

**GOVERNOR PATERSON GETS WORST RATING IN A QUARTER CENTURY  
OBAMA ADMIN., CONGRESS, COURTS, ATTORNEY GENERAL DO BEST  
IN ADIRONDACK COUNCIL'S 2010 STATE OF THE PARK REPORT**  
*Comprehensive Review of Government Actions that Helped or Hurt Adirondack Park*

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ALBANY, N.Y. – Gov. David Paterson's relentless cuts to the state's environmental programs and agencies earned him the worst rating of any New York governor ever reviewed in the Adirondack Council's annual State of the Park report, the organization said today on the occasion of the publication's Silver Anniversary.

State of the Park 2010 is the 25th annual edition of the organization's illustrated, comprehensive review of actions by local, state and federal government officials that helped or hurt the ecological health and wild beauty of the Adirondack Park. The 9,300-square-mile park is the largest in the contiguous United States.

"Governor Paterson received three positive ratings and eight negative ratings, reflecting the fact that he presided over the state's worst year for environmental protection in the Adirondacks since we started keeping track in 1985," said Adirondack Council Executive Director Brian L. Houseal. "No other governor has been so ruthless with his budget axe in key environmental areas. He did little to promote sustainable tourism and he did nothing that the Adirondack Common Ground Alliance advised him to do in terms of economic development.

"He cut all environmental spending by more than 20 percent and held hostage more than 50 state parks and campgrounds, saying everyone had to share the pain of curbing overall state spending," Houseal noted. "Yet the 2010 budget increased by 7.5 percent over last year. We will call on the next governor to reverse this awful trend and restore the state's commitment to environmental health and public safety."

Meanwhile, the Obama Administration and the state's congressional delegation won only praise in the report. The US Environmental Protection Agency, the US Army, the Department of Agriculture and President Obama himself were singled out for efforts to combat air pollution; protect rare wildlife; and, expand broadband internet service in the Park's rural communities.

US Senators Kirsten Gillibrand and Charles Schumer won thumbs-up ratings for support of acid rain legislation and for grants to improve drinking water and sewage treatment systems in the Park. US Reps Scott Murphy, D-Glens Falls, and William Owens, D-Plattsburgh, were praised for grants to improve broadband internet and to control invasive plant species. Thomas Carper, D-Delaware, won praise for his acid rain bill.

Attorney General Andrew Cuomo won an excellent overall rating of 4-and-1, although it was down slightly from his 2008 and 2009 perfect ratings. Cuomo's thumbs-up ratings came from his legal action against air polluters who cause acid rain and climate change. His first and only State of the Park blemish came from his agreement to "investigate" a 2008 state land purchase he had already reviewed and approved.

Individual Adirondack local governments won an outstanding rating of 13-and-5, scoring their tenth consecutive positive rating in the environmental report. Among the highlights were Lake George's efforts to limit phosphorus-based fertilizers that cause rapid weed growth in lakes and ponds; Lake Placid's and Greig's comprehensive land-use planning; a Lyonsdale official's lonely fight against illegal all-terrain vehicle use; and, Tupper Lake's demand for better protection from invasive aquatic plants.

The Adirondack Park Local Government Review Board received criticism for continuing to organize lawsuits against the Adirondack Park Agency after being instructed by state courts not to spend taxpayers' money bringing, or helping with, suits against the APA.

The NYS Legislature had an overall rating of 5-up-and-2-down when both houses were working together on environmental legislation. Most of the credit was due to Environmental Conservation Committee Chairmen Sen. Antoine Thompson, D-Buffalo, and Assemblyman Robert Sweeney, D-Lindenhurst. The Senate fared more poorly on its own, largely due to environmentally harmful one-house bills passed by Sen. Elizabeth Little, R-Queensbury, and Darrel Aubertine, D-Cape Vincent. The Assembly won a perfect 2-and-0 rating for a bill it passed that the Senate did not.

Four State Supreme Court rulings were reviewed in the report, with all four earning a thumbs-up. Justices ordered the removal of illegal buildings, struck down a local law that would have allowed all-terrain vehicle use on town roads in Lewis County; and upheld the Adirondack Park Agency's new regulations requiring a variance for expanding houses that are too close to the water already.

Governor Paterson received three thumbs-up ratings in the publication, for good nominations to environmental boards and for signing an environmental bill. The Governor's environmental agencies also won little praise in the report, with the Adirondack Park Agency earning a disappointing 3-and-5 rating and the Department of Environmental Conservation earning only a slightly better 4-and-6 score.

NYS Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli won two thumbs-up ratings for his reports on the economic benefits of public lands and the need to complete overdue environmental projects more quickly.

The illustrated, 20-page magazine-style report explains complex environmental issues in plain language, for anyone who cares about the Adirondack Park. It is available for free from the Adirondack Council by calling (toll free) 1-877-873-2240 or it can be viewed [here](#).