

## NEWS IN AND ABOUT THE SIX-MILLION-ACRE ADIRONDACK PARK

### INSIDE

-  Time to reform the APA
-  State budget: level for EPF
-  Benefits of local planning
-  Annual outdoor gear raffle

## Local Farms, Food and Jobs

### Open space conservation and local agriculture

There are approximately 52,000 acres of open space farmland remaining in the Adirondack Park with the greatest concentration in the Lake Champlain and St. Lawrence valleys, where approximately 200 farms are in operation. It is here that renewed interest in agriculture promises to help revive local economies, provide essential wildlife habitat and protect water quality. The Adirondack Council is collaborating with individuals and organizations to advocate for the conservation of agricultural lands in the Adirondack Park for the sustainable production of food and other agricultural products and for the protection of ecological resources. The Council is advocating for farming that upholds a rural quality of life, clean air and water, and native wildlife. To read our joint letter to Congressional leaders about the Local Farms, Food and Jobs Act, please visit [http://adirondackcouncil.org/Farm\\_Sign\\_on\\_letter312.pdf](http://adirondackcouncil.org/Farm_Sign_on_letter312.pdf).



Rivermede Farm in Keene Valley

Photo provided by Adirondack Harvest

## Adirondack Council Launches APA Reform Campaign

### Encouraging conservation science and smart growth planning

When the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) Act was created in 1971, it was considered a landmark law with strict environmental protections for the private land in the Park. Since that time however, conservation science and smart growth principles have greatly advanced. Unfortunately, the APA Act is now too outdated to protect the waters, wildlife and forests of the Adirondacks.

The Adirondack Council has launched a campaign urging Governor Cuomo, the NYS Legislature and the Adirondack Park Agency to amend the APA Act and improve the rules and regulations to better protect the Park's environment and enhance local communities. Among some of the changes the Council would like included: improvements to the Agency's enforcement program, reforms to the APA's land use code to protect backcountry forests, a more streamlined permitting process providing greater certainty for project sponsors, and funding for communities to help them complete local land use plans.

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Newsletter photos by Adirondack Council staff  
unless otherwise noted.



*The Council organized a meeting at the Whallonsburg Grange with government representatives, not-for-profit groups, and interested citizens to discuss farming concerns and the federal Farm Bill reauthorization process. Among the participants (pictured L to R): Chris Maron, Champlain Area Trails; Julie King, Adirondack North Country Association; Sue Merrell, North Country Representative for Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, D-NY; Brian Houseal, Adirondack Council; Allison Buckley, Adirondack Council.*

## Time to Reform the APA

### Revamp the Rules and Regs

At their January 2012 meeting, the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) Commissioners voted 10-1 to approve the 6,200-acre Adirondack Club and Resort project in Tupper Lake, following a lengthy 7 ½ year review, multiple mediation sessions and a formal public hearing that lasted 19 days.

During the hearing, the Adirondack Council presented expert testimony and alternative development plans that, if adopted, would have reduced the footprint of the proposed resort by two-thirds, decreasing the project's impact on water quality and wildlife habitat and leaving thousands of acres of forest untouched. Some of the Council's recommendations were incorporated into the final plan (e.g. deed restrictions preventing further subdivision of the largest lots), but the lack of clear regulatory guidance and statutory authority made it difficult for the agency to demand much more.

While this contentious project review is fresh in everyone's minds, the Council is launching a campaign to reform the APA and change weak and outdated rules. Our current knowledge of ecosystem management practices and smart growth principles demonstrate many shortcomings in the APA Act and its rules and regulations.

The APA Act and its rules and regulations should be amended to better improve water quality and revitalize local villages and hamlets. Agency reforms should be used to ensure that future development takes place in areas that can sustain it. For example, regulations to cluster new development are needed to protect critical habitat and wildlife corridors. Upland development, the next wave of building above the shorelines, should be properly regulated. Shoreline setbacks should also be revised to better protect the Park's water resources.

Governor Cuomo's administration is calling for governance and policy reforms that result in a more cost-effective and efficient delivery of government services, while also protecting the environment and stimulating sustainable development. This is where the Adirondack Council has an important role to play. By raising awareness about the need for reforms and advocating for positive solutions, we will make lasting changes that guide future development into the appropriate places.

We need your assistance in the coming months to call on the Governor, the Legislature and the Agency to make needed reforms to the APA. When you receive an action alert from the Council, please take the time to write a letter or call the policymakers listed. You can protect the Adirondacks for generations to come. Thank you for your support!

Brian L. Houseal, Executive Director

Go to our website – [www.AdirondackCouncil.org](http://www.AdirondackCouncil.org) – for more information.



## CAPITAL MATTERS: ALBANY



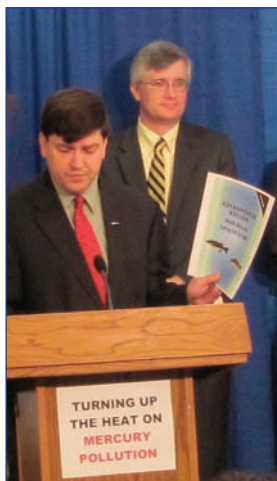
Photo © Larry Master, masterimages.org

### Reducing Mercury Pollution

#### Thermostat collection program

At a press conference in late March, the Adirondack Council and other groups expressed support for legislation that would mandate a mercury thermostat collection program. The legislation is sponsored by Assembly Environmental Conservation Committee (EnCon) Chair Bob Sweeney, D-Lindenhurst, and Senate EnCon Chair Mark Grisanti, R-Buffalo. Currently, it is illegal to put thermostats that contain mercury into the waste stream. However, a voluntary collection program is only capturing about one percent of the discarded thermostats. A stronger program may include financial incentives to return thermostats to retail or wholesale locations. The Senate and Assembly bills must be negotiated to be the same before they can become law.

*During a press conference, Council Legislative Director, Scott Lorey, calls for stronger incentives for a new mercury thermostat collection program.*



### Environmental Funding Steady

#### Second straight early budget

Once again, the state budget passed ahead of the April 1 deadline and funding for the environment was basically the same as the previous year's budget. The Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) was again approved at the \$134 million level. The land protection line stayed at \$17.5 million and the invasive species category saw a small decrease to \$3.4 million. The Legislature and Governor could not reach an agreement to expand the EPF by using revenue from unclaimed nickels from the bottle deposit

law. The Senate and Assembly may still act on this measure before the end of the session in June.

Staffing for the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and Adirondack Park Agency (APA) also remained stable for the second consecutive year. Unfortunately, this still represents a roughly 25 percent cut at both agencies over the last few years.

*The Council's Clarence Petty Intern, Bryce Gray, donned a buck mask and carried the message "Creating Jobs...One Buck at a Time" to advocate for this year's Environmental Protection Fund. The campaign was part of a joint effort by dozens of New York environmental groups.*



## ACTION UPDATE

### Member Action

#### Makes a difference

Thank you to everyone who wrote letters and emails to strengthen new invasive species legislation and to ask the Department of Environmental Conservation to reconsider the agency's bobcat management plan. It makes a difference when you let policymakers know that what happens in the Adirondack Park matters to you! Time does not always allow us to use the mail for alerts. Please be sure we have your current email by sending a note to [foreverwild@adirondackcouncil.org](mailto:foreverwild@adirondackcouncil.org). You can also be sure to see alerts when you follow us on Facebook and Twitter.



## ADIRONDACK COUNCIL

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CFC #22101

Thank you to Adirondack Council members who contribute through their EarthShare workplace giving campaigns. We appreciate your interest in protecting the Adirondack Park and your support for our conservation and advocacy efforts. Contact EarthShare today to talk about bringing EarthShare to **your** workplace! [info@earthshare.org](mailto:info@earthshare.org)

## IN AND ABOUT THE PARK

### Saranac Lake

#### US Agriculture committee hearing

At the request of U.S. Reps. Bill Owens, D-Plattsburgh and Chris Gibson, R-Kinderhook, the House Agriculture Committee held a hearing on the federal Farm Bill at North Country Community College in Saranac Lake. One of only four hearings scheduled,



farmers, local food advocates, and interested citizens filled the room to hear testimony from the panel of farmers and questions from the committee. The Farm Bill is due to be reauthorized in 2012. A joint press release from a local coalition advocating for local food policy can be read at [http://www.adirondackcouncil.org/Farm\\_Bill\\_Hearings\\_2012\\_PR.pdf](http://www.adirondackcouncil.org/Farm_Bill_Hearings_2012_PR.pdf).

### Tupper Lake

#### NYSERDA ClimAID

In 2011, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) created a document, ClimAID, that outlined adaptation strategies regarding water resources, coastal zones, ecosystems, agriculture, energy, transportation, telecommunications, and public health. The Wild Center in Tupper Lake hosted a meeting in March with state officials to discuss NYSERDA's recommendations on how Adirondack communities can adapt to a changing climate.

### Greig

#### Local zoning challenged

Landowners hoping to develop a bulk water operation to extract and bottle spring water are taking the town to court. The suit challenges the merits and timing of local zoning changes dealing with commercial water withdrawals. The project would pipe nearly 200,000 gallons of water a day under the Black River to facilities in the Town of Turin.



Photo: John Draz, Jr.

### First Lake

#### Students study acid rain

In March, West Genesee Middle School students Kathryn Eno and Hannah Walsh (L to R) completed a small study on the acidity of Adirondack waters. The sixth graders presented their findings at the Greater Syracuse Scholastic

Science Fair. Their project entitled "How Acid Precipitation Affects the pH of Lakes: A Study of First Lake" received an honors award. The budding scientists gained inspiration and support from the Council's acid rain literature.

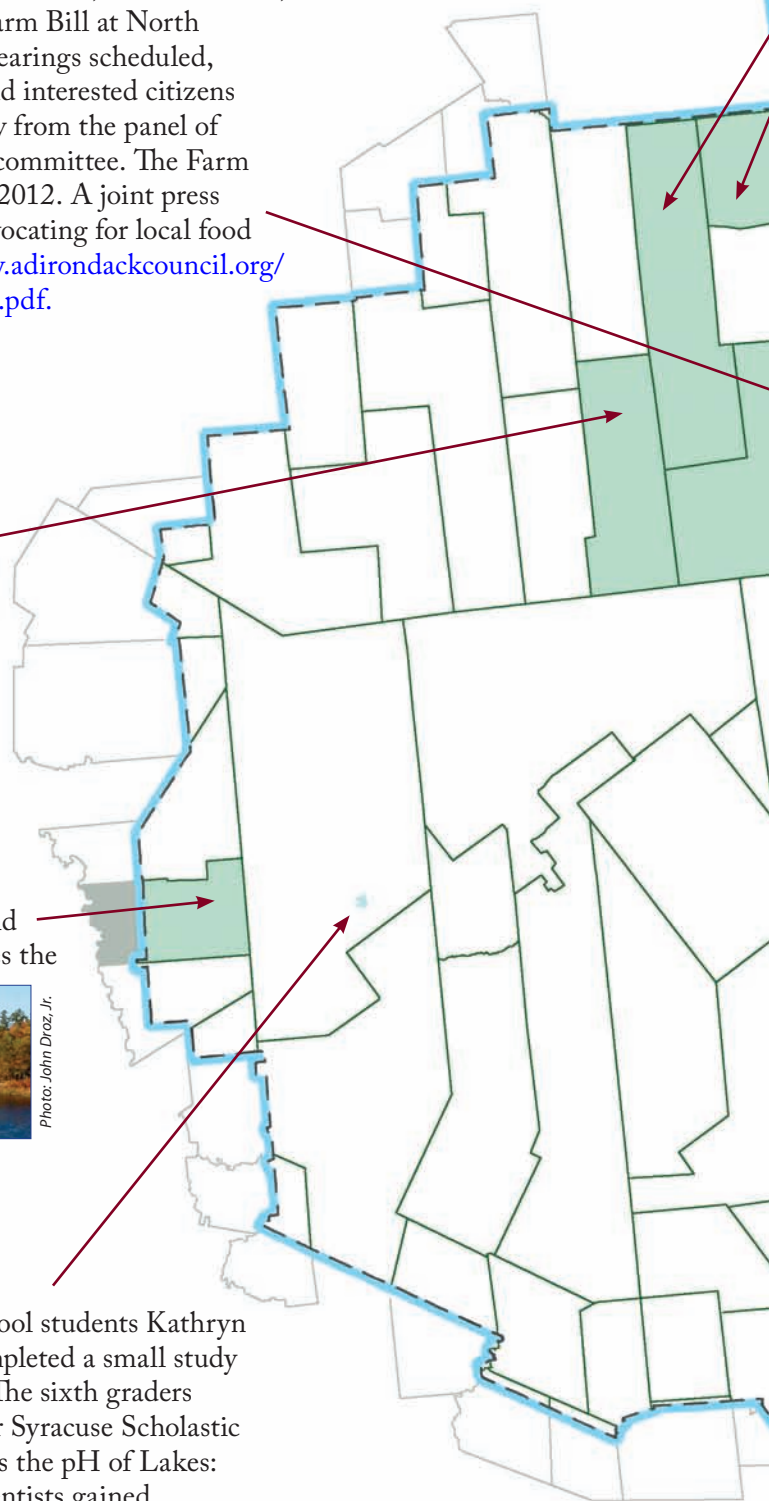


Photo: Beth Walsh



## Santa Clara and Duane

### Easement change adds Forest Preserve lands

Revising the 1998 conservation easement agreement with Champion International, new landowners Heartland Forestland Fund will transfer 2,100 acres to New York State for addition to the Adirondack Forest Preserve. In exchange, 208 hunting camps that were slated for removal will remain on the property (with a total of 220 permitted). The Santa Clara Tract includes 107,000 acres of easement lands that are open to the public for various recreational activities. Check with the Department of Environmental Conservation Lands & Forests Office in Ray Brook (518.897.1291) for details.

## Peru

### Feral Hogs

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation is working diligently to ensure feral hog populations do not spread throughout the Champlain Valley. Formerly domestic farm animals, these large (100-300 pounds) and hungry creatures quickly reproduce, and destroy forest plants, agriculture crops, and wildlife habitat. They have virtually no predators.



Photo: NYSDC

## Au Sable Forks

### Join us at Asgaard Farm

The former home of painter Rockwell Kent will be the site of the Council's Annual Forever Wild Day on July 14. Enjoy a tour of the working farm with hosts Rhonda Butler and David Brunner, attend the annual Members' meeting, experience



Photo © Nancie Battaglia



[www.asgaardfarm.com](http://www.asgaardfarm.com)

an outing along the Au Sable River, and help us celebrate the Conservationist of the Year, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and recognize the Adirondack Park Forest Rangers.

## Lake George

### Aggressive response to Asian Clams

Introduced to Lake George through discarded fishing bait, the invasive Asian Clam is being aggressively treated thanks to the joint efforts of not-for-profit organizations and government entities. Asian Clams reduce water quality, threaten lake biodiversity and can clog the water intake systems of homes and boats. The cost of the two-year control effort is expected to exceed \$1 million.



Photo: Kathleen Bozony/Lake George Waterkeeper

## COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

### Community Planning Needed

#### Council urges comprehensive approach

Created by the NYS Legislature as one of the nation's most advanced regional land use planning agencies over 40 years ago, the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) has made some progress in regulating the Park's private lands. However, it has not been successful in achieving a truly comprehensive land use and development plan, nor has it achieved sound local planning. Only 18 of the Park's 103 towns and villages have approved plans, and 9 out of 10 homes within the Adirondack Park have been built outside a village or hamlet. This is a recipe for the inevitable degradation of the Park's Resource Management lands (one building per 42.7 acres) that should be used as working forests and farms, not subdivided by second home developments. It is for this reason that the Council is intensifying efforts to amend the APA Act and reform Agency rules and regulations. See the Council's [website](#) for editorials and stories from an array of New York papers and online sources.

*Photo above: Westport, NY, one of 18 towns with an APA-Approved Local Land Use Program.*



Westport Library, Westport, NY

### APA Information for Citizens

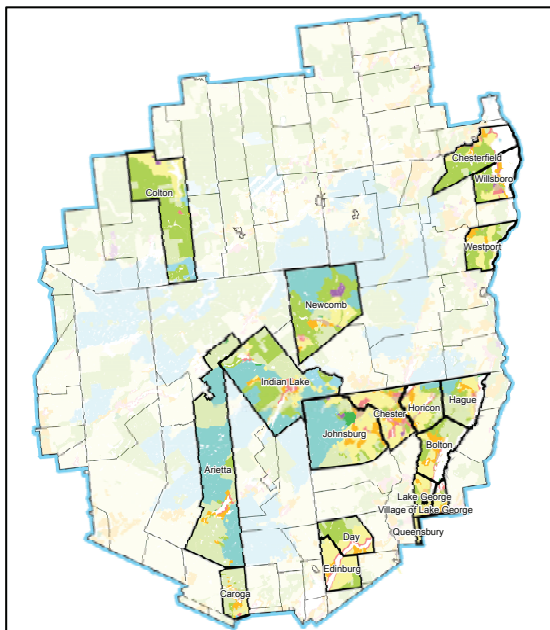
#### Download the free guide

Headquartered in Ray Brook (between Lake Placid and Saranac Lake), the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) was created to develop long-range land use plans for both public and private lands within the Park. The APA Citizens' Guide provides useful information about the Adirondack Park, land use classifications, and the Park's land use regulations. View and download at <http://apa.ny.gov/Documents/Guidelines/CitizensGuide.pdf>.

### Benefits of Local Land Use Programs

#### Advocating for community assistance

A comprehensive plan and land use zoning can provide a blueprint for how a community should grow in the future. Planning can promote economic development while protecting natural resources. Communities with a plan in place increase their likelihood of receiving project grants. Without a local plan, many development projects fall to the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) for review and approval. The APA Act encourages any local government within the Park to develop its own local land use program which, if approved by the Agency, may transfer some review and permitting authority from the Agency to the local government's jurisdiction. The Council is urging the state and the APA to offer greater assistance to Adirondack communities who are interested in creating or updating their local land use plans.



Map: Adirondack Park Agency

TOWNS WITH AGENCY APPROVED LAND USE PROGRAMS

### Land Use Programs in the Adirondack Park

**103** town/villages in the Adirondack Park

**64** with zoning

**64** with subdivision regulations

**4** with site plan review only

**18** with APA-Approved Local Land Use Program (ALLUP)

**25** without Zoning, Subdivision, Site Plan Review or an ALLUP

### Towns with Agency Approved Local Land Use Programs

**Essex County:** Chesterfield, Newcomb, Westport, Willsboro

**Fulton County:** Caroga

**Hamilton County:** Aretta, Indian Lake

**St. Lawrence County:** Colton

**Saratoga County:** Day, Edinburg

**Warren County:** Bolton, Chester, Johnsburg, Lake George, Lake George Village, Hague, Horicon, Queensbury

To view APA maps in more detail and learn more about the APA's local land use programs visit: [http://apa.ny.gov/Local\\_Government](http://apa.ny.gov/Local_Government)



## SUPPORT THE ADIRONDACK COUNCIL

### Outdoor Equipment Raffle

To benefit Adirondack Park conservation

On Friday, July 27, 2012, the Adirondack Council will raffle outdoor gear generously donated by The North Face, Black Diamond Equipment, SCARPA, and Coleman. Raffle tickets are \$5 each or 5 for \$20. The drawing will be held at the Council's office in Elizabethtown, NY at 12:30 pm (EST). Ticket holders need not be present to win.

Each ticket will provide opportunities to win one of the following:  
Hiking Boots ~ Terra 65 Backpack ~ Instant Camping Tent ~ Trail Shock Trek Poles ~ Quad Lantern ~ Spot Head Lamp ~ Portable Grill Stove

For more information about the raffle items and to purchase tickets visit [www.AdirondackCouncil.org](http://www.AdirondackCouncil.org), scan this code or call us toll-free 877.873.2240.



### Using Your Donations with Care

Adirondack Council receives top charity rating

You can be confident that your investments in the Adirondack Council are put to good use on behalf of the Adirondack Park. The Adirondack Council



has a long-standing commitment to fiscal responsibility and receives the highest rating from Charity Navigator.

Visit [www.CharityNavigator.org](http://www.CharityNavigator.org) to view details about the Council's rating. While you're there, it would be great if you could also write a positive review on our behalf and use the share tools to spread the word about

our advocacy for the Adirondack Park.

You can also view our annual IRS 990 forms and our audited financial statements on our website, [www.AdirondackCouncil.org](http://www.AdirondackCouncil.org).



Dicentra cucullaria (Dutchman's breeches)

### ANIMALS OF THE ADIRONDACKS PUZZLE

The puzzle measures 7" x 7" and includes ten animals native to the Adirondacks that nestle together only one way to complete the puzzle.

The puzzle pieces are 1/4" thick and precision laser cut from a variety of woods. Each puzzle is different depending on the types of wood used.

Allison C. Romig, the designer of the puzzle is the granddaughter of William T. Hord, a founding member and one of the original directors of the Adirondack Council. **\$25.00**



You can place an order for this and other products by calling the Adirondack Council at 877.873.2240 (toll-free) or order online at [www.AdirondackCouncil.org](http://www.AdirondackCouncil.org)

*Proceeds from sales benefit Adirondack Park conservation.*

### Thank You for Your Support

Every contribution makes a difference

With every contribution and purchase of a gift, a carbon certificate, or a raffle ticket, you help the Adirondack Council raise the funds we need to put conservation staff in the field, produce effective media coverage about Park issues, and advocate with policymakers every day. Your gift, together with thousands of others, provides strong and effective advocacy for the Adirondacks. Thank you!



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## Come join us at Asgaard Farm and Dairy in Au Sable Forks on July 14, 2012 for the Adirondack Council's Forever Wild Day



photographic image, **Asgaard Farm** by **Rockwell Kent** (oil painting) 1961, courtesy of the Adirondack Museum

- Tour the working Asgaard Farm and Dairy.
- Visit the onsite studio of artist Rockwell Kent.
- Celebrate the Conservationist of the Year, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.
- Honor the achievements of the New York State Forest Rangers.
- Explore the natural and historic attractions of the Au Sable Forks area on one of our guided outings or on your own.

Visit [www.AdirondackCouncil.org](http://www.AdirondackCouncil.org) for details about activities, lunch reservations and lodging.

**A**s we head to press with this Spring newsletter, plans are in high gear for our annual Forever Wild Day.

The Adirondack Council gratefully acknowledges the following businesses, organizations and individuals who are generous sponsors of the event.

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*(list incomplete)*