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Governor Cuomo Announces Appointments and Nominations to the Adirondack Park Agency

Leilani Crafts Ulrich to be designated as Chairwoman of the Adirondack Park Agency; Sherman Craig to be nominated as Commissioner of the Adirondack Park Agency

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced the appointment of Leilani Crafts Ulrich and the nomination Sherman Craig to positions within the Adirondack Park Agency (APA). Ms. Ulrich will be designated to serve as Chairwoman of the APA and Mr. Craig will be nominated to serve as one of the Commissioners of the APA.

“The Adirondack Park is one of this nation’s greatest natural resources, and I am confident that it will thrive under Lani and Sherman’s leadership,” said Governor Cuomo. “Both Leilani and Sherman have dedicated their lives to the preservation and development of the Park. They recognize the need to balance economic development within the Adirondacks with constant environmental protections. I look forward to working with them to further the development and preservation of this extraordinary park.”

Leilani “Lani” Crafts Ulrich said, “As a resident of Old Forge in the Adirondack Park, I know firsthand the great potential of the Park. Each summer, I have worked with over 100 government agencies, towns and villages across the Park, listening to their concerns and working toward common ground on land-use issues. As Chairwoman, I look forward to using this and other community development experience to develop planning opportunities, as well as to fine-tune the regulatory process in ways that will empower communities and maximize the potential of the Park’s land use while continuing to protect its world class natural resources. I thank Governor Cuomo for this exciting opportunity.”

Sherman Craig said “It would be a privilege to serve as a commissioner on the APA Board and I thank Governor Cuomo for this nomination. I am pleased to be able to return to public service in New York, especially a position involving the Adirondack Park where I call home. The Park offers an abundance of unique resources, many of which I use in my business and can be

leveraged to develop the local economy. I look forward to working with the Agency to help Governor Cuomo rebuild New York.”

Leilani Crafts Ulrich was appointed to the APA in November 2004 and then reappointed in 2008. She moved to Old Forge permanently in 1994. In 1997, she began coordination of community discussions which grew into the Central Adirondack Partnership for the 21st Century (CAP-21), a regional non-profit community development organization serving hamlets in Long Lake, inlet, Webb and Forestport on the western side of the Park. CAP-21 strives for balance between nature and commerce by increasing communication to build partnerships amongst diverse groups. The group supported comprehensive master planning, architectural preservation and regional planning efforts. CAP-21 assists small community groups in areas of economic development, social services expansion and recreational development. Ms. Ulrich sits on the Board of Directors of the Central Adirondack Business Association (CAA) and on the Architectural Preservation Committee of the Webb Historical Association. Regionally, she is on the Board of the Adirondack Community Housing Trust and serves as a member of the New York State delegation to the Northern Forest Center’s Sustainable Economies Initiative. For her visioning work with Communities 2000, she received the Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA) Citizen of the Year Award. Past affiliations include the Fulton Chain of Lakes Performing Arts Council, Mountain Theatre, and the Community Chorus of Old Forge. Ms. Ulrich received her B.A. in Liberal Arts Mount Union College in 1978 and her Master Degree in Education Lesley University in 1985. She and her husband reside in Old Forge.

Sherman Craig is a retired teacher and school administrator, currently operating his own business, Wanakena Woodworks, which makes rustic and fine furniture by using local resources within the Adirondack Park. He is an active outdoors traveler and volunteer, and is a current member of several organizations including the Clifton-Fine Economic Corp, Adirondack Mountain Club, and the Waterfront Revitalization Project. He is Chairman of the 5 Ponds Partner subcommittee, managing relationships with groups associated with trail development and maintenance. His committee developed the Cranberry Lake 50 hike and assisted in the opening the Alice Brook snowmobile trail and bridge.

Previously, Mr. Craig held several positions in Pittsford, New York schools including principal, teacher, building administrator and district administrator. During his tenure as principal of a middle school, his building and district won several honors including a National School of Recognition and the New York State Governor’s Excelsior Award for quality and efficiency. From 1973 to 1975, he served as Director and Headmaster of the International School of Belgrade, Yugoslavia. He retired in 1999 as Assistant to the Superintendent for Technology.

Mr. Craig was raised in Rochester, New York and currently resides in Wanakena with his wife, Annette. He holds B.S. and M.S. degrees from SUNY Brockport and a M.A. from University of Rochester.

Senator Betty Little said “I applaud Governor Andrew Cuomo’s selection of Lani Ulrich to lead the Adirondack Park Agency. I’ve known Lani for many years and am fully confident she will provide high-quality leadership for this agency whose decisions impact the lives and livelihoods of many I represent. As a founding member of Adirondack Common Ground, she understands that constructive dialogue between local governments, business and community leaders and environmental advocates will ensure economic needs and environmental stewardship are balanced in the Park. She understands the issues well, she’s a very good listener and has the ability and interest in forging consensus. Sherman Craig, filling the vacancy of Curt Stiles, will be St. Lawrence County's first ‘in-park’ commissioner. It is critical that we have all the park seats filled as this agency moves forward with a new chair and with many important projects to consider. As a small business owner, Sherman brings an important perspective to the board and is another smart choice by Governor Cuomo.”

Assemblywoman Teresa Sayward said, “I commend the Governor for once again listening to the local residents and taking their thoughts into consideration before making his decision. I am very pleased with his appointments and I am looking forward to working closely with both Lani Ulrich and Sherman Craig on issues that are important to the North Country and those living in the Adirondack Park.”

Brian Houseal, executive director of the Adirondack Council, said, "We congratulate Governor Cuomo on his wise decision to designate Lani Ulrich as Chair of the Adirondack Park Agency and to nominate Sherman Craig to the Board. As a co-founder of the Adirondack Common Ground Alliance, Lani has demonstrated the leadership skills needed for the Park today, as we seek solutions that will benefit the Park's communities and the economy, while also protecting its environment. Sherman Craig also brings balance to the APA, with experience in both economic development and environmental stewardship."

Brian Towers, Supervisor Town of Wells and President of the Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages (AATV) said, “The AATV applauds Governor Cuomo for his excellent selection for APA Chair. As a sitting in-park Commissioner, Lani Ulrich embraces the principle that land preservation and open space must be balanced with the need for growth and employment opportunities for the people who call the Adirondack Park their home. Governor Cuomo should be commended for working with the AATV to make recommendations to the APA board, a practice former Governor Mario Cuomo began and he has chosen to continue. The AATV

screened several candidates this year for commissioner and are also pleased with the Governor's selection of Sherman Craig from the Town of Wanakena, St. Lawrence County. Sherman's experience as a local businessman whose furniture business utilizes local resources is exactly the type of perspective needed on the APA board. These appointments are another example of Governor Cuomo's commitment to working with Local Governments throughout the Park and we are looking forward to working with the new Chair and Commissioner."

Tony Collins, President of Clarkson University and Co-chair of the Governor's North Country Regional Economic Development Council said, "Leilani Ulrich and Sherman Craig have proven records of partnering with diverse stakeholders to advance sustainable development in the Adirondack Park. They will be key allies in our efforts to strengthen the economy in the North Country."

Neil Woodworth, Executive Director of the Adirondack Mountain Club said, "The Adirondack Mountain Club (ADK) welcomes the appointment of Leilani Ulrich as chair of the Adirondack Park Agency. ADK has worked with Lani Ulrich as part of the Adirondack Common Ground Alliance, where she strove for a balance between protection of the unique and precious environment of the Adirondacks and sustainable economic development for its citizens and communities. ADK also strongly endorses the appointment of Sherman Craig as a member of the Agency Board. Through his innovative leadership in creating the Cranberry 50 trail and Little River canoe/kayak access projects, Sherman has demonstrated that public use of the Forest Preserve can promote sustainable tourism and economic development for Adirondack communities."

The Adirondack Park Agency Board consists of 11 members. By statute, the Commissioner of the Department of Economic Development, the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Secretary of State are all members. The 8 other members are nominated by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Of those 8, five members must reside full-time in the Park and three must reside full-time outside the Park. No more than 5 of the eight may be of the same political party.

The Adirondack Park Agency (APA) was created in 1971 by the New York State Legislature to develop long-range land use plans for both public and private lands within the boundary of the Park. The APA is a New York State governmental agency with an eleven-member board. The Agency Board meets monthly to act on Park policy issues and permit applications. Agency Board meetings take place the second Thursday and Friday of each month and are open to the public.