Tourism chief joins Ad'k Council board
By CHRIS MORRIS –

LAKE PLACID - A major player in promoting North Country tourism has joined the board of directors at an influential environmental organization.

Jim McKenna, president and CEO of both the Regional Office of Sustainable Tourism and the Lake Placid Convention and Visitors Bureau, joined the Adirondack Council's Board of Directors at its annual meeting this summer.

McKenna said he spoke to a number of friends and colleagues before arriving at his decision to join the board. He said his experience with tourism initiatives helped him to better understand the economic and environmental challenges the Adirondack Park will face in the coming years.

"I think we have to do things differently," McKenna said. "If we don't change how we look at things and operate, we're not going to be competitive in the future. The longer we take to make a decision to make things happen in a new way, the longer it's going to take."

According to McKenna, the number-one reason people come to the area is the Park.

"That's our main attribute," he said. "That's something that we have to sustain for many years."

McKenna said he recognizes that some Adirondack residents are skeptical of the Council and its influence.

"If that wasn't happening, then there might not be a reason for somebody with my background to get involved," he said. He said his role on the board is an opportunity to use his experience as a force for good.

McKenna is a busy man, overseeing operations at both ROOST and LPCVB, but he told the Enterprise his role on the Council's board won't conflict with his schedule.

The Council's executive director, Brian Houseal, said Thursday that McKenna is an excellent addition to the organization's board. He said board members come from diverse professional and individual backgrounds.

Board members serve three-year terms and can serve up to three consecutive terms. After that, they must rotate off the board for at least one year before they can be put up for nomination again.