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Council- State budget cuts threaten Adirondacks

ALBANY — The Adirondack Council says cuts in major environmental initiatives and staff losses at state regulatory agencies are threatening the Adirondack Park's natural resources and tourism.

Scott Lorey, Legislative Director for the non-profit group, spoke at a state budget hearing on environmental spending on Tuesday. He called for an immediate increase in the state's Environmental Protection Fund and in staffing at the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Adirondack Park Agency.

Lorey noted that in 2008, the Environmental Protection Fund was at \$255 million. It's now down to \$134 million. The Fund pays for large capital projects like landfill closure, parkland acquisition, farmland protection and invasive species management.

Staffing at DEC is just under 3,000 — 650 fewer than in 2008.