



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

INSIDE

- 🦉 Budget cuts threaten Adirondack towns
- 🦉 Park protection under assault
- 🦉 Moose sightings in the High Peaks
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Governor Slashes Environmental Funding

Jeopardizes land protection, smart growth and invasive species eradication

As part of his 2009-2010 budget submission, Governor David Paterson has proposed to reduce the funding for the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) by as much as 86 percent. In 2007, the Legislature mandated the EPF be at a level of \$300 million this year. However, the Governor has proposed only \$205 million be spent on environmental capital projects. In addition, Paterson has suggested a dramatic change by funding the EPF primarily through revenue associated with the passage of the Bigger, Better Bottle Bill. This proposal would capture the unclaimed nickel deposits and put that money into the EPF. However, the bottle bill continues to face strong opposition and its passage is far from certain. Historically, the EPF has been funded by using a portion of a small surcharge associated with real estate transactions. Additionally, the Governor has also requested that another \$45 million be removed from the fund to help with the state's budget shortfall.

By taking money out of the fund and relying on an untested funding source that does not currently exist, the Governor is running the risk of an EPF funded by as little as \$42 million. This would be the lowest level of the EPF since 1996, shortly after the fund was created. It would put critical programs such as land acquisition, water quality, and smart growth at risk of not having the necessary money to complete projects. This reduction would also harm communities that often depend on EPF grants to help finance needed local upgrades.

Adirondack Council members should have already received an action alert on this issue and more details about our campaign can be found on page 3.

Cool Park. Healthy Planet.

Program removes carbon dioxide

In December 2008, then US Rep. Kirsten Gillibrand became the first American to permanently retire carbon dioxide pollution allowances from a government-mandated carbon dioxide reduction program. She did it through the *Cool Park. Healthy Planet.* program created by the Adirondack



Adirondack Council Executive Director Brian Houseal and New York's new Senator Kirsten Gillibrand.

Council to prevent thousands of tons of carbon dioxide from being emitted by power plants from Maine to Delaware.

The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI – known as “Reggie”) is the first government-mandated carbon dioxide control program in the United States. It requires power plant emissions reductions in New York and nine other Northeastern and Mid-Atlantic states.

Carbon emissions from power plants are one of the leading contributors to global warming, which is already impacting the Adirondacks with shorter winters, warmer temperatures, loss of ice and snow, and shifting species habitat.

Since December, Adirondack Council members and other interested citizens retired over 1,800 carbon allowances.

There is more information about the *Cool Park. Healthy Planet.* program and links to information about climate change and impacts on the Adirondacks at our website.

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Newsletter photos by Adirondack Council staff
unless otherwise noted.



Brian Houseal looks out over part of the proposed Bob Marshall Great Wilderness from Mt. Arab while touring the Bob's gateway communities with graduate students in January.

Photo courtesy of Conway School of Landscape Design.

Finding the Silver Lining

By all accounts, the global economic system is facing an historic crisis with a major recession predicted for much of 2009. An immediate result is that New York state will need to drastically cut government spending, with anticipated reductions in public support for needed infrastructure improvements and public services in the Adirondack Park.

We are living through an extraordinary crisis. And although it is easy to dwell on negative scenarios for the Adirondacks and simply “hunker down” to weather the coming storm, this situation also presents an outstanding opportunity to envision a better future and set in place strategies to achieve them. The Adirondacks are a special place with abundant natural resources, energy resources and the intellectual capital to confront this crisis and emerge with a new economic model for this very special protected area.

With the understanding that strong environmental protection and economic strength go hand in hand in the Adirondack Park, the Council is advancing opportunities for the Park.

Opportunities for action:

- Produce a master plan for the proposed Bob Marshall Great Wilderness that will provide a blueprint for environmental protection, outdoor recreation, economic development, and ecosystem management for the 409,000-acre area of protected public and private lands;
- Advocate for local job creation for trail construction and maintenance, invasive species removal, and campground operations;
- Secure economic stimulus funding for small-scale renewable energy, broadband communications, and water infrastructure; and,
- Urge consolidation of Department of Environmental Conservation regions and other government services to reduce costs and improve ecosystem management.

Each of these is an example of efforts the Council will undertake this year on behalf of the Park's environment and economy. The Council's *Vision for the Adirondack Park* with more opportunities for action is on our website.

Your support and advice are essential components to the positive impacts we can achieve for the Park and its people. In this uncertain economic environment, when the state legislative focus is primarily downstate and urban, we will also be depending on your letters and calls to help us make sure policymakers understand the value and needs of the Adirondack Park.

Thank you for caring about the Adirondack Park and being part of our efforts.

Brian L. Houseal, Executive Director

Go to our website — www.adirondackcouncil.org — for more information and updates on issues facing the Adirondack Park.

MEMBERS IN ACTION

ACTION UPDATE

Critical Time for Citizen Action

Budget cuts threaten the Adirondacks

The Adirondack Council will soon be reaching out to its members calling on them to assist us with two crucial items of importance in the state budget. The first is the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF). The story on page 1 details the Governor's proposal to drastically reduce the amount of money spent on the environment this year. We must now work with the Legislature to correct the Governor's proposal.

A second important issue in the Governor's submission is the proposal to limit the amount of money the state pays in property taxes to towns with Forest Preserve or other state lands within their borders. For Adirondack municipalities, this represents about \$70 million in total tax payments annually. The Governor would have the state "cap" the payments it makes to local governments for Forest Preserve and other lands at the 2008 level.

This would not only strongly discourage future state land acquisition within the Park, but it would also create a new unfunded mandate for local communities. In towns where the Forest Preserve makes up 80 to 90 percent of the land, the remaining landowners would have to pay not only their fair share of any future tax increases, but the state's portion as well. In one town, it has been determined that a five percent spending increase would lead to a 31 percent tax increase for the private landowners.

The Adirondack Council has joined with various other groups in the Adirondacks and Catskills, including the Adirondack Common Ground Alliance, to fight this proposal. We will be working with these groups and supportive legislators to get the message out about how important it is that the state pay full taxes on the Forest Preserve.

We now need your help to reach out to your legislator and other leaders who will be deciding during the next two months what is included in the final state budget. Your letters are critical so that our elected officials know how important the Adirondacks are to you and that funding for the environment is a priority.

For additional information and what you can do to help, please visit the "take action" page on our website, www.adirondackcouncil.org.



Adirondack Park

LANDS IN PERIL



ALBANY BUDGET CUTS

What's at stake: More than 270,000 acres of Adirondack forests are currently available for addition to the Forest Preserve or easement protection.

What's needed: State officials must act quickly. For land acquisition, \$100 million is needed as part of a fully-funded \$300 million Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) in the 2009–2010 budget to ensure that there are adequate resources to preserve these critical parcels for future generations.

What's going on: In the New York 2008–2009 budget, the Governor and Legislature diverted \$125 million of the \$255-million EPF into the state budget's general fund to provide for non-EPF related fiscal relief.

Will the EPF be depleted again in 2009?



ADIRONDACK COUNCIL
Defending the East's Greatest Wilderness

HOW YOU CAN HELP!
www.adirondackcouncil.org

Many thanks to The Conservation Alliance and Eastern Mountain Sports for their generous support of our *Lands in Peril* publication and intensified public outreach and media efforts to strengthen support for



land protection, quiet recreation, and public funding in order to seize these extraordinary opportunities.

IN AND ABOUT THE PARK



Tupper Lake Developer Delays

Planning continues in spite of economy

It has been over four months since the last mediation session regarding the Adirondack Club and Resort development proposal. The development of the defunct ski area and 6,000 acres of land in Tupper Lake, is the largest project to come before the Adirondack Park Agency since its establishment in 1972. The objective of the mediation sessions is to reach agreement on project revisions that address key issues identified by the Adirondack Park Agency staff in response to the initial project application. Rather than proceed to a legal hearing, parties agreed to mediation.

Since July, Adirondack Park Agency and Department of Environmental Conservation staff, environmental organizations, local citizens, and government representatives have been waiting for the developer to follow through with revisions to the development plan. The last promised delivery date was December 31, 2008. As of this publication, no revised plans have been shared with mediation participants. While the economic crisis has people questioning the developer's intention to move the project forward, all public statements by the developer's representatives declare planning will continue.

The Adirondack Park Agency has no deadline for project application completion, so the project may just languish without closure. The Adirondack Council hopes the developer will come through with a revised plan and we remain committed to a project that benefits the local community, meets guidelines for development within the Adirondack Park, and takes aggressive measures to protect the surrounding environment.

Educational Ads about the Park

Bacon Brothers lend support for Adirondack Park protection



Michael Bacon and Kevin Bacon

whose music comprised the soundtrack for the 2008 two-hour, PBS documentary THE ADIRONDACKS. "We were thrilled to lend our names and our efforts to the people who protect such a special place," said actor Kevin Bacon, who along with Michael form the core of the six-piece acoustic rock band, The Bacon Brothers (www.baconbros.com).

You can view the PSAs on our website, the Council's Facebook Group and Cause, or YouTube. Please share them and help spread the word about the importance of protecting the Park.

The first of two in a series of six 30-second public service announcements (PSAs) created by the Bacon Brothers and the Adirondack Council began airing in January in New York state, New England and Mid-Atlantic television stations and cable networks.

"We wanted to give something back to a place that has been such a wonderful refuge for my family and for me," said Michael Bacon, a composer

Sustainable Economic Initiative

Rockefeller Institute hosts forum on the Northern Forest

The Adirondacks are part of the Northern Forest that spans New York, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. The region shares characteristics of natural beauty and outdoor recreation attractions, as well as economic challenges. A forum hosted by the Albany-based Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government highlighted opportunities and obstacles facing the region.

As a member of the forum panel, Executive Director Brian Houseal shared some of the objectives the Adirondack Council has helped formulate as a steering committee member of the Northern Forest Center, the Adirondack Common Ground Alliance and DEC Commissioner Pete Grannis' Adirondack Planning Initiative. Within the Adirondacks and across the four state Northern Forest, shared priorities will strengthen our advocacy for state and federal economic stimulus funds when they become available.

These shared priorities of affordable broadband telecommunications, water and wastewater treatment infrastructure and renewable energy will further the Adirondack Council's efforts to strengthen local communities, improve water quality and promote working farms and forests. For complete audio of the forum go to http://www.rockinst.org/forumsandevents/#economic_prospects_for_the_north_country.

ADIRONDACK COUNCIL is a member of



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ADIRONDACK FACTS AND FIGURES

Fast Facts: Follensby Pond Tract

Town: Harrietstown and Tupper Lake

County: Franklin

Land and Water:

- 14,600 acres, mostly forested;
- 1,000-acre Follensby Pond and adjacent wetlands;
- 10 miles of river frontage on the Raquette River, bordering the High Peaks Wilderness Area;
- unique silver maple floodplain.

Ownership: Purchased by John S. and Bertha "Bird" McCormick in 1952. Sale to The Nature Conservancy for \$16 million announced September 2008.

History: 19th century Philosopher's camp visited by Ralph Waldo Emerson and other scholars; site of Adirondack eagle re-introduction in 1980s.

Future plan: The sale agreement to The Nature Conservancy included the owners intent that the land be sold to New York state for addition to the Adirondack Forest Preserve.



Photo © Larry Master, masterimages.org

Moose Back in the Adirondacks

Sightings of mega fauna in High Peaks area

The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has estimated that there are over 500 moose in the Adirondacks. While a resurgence in numbers in the past few years was thought to be due to migration, DEC now believes the rising numbers are the result of moose calves born in New York. Moose sightings along Rt. 73 near Lake Placid became quite predictable this fall, leading to concern about traffic safety as drivers pulled over and pedestrians walked along the busy stretch of road to get a view of "the Cascade moose." Many observers concurred that it was not one, but a family of moose that inhabited the area.

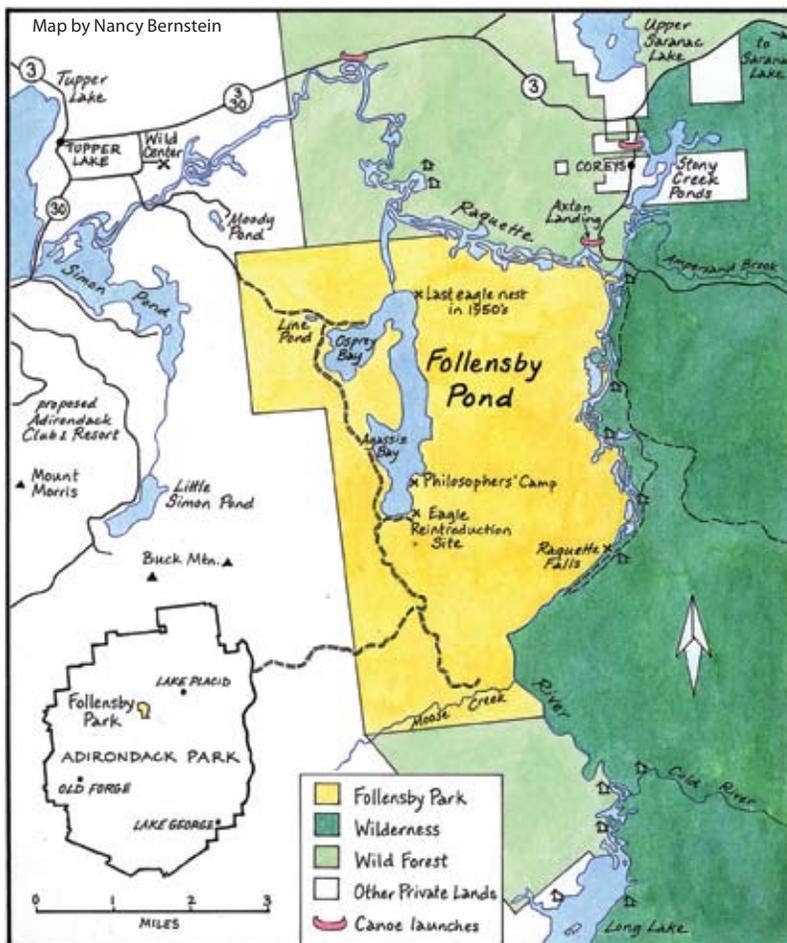
In response to citizen concern for human and moose safety, moose caution signs were installed along the four-mile stretch where the moose have been frequently spotted. Thankfully, no moose or moose fan injuries have been reported. For more information about Adirondack moose visit the Adirondack Ecological Center website: <http://www.esf.edu/aec/adks/mammals/moose.htm>.



Photo © Larry Master, masterimages.org

foreverwild@adirondackcouncil.org

Please send us your e-mail address and be sure to add foreverwild@adirondackcouncil.org to your e-mail address book, spam software white list, or mail system white list to help ensure that you receive e-mails from us and that your e-mail software displays HTML and images properly.



SEEN AND HEARD



Clean Air Interstate Rule (CAIR) Reinstated

Acid rain emissions rule stands

In late December, the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia reinstated the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Air Interstate Rule (CAIR) that it struck down in July sighting fundamental flaws in the rule's system to cap and trade sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide pollution allowances. Industry, government representatives and environmental organizations, including the Adirondack Council, were shocked when the courts threw out the rule altogether. Diverse interests agreed that the rule was important even if the details needed modification, and urged the courts to reconsider its decision. In response, the courts reinstated the rule with the stipulation that the cap and trade program be revised to meet the standards of the Clear Air Act. Revising the rule could happen through legislative action by Congress or a rulemaking process by the EPA. Either approach is likely to take two or three years to complete. Until then, effective January 1, the CAIR rule will remain in place.



I thank the Adirondack Council for having the foresight to create this program so it can teach the public about climate change and give individuals an affordable way to participate in curbing it.

Then US Representative, now Senator, Kirsten Gillibrand commending the Adirondack Council for launching Cool Park. Healthy Plant. program upon purchasing and retiring 9 tons of carbon dioxide emissions.

I would say that this region, the Adirondacks, would have many of the same challenges they have today with or without the Adirondack Park Agency. I'll put that out there and New York can respond to that. But that's from where I sit working regionally and seeing many of the same economic challenges across the four states where there is not the same framework. There is no APA, there is no regulatory framework.

Joe Short of the Northern Forest Center responding to accusations that the economy of the Adirondacks suffers because of the Adirondack Park Agency.



L to R, Caroline Sicher, Aaron Woolf and Ambassador Bruce Gelb visit during a winter gathering of Council supporters in New York City.

Park Protection Under Assault

Council answers with collaboration, advocacy, and outreach

The economic crisis has helped spur a new round of grandstanding by government officials and anti-environmental activists hoping to obstruct additional land protection in the Adirondack Park, to increase motorized recreation on Forest Preserve lands, and to prevent improvements to policies protecting the Adirondacks. Adirondack town and county governments have filed a lawsuit against the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) for modifying regulations, including shoreline development regulations that protect water quality. The APA's jurisdiction over development of farmland is being challenged in the courts. The dedicated funding set aside for land protection and other environmental projects is under siege, while thousands of acres await permanent protection.

The Adirondack Council will counter these challenges to Park protection with information about the economic benefits of protected lands and waters in the Adirondacks, promotion of smart growth initiatives, and collaboration on advocacy priorities with the Adirondack Common Ground Alliance. This is a time to re-double efforts. With your support and involvement, we will seize opportunities to benefit the Adirondack Park in this turbulent economic and political time.

SUPPORT THE COUNCIL

Become a Sustaining Member

It's easy!

Thank you! Your contributions make it possible for the Adirondack Council to effectively advocate for the Adirondack Park every day. Supporting the Adirondack Council's efforts on behalf of the Park is now easier and more cost effective with our Sustaining Member program. A sustaining membership is a monthly contribution made automatically through your credit card or checking account. When you're a sustaining member, your membership is always active. You'll receive no renewal notices. You *will* receive an annual summary of your contributions for tax purposes and the opportunity to choose a thank you gift.

For a brochure with more information and the Sustaining Membership Authorization Form, call Kathy Kelley, Membership Coordinator at 877-873-2240 (toll-free) or view the information and download a form via our website: <http://www.adirondackcouncil.org/sustainingmembership.html>.

Your Investment in the Adirondack Council

The Economy, the Council and You

Thank you for your investment in the Adirondack Council. We hope you take great personal pride in the Council's accomplishments. To maintain our strength as a non-partisan advocate for policies and funding for conservation and community initiatives, the Adirondack Council does not accept any grants from government entities. All our operating revenue comes from individuals and foundations.

Individuals, businesses and organizations alike are impacted by the current economic crisis. The Adirondack Council is grateful for all the contributions and words of encouragement we received during the closing weeks of 2008. We are fortunate to have the support of so many people who care deeply about the Adirondacks. We remain strong financially and have ambitious goals for the year ahead.

With your support, focused advocacy and careful use of our resources, the Council will be a formidable voice for land protection, water quality improvement, and smart growth initiatives that will protect the Adirondacks for the (brighter) future. Thank you for your commitment to the Adirondack Park at this uncertain time. If you have any questions about the Adirondack Council's finances or program priorities, please don't hesitate to contact us in Elizabethtown: 877-873-2240 or info@adirondackcouncil.org.



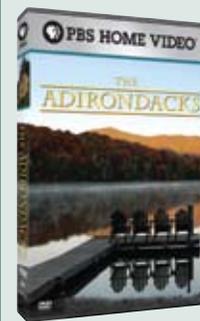
Carbon Reduction Certificate
Your Name Here

CARBON REDUCTION CERTIFICATE
Help reduce your carbon footprint!

For a \$25 contribution to the Council's *Cool Park. Healthy Planet.* program, we will permanently retire three tons of carbon dioxide from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), the nation's first multi-state effort to reduce carbon emissions.



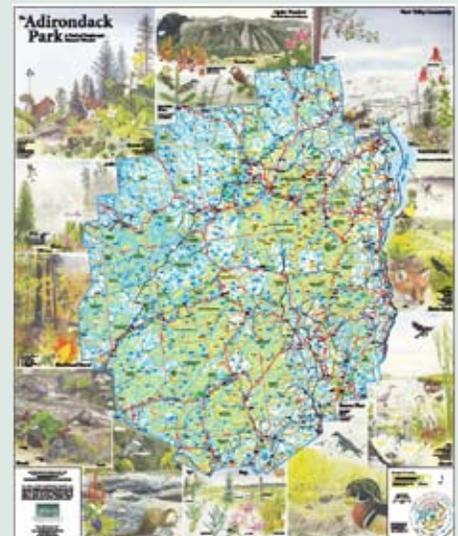
The Adirondack Council offers a small collection of products to help raise the funds needed to advocate for the Adirondack Park every day.



THE ADIRONDACKS

This documentary was recorded in high-definition, making the most of the Park's majestic beauty and wildness. The movie was partially underwritten by the Adirondack Council and created by WNED-TV, PBS Buffalo. DVD \$24

Proceeds from product sales benefit Adirondack Park conservation.



ADIRONDACK PARK MAP

WITH WATERCOLOR ILLUSTRATIONS (35" X 43")
LAMINATED MAP: \$40
UNLAMINATED MAP: \$25

Additional items are available on our website.

You can place an order by calling us
877.873.2240 or order online at
www.adirondackcouncil.org

Cool Park. Healthy Planet. Resort reduces its carbon footprint

The Golden Arrow Lakeside Resort in Lake Placid recently joined with the Adirondack Council in support of the *Cool Park. Healthy Planet.* carbon dioxide reduction program. The program retires actual carbon credits (one ton equals one credit) that Northeast power companies must now purchase for the right to emit carbon dioxide. The resort pledged to retire 100 lbs. of carbon for every occupied room during the month of December.

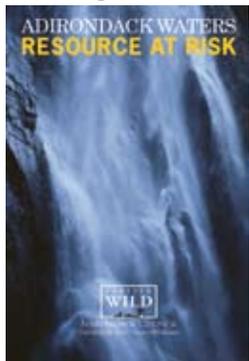
Jennifer Holderied, one of the hotel's owners and an advocate for state-wide programs to "green" the hotel industry, presented the Adirondack Council with a check for \$1,100 to retire 132 tons of carbon credits. Funds from the *Cool Park. Healthy Planet.* program will be used to purchase and retire additional carbon credits, educate the public about the impacts of climate change on the Adirondack Park, and advocate for improved policies to address global climate change.



Jennifer Holderied (center) with Adirondack Council staff members Julie Ball (left) and Diane Fish (right).

Adirondack Waters Advocacy efforts promote infrastructure investment

The 2,800 lakes and ponds, 1,500 miles of rivers, and 30,000 miles of brooks and streams in the Adirondacks provide both drinking water and extraordinary recreational opportunities across the Park. The Adirondack Council is committed to regional and statewide advocacy to strengthen protections for water quality, including securing potential federal stimulus investment in septic upgrades and water infrastructure. Recent advocacy actions include:



- ◆ Working as a member of the Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) Water Management Advisory Committee, to evaluate the impact of the fiscal crisis on water and green infrastructure.
- ◆ Promoting the establishment of a grant program for the replacement of private wastewater treatment systems.
- ◆ Meeting with the Environmental Facilities Corporation to encourage improved wastewater management and advocate for the creation of a program for private wastewater treatment infrastructure.
- ◆ Promoting and distributing *Adirondack Waters: Resource at Risk*, a blueprint for actions to protect water quality.

Hard copies of *Adirondack Waters: Resource at Risk* are available free to government officials, lake associations, schools and citizen activists by calling the Adirondack Council at 877-873-2240.

**Come join us at The Woods Inn in Inlet on July 11, 2009
for the Adirondack Council's annual Forever Wild Day.**

Check out our website this spring for details about activities and lodging.



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ADIRONDACK COUNCIL

Defending the East's Greatest Wilderness

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