

ADIRONDACK COUNCIL

NEWSLETTER / JULY 1990

Commission Calls For Permanent Protection



Alan Cederstrom

In the 21st century will we have a park like this? or...(see page 2)

Following more than a year of study, the Governor's Commission on the Adirondacks in the 21st Century has concluded that fast action is needed if we hope to preserve the Adirondack Park beyond the end of this decade. The Commission found strong evidence that development and the changing economics of the forest products industry pose a serious threat to the future of the open space, the road and river corridors, the lakes, and wilderness character of the Adirondacks.

To address these concerns the Commission has called for "a strategy to thwart the subdivision of vast tracts into little ones, to keep the forest industry viable and thereby preserve the park's most fragile asset: the open space of its forests and fields outside the state-owned Forest Preserve."

"Unless a significant portion of the legislation proposed by the Commission is enacted this year," the report warned, "the park as we know it today is in serious jeopardy."

The Commission's 96-page report contains 245 recommendations. To encourage action during the spring legislative session, many of the recommendations had

already been drafted in bill form. These included:

- 1) An Open Space Protection Plan (see page 3) that would protect and expand the public's wildlands and at the same time protect privately owned open space for economic uses. Central to the plan is the establishment of a forest-use tax exemption, along with a program to sell development rights transferred from private backcountry into suitable areas near hamlets. The program would respect a backcountry landowner's equity, reimburse local governments for any loss of tax revenues, and preserve the private forested open space of the park;

- 2) Better protection of the park's undisturbed natural shorelines through greater setback requirements, bigger lot sizes, specific design standards, vegetative screening, and on certain shorelines, no development at all.

Short of these two critical measures, the Commission called for a one-year moratorium on development in the backcountry and along shorelines. Such an action would protect these fragile areas from further degradation while new regulations are established and put in place.

More on page 2



Alan Cederstrom

...or in the 21st century will the Adirondack Park look more like this?

Other Important Commission Recommendations:

- Expand the state-owned Forest Preserve by purchasing an additional 654,850 acres from willing sellers. When this new acreage is added to existing Forest Preserve, the percentage of public lands would increase from 42 to 52 percent;

- The state must treat the park as a single entity. The Adirondack Park Agency (APA) Act should be amended to include a clear strong statement of purpose and policy for the park to be followed by all state agencies and authorities operating in the Adirondacks;

- A single state agency must be responsible for all planning and land use regulations in the park. This should be done by creating a new Adirondack Park Administration to replace the existing Adirondack Park Agency;

- A new Adirondack Park Service should be established within the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to manage the Forest Preserve and protect the park's diverse ecological systems, as well as expand visitor education and interpretation programs;

- To help fund community development and affordable housing in and near park hamlets, the State should create an Adirondack Park Community Development Corporation, with bonding authority, funded by a tax surcharge on luxury-home sales in the park;

- To relieve development pressure from much of the private land in active forest management, and to protect other critical environmental areas in perpetuity, the State should make maximum use of conservation easements;

- To protect the fragile forests and lakes, river valleys and mountaintops, the State should limit land uses to those that do not threaten or diminish the park's natural resources. Uses that threaten the park should be considered incompatible. Strict standards should be imposed to protect air, water, forests, soils, wetlands, and wildlife.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Let the Governor and your state senator know that action must be taken to protect the heart and soul of the park—its forested open space and undisturbed lakeshores. **WRITE:** Governor Mario Cuomo, State Capitol, Albany, NY 12224, and Senator _____, Legislative Office Building, Albany, NY.

“This Commission believes the state today has a great opportunity—probably its last clear chance—to establish and implement a bold vision for the Park. We must act now to secure the future of this six million acres of open space, this symbiotic mix of wilderness and productive timberlands, this largest forested wilderness east of the Mississippi.”

Governor Cuomo's Adirondack Commission

Commission Open Space Protection Plan

I. PUBLIC LAND (Forest Preserve)

Existing	2,440,817 acres
Proposed additions:	
Biological diversity acquisitions	202,301
Wilderness	322,576
Wild Forest	<u>129,973</u>

Total 3,095,667 acres

B. PROPERTY TAX PROGRAMS

Conservation easement (Article 49)	
Existing	56,812 acres
New	943,188
Forest-use tax program	<u>820,000</u> acres

Total 1,820,000 acres

II. PRIVATE LANDS

A. ALLOCATION

Conservation easement acquisitions	1,000,000 acres
Transferable development rights to be purchased by the state (50%)	410,000 acres
Transferable development rights to be purchased by private sector (50%)	<u>410,000</u> acres
Permanent private open space	
subtotal	1,820,000 acres

Lands for more intensive development	448,664 acres
Small ownerships with structures in open space areas	<u>188,269</u> acres

Total 2,456,933 acres

C. STRUCTURES IN PRIVATE OPEN SPACE LANDS

Existing	15,350
Additional structures allowable	<u>8,510</u> *

Total 23,860

* Current controls would permit an additional 143,962 structures

III. TOTAL PARK AREA (proposed)

Forest Preserve (52%)	3,095,667 acres
Private open space (31%)	1,820,000
Private developable (8%)	448,664
Private developed in open space (3%)	188,269
Large water bodies (6%)	<u>375,000</u>

Total 5,927,600 acres



Barbara McMartin

ADIRONDACK OPEN SPACE

Environmental Groups Send Message to Governor

Following the Adirondack Commission's call for better protection of park shorelines and backcountry, six environmental groups, including the Adirondack Council, sent the following letter to Governor Cuomo. The groups, with over four million members combined, urged the Governor to do everything in his power to secure adequate protection for Adirondack shorelines and backcountry before the close of the spring legislative session. Leaders of the state senate and assembly were also provided with this message.

DEAR GOVERNOR CUOMO:

Two years ago, representatives from our organizations approached you to express concern about the future of the Adirondack Park. What we saw was a rapid rise in the demand and opportunity for development within the park—especially along undeveloped lakeshores and in the unprotected backcountry. It also became increasingly clear that the organization charged with managing the park's land use and development, the Adirondack Park Agency, had neither the resources nor the regulatory faculties to handle this unprecedented rate of growth. The danger in all of this was the real potential for permanent loss of the qualities that make the Adirondack Park unique.

Lasting Legacy

To your credit, you listened to our concerns and responded by establishing the Commission on the Adirondacks in the 21st Century. You directed that group to conduct a comprehensive study of the park, its resources and its people, and to come up with a strategy for creating an Adirondack Park that would be a lasting legacy to future generations.

Now your Commission has completed its formidable task. Many of its recommendations are novel; some may be controversial; all deserve consideration. We applaud the Commission's vision for a greater sharing of land-use planning with local government in the Adirondack Park, and the need for incentives for environmentally sound, sustainable economic development.

Need Immediate Action

In reviewing the Commission's proposals, our organizations have found a critical element of common ground; the need for immediate legislative action to restrain development along shorelines and subdivision of the park's

backcountry, and to encourage development in low and moderate intensity use areas and in hamlets.

Adirondack shorelines and backcountry are clearly the most critical environmental areas to the future of the park. They are the essence of the Adirondacks. We are writing you today to ask that securing adequate protection of these areas be made your highest priority during the time left in this legislative session.

With your leadership, New York State government can take the actions necessary in this session. All that is needed is the will and conviction to keep the Adirondack Park unique—a world-renowned sanctuary for all New Yorkers to be proud of.

The environmental community and everyone concerned about the future of the Adirondack Park look to you to instill state decision makers with this spirit, for it is on all of your shoulders that the fate of the Adirondacks rests.

Sincerely,

Gary Randorf, Executive Director,
The Adirondack Council
Neil F. Woodworth, Counsel,
Adirondack Mountain Club
David J. Miller, Regional Vice President,
National Audubon Society
Thomas R. Kligerman, Chairman,
Adirondack Committee Sierra Club,
Atlantic Chapter
David H. Gibson, Executive Director,
Association for the Protection of the
Adirondacks
Angie Berchielli, Regional Executive,
Eastern Great Lakes, National Wildlife
Federation

Bond Act to Reach Voters

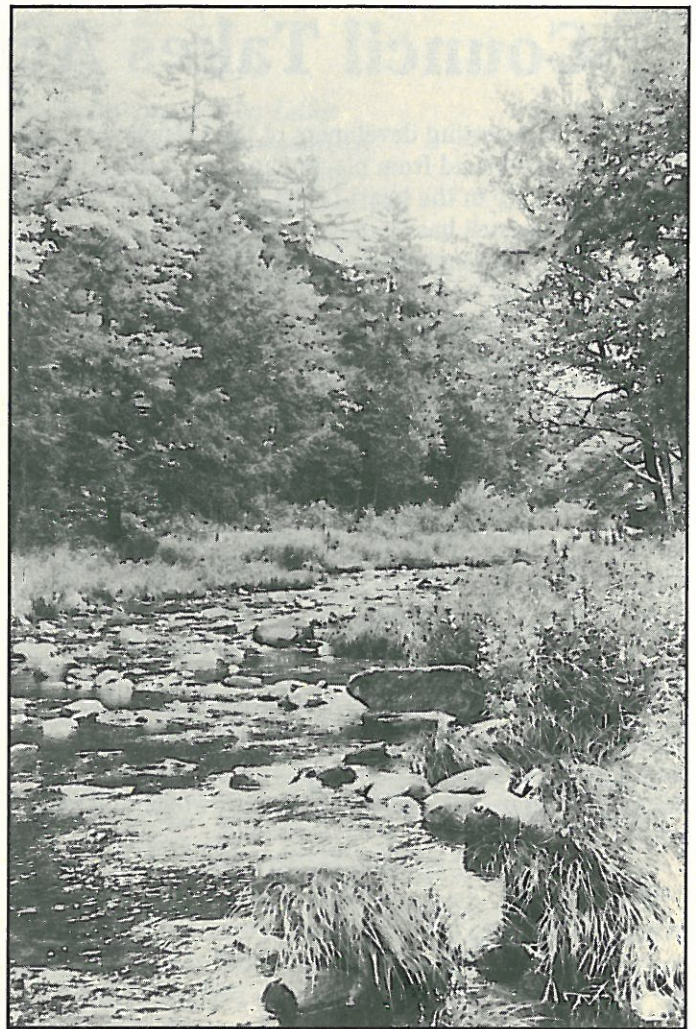
A major hurdle has been cleared in the race to beat land speculators and developers to some of the choicest Adirondack wildlands and lakeshores. After weeks of intense negotiations and a non-stop campaign by the Adirondack Council and other environmental groups, the state legislature has overwhelmingly passed the 1990 Environmental Quality Bond Act.

The fate of the proposal will be decided by the state's voters in November.

The \$1.975 billion bond issue includes \$800 million for land acquisition state-wide. While this figure is less than Governor Cuomo's original proposal of \$950 million, it is more than three times the amount allotted for land protection in the last environmental bond act of 1986. The remainder of the 1990 bond act funds would be used for recycling, landfill closures, historic preservation and other environmental projects.

Acquisition funds from the new bond act would preserve scenic landscapes, pristine lakes and streams, wildlife habitat, watersheds, and underground aquifers that provide a source of drinking water for many state residents. In the Adirondacks these funds will help to round out the fragmented Wilderness and Wild Forest areas of the public domain, and to secure protective conservation easements on key private park lands.

In its report, the Governor's Adirondack Commission warned: "The pace of land sales and the break-up of large parcels suggest that the final shape of the park will be determined before this century is over." Without the money provided from the new bond act, the natural character of the Adirondacks could be tragically compromised in just a few years.



Barbara McMartin

Public acquisition would open access to this beautiful spot on Fourmile Brook.

What We Stand to Gain (or Lose): A Few Examples

- 51,000 acres forming the heart of the Council's proposed Bob Marshall Great Wilderness,
- Over 700 acres and three miles of shoreline on the east shore of Lake George – the last significant undeveloped stretch of private land on the lake,
- 2,300 acres and 3.2 miles of undisturbed shoreline on the western shore of Lake Champlain – comprising an integral part of the Champlain Highlands and currently threatened by subdivision and development,
- 20,000 acres along the Raquette River – a critical portion of the Council's proposed Boreal Wilderness,
- 150,000 acres of timber company lands including key tracts within the Council's proposed expansion of the Hoffman Notch Wilderness and High Peaks Wilderness, and much of the newly proposed Wild Rivers Wilderness.

QUESTION: What is a Conservation Easement?

ANSWER: A legal contract in which landowners agree to limit certain uses of, and give up certain rights in their property. State-acquired easements most often involve purchase of public-access rights to a property, and usually limit or preclude future development. In this way the property is protected (usually in perpetuity) from the threat of development and made available for public recreation. Ownership remains in private hands, thus permitting continued productivity of the lands for forestry or agriculture. Taxes on lands under easement are divided between the State and the private landowner.



Council Takes Action on Gleneagles

Intent on preventing developers of the Gleneagles project in Lake Placid from placing an oversized second-home community in the heart of the Adirondacks, the Adirondack Council has been active on several fronts. As proposed, the Gleneagles development would be spread over nearly 1,000 acres on the old Lake Placid Club grounds and would include a 290-unit hotel, more than 300 condominiums, townhouses and cottages, and the subdivision of 689 acres into 108 building lots.

First, the Council urged the Adirondack Park Agency (APA), the park's project review authority, to enforce "no-build" restrictions that are already in effect on much of the property. Deed restrictions, stemming from previous development at the Lake Placid Club, prohibit any new land use or development in designated areas of the proposed project site (see map). The restrictions were established to ensure that the open space character of the property is maintained in perpetuity.

In a recent announcement, developers of the project have apparently agreed to honor these restrictions by modifying their building plans somewhat. But even with the modifications, the project remains a "whale in a bathtub."

Remove Former Official

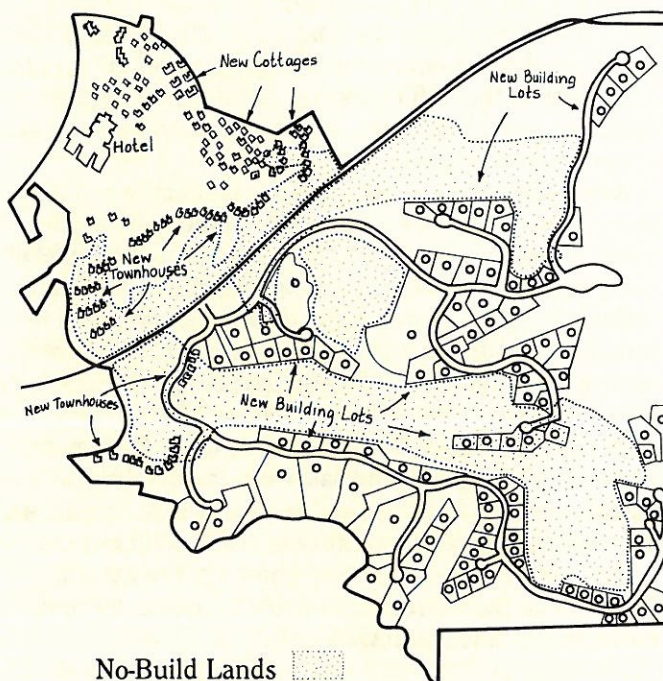
The Council is also seeking the removal of Richard Persico as attorney for Gleneagles. Persico, a former Department of Environmental Conservation representative on the Adirondack Park Agency, actively participated in decisions concerning the Lake Placid resort site in 1981, including establishment of the no-build restrictions. According to the Council's interpretation of state law, Persico should be forbidden from representing Gleneagles because of his past official involvement with the project.

Finally, the Council demanded that the New York State Department of Economic Development (DED) be disqualified from the review and decision-making process involving Gleneagles. The Council contends that private meetings which took place between DED officials and Gleneagles' developers were in direct violation of APA law. To avoid possible conflicts of interest, such unilateral communications between a project applicant and APA member are prohibited. (DED Commissioner Vincent Tese is one of 11 voting members of the Adirondack Park Agency.)

A recent decision by the APA Legal Affairs Committee has, for now, allowed DED to continue participating in the process. The Council is reserving the right to appeal.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: If you haven't done so already, please let the APA know that there is simply no place in the Adirondack Park for projects the scale and magnitude of Gleneagles. Whether it's Gleneagles or any other grandiose proposals being considered by the APA (see list on page 9), the Adirondack Park should be treated as a park, not a second-home suburb. **WRITE:** Raymond P. Curran, APA, Box 99, Ray Brook, NY 12977.

Proposed Gleneagles Development for Lake Placid



How Many More?

POTENTIAL BUILDOUT: (by land use category)	<u>Present Control</u>	<u>Commission Proposal</u>
Resource Management	38,259	6,467
Rural Use	121,053	17,39 *
Low Intensity	86,651	14,534 *
Moderate Intensity	79,667	88,961
Hamlet	219,080	219,080
TOTAL	544,711	446,435

POTENTIAL POPULATION: 1,252,835 1,026,800

*assumes state purchase of 50% of transferable development rights

Developers of the proposed Gleneagles project in Lake Placid, an immense second-home development, announced changes to their plans which left many people wondering whether the "five-star" hotel they were offered would ever be built. The changes came as no surprise to the Adirondack Council, and our letter below to Adirondack newspapers explains why.

A wolf in sheep's clothing

Dear Editor:

Gleneagles. Up until now, no matter who you talked to or what newspaper you read, discussion of the massive development proposal usually centered on the 301-room, five-star, world class, destination resort hotel and not much else. A hotel to be raised from the old Lake Placid Club, maybe as soon as 1992. A hotel that, once built, would provide many positive benefits for the community.

Little attention has been given to the 316 new condominiums, townhouses and cottages, or the subdivision of almost 700 acres of undeveloped land into 108 building lots. Little thought has been devoted to the associated impacts (eg. traffic, property taxes, strip development, etc.) such overscaled development would have.

Until now, the Lake Placid Resort

Partnership has, quite predictably, emphasized the benefits the hotel will bring. But will there ever even be a hotel? And, if so, when?

New plans recently announced by the Partnership call for a dramatic shift in priorities. Construction of the hotel, which was to occur first, has been pushed to the back-burner. It must now wait in line behind development of the 108 building lots and the 316 condos, townhouses and cottages.

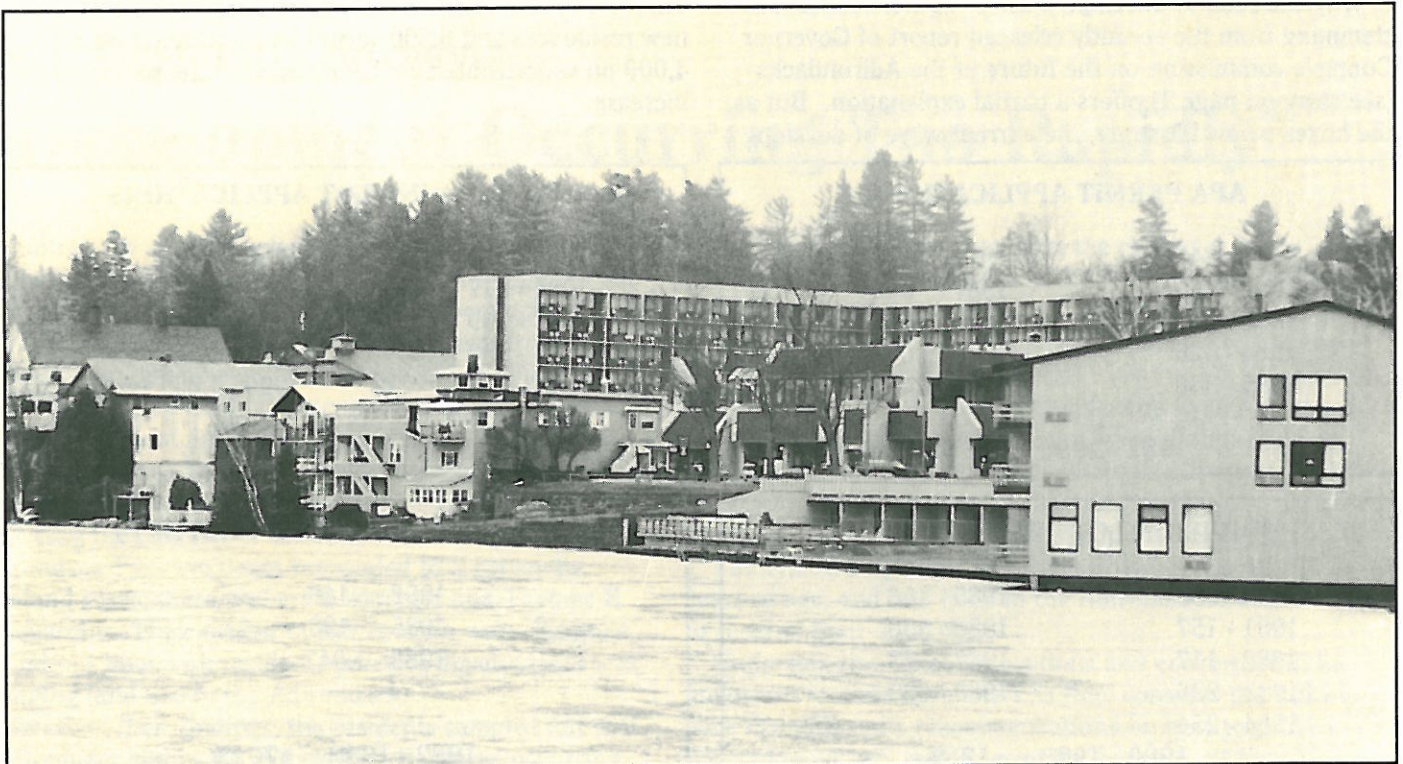
Should we be surprised? Not really. This is a sure-fire way for the developer to reap great profits with little or no risk.

The risk will be to the Lake Placid community. For what if the developer sells the lots and the condos, and then decides for whatever reason, not to go ahead with the hotel? Lake Placid will be left holding the bag,

beset with all the problems — increased traffic, explosive demand for services, heightened land and housing costs, loss of open space, etc. — with none of the benefits the hotel would bring.

The Adirondack Council has always favored the idea of breathing new life into the Lake Placid Club. But, we have contended all along that the Gleneagles project, as presently proposed, is a wolf in sheep's clothing — an attempt to exploit the character and beauty of Lake Placid and the Adirondack Park. The developer's latest actions certainly do nothing to disprove this contention.

**Very truly yours,
Gary Randorf
Executive Director
The Adirondack Council
Elizabethtown**



Lake Placid Village on overdeveloped Mirror Lake



Michael Carr

Development Surge Threatens to Overwhelm APA

As predicted by the Council months ago, developers are now flooding the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) with new proposals of all shapes and sizes—everything from small two-lot subdivisions to a massive 4,000 acre second-home community. Never has the pressure to develop the Adirondacks been so great. Based on the record number of applications received so far this year, the APA projects a 72% increase in development requests over 1989.

Why the rush to develop? Fear of tighter restrictions stemming from the recently released report of Governor Cuomo's commission on the future of the Adirondacks (see story on page 1) offers a partial explanation. But as the boxes below illustrate, the current wave of develop-

ment has been building for years.

It was the threat of over-development in the park that prompted creation of Governor Rockefeller's Study Commission on the Future of the Adirondacks 22 years ago. And it inspired Governor Cuomo to establish his Adirondack Commission last year.

In April, the APA released its report on development patterns in the Adirondacks between 1967 and 1987. Their study showed that during the past 20 years 19,000 new residences and 6,500 vacant lots, including over 4,000 on waterfront, have been added in the park—a 42% increase.

APA PERMIT APPLICATIONS

1981 - 344	1986 - 443
1982 - 265	1987 - 503
1983 - 300	1988 - 617
1984 - 326	1989 - 631
1985 - 380	1990 - 1,087 (projected)

1981 - 1990 = +316%

APA BUILDING LOT APPLICATIONS

1980 - 570	1986 - 718
1981 - 917	1987 - 1,144
1982 - 709	1988 - 1,290
1983 - 530	1989 - 1,668
1984 - 492	1990 - 1,851 (projected)
1985 - 730	

1980 - 1990 = +325%

SUBDIVISION LOTS FILED BY COUNTY

1980 - 353	1985 - 108
1981 - 157	1986 - 350
1982 - 117	1987 - 373
1983 - 236	1988 - 629
1984 - 254	

1980 - 1988 = +178%

SALES OF SUBDIVIDED PROPERTY

1982 - 148
1985 - 496
1988 - 1,042

1982 - 1988 = +704%

A Sampler of Proposed Projects

- The (BBI) Woodlands Development: 1250-1400-lot subdivision or clustered townhouses and vacation homes with golf course on 4,000 acres in the Towns of Wilmington and Jay,
- Schroon Lake Townhouse and Hotel project: 97 townhouses on 24 acre lakeside parcel with 98-unit hotel and potential for several hundred additional condominiums,
- Devitt project: 100-lot subdivision in Town of Arietta on 1800 acres,
- Hamlin Bay subdivision: 28 lots on Tupper Lake with 1800 feet of undeveloped shoreline (**public-acquisition priority**),
- Heurich project: 125 townhouse or condominium units on 17,000 feet of undeveloped Lake Champlain shoreline (**public-acquisition priority**),
- McIntyre subdivision: 49-lot subdivision and marina on Upper Chateaugay Lake,
- Twin Peaks Association project: 52-lot subdivision with accompanying condominiums on Lake George,
- Oven Mountain subdivision: 90 building lots on 700 acres of backcountry in Johnsburgh.



The list of developments now before the APA goes on and on and on.

Park Residents Surveyed:

“Development Occurring Too Rapidly”

Contrary to popular belief, many residents of the Adirondack Park place a higher priority on protection of the park's unique natural character than on personal economic gain. That's the finding by researchers from the State University of New York College at Cortland.

Their study, entitled “Residents’ Perceptions of Recreation Development and Land Use Within the Adirondack Park,” sheds new light on how Adirondackers view the place they call home.

During the summer of 1989, 330 randomly selected Adirondack Park residents responded to a survey by Cortland researchers, Robert B. Buerger and Thomas E. Pasquarello. Their mailed questionnaires were designed to find out how park residents perceive development and changing land use in the Adirondacks.

Based on their findings, the residents sampled felt that development within the Adirondack Park was occurring too rapidly. As a result, an overwhelming majority of re-

spondents perceived a change in the character of the park, evidenced by a general decline in environmental quality—increased crowding, changing landscapes (from natural to developed), and changing community composition (from year-round to seasonal).

Those interviewed felt that people who lived outside the park were largely to blame for these changes. Also, almost three to one of the park residents surveyed (64.9% to 26.4%) felt that jobs created by new development were not worth the changes they caused in the park.

The typical respondents to the survey were male, 55.5 years of age, and had lived in the Adirondack Park for all or most of their adult life.

Understanding these perceptions and concerns will be important to state lawmakers as they consider the Adirondack Commission's recommendations on how to protect the fragile natural resources of the park for all New York State residents.

Council Calls For Curb on Road Salt Use

The season for icy roads and rock salt use may be long over, but now the consequences of dumping thousands of tons of salt on Adirondack roads are obvious. Roadside trees tell the story best. Evergreens have turned to "ever brown" and leaf-bearing trees are either dead or dying from the road salt run-off.

Examples of such die-off are seen along most roads in the Adirondacks, including the stretch of Route 73 that hugs the Cascade Lakes on the way to Lake Placid. There, sandwiched between the lakes and the road, stands a string of dead white birch trees, unable to tolerate year after year of rock salt use.

The Council has written Governor Mario Cuomo urging that the State's excessive use of rock salt be curbed and that salt substitutes be considered. One possible alternative is calcium magnesium acetate, commonly referred to as CMA. Use of this product in other states and in Canada has shown it to be very effective with few adverse impacts on the environment.

Whereas rock salt costs only \$40 per ton, the price tag for CMA is now \$650 per ton. Yet, when the "damage costs" to roadways, bridges, and vehicles associated with

the use of salt are factored in, CMA is considerably less expensive to use than salt. A recent study by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority placed the true cost of rock salt use at over \$1,500 per ton. This figure does not even take into account the aesthetic and environmental costs of rock salt use.

Aside from sparing trees, vehicles, bridges, and road surfaces, use of CMA has other benefits. Unlike salt, it works at temperatures below 20 degrees Fahrenheit, is effective for a much longer duration than salt, and leaves behind an alkaline buffer which may actually help counter the effects of acidic precipitation.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: The Governor's Commission on the Adirondacks has recommended that a new de-icing policy be developed for Adirondack roads which minimizes adverse environmental impacts. Urge the Governor to pursue this new policy now, before orders are placed for next winter's salt supply. Unlike many other Commission recommendations, this action would require no new legislation. **WRITE:** Governor Mario Cuomo, State Capitol, Albany, NY 12224.



Adirondack Activists Wanted

Our goal for securing the future of the Adirondack Park may now be within reach. A new bond act, essential to Adirondack land protection efforts, has been passed by the legislature (details on page 5), and Governor Cuomo's Adirondack Commission has issued its recommendations on how to preserve the park for the next century (story on page 1). Your letters and phone calls, in response to Council action alerts, were instrumental to both of these landmark achievements.

But there is still much to be done. The bond act needs voter approval in November, and translating the Commission recommendations into public policy may prove to be our greatest challenge yet.

In preparation for these challenges and more, the Council has taken steps to establish a state-wide Activist Network of members. This group will consist of dedicated individuals who can be counted on to write letters and make calls to key officials, and to help organize Adirondack Council members in their communities.

If you are interested in taking part in this "front-line" endeavor, contact Dan Plumley at (518) 873-2240, The Adirondack Council, P.O. Box D-2, Elizabethtown, NY 12932.

Birches killed by salt run-off along Rte. 73.

Director's Box

In Volumes 2 and 3 of the Adirondack Council's 2020 VISION Series, we have set forth a vision for rounding out and permanently protecting the publicly owned Forest Preserve—the park's Wilderness and Wild Forest areas. Both reports identify key private tracts that should eventually be protected to secure the ecological integrity and recreational diversity of the park for future generations.

I wish to emphasize that these reports were published to keep state officials and the public fully aware of what private park lands need to be protected should they become available for purchase from willing sellers. The Council realizes that, for some lands, this opportunity may not occur until well into the next century. In such cases, we advocate securing conservation easements to insure that these lands are not lost to development.

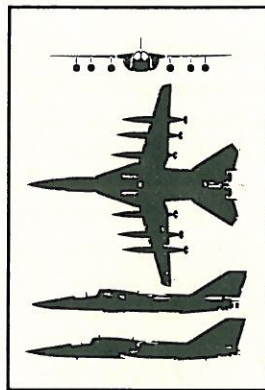
To quote from the introduction to Volume 2: "Of overriding importance is that these critical private lands and waters be preserved in their natural, undeveloped condition so that the option for eventual public ownership remains open."

In all of our communications we have stressed the need for the State to show respect for, and sensitivity toward, established uses of private land as it undertakes negotiations with landowners of critical properties. We realize that many individual club and corporate lands identified in our reports are presently managed with an exemplary level of stewardship, a practice for which these landowners should be duly recognized by the State. Nonetheless, if such lands or their development rights are ever offered for sale, we would urge the State to pursue purchase.

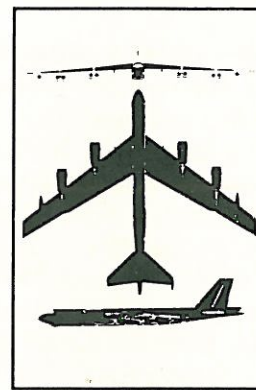
Finally, I must underscore the Adirondack Council's long-held position on the State's power of eminent domain. As an acquisition tool, eminent domain or condemnation should only be used as a last resort, when a critical private tract is threatened with irreversible change and degradation.

Gary Randorf
Executive Director

Be on the Lookout



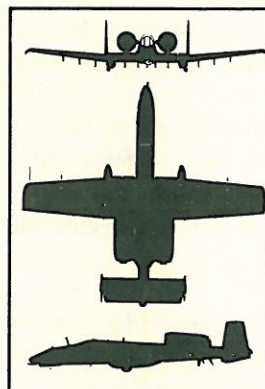
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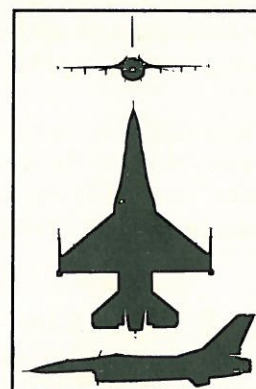
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We hope that your wilderness sojourn in the Adirondack Park won't be shattered this summer by the sights and sounds of low-flying military aircraft such as these. But if it is, call or write Eric Siy at the Adirondack Council, Box D-2, Elizabethtown, NY 12932, (518) 873-2240. Reports of your sightings will help us to end the aerial abuse of Adirondack skies.

Thanks to the Council's persistence, recommendation number 149 of Governor Cuomo's Adirondack Commission reads: "All aircraft (military and civilian) should be required to fly at an elevation of 2,000 feet above the land surface except when landing or taking off."



A-10



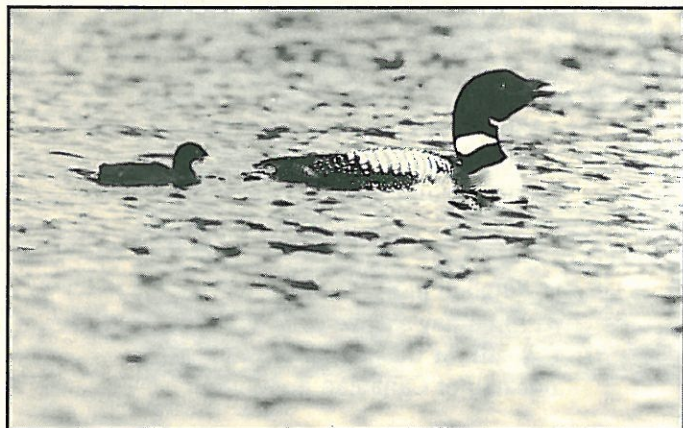
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Skyguard

THANK YOU

Our thanks to all of those members who received and responded to the Council's membership survey. Of the 1619 surveys mailed out, 684 were completed and returned to our office. Results from these are now being tabulated.

Findings from this survey will give us a clearer picture of who our members are, what you're most concerned about, and how we can more effectively address those concerns. Stay tuned for the results in the next issue.



STOP the Spraying!

Every spring airplanes shower the Adirondack landscape with chemical poisons far more noxious than the blackflies and mosquitoes they are supposed to kill.

First came DDT. Not only did it kill all kinds of insects, it wiped out bald eagles and peregrine falcons. DDT was finally banned. Now, thanks to expensive restoration efforts by the State, those two species are coming back.

It seems we have yet to learn from past errors. Proposals for this year's aerial assault on the Adirondacks involve three dangerous chemicals: Dibrom-14, Malathion, and a "people friendly" newcomer named Scourge.

"Despite glib assurances that 'non-target' species will not suffer undue harm, the truth is quite the opposite," the Council recently told public officials. "Contrary to the sprayer's claims, Dibrom, Malathion, and Scourge are not analogous to carefully aimed bullets that destroy only blackflies and mosquitoes. The product labels warn of toxicity to fish, aquatic invertebrates, wildlife, birds and bees. And some researchers have even concluded that the Scourge label warnings are 'grossly inadequate' to protect human health."

"If towns feel they must do something to control blackflies and mosquitoes, there is a comparatively safe alternative," the Council stated. "A biological control known as Bti has already been proven effective by a number of Adirondack towns. This bacterial larvicide is a narrow-spectrum control which is only toxic to one additional genus of insect besides blackflies and mosquitoes. After initial start-up costs during the first year, Bti is no more expensive to use than the broad-spectrum chemicals."

"The traditional chemical warfare to control blackflies and mosquitoes in the Adirondack Park benefits only the chemical companies and the aerial applicators," the Council concluded. "Everyone and everything else suffers."

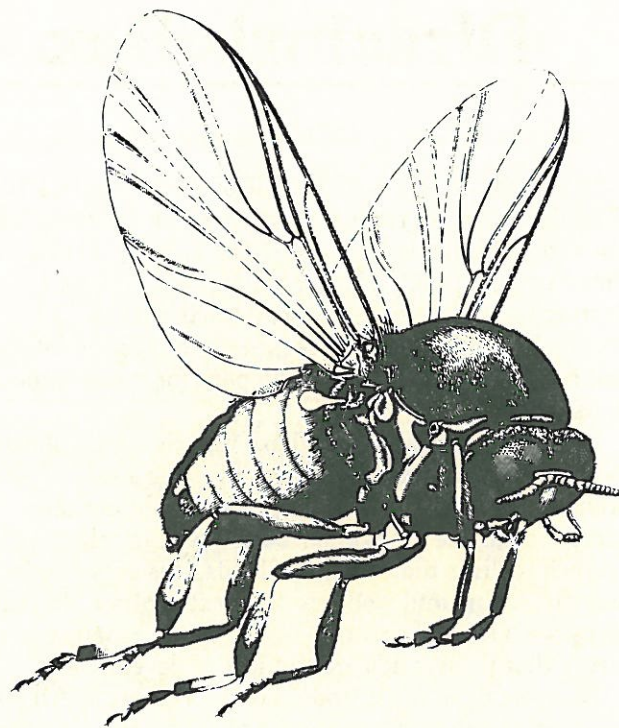
WHAT YOU CAN DO: The State needs to hear from everyone who wants aerial spraying of dangerous chemical poisons stopped in the Adirondacks.

WRITE: Commissioner Thomas C. Jorling
NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation
50 Wolf Road, Albany, NY 12233

Robert C. Glennon, Executive Director
Adirondack Park Agency
Ray Brook, NY 12977

Let them know that blackflies can be controlled by the comparatively benign larvicide known as Bti. Urge a permanent ban on dangerous chemical pesticides in the Adirondack Park.

12 - Adirondack Council



Black Fly

The Adirondack Park Today

SIZE:

5,927,600 acres or 9,262 square miles
Larger than the states of Connecticut,
Delaware, Hawaii, Massachusetts, New
Jersey and Rhode Island
Larger than Everglades, Glacier, Grand
Canyon and Yellowstone National Parks
combined

OWNERSHIP:

2,440,817 acres (41%) state-owned Forest
Preserve
375,000 acres (6%) large water bodies
1,110,000 acres (19%) forest products
industry
2,001,783 acres (34%) others

POPULATION:

130,000 permanent residents
110,000 seasonal residents
240,000 total

VISITORS:

10,000,000 per year
Within a day's drive of 70,000,000 people,
one-fifth of US population and
one-half of Canadian population

Park Viewed as Dumping Ground

"In terms of population and geography, the Adirondack wilderness represents a practical alternative site, and it was irresponsible of the state to exclude the area from its initial selection process."

Editorial, Binghamton Press and Sun Bulletin

"The park already is 6 million acres, the size of Vermont ... There's even room for dump sites, which would be out of harm's way."

Commentary, Albany Times Union

These are excerpts from two state newspapers that advocate taking "a fresh look" at Adirondack wilderness areas as possible dump sites for low-level radioactive waste—a seemingly outrageous idea which would be comparable to suggesting that we start dumping all of our trash in the Grand Canyon to solve the nation's solid waste woes. Outrageous, but not necessarily out of the question. A dangerous precedent may have already been set.

Beginning in early February the City of Plattsburgh, just outside the northeast corner of the park, started shipping truckloads of sludge from its failed composting plant to a site in Saranac Lake—an unlined landfill which does not comply with State standards and is slated for closure. The Council voiced its opposition before the action began, citing the risk of groundwater contamination and the folly of permitting the Adirondack Park to be used as a dump site for wastes from outside the park.

Department of Environmental Conservation officials, while agreeing with the Council's position, were forced to

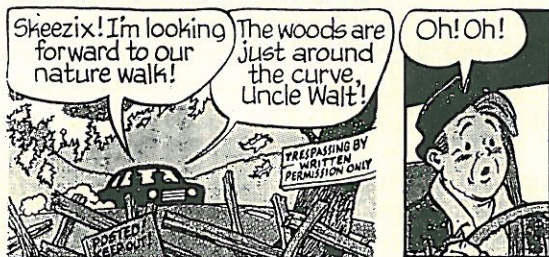
allow the sludge disposal because current laws do not exclude the park from such activity. The Council kept the pressure on and at an Adirondack Park Agency meeting earlier this year that state agency also opposed the dumping.

While the APA resolution condemned the transport and disposal of waste products into the park from outside park boundaries, it has no regulatory weight. Protection of the water, wetlands and aesthetic resources of the Adirondack Park from future dumping will require new laws.

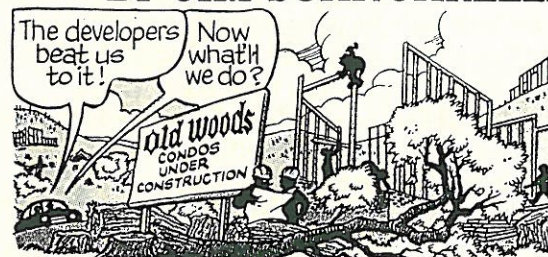
WHAT YOU CAN DO: Governor Cuomo's Adirondack Commission failed to adequately address the dumping issue in its final report. The Governor needs to hear that existing and future landfills in the Adirondack Park should not be used for the disposal of waste generated outside the park—whether it's radioactive, hazardous, or just plain unhealthy.

WRITE: Governor Mario Cuomo
State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

GASOLINE ALLEY



BY JIM SCANCARELLI



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Your Letters Make the Difference

The outpouring of letters from Adirondack Council members has had a remarkable (and predictable) effect. Over the past two years the response from Council members to our "action alerts" provides some classic examples of how an outspoken citizen-advocacy group can influence public policy and, through letters to local newspapers, help shape public opinion.

Classic Example #1:

During the second half of 1988, Council members wrote more than 2,000 letters to Governor Cuomo. Your letters urged the Governor to save 96,000 acres of Adirondack forest lands from a Georgia land speculator. You also called on the Governor to activate the State's languishing land-acquisition program, and to establish a commission to recommend better protection for the Adirondack Park.

Due in large part to this flood of mail, the Governor acted decisively. The State saved much of the endangered forest tracts from the speculator. Public officials began competing effectively against other development interests for major land and easement purchases in the Adirondacks. And thanks to your letters, and those from other preservationists, the Governor also set up his Commission on the Adirondacks in the 21st Century, whose visionary report is summarized on pages 1-3.

Classic Example #2:

When a huge second-home and hotel development known as the Gleneagles project was proposed for Lake Placid last year (see page 6), pro-development forces pressured the Governor's office and Adirondack legislators to endorse the proposal. The focal point of this intensive lobbying campaign was the Adirondack Park Agency (APA), the permit-granting authority for such projects. Local boosters demanded prompt and unquestioning approval of the Gleneagles proposal.

In January, we mailed members an action alert with the headline: MAMMOTH RESORT DEVELOPMENT THREATENS PARK—YOUR LETTERS CAN STEM THE DESTRUCTIVE TIDE. For three months your letters poured in to the APA. Never before had this agency received so much mail on a single issue. More than a thousand letters opposed the Gleneagles project—while only four letters received by the APA expressed approval!

Your letters strengthened the resolve of the APA to "hang tough" in its review of the biggest Adirondack development proposal in the history of the agency.

Classic Example #3:

For months, local newspapers carried editorials and ran letters extolling the benefits of the Gleneagles proposal. Then, in response to an action alert to 1,500 Council members in and around the Adirondacks, letters of a different sort began to appear.

These letters raised questions about the true cost of this and other bigtime resort development in the Adirondacks. How would such growth really affect local property taxes? What would happen to the cost of local housing? How would this lavish second-home community change the natural character of the area? What about traffic congestion?

Suddenly, it became clear that many Adirondack residents did not want Lake Placid and the Adirondack Park to go the way of Aspen, Stowe and Lake Tahoe. Once again your letters—and letters from others who were encouraged to write to their newspapers after seeing your letters—made a difference. (See following page for some typical letters-to-the-editor.)

WHAT YOU CAN DO

At this critical juncture, two more letters are needed. If you wrote before, please do so again. If you haven't yet put pen to paper, this is the time to take action.

The first letter should go to your state senator (addressed to Senator _____, Legislative Office Building, Albany, NY 12247). Urge him or her to support any new legislation, stemming from the Commission's report, that will provide better protection for the Adirondacks.

The second letter should go to the editor of your local newspaper, including an Adirondack newspaper if you live in or near the park. This letter should mention the Commission's study and the need for its recommendations to be translated into action.

In a letter-to-the-editor, it helps to be specific. For example, you might refer to one or two of the recommendations you feel are particularly important, and also mention the development pressures that give special urgency to the Commission's report. Please also keep in mind that the most widely read letters-to-the-editor are the relatively brief ones, those not exceeding 250 or 300 words.

If the Adirondack Park is to be saved for all time, it will be saved by our actions right now and over the next few years. Perhaps more than anything else at this pivotal moment in Adirondack history, it is your letters that are making the difference.

Dick Beamish

Developers are squandering these beautiful mountains

Dear Editor:

It's sad to see what might be the beginning of the end of the Adirondacks. Greed, power, control, and low self-esteem seem to be belching its final wrath.

My family has been around the Adirondacks for the past 200 years or so, as well as a lot

the other paper companies acquired most of their Adirondack lands by similar means. And look what they are doing. They've now selling it to the can't describe what kind

One-sided reporting

12 THE CHRONICLE, MAY 3-MAY 9, 1990

Letters to The Chron

Supports Adirondack Council

To The Chronicle:

As a full-time resident of the Adirondacks I fully support the position of the Adirondack Council and am grateful for their vision and wisdom!

We have a national treasure here in the Adirondacks that has been eroding before our very eyes. The excessive push for development has been rampant and has taken its toll locally on the Lake (Lake George) and its surroundings.

We need now, more than ever, the enlightened perspective that the Council offers.

Our precious resources of water, air and forests are sacred gifts meant to be conserved and shared with future generations.

As Earth Day comes and goes, I believe the Adirondack Council remains constant in its focus on the special ecological needs of our lands and its people.

Let's not get confused...the Council is working for all of us, to preserve what is special and to prevent further destruction.

Gleneagles opposed

Dear Editor:

Even though I live in Utica, 140 miles away, and wear bifocals, I can still see what is happening. The Gleneagles developers are

APA deserves our encouraging

Editor:

I would like to add my voice to those speaking out in support of the Adirondack Park Agency, and wish to save our Adirondacks from those who would destroy them.

Development costs tax payers

To the editor:

Will the resident home-owners of Essex County, their reassessments in their hands, now, finally, wake-up to the Big Lie of the developers, speculators, and their apologists? "Broaden the tax-base" has been their constant refrain, and implied promises of tax-relief have usually accompanied their spiels to local planning boards. Yet without fail, it is the local taxpayers who pick up the tab for the hidden costs of their get-rich-quick schemes.

All over our area one sees

To the Editor: Concerning your recent articles relating to the Gleneagles project in Lake Placid, you not only do a disservice to the local communities at large for your one-sided reporting, you also inflame the emo-

magnificent homes, and luxury condos, standing on land that, perhaps only a year or two ago, was listed on the tax rolls at a tiny fraction of the worth of its new improvements. Has this reckless growth brought with it that promised tax-relief, or has it, on the contrary, made it nearly impossible for residents of moderate means to continue to live in their own homes?

Protect Adirondacks

Will Adirondack Park become another Aspen?

To the editor:

Aspen, Colorado, in the news? Who cares? Well, as you think of it, Aspen is like many towns in the Adirondack State Park. It is

A small apartment barely big enough for two people rents for \$600 to \$1,000 per month. So they have to go, too, no matter how old.

Uncontrolled development is killing the Park

Dear Editor:

I am writing this letter as an Adirondacker concerned about the course of events in our area. Being an enthusiastic hunter and fisherman, I am disturbed by the proliferation of posted lands and new homes that bar access to

These types which include project, leave us more support services of sewage treatment, solid waste control, police Housing will be

Gleneagles would hinder quality of life in Park

Dear Editor:

Adirondacks remain the most beautiful park in the Eastern

Not every Adirondacker stands against strict development control

Dear Editor:

In response to last Friday's editorial, "Ad'k Park fight shifts to

control of development in the Park.

I attended the commission's hearing in Saranac Lake last fall, which would come once a week during the ski season to clean

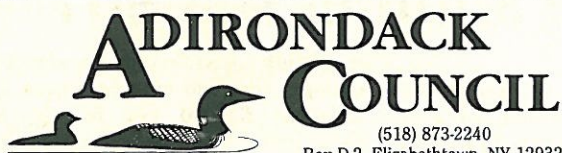
It is development which had driven up our land prices and taxes so high that young people like me may never be able to own

on a "slow down. He has environmental the village



Alan Cederstrom

SUMMER PADDLERS IN THE ADIRONDACKS



(518) 873-2240
Box D-2, Elizabethtown, NY 12932

A coalition of the National Audubon Society; The Wilderness Society; Natural Resources Defense Council; Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks; National Parks and Conservation Association; and other concerned organizations and individuals.

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