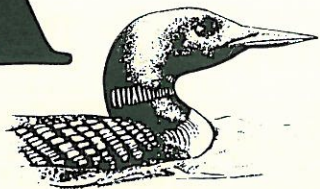


ADIRONDACK COUNCIL



MAY 1989

NEWSLETTER

Natural Tranquility Threatened

The U.S. Air Force has announced plans to conduct as many as twenty B-52 and twenty FB-111 tandem flights each week, at altitudes as low as 400 feet above the ground, between Ticonderoga and Watertown (Fort Drum).

The Adirondack Council has found the Air Force's "environmental assessment" of these low-level flights over the northern Adirondack Park to be "inadequate and indefensible." The Council has requested a complete Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on all proposed and current military flights over the park.

"Why all the fuss?" Air Force spokesmen subsequently asked, after the Council and various state officials registered concern. "We've been flying this route for 23 years and haven't hurt anything."

In fact, the current proposal involves much lower flights over this route, with the potential for much greater disturbance, than in the past. Up to 16 bombers a day will

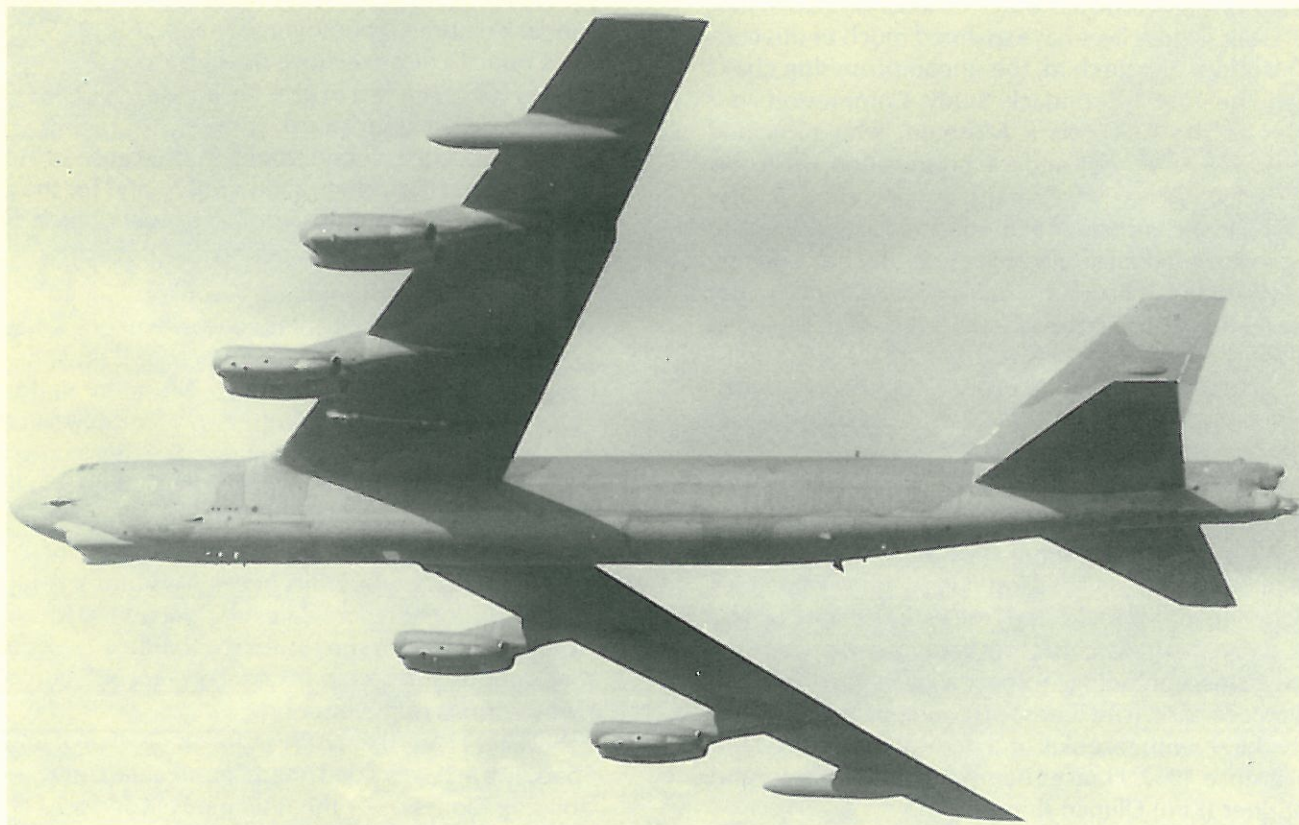
fly just above tree level over three public Wilderness Areas and eight nesting sites of endangered peregrine falcons and bald eagles. This is not "more of the same," as the Air Force would have us believe, but a quantum leap forward in the military use of Adirondack air space.

WHAT YOU CAN DO — Write your U.S. Representative and at least one of your two U.S. Senators. Urge them to support the Council's call for a full Environmental Impact Statement on all current and proposed military flights over the Adirondack Park.

Address letters to your Representative and Senator(s) at the U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515 or the U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510.

To register complaints you can also call 1-800-SKY-GUARD, a national network that lobbies against "abusive military use of our skies."

(See pp. 10-13 for more details and developments.)



U.S. Air Force Photo

B-52 BOMBERS TO BE PART OF WILDERNESS EXPERIENCE ?

COMMENTARY

In Pursuit of a True Adirondack Park

From our call for an Adirondack Recreationway to our concern over low-level military training flights, the various items in this newsletter have a common denominator. What connects them is the idea of a park. And not just a blue-line boundary on the map of northern New York State, with a six-million-acre jumble of private and public lands within, but a *true* Adirondack Park where natural beauty and serenity and wildlife are preserved, where recreational opportunities abound, and where all the lands, public *and* private, are treated as a resource rather than a commodity.

This movement goes back at least to the 1870s when Verplanck Colvin, the young surveyor, envisioned a vast park encompassing the wild country north of Albany. The movement includes Louis Marshall, the great civil libertarian and conservationist, who helped put the "forever wild" provision in the State Constitution in 1894, thereby giving ironclad protection to the public Forest Preserve.

The First "Forty-Sixers"

It includes his son, Bob, the first person (with brother George and guide Herb Clark) to climb all 46 Adirondack peaks over 4,000 feet; Bob later became the Nation's leading advocate for wilderness. It includes Bob's other brother, Jim, the keen lawyer and staunch preservationist who served on the Council's board until his death three years ago at the age of 90.

The continuum includes other Council directors, past and present, whose lives have spanned much of this century: Harold K. Hochschild, the uncompromising chairman of the first Adirondack Study Commission and founder of the Adirondack Museum, who remained deeply involved in Adirondack preservation up to his death in 1981 at age 90; Richard W. Lawrence, Jr., the far-seeing first chairman of the Adirondack Park Agency during its early days; Harold A. Jerry, Jr., the hard-driving visionary who revitalized the Adirondack Council in the mid-seventies and who had, a few years earlier, served as executive director of the first Adirondack Study Commission; and Clarence A. Petty, son of a 19th century Adirondack guide, whose field studies over three decades laid the groundwork for designating a million acres of Forest Preserve as Wilderness (no motors allowed) and for much of the protective legislation now on the books.

Pantheon of Heroes

The pantheon of heroes most conspicuously includes Paul Schaefer, the John Muir of the Adirondack Conservation Movement who has devoted half-a-century to fighting dams, upholding "forever wild" and articulating his vision of a park. It includes two younger conservationists who have, with rare skill and dedication, chaired the Council since 1980: Frances Beinecke for five years, and Christopher (Kim) Elliman since then.

Four others at the forefront of the movement gathered recently in a living room in Schenectady. Two of them had



BILL VERNER

just come from the first meeting of the Governor's Commission on the Adirondacks in the Twenty-First Century: chairman Peter A. A. Berle (who is also president of the National Audubon Society) and staff director George D. Davis, former program director for the Council and, earlier on, a principal architect of the APA's parkwide zoning plan. Joining them was Gary Randorf, distinguished Adirondack naturalist, photographer and, from 1977 to 1986, the Council's first executive director.

They had gathered to give Bill Verner, their not-so-old comrade in arms, an award.

"For his lasting contributions to the cause of Adirondack preservation," the citation read, "and for the grace, wisdom and unfailing good humor with which he has pursued this cause and inspired his colleagues."

Adirondack Visionary

Verner, who at 51 is afflicted with leukemia, has projected a vision of a true Adirondack Park since his early days as curator of the Adirondack Museum. In the early 1970s he worked closely with then-Assemblyman Berle, providing much of the vital information Berle needed to debate and carry the Adirondack Park Agency bills (the first one creating the APA and the second one enacting its land-use controls) through the state legislature.

Though he left the Adirondack Museum several years ago, his influence permeates the place. The wonderful Adirondack Woods and Waters exhibition was his "baby," for example, and his is still the recorded voice you hear in many corners of the museum.

Bill later chaired the APA's Citizen Task Force on Open Space, which provided more good guidelines — more building blocks — for the ultimate Adirondack Park. His report, issued in 1980, forms an important link between the Governor's Study Commission report of 1970 (Hochs-

child, Jerry *et al*) and the next one (Berle, Davis *et al*) due in April, 1990.

The threats to today's Adirondack Park, and the obstacles to making it a park in reality as well as name, have never been greater — as Verner, Randorf, Berle and Davis were keenly aware as they sat together, reminiscing over past battles and contemplating new ones to come. They also took some comfort in a happy fact: the momentum begun more than a century ago to create and preserve an Adirondack Park has never been so powerful as it is today.

Dick Beamish

Wanted: News Clippers

Thanks in part to the Council's diligent work with the news media, there is more press publicity than ever before on Adirondack issues, including news stories, editorials and letters-to-the-editor. If you see any items in your local newspaper about the Adirondack Park, you'll be doing us a big favor if you clip and send them to Donna Beal, Adirondack Council, Box D-2, Elizabethtown, NY 12932.

Please include the date and name of the newspaper, as well.

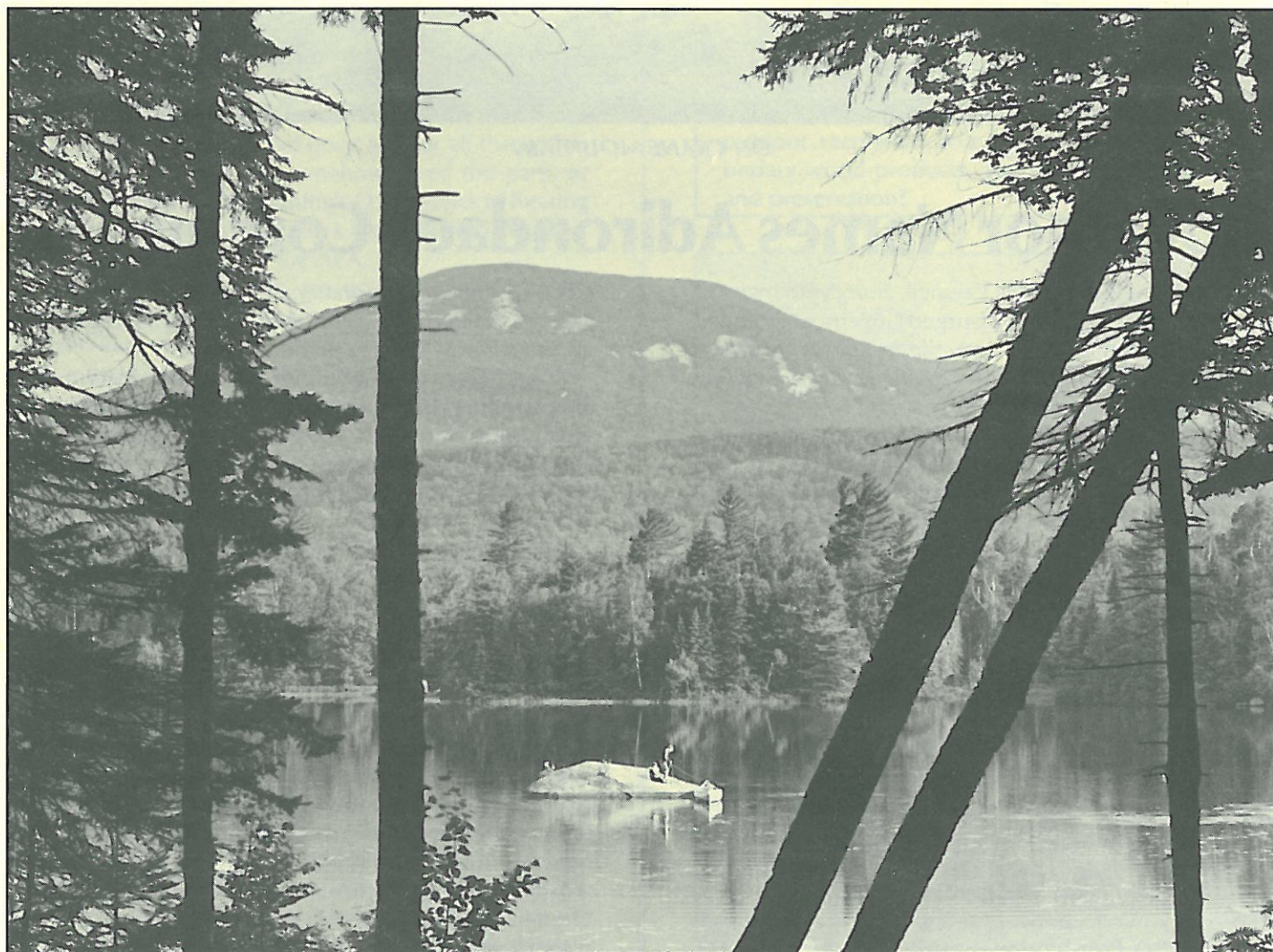
Gold Rush Accelerates

The Adirondack gold rush also continues to gather momentum along with efforts to safeguard the region.

Dan Christmas, former head of Patten Corporation in the Adirondack Park, has left Patten to open his own land office in Tupper Lake. In 1988, Christmas was named "employee of the year" by Harry Patten, who founded the company that has become one of the nation's biggest land speculators.

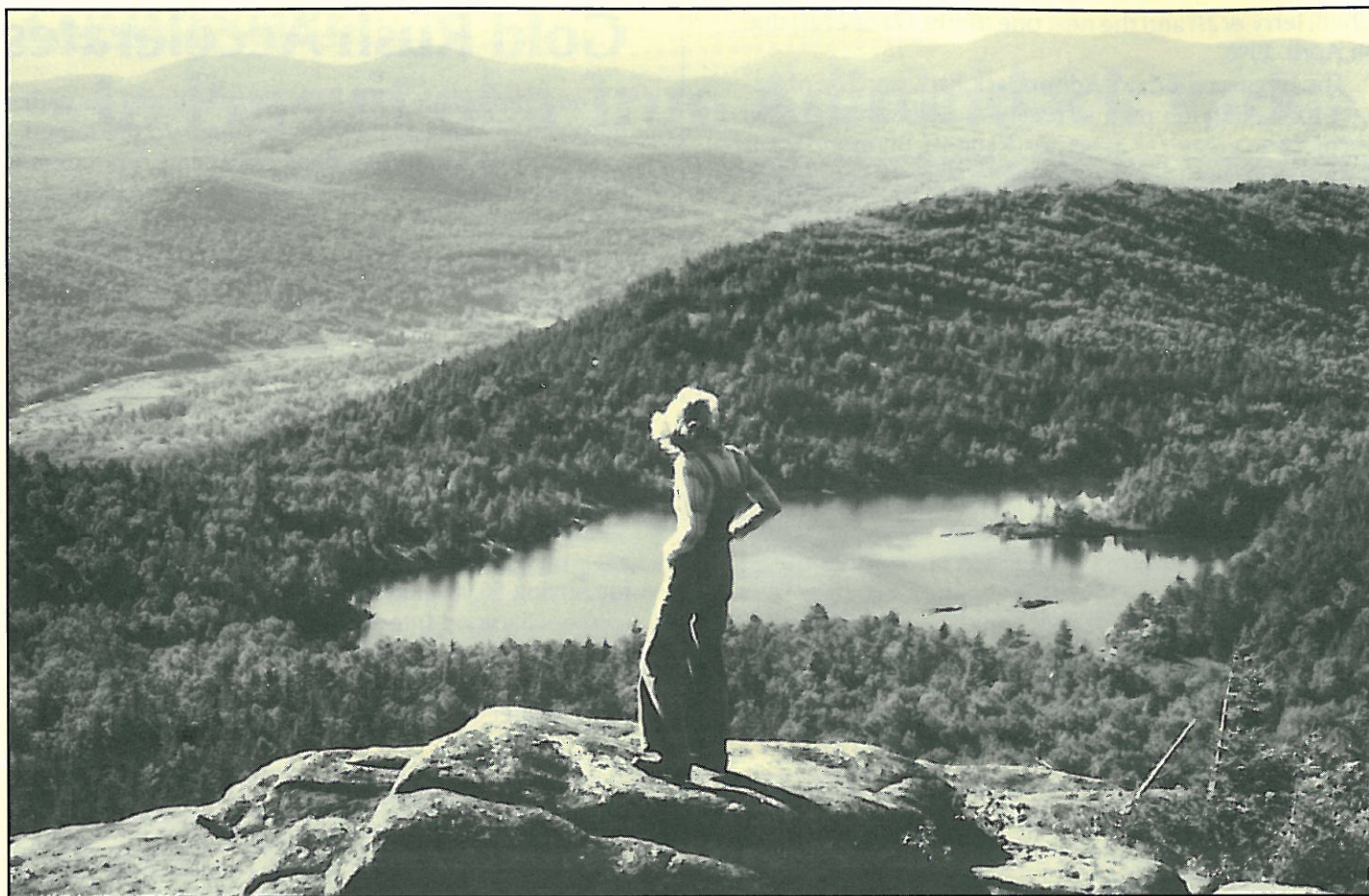
The honor seems well deserved. In less than three years, Christmas and his staff bought and subdivided for quick sale some 15,000 acres of forest land in the park.

Also leading the land rush is Henry Lassiter, the speculator from Atlanta, Georgia who recently opened an office in Potsdam (just north of the park boundary) and announced his intention of purchasing another 80,000 acres next year. Lassiter is best known in the Adirondacks for buying 96,000 acres of forest land last year from the former Diamond International timber company. (At the urging of the Council and other conservationists, the State subsequently bought fee title or development rights from Lassiter on more than half that acreage.)



Barbara McMartin

BLUE MOUNTAIN FROM LAKE DURANT



Gary Randorf

ON CRANE MOUNTAIN

Governor Names Adirondack Commission

Last year the Adirondack Council, along with many of the State's major newspapers, urged Governor Cuomo to establish a commission to study the mounting threats to the Adirondack Park and devise better ways of preserving the park for all time.

Early this year the Governor announced the creation of a Commission on the Adirondacks in the 21st Century. His appointments to the commission, which will be supported by a staff of specialists in natural resources, law, and land-use planning, are as follows:

Chairman: Peter A. A. Berle of New York City, president of the National Audubon Society, former NYS Commissioner of Environmental Conservation, former NYS Assemblyman from Manhattan.

Executive Director: George D. Davis of Wadhams, former program director of the Adirondack Council, executive director of The Wilderness Society, planning director for the Adirondack Park Agency, and staff ecologist for Governor Rockefeller's Study Commission on the Future of the Adirondacks (1968-70).

Members:

Claire L. Barnett of Westport, director of special projects, Economic Development and Technical Assistance Center, SUNY Plattsburgh;

John Bierworth of Cedarhurst, former chairman and

CEO, Grumman Corporation;

Sarah R. Bogdanovich of Lake Clear, former chairwoman, State Forest Practice Board;

Robert Boice of Watertown, sportsman, chairman of Conservation Fund Advisory Council, board of directors, Great Lakes United;

Robert F. Flacke of Lake George, former NYS Commissioner of Environmental Conservation and chairman of Adirondack Park Agency;

Craig Gilborn of Blue Mountain Lake, director of Adirondack Museum;

Harold A. Jerry, Jr. of Speculator and Albany, commissioner of NYS Public Service Commission;

Read Kingsbury of Rochester, senior editor, *Rochester Times-Union* and *Democrat & Chronicle*;

Richard W. Lawrence, Jr. of Elizabethtown, former chairman of Adirondack Park Agency;

John Oakes of New York City, former senior editor and editorial page editor, *New York Times*;

Harvey C. Russell of Yonkers, public relations consultant, Pepsico;

James F. Smith of Tuxedo Park, chairman and CEO, Orange and Rockland Utilities, Inc.;

Dr. Ross Whaley of Syracuse, president, College of Environmental Science and Forestry, SUNY.

Advice to Commission

"Give Us a Good Swift Kick"

"You represent an aroused citizenry," the Governor's new Adirondack Commission was told during its recent meeting at the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) offices at Ray Brook.

"The people get fed up with the government's response to this park, and they kick government in the behind and get it to act," said Robert C. Glennon, the APA's executive director. "Do so, give us a good swift kick, and Godspeed."

Here is some other advice that Glennon gave the commission:

Don't Compromise

"This might be the right time to say something about compromise on your commission. I most respectfully and emphatically suggest to you — don't do it. If at all possible, articulate your vision of next century's park unanimously in one strong voice. The people of the State of New York can have, and deserve, an Adirondack Park worthy of the name. All they have to do is find the money to pay for it and convince the NYS Legislature to pass measures necessary to bring it about."

False Notion

"If you do nothing else, you will have served a valuable public purpose if you dispel once and for all the notion that the Park Agency Act somehow saved the park, or froze it as of 1973 and everything's O.K. I'm sick of hearing how the private lands in this Park are subject to the 'strict development controls' of the APA.

"The density guidelines are no impediment to the breaking up of large tracts — large tracts found by aggressive and very systematic acquisition agents who exist in greater numbers . . . and can afford to pay a lot more than any counterparts on the State payroll. [These tracts are] sold as 'your piece of the vanishing wilderness.' That phenomenon, and the related and equally unfortunate one of timber companies — longtime good neighbors — selling shoreline, like International Paper; developing shoreline, like Finch-Pruyn; or just selling out backcountry to leaseholders, like Otterbrook — give the lie to the notion that those controls protect the backcountry."

Tragedy for Shorelines

"The 'strict development controls' are a tragedy for Adirondack shorelines. The point is they work to encourage development of shorelines at a greater intensity than elsewhere, and without environmental review by the Agency.

"Those 'strict development controls' contain no use zoning whatsoever. No use is flatly prohibited anywhere by the APA Act unless it exceeds the density controls. Industrial uses, waste disposal areas, junkyards, sand and gravel extractions and other uses are allowed by the APA Act's 'strict development controls' anywhere in the Park."

Incoherent Approach

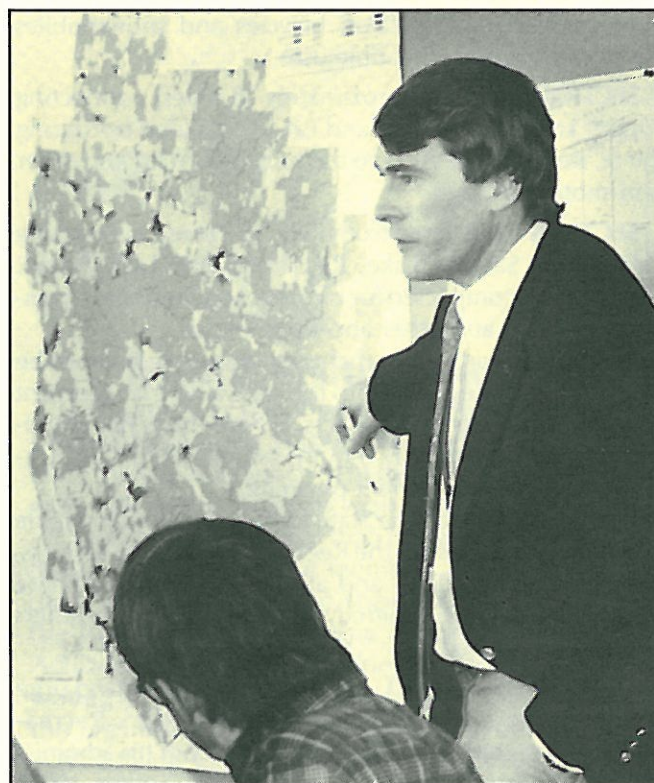
"I've been saying for 10 years that New York State's approach to the Adirondack Park is not coherent. Forest Preserve acquisition here, a sign law and the APA there. Doesn't that leave a gaping hole in the center?

"We need an integrated, resource-based, open-space protection plan. State tax payments, the various tax abatement provisions, various State subsidies [must] be targeted towards preserving those parts of the Adirondack Park which ought to be preserved."

Four Questions Posed

The Governor has asked his Adirondack Commission to answer four questions:

- What kind of Adirondack Park do we want for our children in the 21st century?
- Are existing State programs and policies adequate to achieve this type of park?
- What new programs or modifications in existing programs are needed?
- How can a strong economic base, compatible with the park envisioned for the 21st century, be maintained, particularly with respect to tourism, outdoor recreation, forestry production and secondary wood products, and hamlet development and preservation?



BOB GLENNON

122-Mile Recreationway Envisioned

With visions of "the Nation's premier, multi-use recreation trail" traversing the Adirondack Park, the Council has called on the State to transform the abandoned railroad right-of-way from Remsen (north of Utica) to Lake Placid into a 122-mile Adirondack Recreationway.

In letters to the Governor and Environmental Conservation Commissioner, Charles M. Clusen, the Council's executive director, urged that the state-owned right-of-way be converted into "an all-season Adirondack Recreationway for cross-country skiing, bicycling, hiking and snowmobiling."

The Council recommended five separate "use zones" along the route. Uses would vary according to the classification of adjoining state lands (Wilderness, Wild Forest or Canoe Area).

SECTION ONE (approximately 48 miles) connecting Remsen, Thendara, Big Moose and Beaver River: bicycles and snowmobiles on a compact but unpaved surface, along with hikers, cross-country skiers, hunters and fishermen.

SECTION TWO (approximately 23 miles) connecting Beaver River, Sabattis and Horseshoe Lake: wilderness path for non-mechanized recreation including fishing, hunting, hiking and cross-country skiing. The Council recommends excluding snowmobiles and bicycles on this section because such uses, once established, would preclude consolidation of existing public Wilderness Areas into a 400,000-acre Bob Marshall Great Wilderness, a goal of the Council.

SECTION THREE (approximately 15 miles) from Horseshoe Lake to Tupper Lake: bicycles and snowmobiles along with other compatible uses.

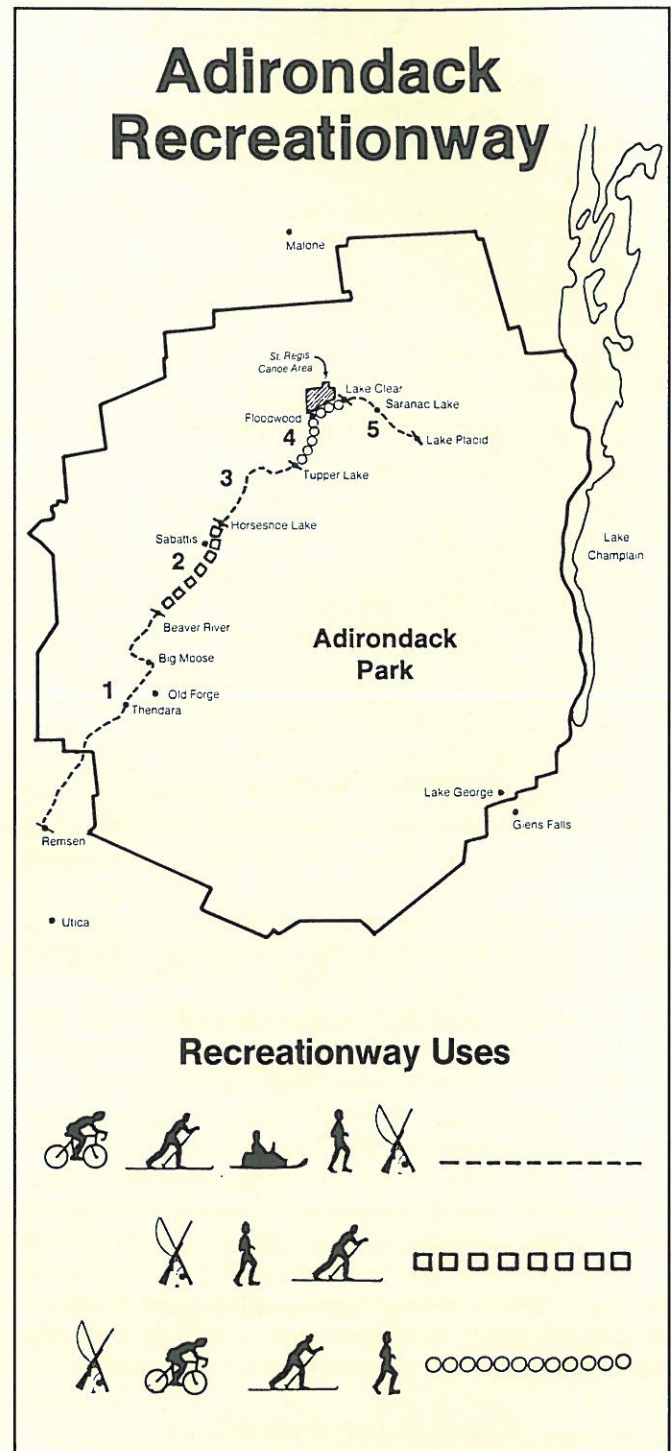
SECTION FOUR (approximately 18 miles) connecting Tupper Lake, Floodwood and Lake Clear, and bordering the St. Regis Canoe Area to the north: bicycles and other non-motorized uses.

SECTION FIVE (approximately 18 miles) connecting Lake Clear, Saranac Lake, Ray Brook and Lake Placid: unpaved but compacted for bicycles, snowmobiles, cross-country skiing and other appropriate uses.

The Council proposed that each of the five sections be classified and integrated into the state land management unit which it abuts or intersects. Where this is not practical, certain sections may require independent classification and unit management planning.

The Council urged the State to prohibit "incompatible and conflicting uses" of the Recreationway, such as jeeps, motorcycles, dirt bikes and all-terrain vehicles. Where snowmobiles are permitted, the use of noise mufflers should be required.

WHAT YOU CAN DO — Write the Governor and urge him to support the creation of an Adirondack Recreationway that could be an enduring legacy of his administration. Address: Governor Mario M. Cuomo, State Capitol, Albany, NY 12224.



BICYCLING ADVOCATE

Dan Plumley, park specialist for the Adirondack Council, has been appointed chairman of the subcommittee on bicycling of the North Country Transportation Corridor Group. NCTCG is a coalition of public and private entities dedicated to enhancing the highways and byways of the Adirondack region.

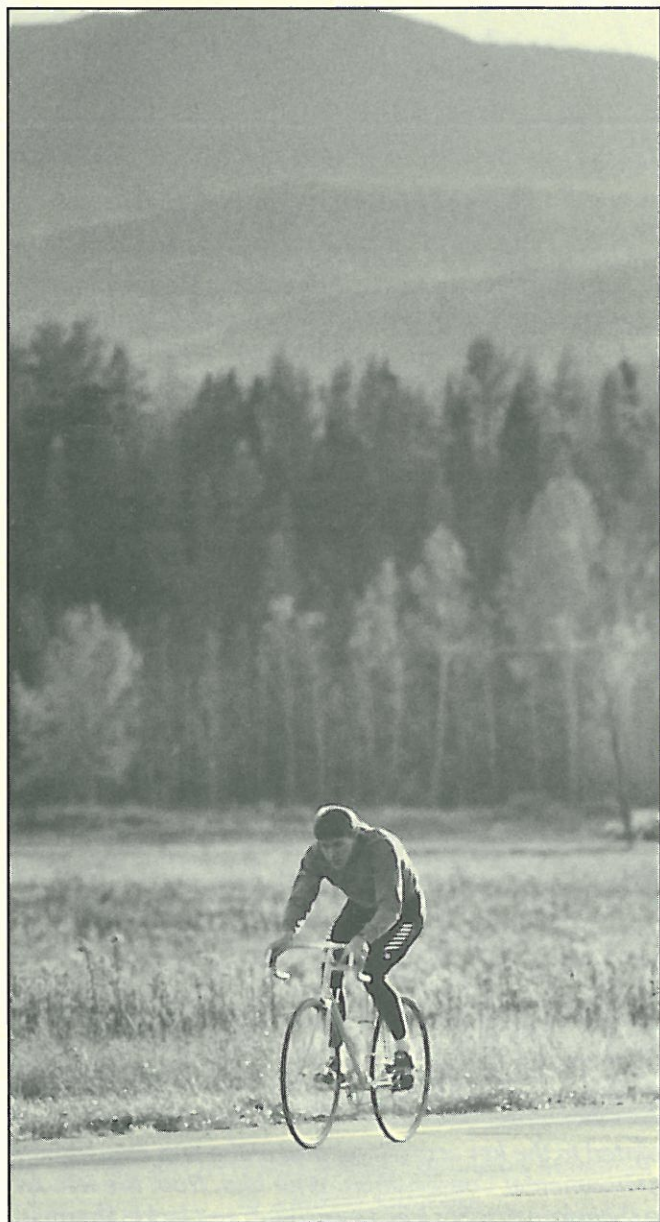
Council Urges State To Build Bike Lanes

The Adirondack Council has urged the State Department of Transportation (DOT) to reinstitute its policy of building bicycle lanes on the shoulders of state roads in the Adirondack Park, a step the Council believes will help make the region "a mecca for bicycle touring."

In a letter to DOT Commissioner Franklin D. White, the Council's executive director, Charles M. Clusen, declared:

"If the State will routinely incorporate eight-foot bike-way shoulders as it repaves and reconstructs Adirondack roads, we will have, within a generation, more than a thousand miles of bikeways running through some of the most beautiful forest, mountain and lake country in the world."

The Council also called on the State (see opposite page) to convert the abandoned railroad line from Remsen to Lake Placid into an Adirondack Recreationway that would open 99 miles of railroad grade to bicycling.



Nancie Battaglia

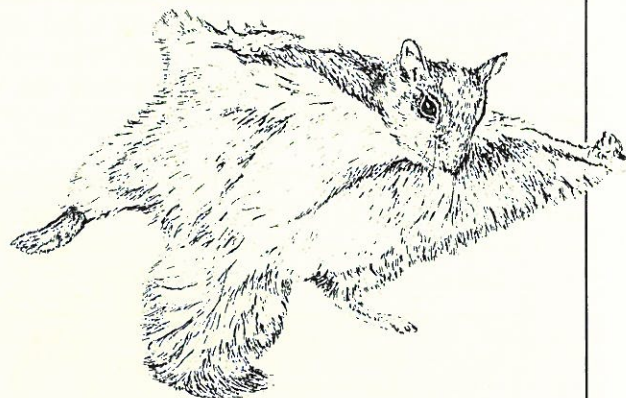
"Together with the proposed Recreationway, and the scenic county and town roads throughout the Park, a system of bikeways along state highways would make the Adirondack Park a mecca for bicycle touring," Clusen told Commissioner White. "With your help, bicycling could become as popular a form of Adirondack recreation as canoeing and hiking."

The Council reminded the Commissioner that "for several years DOT made a point of building bikeways into reconstructed Adirondack highways." As examples, the Council cited sections of Route 30 from Long Lake to Blue Mt. Lake and Route 28 from Blue Mt. Lake to Indian Lake.

"Unfortunately, some other fine opportunities for bikeways have been missed since then," Clusen said. He identified as "imminent opportunities" the upcoming improvement projects on Route 86 from Lake Placid to Saranac Lake and from Saranac Lake to Donnelly's Corners.

Both stretches are particularly hazardous for bicycling in their present condition, the Council warned the Commissioner.

WHAT YOU CAN DO — Urge Commissioner White to build eight-foot-wide bikeways on both sides of state roads in the Adirondack Park. Write: Commissioner Franklin E. White, NYS Department of Transportation, Albany, NY 12232. Please send a copy of your letter (or write a separate letter if you have time) to Governor Mario M. Cuomo, State Capitol, Albany, NY 12224.



Membership Soars

The number of memberships in the Adirondack Council has topped 11,000. This is a 400% increase since the Council launched its membership drive in early 1987 — just over two years ago!

"Even more impressive than our growth in numbers is the *quality* of our members," said Kim Elliman, the Council's board chairman. "People join the Council for basically one reason: to save the Adirondack Park. Through dues and donations, by writing letters and by speaking out, the members of this organization are really making a difference."

(The flying squirrel above is from Andrew Saunders's *Adirondack Mammals* — see pp. 14-15.)

Acid Rain Update

Almost every year for the last eight years, legislation to curb acid rain — the silent plague that has killed hundreds of Adirondack lakes and may be causing extensive damage to Adirondack forests — has been introduced in Congress. And each time it has died.

Now, finally, the omens are good.

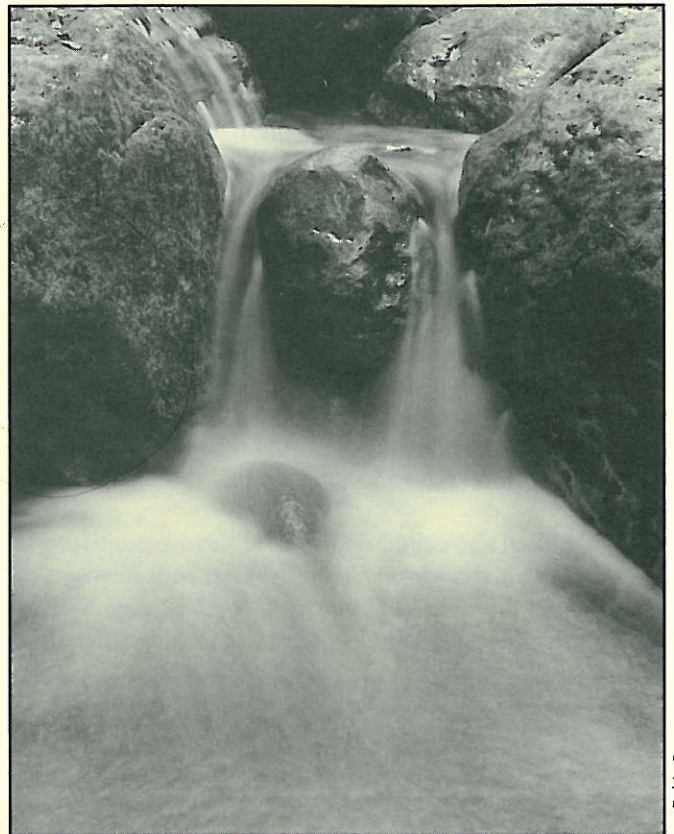
"For the first time in the history of the acid rain battle, we have a President who acknowledges that the problem exists and has made a commitment to be part of the solution rather than part of the problem," said Rep. Sherwood Boehlert, a New York Republican who favors strong legislation to curb the acid rain afflicting his southern Adirondack district.

The selection of clean-air champion Senator George Mitchell (D-ME) as Senate Majority Leader should help move tough clean-air legislation through the Senate. Speaker of the House Jim Wright (D-TX) has announced that clean air is on his "must-do" list. President Bush's selection of William K. Reilly to head the Environmental Protection Agency is another good sign — Reilly formerly headed the Conservation Foundation/World Wildlife Fund, an amalgam of two prestigious environmental organizations.

At his confirmation hearing, Reilly repeated the President's campaign promise to support clean-air legislation that would significantly reduce acid rain and other air pollution.

WHAT YOU CAN DO — Write to Reilly and NYS Senator Moynihan urging them to support passage — this year — of clean-air legislation that will 1) cut sulfur dioxide emissions by 12 million tons over 10 years, 2) cut nitrogen oxide emissions by four million tons over the same period, and 3) impose a cap on total emissions of both pollutants.

Addresses: William K. Reilly, Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M St. SW, Washington, DC 20460. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, U.S. Senate, Rm. 464, Russell Senate Office Bldg., Washington, DC 20510.



Robin Brown

Bequests Needed

Your bequest of money or property will give long-term sustenance to the Adirondack Council in its increasingly effective efforts to preserve the park's beauty and serenity, its wildness and wildlife, against those who would exploit and domesticate this great natural sanctuary.

For further information about making a bequest, please contact Lynne Poteau, Adirondack Council, Box D-2, Elizabethtown, NY 12932. Tel. 518-873-2240.



Michael Carr

FLIGHT CREW — Bob Binnewies (second from right) joins Adirondack Council staff members for a bird's eye view of some land-acquisition opportunities. Binnewies was recently

appointed to the key acquisition post at the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. With him, from the left, are Mike DiNunzio, Eric Siy, Ken Horn (pilot) and Jackie Sherman.

Curbing Speculation

The Council has called for it. The Governor is promoting it. And land speculators are organizing and raising money to fight it.

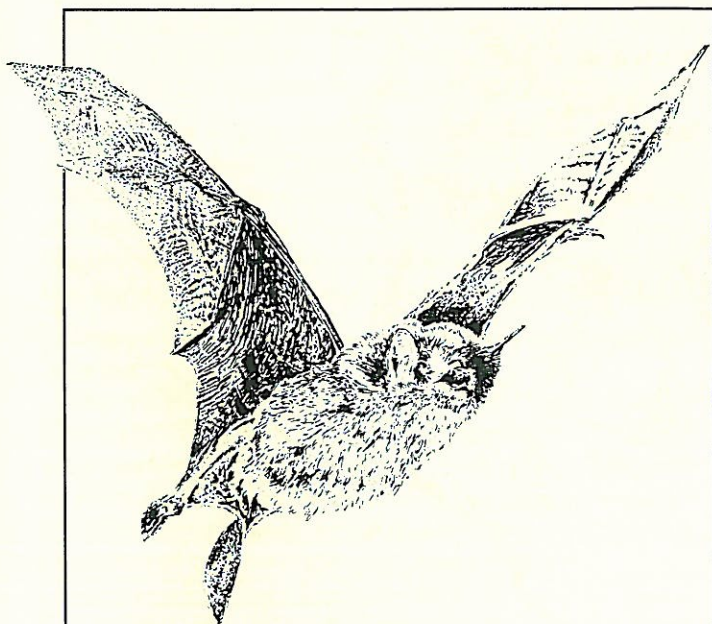
In Vermont, it has curbed the quick-turnover land sales that have inflated land values, driven up property taxes, and hastened the subdivision of the rural landscape. In Maine, it was opposed and defeated by Patten Corporation (which grossed \$52 million on quick land sales *in that one state alone* since 1981) and other well-financed speculators — and will be introduced again this year in the state legislature.

What is this measure that could do so much to save the Adirondack Park from the sad fate of most once-natural landscapes almost everywhere else? It's Governor Cuomo's bill to create a sliding-scale tax on the quick-resale of "raw land." The quicker the sale, and the greater the profit, the higher the gains-tax would be. For example, the measure proposes to tax speculative land profits at rates up to 80%.

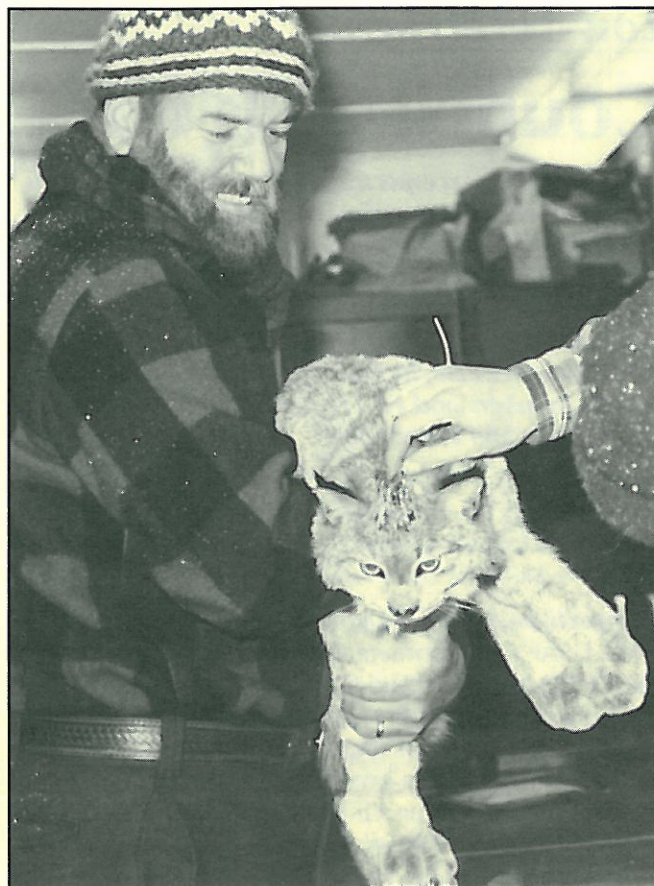
The tax diminishes as the holding period lengthens. For example, gains of 200% or more would be taxed at 60% if the resale occurs from six months to one year after the original purchase; at 40% up to two years; 30% up to three years; 25% up to four years; and 20% up to five years.

No speculation tax would be imposed after five years.

WHAT YOU CAN DO — The greatest opposition to the bill is expected in the Senate. You can help by alerting your state senator to the need for this speculation tax to protect the Adirondack Park from destructive land dealing by Patten Corporation, Henry Lassiter of Atlanta, Properties of America, and a host of other land hustlers now active in the Adirondacks. *There's no time to lose. The bill must be enacted this year.*



LITTLE BROWN BAT—From Adirondack Mammals
by Andrew Saunders.



Andrew Saunders

DR. RAINER BROCKE WITH CANADA LYNX

Return of the Native

The Adirondack Park became a little wilder this year with the return of a native that has been absent for over a century. Eleven lynx obtained from trappers in the Canadian Yukon were released in the High Peaks Wilderness by a team of wildlife biologists with the State University College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF).

The tufted-eared cats were transported to the release site by Dr. Rainer Brocke, the ESF biologist directing the project, and Kent Gustafson, co-director and doctoral candidate studying predator restoration techniques. In what's termed a "slow release" procedure, the animals remained caged for 10 days while their diet was changed from commercial cat food to snowshoe hare, and their droppings were used to mark an artificial territory.

Additional releases are planned for this spring, contingent on finding more lynx and the money to acquire them.

The lynx project (one of ten current research efforts) is part of ESF's Adirondack Wildlife Program, which received \$240,000 this past year from the state legislature. The state funds are supplemented by private donations. Brocke said another \$18,000 is needed to acquire the additional lynx and continue the restoration program.

FOR MORE INFORMATION WRITE: Andy Saunders, Education Coordinator, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Huntington Wildlife Forest, Newcomb, NY 12852.

Low-Level Flights

Council Calls For Complete Impact Study

Following are excerpts from a letter to Hugh M. Stirts, director of environmental management for the Strategic Air Command at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska. In the letter, the Council's Director of Park Protection, Michael DiNunzio, calls for a complete Environmental Impact Statement on current and proposed military flights over the Adirondack Park, including plans for low-level flights of B-52 bombers and FB-111 fighter-bombers between Ticonderoga and Watertown.

Dear Dr. Stirts:

In assessing the proposed project, the Air Force has ignored the following federally-mandated considerations under the National Environmental Policy Act:

Impacts on unique geographical features.

The USAF's environmental assessment ignores the fact that IR-806 (the proposed flight path) passes over thousands of acres of the Adirondack Park, which is the largest natural sanctuary in the country outside Alaska. The Adirondack Park occupies one-fifth of New York State and contains the most important wilderness remnants in the Northeast. About 40% of the park is publicly-owned Forest Preserve and has been protected as "forever wild" by the New York State Constitution since 1894.

En route to targets at Fort Drum, the Air Force bombers

would shatter the tranquility of at least three public Wilderness Areas (Giant Mountain Wilderness, Jay Mountain Wilderness and Sentinel Range Wilderness) where land-based motorized uses are banned to preserve the natural serenity.

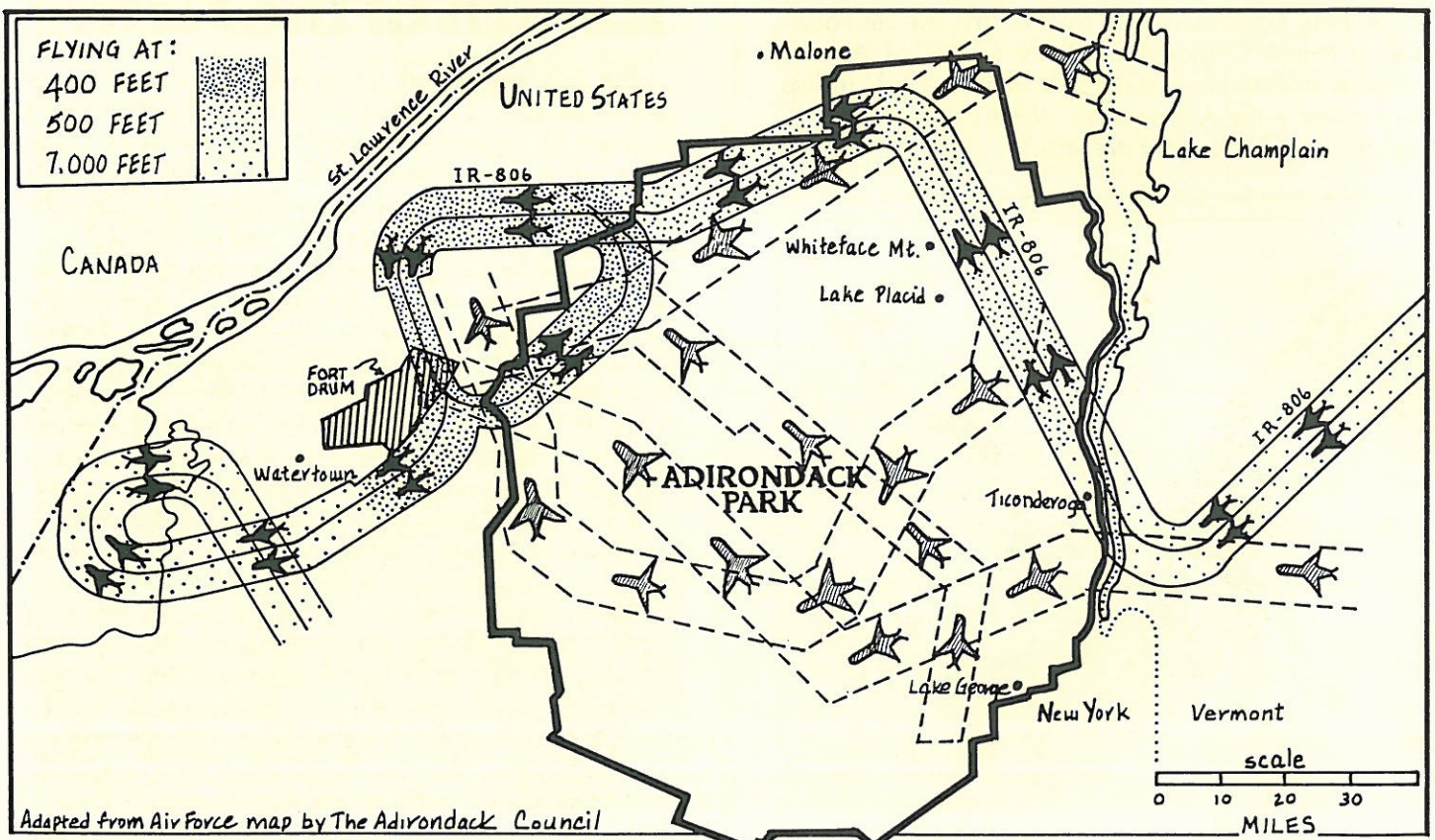
Degree to which impacts on the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.

There can be no doubt that the proposed action is highly controversial. For over a hundred years, the citizens of New York State have staunchly defended the constitutional protection afforded the publicly-owned Forest Preserve.

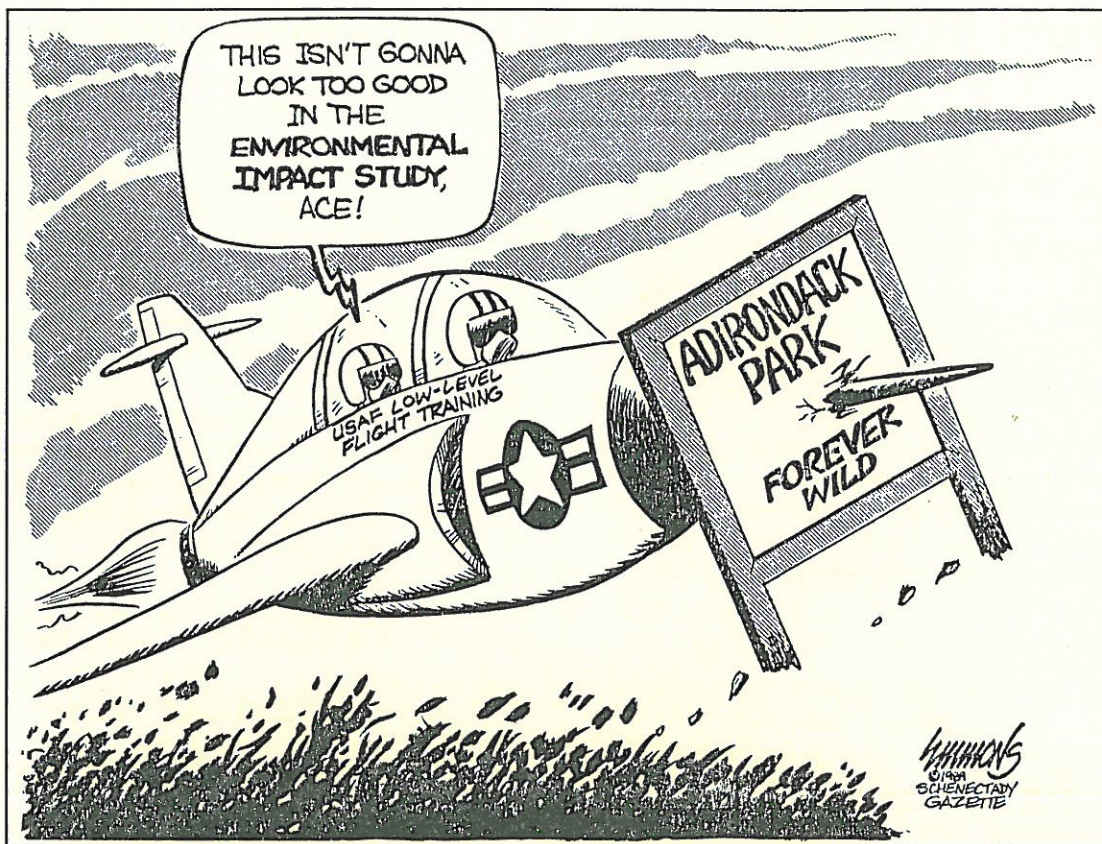
Many view the proposed action as a threat to the very character of the Preserve and to the Adirondack Park of which it is a part. This controversy must be dealt with through the environmental impact statement process, including public hearings.

Level of uncertainty of impacts or uniqueness of risk to the human environment.

The proposed action carries a high level of uncertainty concerning impacts on, and unique risks to, the human environment. Tourism and recreation provide a livelihood for many of the 120,000 permanent residents of the park. Millions of visitors, including hikers, campers, fisher-



EXISTING FLIGHT PATHS for low-level military jets are indicated by shaded planes.
Solid planes show route of proposed tree-skimming flights of B-52s and FB-111s.



Courtesy of Robert Emmons and the Schenectady Gazette

men, hunters, cross-country skiers and other outdoor recreationists, come every year to the Adirondacks seeking peace and quiet in a pristine park setting. This experience would be severely compromised by the proposed overflights.

Contribution to significant cumulative impacts.

In addition to the proposed action, the park is currently subject to regular overflights by the Air Force, Army and Air National Guard involving three other routes. Moreover, no consideration is given to new Air Force test flights of F-15E jet fighters over large areas of the park at altitudes as low as 200 feet and speeds up to 700 mph.

Impact on objects listed in or eligible for National Register of Historical Places.

The 2.5 million acres of state-owned lands constituting the Adirondack Forest Preserve are listed on the National Register of Historical Places. Thousands of these acres lie a few hundred feet beneath the flight path of IR-806.

Degree to which endangered species or habitat may be affected.

The frequent low-level bomber runs will pass over at least six active nesting sites of peregrine falcons and two active nesting sites of bald eagles. Both species are listed as federally-endangered and both have been re-established in the Adirondack Park in recent years by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.

Yet the Air Force's Environmental Assessment states: "At present, the proximity of nesting locations of these species to IR-806 has not been determined." It further states: "To ensure that use of IR-806 does not have an adverse effect on endangered species, the Air Force will

incorporate flight restrictions as deemed necessary by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service." In recognition that peregrine falcon nests are located under IR-806 in Vermont, the Environmental Assessment states that "confinement of flights to altitudes above 7,000 feet is considered sufficient to avoid impacts on this species."

Why are New York State's endangered species less deserving of consideration than those in Vermont?



Len Rue, Jr.

NESTING SITES of endangered bald eagles are situated only a few hundred feet under proposed flight path.

Letters . . .

DISRUPTIVE

Dear Senator Moynihan:

My wife and I vacation twice a year in the Adirondack Park — in the summer at Inlet to play tennis, and in the winter at Lake Placid to ski. Over the years we have noticed (with dismay) the increasingly disruptive military jet aircraft that destroy the very peace and tranquility that draws us to the Park.

The prospect of B-52s and FB-111s, sixteen planes a day, flying as low as 400 feet, really upsets me. It's ironic that these flights will take place in areas that already prohibit all motorized vehicles on the ground. How many snow-mobiles or dirt bikes does it take to equal the noise and vibration of a pair of B-52s?

I urge you to support the Adirondack Council's call for a full environmental impact analysis of this and all other military exercises in and over the Adirondack Park.

Jack I. Spyker
Newark Valley, NY

EAR SHATTERING

Dear Senator Moynihan:

We have a second home at Eagle Lake . . . about six miles from Ticonderoga, where it is said that the additional low-level flights will enter the Adirondack Park. You should know that the FB-111s or similar aircraft have been flying over Eagle Lake for at least five years, disrupting the peacefulness of the area. The lake is situated between peaks which are about 500 feet higher than the lake. The planes presently come in at a low level from the east — well below the height of the surrounding hills — roar off to the west and then head north. They are probably about 200 feet above the surface of the water.

The noise level created by these planes, together with the echoes which the surrounding hills amplify, is ear-shattering! Not only that . . . but they break upon the quietness like a canon-shot. The absolute worst sound level is during the winter when the leaves are off the trees and the lake is covered with ice. It must be heard to be believed. . . .

Robert C. and Jane K. Stevens
Pittsford, NY

BELOW TREE LEVEL

Dear People:

How right you are to be concerned about low-flying planes over the Adirondacks! Let me tell you about an incident on a day this winter when a friend was here, so two of us saw it, and were frightened beyond words. The jet was between my house and some trees on my property and so low we could see the tops of those trees above the plane — 25 or 35 feet from this home of mine at most.

Evelyn Farley
Malone, NY

OVERFLIGHT UPDATE

In response to strong and unexpected opposition to its latest low-level flight plans, the Air Force has gone back to the drawing board to prepare a more thorough environmental assessment. This is a step in the right direction — but it still falls short of the full Environmental Impact Statement needed on the cumulative effect of *all* military overflights on the Adirondack Park.

(The letter below from the Plattsburgh Press-Republican appeared in response to the Council's statement, "Militarization of Adirondack air space." The conclusion of that statement is reprinted at the bottom of the next page.)

Wants to see Council list

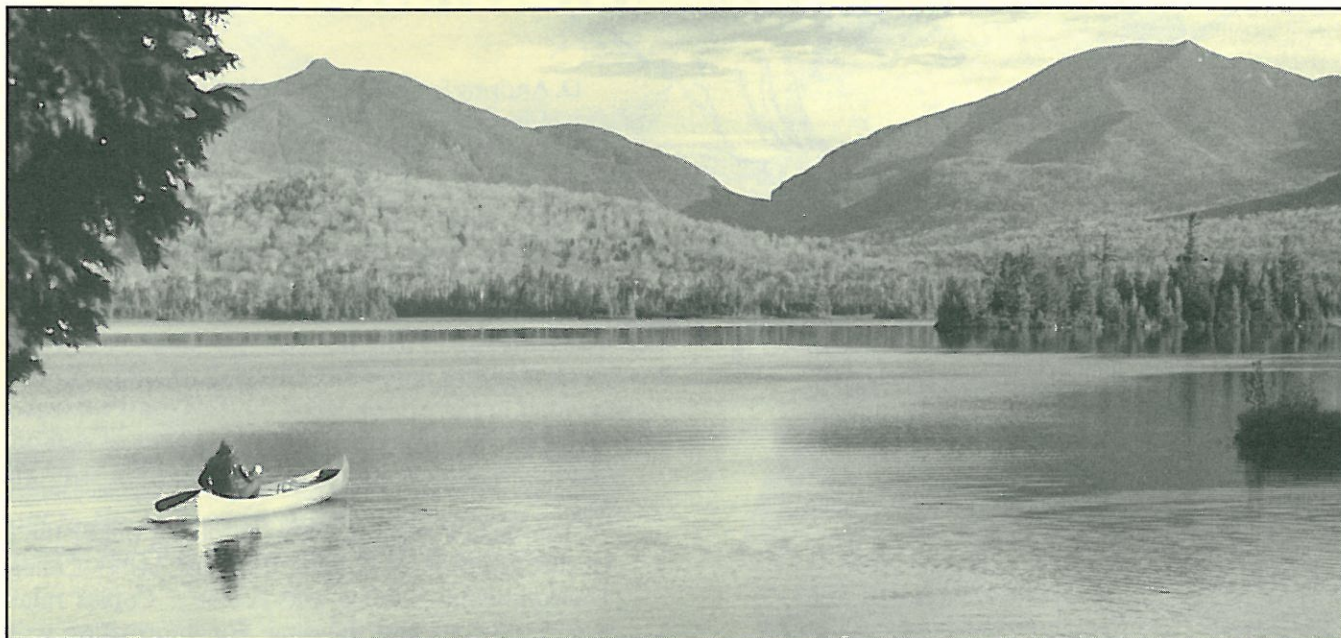
To the Editor: In reference to In My Opinion, Tuesday, March 14 by Richard F. Beamish.

First of all Mr. Editor, before I took anything seriously in a Mr. Beamish opinion, I would like to see the listing of the alleged 10,000 members of the Adirondack Council and the home addresses of each. I'm quite sure no one ever will, and if they do, they will surprised to find that most are affluent "dogooders" who are dedicated to establishing the Adirondacks as a national park. It is a known fact that the majority of the council membership does not live in the Adirondacks and some don't even live in this state. Wanna bet?

I'm sure in my opinion, as should the rest of the populace of this state be: that I would rather see stars on the wings of planes overhead at 200 feet than the hammer and sickle. Fly boys and girls, train hard, remain the best in the world and when my buddies and I are out hunting and fishing and you zoom overhead we will all shout, "That's one of ours."

Robert W. Moody
Saranac Lake

LETTER-TO-THE-EDITOR OF ROCHESTER PAPERS



Alan Cederstrom

Military flights ruining Adirondack wilderness

READ KINGSBURY is right to the point in "Should military planes unzip the wilderness?" (March 3). The Adirondack Park is not the place for B-52 bomber-runs 400 feet above the trees.

That peaceful vacation that thousands of us are planning this summer—hunting, fishing, camping, canoeing or hiking in the Adirondacks—will not be the same with more military flight training over

a constitutionally protected wilderness park.

But Kingsbury missed an important point in his article: While the federal government can do as it wishes, whatever the state Constitution says about the area being a park, we as citizens do have some power. Just who does the federal government work for, anyway?

Don't like the idea of more training flights over your favorite corner of the

woods? Start by writing your local congressman and U.S. senator. And, while the formal comment period is closed, it still wouldn't hurt to write direct to the source of this latest proposal: Strategic Air Command, Attention: Hugh M. Stirts, director, Environmental Management Division, DCS/Engineering and Services, Department of the Air Force, Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska 68113.

David A. Newman Brighton

Press-Republican

TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 1989

In My Opinion

Militarization of Adirondack air space

(concluding paragraphs)

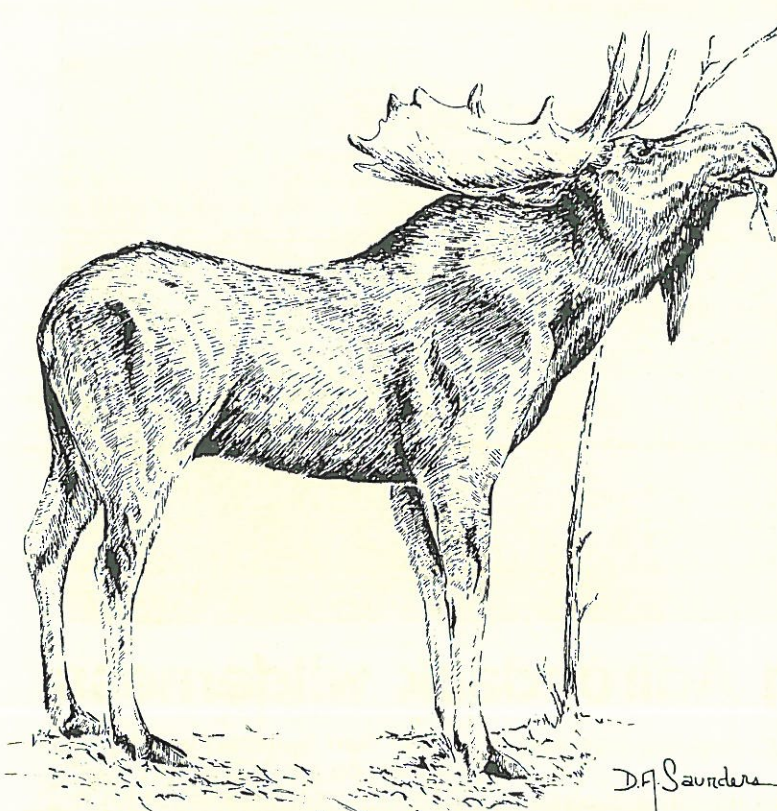
The Adirondack Council has found the Air Force's environmental assessment to be inadequate and indefensible. The council has called for a complete environmental impact statement taking into account the cumulative effect of all present and proposed low-level military flights over the Adirondack Park.

To the Air Force, the Adirondack Park may look like a mostly-blank spot on the map, made to order for fighter and bomber maneuvers. But many thousands of people live in this park, and many millions of others vacation here. One of the great attractions for these residents and visitors has been the rare natural serenity the park offers.

We believe there are more appropriate places for such military operations than over the last, significant public wilderness in the Northeast. Obviously we are not competent to say where these flights should take place, but we are competent to say that ear-splitting, tree-shaking bomber runs over the "Forever Wild" Forest Preserve, and over the nesting sites of endangered species, is not an acceptable use of the Adirondack Park.

The Air Force avoids low-level flights over many federally-protected sanctuaries, including Yosemite National Park, Everglades National Park, and the Boundary Waters Canoe Area. We believe the Adirondack Park deserves the same respect.

From *Adirondack Mammals*



MOOSE — A small population of approximately 15-20 moose, including about five females, is known to be present in the Adirondack Park. In spite of its immense size, a moose can gallop for short distances at speeds up to 35 mph. Wildlife photographers and nature observers should keep this in mind when approaching a bull during the rutting season or a cow with a calf.



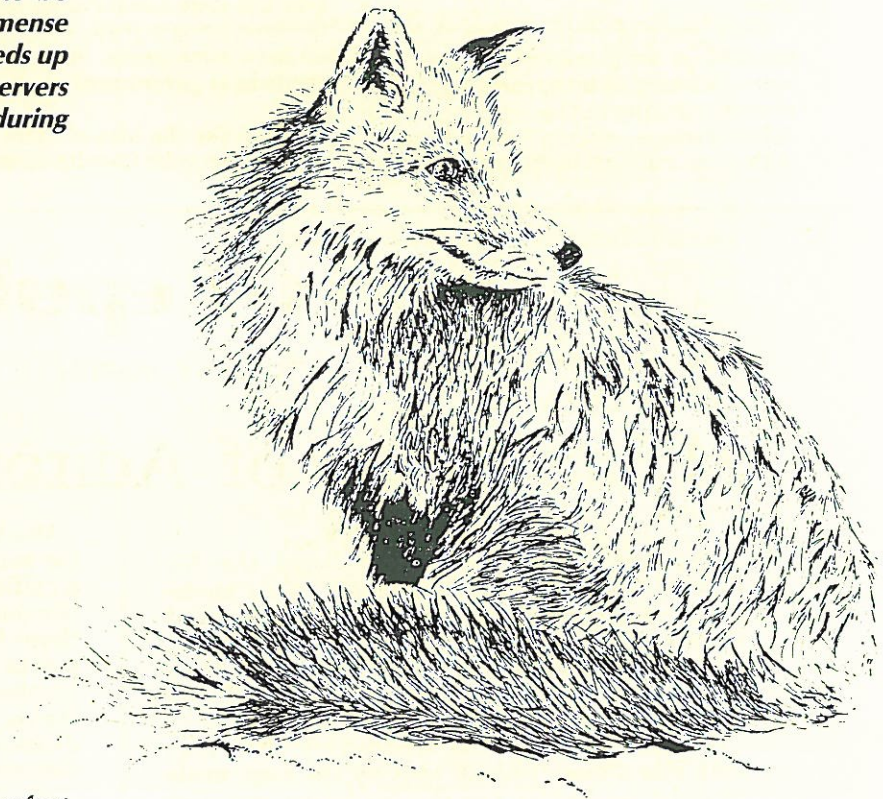
BEAVER — To fell a tree, a beaver places his forefeet against the trunk, and braced in place by the tail, uses his incisors to gouge chips from the trunk in an hourglass pattern. A beaver removes about 140 ragged chips from a tree 5½ inches in diameter, toppling it in a few minutes.

D. Andrew Saunders has produced a concise, informative guide, delightfully illustrated by his own drawings, to the 54 mammalian species with whom we share the Adirondack Park.

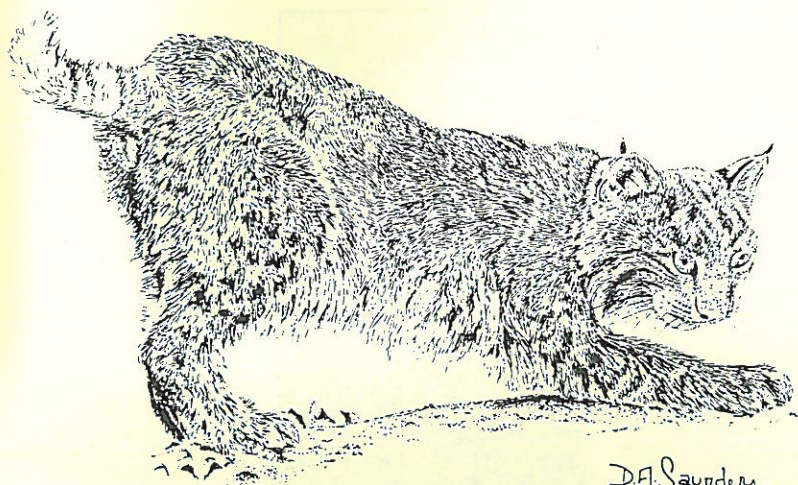
His 216-page paperback book, *Adirondack Mammals*, is about one hundred years overdue. As Saunders notes in the introduction: "Not since the publication of C. Hart Merriam's landmark work, *The Mammals of the Adirondack Region*, in 1884, has a serious attempt been made to draw together under one cover information about these animals in the Adirondacks. . . . This book endeavors to enhance our awareness and enjoyment of Adirondack mammals, and to fortify our appreciation with knowledge."

Adirondack Mammals was produced under the aegis of the Adirondack Wildlife Program, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry. Copies retail for \$10.95, plus tax and shipping. For information write or call: Syracuse University Press, 1600 Jamesville Ave., Syracuse, NY 13244-5160, tel. 315-443-2597.

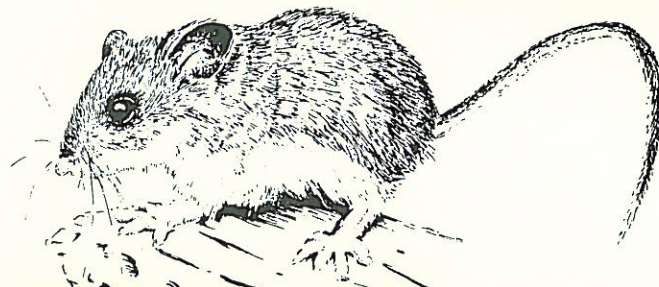
(Captions on these pages are derived from *Adirondack Mammals*.)



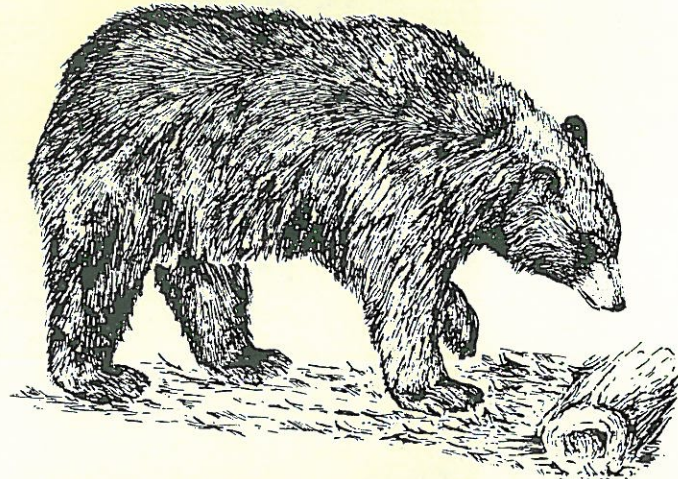
RED FOX — This species occupies all terrestrial habitats in the park, from the lowest to the highest elevations, but prefers meadows, agricultural lands, forest openings, brushy fields, and forest and woodland edges.



BOBCAT — An Adirondack winter is a severe test for resident bobcats, and those unable to kill deer, especially in mid-to-late winter, may starve. Young bobcats, inexperienced in hunting, are the most likely to succumb.



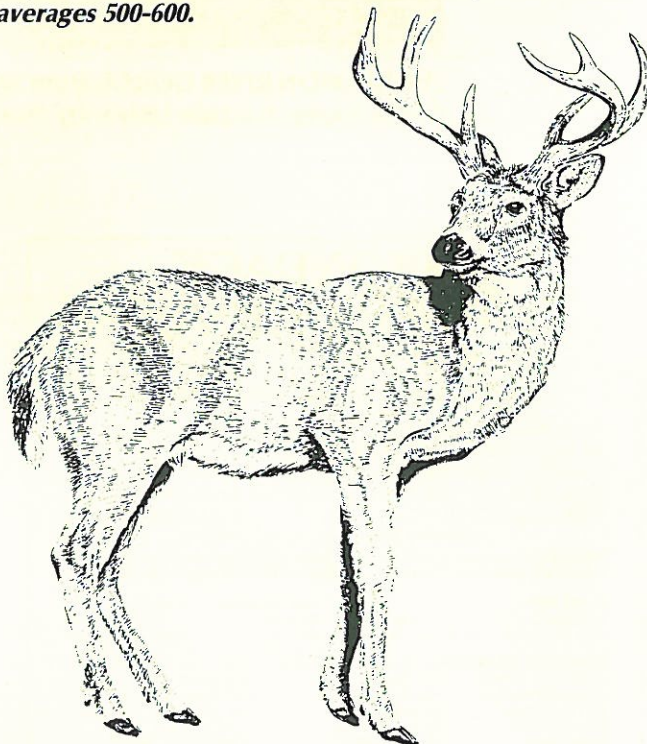
DEER MOUSE — This species is the most abundant small rodent of the region, and in autumn often enters human dwellings. All predators of small mammals take deer mice, [including] hawks, owls, snakes, short-tailed shrews, foxes, minks, weasels, bobcats and coyotes.



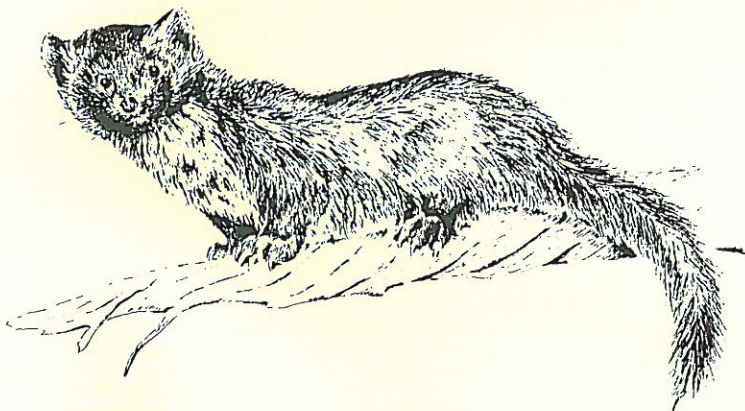
BLACK BEAR — The current estimate of the Adirondack population is 3600. The annual harvest by bear hunters averages 500-600.



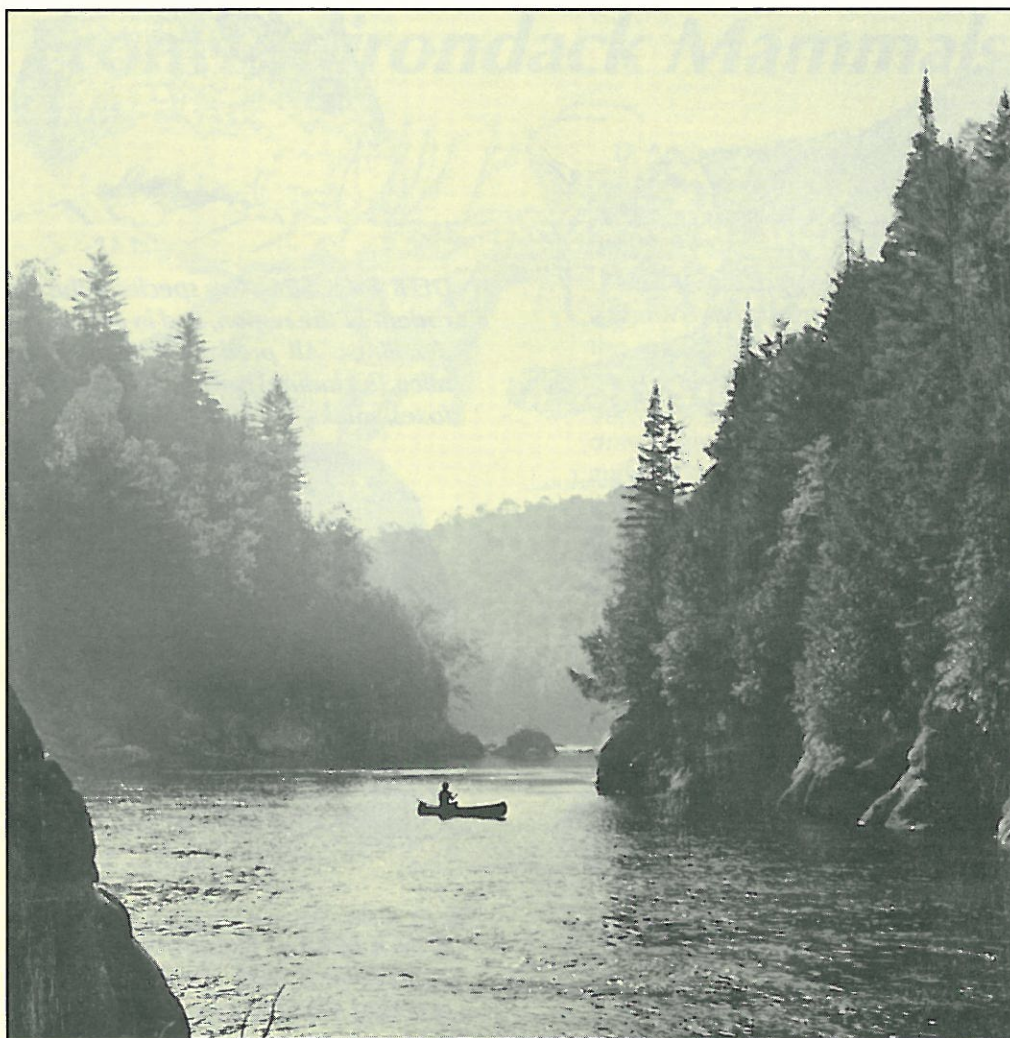
EASTERN CHIPMUNK — Chipmunks prefer beechnuts, and can stuff their two internal cheek pouches with as many as 32 of the husked nuts at one time for transport to an underground cache, which by the end of autumn may contain 5,000-6,000 nuts.



WHITE-TAILED DEER — For many visitors, the view of a white-tailed deer in the Adirondacks is the highlight of their experience in the park, overshadowing previous exposure to the same animal in the more mundane contexts of rural pastures and corn fields.



MARTEN — Since 1936, when their range had shrunk from nearly all of New York State to the central Adirondacks, complete protection or special trapping seasons have enabled the marten to recolonize most of the park.



Paul Schaefer

THE HUDSON RIVER GORGE, from *Defending the Wilderness: Adirondack Writings of Paul Schaefer*, Syracuse University Press (to be previewed in next Newsletter).

ADIRONDACK COUNCIL

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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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