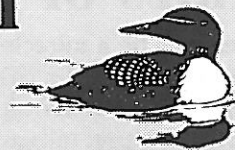




# The Adirondack Council NEWSLETTER



Vol. 11

April 1987

No. 38

## COUNCIL CALLS PUBLIC ATTENTION TO PERILS OF SONAR USE IN LAKE GEORGE

Early last year, the Adirondack Council urged the state to exercise "caution and skepticism" in reviewing an application for the use of Sonar, a chemical pesticide, against an infestation of Eurasian watermilfoil (milfoil for short) in Lake George.

Seeing milfoil as a menace both to water quality and the tourist economy, lakeshore homeowners and local businessmen had requested permission to use the chemical to combat the messy aquatic weed.

At hearings conducted during the last several weeks by the Adirondack Park Agency and Department of Environmental Conservation, the Council's call for skepticism seemed well justified. The Council, as a principal intervenor in the hearings, introduced evidence indicating that Sonar poses a serious threat to public health when applied to a waterbody used for drinking and swimming, such as Lake George.

"It's a familiar story," said Gary Randorf, who represented the Council at the hearings. "Sonar was approved for use last year by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. It has been approved by all of the contiguous states except New York and California. And now we discover that EPA and 46 state governments didn't bother to find out what happens to Sonar, whose active

ingredient is fluridone, when it combines with water."

Working with Howard Fox, a lawyer with the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, and Ellen Silbergeld, a toxicologist with the Environmental Defense Fund, Randorf identified research data showing that a breakdown product of Sonar called monomethylformamide (MMF) can be harmful to human beings. Laboratory tests have shown that MMF induces miscarriages and stillbirths in animals and causes malformation in animal fetuses. Randorf, Fox and Silbergeld also revealed that when MMF has been used as a last resort against cancer in human beings it has caused death from liver damage in some of the patients.

"You don't even have to drink or breath this chemical," Silbergeld explained. "MMF has a high level of absorption through the skin. A recreational lake like Lake George would be unsafe for swimming if Sonar were used."

### Fifty Acres Affected

Milfoil is now believed to be growing on about 50 acres of shallow, sedimented lakebottom in Lake George. Of the affected area, it's estimated that 6-7 acres are severely infested, with milfoil comprising 50% or more of the plant community. Last year, the Council advocated an alternative "mechanical" control which has been used successfully in combating milfoil in Washington State. This control entails placing plastic mats directly on the infested area. Last summer, it was applied to three acres of milfoil beds in Lake George.

According to Randorf, who subsequently donned mask and flippers to make his own underwater inspection, the mats appear to be smothering the weed. But according to Wilbur Dow, Jr., a local steamboat operator and the leading advocate for Sonar, the mats are not working and the weed is spreading.

Dow, along with the Lake George Association (a shoreowners group) and the Lake George Park Commission, is continuing to push for the use of Sonar despite the latest findings.

"Have we learned nothing from our experience with pesticides over the last 40 years?" asks Randorf. "Over and over again we make the same mistake. We use what

(continued next page)



Len Rue, Jr.

**RAVEN STAGES ADIRONDACK COMEBACK**

## PERILS OF SONAR (cont.)

appears to be a miracle chemical to kill something we don't like only to discover that it often harms other living things as well, including human beings. Then the chemical manufacturer tells us: 'Sorry, we may have goofed on that one, but here's a nice new chemical that should do the trick.' By the time we finally document the damage caused by the new one, they have another for us to try."

"The quick fix with the 'safe' chemical has proved to be an impossible dream," said Randorf. "But it's a dream we still cling to, particularly when we perceive some kind of emergency."

Hearings on the use of Sonar in Lake George are scheduled to conclude this month and a decision is expected before the start of the summer season. The Council is prepared to take legal action if the decision appears to endanger human health or natural ecosystems.



Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology

**OSPREY FLOURISHES AGAIN IN PARK**

# LILCO BILL MUST BE DEFEATED

For hypocrisy and inconsistency, for setting a bad example and a destructive precedent, Assembly Bill 2597 is hard to beat.

At a time when the entire New York State congressional delegation (with the exception of Buffalo's Jack Kemp) has come out for strong federal controls to curb acid rain, the NYS Senate has passed a bill that would save Suffolk and Nassau utility customers a few dollars a year on their electricity bills by continuing to exempt Long Island Lighting Company (LILCO) from requirements of the state's exemplary Acid Deposition Control Act.

The LILCO exemption bill is now before the State Assembly. Action on it could come soon. If the bill becomes law, LILCO will continue to burn high-sulfur fuel oil instead of the low-sulfur fuel required for other utilities in New York State. That will translate into 114,508 tons of sulfur dioxide emissions by LILCO in 1990—almost three times its annual sulfur pollution now. And

that will mean more acidic fallout on Long Island, the Hudson Highlands, and downwind New England.

A. 2597 would set a poor precedent. Its enactment would prompt other state lawmakers to seek special treatment for polluting industries in their own bailiwicks. Its passage would also undercut efforts of New York State congressmen to secure strong acid-rain controls nationally. How can we expect midwestern utilities to reduce sulfur emissions if we exempt Long Island from our own state controls?

Meanwhile, on the upper elevations of Wright's Peak and elsewhere in the higher Adirondacks, the red spruce forests are dead or dying, and the balsam firs may be next. Lower down, the sugar maples are suffering, and in hundreds of lifeless lakes and ponds, the only thing tightening fishing lines are submerged snags or old rubber boots.

**Please write or call your state assemblyman and urge him to vote against A. 2597.**



Alan Cederstrom



## **A RADICAL DEPARTURE**

# **ENVIRONMENTALIST APPOINTED TO STATE'S TOP ENVIRONMENTAL POST**

In a radical departure from established government practice, Governor Mario Cuomo has appointed a professional environmentalist to head the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. Thomas C. Jorling, 46, will be taking over the job when Henry G. Williams, the present DEC commissioner, moves to the Public Service Commission.

Jorling appears to have all the right credentials for running a department that, among its mind-boggling range of responsibilities, manages the Adirondack Forest Preserve, influences the Adirondack Park Agency, and carries out a land-and-easement acquisition program that will determine, more than anything else, the future of the Adirondack Park.

Schooled in biology (bachelor's degree), ecology (master's degree), and jurisprudence, Jorling's first job after earning his law degree from Boston University was with the U.S. Interior Department. Since 1972, he has been director of the Center for Environmental Studies at Williams College in Williamstown, MA, with three years off to serve with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency during the Carter administration.

At Williams, as a college professor, he has covered the gamut of local, state, and national environmental issues from an analytical perspective. At EPA, as head of the clean water and hazardous waste unit, he managed a staff of 3600 and a budget of \$300 million in tackling some of the country's toughest pollution problems.

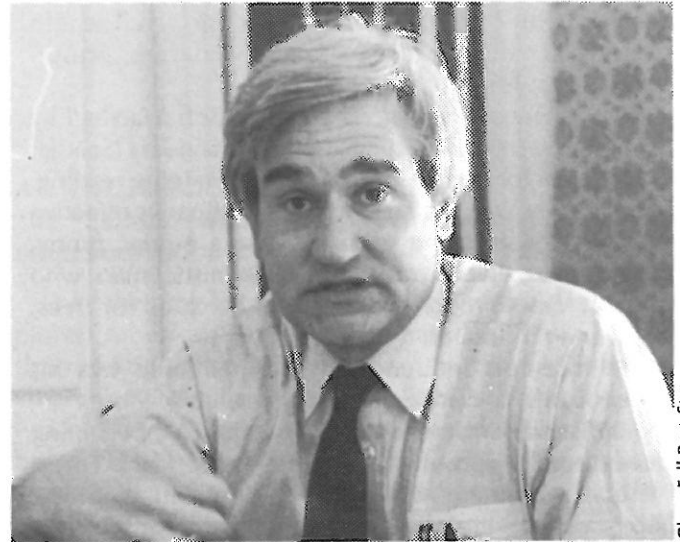
Most of what Jorling knows about the Adirondack Park comes from sending students to Ray Brook to check out the Adirondack Park Agency's landmark land-use controls, and from drives through the park to Canton, NY, to visit his daughter, Julie, who is a student at St. Lawrence University.

### **Strong Advocate of "Forever Wild"**

"I support the Forest Preserve idea both pragmatically and philosophically," Jorling told the Adirondack Council during a recent interview at his office in Williamstown. "We need the 'forever wild' protection to safeguard watersheds, to maintain ecosystems of sufficient size to sustain the health of the biosphere. The notion of wilderness is also essential for our spiritual well-being. Not only to visit such places, but to think about them and know that they exist, is very important.

"We need all the wild land we can preserve. There isn't much left. We no longer have the luxury of being able to wait for it to fall into our hands. We must actively go after it. Everything we preserve today is crucial for the future."

As for citizen groups like the Council, Jorling said: "I come out of a background that believes that public



**THOMAS C. JORLING**

Glens Fall Post-Star

vigilance of government is absolutely essential. When I was at EPA, we actually gave groups millions of dollars so they could participate in rulemaking and even in some cases engage us in litigation."

Jorling believes that New York State should lead the country in prodding Congress and the Reagan administration to clean up our air, land and water. "EPA isn't showing the leadership it should," he says. "New York can be a major force in insisting on strong federal laws."

A hiker and fisherman when he can find the time, Jorling has spent happy vacations with his wife and their two daughters, tramping the Wind River Mountains of Wyoming and the Green Mountains of Vermont. Now, he agrees, it's time to try the Adirondacks.



Drawing by W. Miller; © 1987 The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

"That's what I love about Ben—he's all Adirondack."

## **BOB MARSHALL: "A WILDERNESS ORIGINAL"**

# **ADIRONDACKS FIGURE PROMINENTLY IN BIOGRAPHY OF CONSERVATION LEADER**

It finally happened. Almost half a century after the death of Bob Marshall at the age of 38, a full-length biography of this great champion of wilderness preservation has at last appeared.

*A Wilderness Original: The Life of Bob Marshall* by James Glover, published by The Mountaineers (Seattle, WA), makes for both inspiring and entertaining reading. For not only was Marshall an extraordinarily effective advocate for wilderness; he was also a quirky, funny, adventurous, lively, unfailingly optimistic man who cared at least as much for people as he cared for trees, lakes, and mountains.

The foremost influence in Marshall's life was his father, Louis, a distinguished lawyer, civil libertarian, and conservationist who played a major role in gaining "forever wild" protection for the Adirondack Forest Preserve at the state's constitutional convention of 1894. Bob Marshall's life was also shaped by the summers he spent at Knollwood, his family camp on Lower Saranac Lake, starting in 1901 when he was six months old; his childhood readings about the Lewis and Clark Expedition (which convinced him he'd been born a century too late); the picturesque writings of Verplank Colvin, the renowned 19th century Adirondack surveyor; and the tutelage and friendship of Herb Clark, the Marshall family guide.

### **Tramping The Woods**

As a child at Knollwood, the author tells us, Marshall "was often up before breakfast, tramping around while the woods were still fresh and soaked with dew. He got to know every ridge and game trail, every brook and boulder. In true explorer fashion, he gave names to them all: Found Knife Pass, Squashed Berry Valley, Hidden Heaven Rock." (Later, exploring the wilderness of northern Alaska, he would christen a pair of peaks the "Gates of the Arctic," a name now applied to our second largest national park.)

On August 15, 1915, Herb Clark led Bob and his brother, George, up their first mountain, 3352-foot Ampersand. They were exhilarated. From the rocky summit, the three hikers looked out over lakes and mountains in all directions. "Most intriguing," writes Glover, was the "ocean of blue green rippling ridges" rising high above them to the east. The scene was "nearly as untrammelled as the entire region must have appeared to Champlain," the first white man to see the Adirondacks three centuries earlier.

The trio soon set their sights on bigger game. White-face Mountain, standing solitary and graceful above Lake Placid, was their first summit over 4,000 feet. Next came their first excursion into the High Peaks region,



**BOB MARSHALL, 1901-1939**

Photo from Bancroft Library, University of California.

where they climbed Marcy, Algonquin, and Iroquois.

"A sort of spell came over them," explains Glover, "a binding enchantment known by those who venture into high, remote and wild places. The two teenagers and the man of nearly 50 experienced a camaraderie and spirit of adventure that they had never known before, and they found it addicting.

"For the next six years," Bob later recounted, "Herb, George and I found Adirondack mountain climbing our greatest joy in life."

It was during Bob's freshman year at the New York State College of Forestry (which his father helped to found) that he and George decided to climb all Adirondack peaks over 4,000 feet. In partnership with Herb, who could find the surest way up a mountain without even consulting a compass, they eagerly pursued this goal in 1921. On three excursions they climbed 23 peaks, 18 of which were trailless and seven of which had never been climbed before to anyone's knowledge. On one 13-day outing they ascended a total of 50,000 feet and hiked 300 miles.

"As we looked around us," Bob recalled of their view from Haystack, "we realized that this was one of the few places east of the Rockies where a person could look over miles of territory without seeing civilization."

By summer's end they had polished off the remaining 42 high peaks. Later they would discover and climb four more over 4,000 feet, making them the first "Adirondack Forty-Sixers" long before the name was ever coined.



After graduation, Marshall went to work for the U.S. Forest Service as a researcher at the Northern Rocky Mountain Forest Experiment Station. In his spare time he explored the backcountry, including the Flathead River region of Montana in what is now the Bob Marshall Wilderness, regarded by many as the finest component of our national wilderness system.

Returning from one unusually eventful trek, he telegraphed home: "SAFE IN MISSOULA AFTER TEN GLORIOUS DAYS IN SELWAY WILDERNESS. LETTER GIVING DETAILS OF BEING TREED BY GRIZZLY MAY EVENTUALLY FOLLOW."

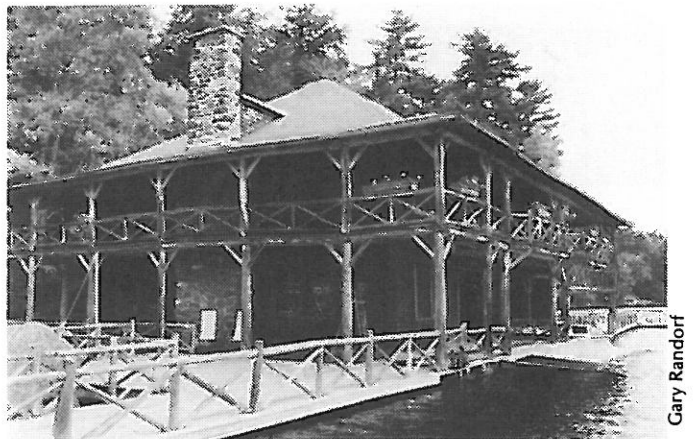
He also gave some thought to the importance of saving wilderness. For the *Service Bulletin* of 1928, he wrote an article titled "Wilderness as a Minority Right."

"A small share of the American people have an overpowering longing to retire periodically from the encompassing clutch of a mechanistic civilization," he observed. "To them the enjoyment of solitude, complete independence, and the beauty of undefiled panoramas is absolutely essential to happiness."

In another article, published later in *The Scientific Monthly*, Marshall elaborated. He described the physical, mental, and aesthetic values that made wilderness worth preserving. And he declared, in his now-famous call to arms: "There is only one hope of repulsing the tyrannical ambition of civilization to conquer every niche on earth. That hope is the organization of spirited people who will fight for the freedom of the wilderness."

One reason for saving wild places, according to Marshall, was to provide visitors with a chance for adventure in those few remaining areas where they could still test their physical limitations, be self-sufficient, and even face danger. "Life without the chance for such exertions would be for many persons a dreary game, scarcely bearable in its horrible banality," Marshall argued.

Later, when someone asked him how much wilderness we really needed, he responded without hesitation: "How many Brahms symphonies do we need?"



Gary Randorf

**AT KNOLLWOOD ON LOWER SARANAC LAKE—**  
The "Casino" building used by the Marshalls and four other families for community dining and boat storage.

Over the next decade, Marshall was to find the unexplored American wilderness he had dreamed of since first reading about Lewis and Clark. In trips to Alaska he climbed mountains, explored valleys, and reached the headwaters of rivers never before visited by human beings. He also wrote *Arctic Village*, a book based on a year's stay in the tiny settlement of Wiseman, in which he extolled the frontier life of Alaska. He dedicated the book, which became a Literary Guild selection, "to the people of the Koyukuk who have made for themselves the happiest civilization of which I have knowledge."

As the outdoor recreation expert for the U.S. Forest Service, and a force for conservation in the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Marshall left an imprint on public policy that would be felt decades later with the passage of the National Wilderness Preservation Act of 1964. While at the Forest Service, he compiled a list of 38 roadless areas (three of them in the Adirondacks) that merited preservation in their roadless state. And he badgered regional foresters to set aside more primitive areas where no development could occur.

#### Wilderness Society Formed

"I do wish you would hurry up," he wrote one such forester, "and get that entire country from the Locksaw River to the southern border of Region One (northern Rockies) set aside as wilderness before some damn fool chamber of commerce...demands a useless highway to provide work and a market for hotdogs and gasoline."

In 1934, Marshall's call for an organization of "spirited people" was answered. He and a half-dozen other wilderness advocates joined together to create the first national organization dedicated wholly to wilderness preservation. "It will no longer be the cause of a few individuals fighting," he announced, "but a well-organized and thoroughly earnest mass of wilderness lovers."

There had been enough compromising, he declared. "We want no straddlers, for in the past they have surrendered too much good wilderness which should never have been lost."

(continued next page)



**THE FIRST "FORTY-SIXERS"—Bob Marshall, Herb Clark, and George Marshall. (From *Peaks and People of the Adirondacks*, by Russell M.L. Carson, Doubleday.)**



**Jesse Allen, Bob Marshall and Nutirwik (Harry Snowden).**  
(From *Alaska Wilderness*, courtesy George Marshall.)

On January 20, 1935, The Wilderness Society was launched with a formal statement that began: "Primitive America is vanishing with appalling rapidity. Scarcely a month passes in which some highway does not invade an area which since the beginning of time had known only natural modes of travel." The statement acknowledged that most Americans preferred "mechanically disturbed" nature. The Wilderness Society was "cheerfully willing" to let them have most of outdoor America, "including most of the scenic features in the country which have already been made accessible to motorists."

But the Society wanted those areas yet remaining roadless to continue so unless some compelling reasons could be given otherwise.

Marshall remained a prime-mover in the organization until his sudden, surprising death in 1939. He died in his sleep on a train, apparently from a heart attack.

Of all his attributes, Marshall's enthusiasm was, says the author, perhaps his greatest one. "With the optimism that flowed from him like water from a mountain stream, Marshall not only stirred things up but became truly an inspiration," Glover writes.

Just how optimistic this man could be was brought home after a wilderness trip that might have discouraged even Lewis and Clark. The raft he was traveling in, on a wild and icy Alaskan river, flipped over. Marshall nearly drowned, and then might easily have died from exposure. Most of his equipment was lost. On that particular expedition, it rained for 27 of 29 days. Moreover,

he had failed to reach the summit of Mt. Doonerak, an objective of the trip.

"For a purely good time," he recounted afterwards, "it would be hard to beat our four-week adventure in that unexplored wilderness."

The author compares Marshall with John Muir, the writer/naturalist/crusader who founded the Sierra Club in the late 19th century. "Both Muir and Marshall were clearly in a kind of ecstasy in the wilderness," Glover observes. "Both liked their wilderness on the grandest scale possible. Both expressed their enthusiasm in extravagant terms (indeed, both had a penchant for overusing the word 'glorious'). Both had extensive experience in the mountains before becoming wilderness activists. And both were the primary founders of major preservationist organizations."

It is tempting to speculate on how Bob Marshall, had he lived as long as he should have, would view the American conservation scene today. No doubt he'd be elated by the growth and clout of The Wilderness Society (now approaching 200,000 members) and by the work of his spiritual offspring, the Adirondack Council. He would probably be encouraged by the Adirondack Park Agency's land-use controls on the park's private holdings and be pleased that one million acres of the publicly-owned Adirondack Forest Preserve have been designated Wilderness, where no motorboats, snowmobiles, jeeps, airplanes, or other mechanical intrusions are permitted. He would applaud the new parks and other federal reserves in Alaska, though he'd be appalled by current federal efforts to develop oil and gas production in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. He would surely be gratified by the federal wilderness system that he helped to foster, but horrified by the emphasis of the current administration on roadbuilding, clearcutting, and exploitation of virgin timber in our national forests.

#### **Still Very Much With Us**

Though he died almost 50 years ago, Bob Marshall still seems very much with us. His older brother, James, served as a director of the Adirondack Council until his death last year at 90. His younger brother (and fellow forty-sixer), George, lives in London but continues to serve on the governing council of The Wilderness Society. And Paul Schaefer, a Council director and leading Adirondack conservationist since the 1920s, vividly recalls the day he and Bob Marshall met by accident on top of Mt. Marcy. Paul remembers the details of their conversation as they surveyed the logging damage on nearby mountainsides.

"We simply must band together, all of us who love the wilderness," Marshall had said. "We must fight together—wherever and whenever wilderness is attacked."

Bob Marshall, who smiled a lot, would certainly smile right now if he knew that Paul Schaefer, and a whole new generation of wilderness protectors, were carrying on his fight.





# COUNCIL SETS LEGISLATIVE GOALS

*The Council's priorities for the current session of the state legislature include the following bills:*

## FAVOR

**CONSERVATION EASEMENT TAX PAYMENTS (S. 1815, A. 4620)**—Requires state to compensate local communities for property tax-losses resulting from state acquisition of conservation easements. (Most—but not all—easements currently require such compensation.)

**RIVERS PRESERVATION BILL (S.3749)**—Would add the remaining 97 miles of qualifying Adirondack “study rivers” to the state’s protective Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers System.

**CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROTECTION (no bill number yet)**—Would repeal an ill-conceived amendment to the conservation easement law that could invalidate easements under certain circumstances.

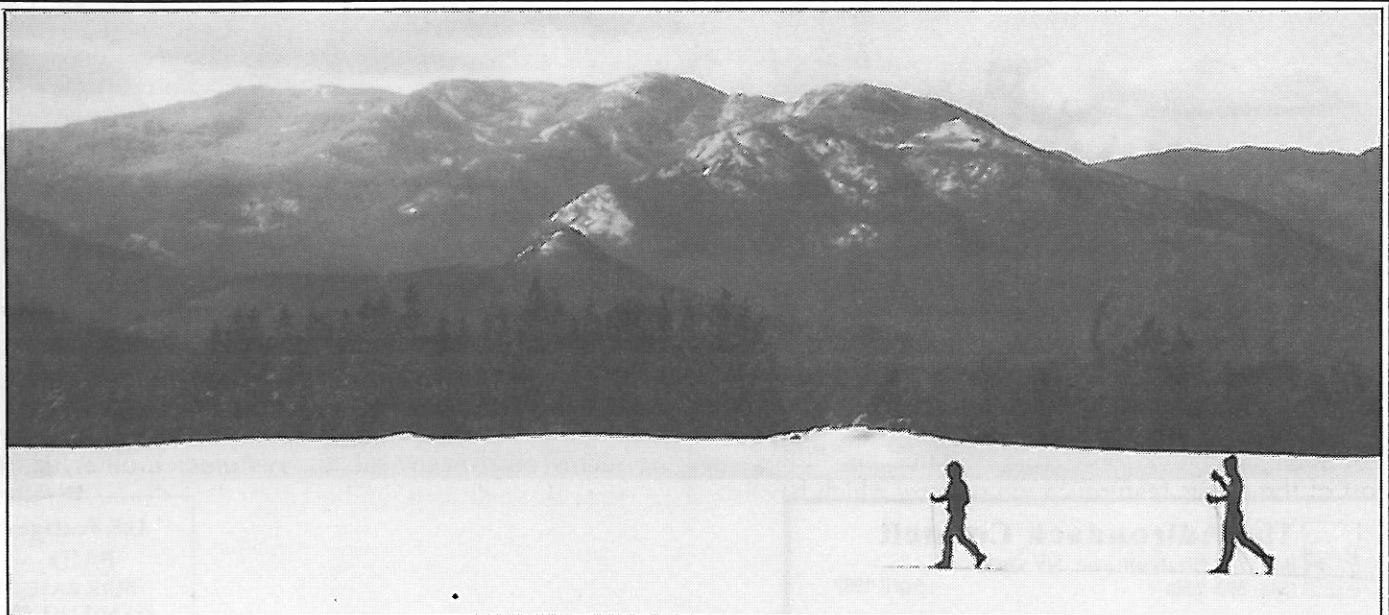
**ABOLISH DOUBLE STANDARD (A.1519)**—Would require that state-agency projects in the park be subject to the same development standards and environmental safeguards that apply to private development.

## OPPOSE

**STATE LAND MASTER PLAN MORATORIUM (S. 398, A.529)**—Would halt removal of remaining non-conforming structures in designated Wilderness areas.

**SMALL HYDROPOWER BILL (no number yet)**—Would provide additional financial inducement for development of small hydropower facilities throughout the park, to the detriment of some free-flowing rivers.

**LILCO BILL (A. 2597)**—Would allow Long Island Lighting Company to continue to burn high-sulfur fuel while all other New York State utilities must burn low-sulfur fuel. (See page 2.)



Gary Randorf

## Please Consider A Bequest To The Adirondack Council

Your bequest of money or property will give long-term sustenance to the Adirondack Council in its efforts to preserve forever the natural beauty and biological diversity of the Adirondack Park. Your bequest will help to insure that future generations will have a chance to hear the cry of a loon and the call of a moose; to enjoy an expanded system of wilderness canoeing; and to look out from a mountain summit over a natural rather than a developed world.

Your bequest will also benefit the communities of wildlife and plant life—the other living things with which we share this planet—whose health and survival depend on us.

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

## WASTE PLAN POOH-POOHED

The Adirondack Council has found the state's new solid-waste management plan to be vague, inadequate, and dangerous to our environment. The Council is also supporting legal action by a taxpayers' group in Warren, Washington, and Saratoga counties challenging construction of a solid-waste incinerator at Hudson Falls that would transport its ash residue, some of it toxic, to a state-approved landfill in Lewis, a small Adirondack community near Elizabethtown in the Champlain Valley.

In its plan, presented in draft form, the Department of Environmental Conservation proposed construction of 38 solid-waste incinerators throughout the state, including the one at Hudson Falls. The Council, in a letter to DEC, applauded the Department's stated goal of recycling up to 50% of the state's solid waste by 1997. But the Council questioned how DEC intends to achieve this

goal. The plan failed to present any specifics or budget recommendations, indicating that DEC places a higher priority on *burning* solid wastes—and producing electricity in the process—than on *recycling* the wastes.

"I'm convinced that trash burning *could* be the preferred alternative," said the Council's Gary Randorf, if these three conditions are met:

- 1) Recycling is seriously undertaken;
- 2) Toxic components are removed from the wastes before burning;
- 3) Temperatures are high enough for total combustion.

As currently proposed, however, the plants could pollute the air from incomplete burning and contaminate groundwater from toxic ash residue, while avoiding the only long-term solution to the growing problem of solid waste disposal: the recycling of paper, glass, metal, and other reusable materials



Gary Randorf



### The Adirondack Council

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

April 1987

*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.*

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:** Gary A. Randorf      **PROGRAM DIRECTOR:** George D. Davis  
**COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR:** Richard Beamish      **ADMINISTRATOR:** Donna Beal

**OFFICERS:**  
**Chairman** . . . . . Kim Elliman      **Vice Chairman** . . . Frances Beinecke  
**Vice Chairman** . . . Arthur M. Crocker      **Secretary** . . . . . Dean Cook  
**Treasurer** . . . . . Timothy L. Barnett

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

Timothy L. Barnett	Lynn T. Edgerton	Frederick O'Neal
Frances Beinecke	Kim Elliman	Clarence A. Petty
Peter A.A. Berle	John Ernst	Katharine M. Preston
Richard Booth	Barbara Glaser	Paul Schaefer
Thomas Cobb	William T. Hord	David Sive
Dean Cook	Harold A. Jerry, Jr.	Constance A. Tate
Arthur M. Crocker	George R. Lamb	Thomas D. Thatcher II
James C. Dawson	Richard W. Lawrence, Jr.	Francis B. Trudeau

**Dues and contributions are tax-deductible.**

A copy of the latest financial report filed with the New York Department of State may be obtained by writing: New York Department of State, Office of Charities Registration, Albany, NY 12231 or The Adirondack Council.

U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
**BULK RATE**  
**PERMIT NO. 40**  
Elizabethtown, NY  
12932