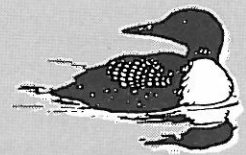




The Adirondack Council NEWSLETTER



to keep supporters informed of our activities

Vol. 8

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ADIRONDACK WILDLIFE — THE HALLMARK OF QUALITY

The sudden white flash of a deer's "flag", the eerie call of a loon, the song of a Bicknell's thrush, the bark of the coyote: such fleeting encounters with wildlife add immeasurable enjoyment to any visit to the Adirondack Park. Lois Crisler, trying to convey the importance of these events in her book *Arctic Wild*, wrote "wilderness without wildlife is mere scenery."

Decisions now being made by the Department of Environmental Conservation will determine the quality of Adirondack wildlife. It is important that all New Yorkers interested in the Park and its wildlife resource better understand that resource and assist the Department in making decisions we can take pride in.

The quantity, diversity, and uniqueness of Adirondack wildlife distinguish this region from other areas of the state. Three factors contribute to these distinguishing characteristics. First and foremost is the relative wildness of the region, a wildness that we must continuously work to preserve. In writing for the Temporary Study Commission on the Future of the Adirondacks Dr. C.H.D. Clarke stated, "If what makes the Adirondacks different...is wildness, then it must be said that it is most unlikely that there will ever be any more of this quality in the future than there is now, and the preservation of the present level will require deliberate planning and restraint of natural impulses and trends very much in evidence now."

The second factor is the unique mixture of forever wild forest preserve lands with private lands where timber harvesting takes place. This mixture allows for animal species that flourish only in old growth forest stands to thrive while, in close proximity, other species thrive in cut-over lands.

And, finally, because of its geology, soils, physiography, and climate, the Adirondack Park contains extensive areas of life zones, or habitats, found either not at all or in very limited quantity elsewhere in the state.

Adirondack wildlife, including fish, delight both Park visitor and resident, regardless of whether they fish or hunt. A few short decades ago the consumptive uses of wildlife - hunting, fishing and trapping - predominated. Today quiet pleasant escape from the rapid pace of our everyday life makes birding, photography, track identification, and just taking pleasure in the sights and sounds of various creatures equally important. This is encouraging since it not only makes wildlife enjoyment a year-round possibility but also encourages the recognition of the interdependency and importance of all species; a healthy environment benefits not only wildlife but all who enjoy wildlife regardless of how. And surely the quality of the setting is unmatched for any form of wildlife enjoyment.

Life Zones

Adirondack life zones range from open water bodies through marshes, bogs, spruce swamps, mixed woods, northern hard-

woods, upper spruce slopes, subalpine and alpine. The latter two are unique to the Adirondacks in New York State while the two boreal types - the spruce swamps and the upper spruce slopes - although found in limited amounts elsewhere in the state are common only in the Adirondacks. Bogs too, while frequent in the Park, are very rare elsewhere. Even the mixed woods and northern hardwoods, although common elsewhere in the state, reach their crowning glory in the Adirondacks.

The result of this unparalleled variety of life zones is a diversity of wildlife species found nowhere else in the state. The ring-necked duck, rusty blackbird, marten, mink frog, spruce grouse, ruby-crowned kinglet, raven, ladder-backed woodpecker, yellow-nosed vole, longtail shrew, winter wren, Lincoln's sparrow, golden eagle, black-backed woodpecker, moose, round whitefish and brown-capped chickadee are found only in the Adirondacks. Many other species, such as the loon, yellow-bellied flycatcher, fisher, Bicknell's thrush, olive-backed thrush, osprey, red-breasted nuthatch, and numerous other common Adirondack species can be found only infrequently elsewhere in the state.

Such occurrences make the Adirondack Park a real attraction for birders and others interested in seeing unusual species of wildlife in their native setting. This potential has not been capitalized on in Adirondack promotional material. In some cases, where it might be detrimental to a species, it should not be promoted. In the vast majority of cases, however, protecting ecosystems and their community of species will insure that the individual species prospers and will serve as a natural attraction for wildlife observers.

Species Restoration

Although rich in wildlife species, the Adirondack Park is missing, or contains only remnant populations of, some of the species historically associated with it. The cougar, bald and golden eagles, wolf, lynx, moose, and peregrine falcon, as well as others, fit in this category. Most of the reasons for the decline of these species, and in some cases their extirpation, can be traced to humans and land use changes. The widespread clearing of Adirondack forests in the nineteenth century and the resultant change in habitat coupled with unregulated hunting, trapping and fishing, led to the demise of many of these species. Others succumbed to DDT and other pesticide residues in the mid-twentieth century. These causes have diminished. The great forests have grown back, DDT has been banned and professional wildlife management programs have been instituted. Is there, then, hope that some of these species may return?

The answer to that question is complex. Biologically some ecological niches may have been filled by other species; as an example, the eastern coyote may have filled the niche left by the timber wolf. In other cases, public attitudes might preclude

a successful restoration program. A case in point is the timber wolf. The "Little Red Riding Hood" syndrome and the fear of deer herd or livestock predation, although biologically refutable concerns, may preclude the feasibility of reintroduction.

Some restoration efforts have been undertaken already. Active programs by the State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to restore the peregrine falcon and bald eagle are in progress, and although it is still too early to be certain, seem to be headed for success. In 1981 and 1982 the Department successfully reared and released 25 peregrines in the Adirondacks; another 16 will be released this year. Plans to rear and release 50-60 bald eagles over the next four years have been approved. The DEC's Division of Fish and Wildlife deserves a great deal of credit for these exciting and visionary programs.

DEC is considering restoration programs for five other species in addition to the peregrine falcon and bald eagle. They are most enthusiastic about the chances for success with the moose and the cougar but serious consideration is also being given to the lynx, wolf, and golden eagle. Chances of successful restoration of these species could be summed up this way:

Species	Biological Feasibility	Public Attitude	Chance of Success
Bald Eagle	+	+	+
Cougar	+	?	?
Golden Eagle	?	+	?
Lynx	?	+	?
Moose	+	+	+
Peregrine Falcon	+	+	+
Wolf	?	-	?

Public support is vital to a successful restoration program. The Governor's Temporary Study Commission on the Future of the Adirondacks summed it up this way: "We must be wise enough to give such creatures the kind of protection they need and grateful that we have the knowledge to do so. If these species cannot be protected and allowed to multiply in the Adirondack Park, then, unfortunately, there is probably no room for them in the northeast."

Goal

The Adirondack Council firmly believes that the basic wild-life management goal in the Adirondack Park should be to foster a wild Adirondack environment and all the flora and fauna historically associated with that environment.

The Adirondack Park is special. It is the only region of any size in the northeast that remains in a near natural state. It retains large areas with no roads, no motor vehicles and limited human disturbance. It is the only area in the northeast where successful restoration can occur for species that require large tracts of undeveloped land.

The Adirondacks can and should be known as the last great wild area of the northeast. To achieve such a reputation will take a concerted effort by the business community, sportsmen, environmentalists, birders, residents, visitors and state government. The result will be well worthwhile. All that is needed is the will.

CHEMICAL SPRAYING LITIGATION: GETTING THEIR ATTENTION

After many years of observation, study and consultation with a host of experts, The Adirondack Council became convinced that the aerial chemical spraying program to combat blackflies and mosquitos in several Adirondack towns was an exercise in

futility and posed a threat both to humans and wildlife, especially birds and beneficial insects. The chemical used, Dibrom (Naled), is a suspected mutagen and according to label restrictions should not be sprayed into water (a difficult requirement to meet in most Adirondack localities because of the abundance of streams, lakes, ponds and wetlands).

The Council initiated two separate legal actions, one in 1982 and another in 1983, because it became apparent that the users and regulators were not sufficiently responding to our concerns and pleadings. Legal actions became necessary to get their attention and although a state supreme court judge has recently denied our request for an injunction to stop the spraying in the four towns we sued this year (Indian Lake, Webb, Keene, and Black Brook), it is obvious that a great deal has been accomplished by the Council's initiatives:

- Two towns were stopped in their tracks from spraying in 1982 and the State's Attorney General stepped in to stop almost all spraying.
- Because of the attention and hard facts generated from the Council's 1982 action, the State Commissioner of Health agreed that there wasn't a health threat in the Adirondacks warranting state financial aid for spraying; state reimbursement to towns was cut off.
- Warren County phased out all spraying and laid off the director of their spraying program.
- Towns wanting to spray in 1983 were required to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate the effects of the spray program.
- The pressure of our lawsuits has no doubt encouraged both the Adirondack Park Agency and the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to enforce their legal responsibilities and require permits for the spraying of wetlands and open waters. DEC has also continued their policy of not issuing permits to spray state lands or waters.
- The news media has given the issue broad coverage, informing more citizens, and helping to raise awareness of both the potential problems and alternatives.
- The possible use of Bti (a bacterium) to control mosquitos and blackflies in their larval stage is being broadly debated and studied. Bti holds great promise because it is very effective, harms little other than the target insects, and apparently poses minimal or no threat to humans and the environment.
- Some local officials are questioning the present program (in Keene, for instance, the Supervisor and a councilman voted against spraying!) In 1983 about a dozen Adirondack towns that historically sprayed decided against spraying. Last year local officials took strong issue with our position, now several are on our side.
- Towns are very wary of spraying private lands where the owners object and have done a much better job of publicizing the fact that landowners not wishing to have their property sprayed can so notify local officials.

We believe that the day of indiscriminate aerial chemical control of blackflies and mosquitos is on its way out, and that the body of citizens and visitors opposing the present program and demanding alternatives will continue to grow.

The Council is indebted to the support provided us by the following co-plaintiffs: The Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks, High Peaks Audubon, Northern Adirondack Audubon, Upper Hudson Environmental Action Committee, Clearwater Chapter Trout Unlimited, David Thomas-Train, C.V. "Major" Bowes, Bernard "Bun" Arndt, Harold and Mae Heald, Peter and Carolyn Fish.

Sometimes legal action is the only way to get attention.

LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UP

Although the State Legislature may return briefly to address a few pressing items, its general lawmaking chores are essentially completed. The end of the session brought very good tidings as the Assembly and Senate both passed the Conservation Easement Bill, the Council's top legislative priority for a number of years!

Getting the bill passed was the result of the work of many, with the Council directors, staff and members all playing a significant role. We sent out a host of memoranda explaining and promoting the legislation, we were involved with a number of legislative briefings, and we encouraged supporting editorials from several of the state's major newspapers.

The battle is not over yet, however. Now is the critical time when your help can make the difference. There is reason to believe that the Governor may not sign the bill into law unless public support is made clear to him. Please write or send a mailgram to the Governor immediately; this could be one of the most important environmental protection bills of the decade. Write:

**Governor Mario Cuomo
Executive Chamber
State Capitol
Albany, New York 12224**

urging his signature on the conservation easement legislation (A.2323-B) now before him.

The easement bill will be a great aid to wise and proper use of the private lands of the Adirondack Park and will operate state-wide to help preserve farmland, forest lands, recreational open space lands, scenic quality, and historic and architectural resources.

Easements are simply an agreement in perpetuity, entered into between the owners of real property and either the state or non-profit, private conservation organizations, to the effect that the real property will not be altered in ways that are destructive to natural and cultural resources of significant public benefit.

The Legislature is to be commended for passing this legislation and also for resisting passage of a variety of proposed measures that, if passed, would have posed serious threats to the Adirondack Park.

Unfortunately, the Legislature did not see fit to pass legislation to better protect Adirondack shorelines and highways or add the approximately 116 miles of Adirondack rivers to the State's Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers system even though studies show these rivers should be protected. Such legislation should receive high priority next year.

APA GOALS PROGRAM

The final schedule of public workshops for the Adirondack Park Agency goals program (see April NEWSLETTER) has been announced as follows:

Date	Area
July 14	Tri-Lakes (Placid-Saranac-Tupper)
July 28	Lake George-Warrensburg
August 11	Old Forge-Raquette Lake
August 25	Piseco-Northville
September 8	Cranberry Lake-Star Lake
September 22	Port Henry-Ticonderoga
September 29	Duane-Dannemora
October 6	North Creek-Schroon Lake
October 13	Elizabethtown-AuSable Forks

It is imperative that as many Council supporters as possible attend these meetings. Please call the APA (518-891-4050) for the specific location of the meeting most convenient for you to attend.

The first two public meetings, in Keeseville and Blue Mountain Lake, were very constructive. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of a 90-minute educational TV program aired by WCFE in Plattsburgh on June 28. The minority element in the Park that has long argued for the abolition of the Park Agency dominated the show. They effectively prevented adequate presentation and explanation of the goals program and the effective participation of the remaining live studio audience and viewers who were interested in a constructive dialogue. The "abolitionists" invite pity for their dedication to such futile efforts but deserve admonishment for obstructing efforts to make things better in the Park.

Dates and locations for workshops outside the Park have not been set yet. Such workshops are still anticipated.

COUNCIL ACTIVITIES April-June 1983

Constitutional Amendment Endorsed

The Council's Board of Directors voted to endorse the proposed amendment to Article XIV of the State Constitution that would allow the exchange of approximately 10 acres of forest preserve and several buildings once a part of the adjacent Camp Sagamore for approximately 200 acres of private land that would become forest preserve. Although generally opposed to amendments to Article XIV, the Board found that this particular site specific amendment would be in the public interest from both a forest preserve and historic preservation standpoint.

“We are not fighting progress. We are making it.”

—Howard Zahniser

**Have you thought
about how
you can help?**

- *A Bequest in Your Will?*
- *An Income or Remainder Trust?*
- *A Life Insurance Gift?*
- *A Gift in Kind?*

**The Adirondack Council
Has a Deferred-Gift Plan for You—**

*For more information, clip this portion
of your NEWSLETTER and mail to:*

*The Adirondack Council
Deferred-Gift Program
Box D-2
Elizabethtown, New York 12932*

Adirondack Forestry Association

With financial assistance from the Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks, the Council has hired Valerie Luzadis, a recent Cornell graduate who majored in forest science, to help determine the feasibility of establishing an Adirondack Forestry Association. The Forestry Association would assist landowners in developing environmentally sensitive land management plans for their properties. Valerie will conduct a statistically sound survey of Adirondack forest landowners to determine their management objectives, analyze the demand for various services the Association might provide, and analyze regional markets to determine what products might be saleable in different geographic areas of the Park.

Adirondack Land Trust

The Council has decided to seek financing for a land trust project. Land trusts use the full range of land preservation devices to achieve their specific objectives while offering the landowner a variety of incentives to practice good land stewardship. Land trusts have been successful in all geographic sections of the nation.

In the Adirondacks, most land trust activities have been undertaken in past years by the Adirondack Conservancy and other chapters of the national Nature Conservancy. The evolution of the Nature Conservancy's land preservation efforts, however, has necessitated focusing their activities on the preservation of rare and endangered species and outstanding natural communities.

The basic goal of The Adirondack Council's land trust project is to preserve and enhance the agricultural and forested open space character and the natural ecosystems of New York State's Adirondack region (Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Oneida, St. Lawrence, Saratoga, Warren and Washington Counties). Specific objectives of the Trust will be designed to protect and promote a strong agricultural, forestry and low impact recreational economic base in the region.

Meetings

During the second quarter of 1983 the staff participated in the following meetings:

April

- 1 Interviewed by WPTZ-TV Plattsburgh
- 5 Met with Essex County Garden Club concerning Mary Prime Memorial Fund
- 6-7 Attended Adirondack Park Agency meeting in Lake George
- 8 Participated in Adirondack Park Agency's forum on pesticides
- 12 Spoke to Adirondack Mountain Club, Glens Falls Chapter, on acid rain
- 14 Attended meeting on proposed Town of Ticonderoga sanitary landfill
- 16 Participated as panel member at Acid Rain Conference, Mohawk Valley Community College in Utica.

- 19 Met with members of NYS Legislature
- 21 Attended CANARI (Committee of Adirondackers to Neutralize Acid Rain Inflow) meeting
- 25 Spoke to Green Mountain Audubon in Burlington on the Adirondack Park and acid rain
- 26 Introduced "The Adirondack-The Land Nobody Knows" movie at the Legislative Office Building Auditorium in Albany

May

- 2 Participated in forest preserve unit management planning session at DEC in Albany
- 3 Met with members of NYS Legislature
- 6 Met with Planning Committee, Conference on the Adirondacks
- 9 Met with DEC Commissioner Williams in Albany
- 10 Met with DEC wildlife personnel in Albany
- 10 Spoke to Southern Adirondack Audubon Chapter in Glens Falls
- 10 Attended Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks meeting in New York
- 12 Council Board meeting in New York
- 17 Met with members of NYS Legislature on proposed sulfur emissions and acid rain controlling legislation.
- 19 Attended Supreme Court hearing on blackfly spraying litigation
- 19 Attended annual meeting, Adirondack Research Center
- 19 Keynote speaker, anniversary dinner, Schenectady Chapter, Adirondack Mountain Club
- 19 Attended Adirondack Park Agency meeting in Ray Brook
- 19 Spoke at Canada Valleys Audubon board meeting in Oppenheim
- 20 Attended Adirondack Goals Committee meeting in Ray Brook
- 20 Attended parks conference in Albany
- 23 Attended meeting with DEC, utilities and industry on sulfur emissions policy
- 24 Met with members of NYS Legislature
- 26 Attended hearing on sulfur emissions in Ray Brook
- 26 Attended meeting on gypsy moth spraying in Ticonderoga
- 28 Keynote speaker at meeting of Adirondack 46ers

June

- 1 Spoke to Essex Community Heritage Organization on acid rain
- 2 Inspected recent forest preserve acquisition in Herkimer County
- 3 Met with DEC's Director of Lands and Forests on proposed forest preserve acquisitions
- 6 Met with Commerce Commissioner William Donohue
- 7 Attended hearing on proposed sulfur emissions and acid rain reduction legislation in Albany
- 9 Attended Adirondack Park Goals meeting in Keeseville
- 13-17 Attended acid rain conference in Quebec City
- 20 Discussed wetlands and clearcutting at Huntington Forest meeting in Newcomb
- 23 Attended Adirondack Park Goals meeting in Blue Mountain Lake
- 24-25 Participated in St. Lawrence University Conference panel on blackflies
- 28 Spoke to Adirondack Essex County Garden Club on Council's intern program
- 28 Participated in WCFE-TV panel on Adirondack Goals Program



The Adirondack Council

Box D-2, Elizabethtown, NY 12932

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

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