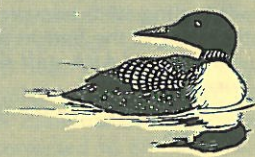




# The Adirondack Council NEWSLETTER



to keep supporters informed of our activities

Vol. 2

November 1978

No. 5

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ACTIVITIES

A frequently asked question is, "What does the executive director of The Adirondack Council do?" In an attempt to answer that question, following is a 4 week summary of his *major* activities:

### \*JULY 13

- Phone conversation with a Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Pathologist about insecticides used in aerial spraying programs for black fly and spruce budworm and some of the latest research and studies.
- Phone conversation with an individual to see if he would be willing to give a workshop on how to teach about wilderness at the 3rd Annual Adirondack Conference for Educators.
- Phone conversation with Department of Transportation (DOT) employee about highway pull-off interpretive signs and the forthcoming Adirondack Highway Council meeting.
- Phone conversation with Chairman Harold Jerry about new accounting and other procedures that should be implemented since gaining federal tax exemption.
- Phone conversation with the editor of Adirondack Life about some suspected inaccuracies in the latest issue.
- Wrote letter to Chairman of Conservation Committee of High Peaks Audubon about insecticide spraying and the New York Telephone microwave towers.
- Telephone conversation with Adirondack Mountain Club member about map amendments proposed in the Town of North Elba.
- Made application to Post Office to obtain special bulk third class mailing rate.
- Began writing Newsletter #4.
- Began review of "Draft Supplementary Environmental Impact Statement, 1980 Olympic Winter Games."

### \*JULY 14

- Prepared a presentation on outdoor education to be given at a workshop for youth leaders, sponsored by the Essex County Youth Bureau.
- Completed review of Draft Supplementary Olympic EIS and prepared a statement for the Federal Economic Development Administration.

### \*JULY 15

- Participated in a workshop for youth leaders sponsored by the Essex County Youth Bureau.

### \*JULY 17

- Reviewed two appendices to the Draft Supplementary Olympic EIS and included comments on them in the statement previously prepared.
- Responded to an Adirondack Conservancy Committee questionnaire on unique natural areas.
- Wrote to Harold Jerry about the Council's future role in public hearings because of concern over process and procedure in recent Park Agency hearing on microwave towers.
- Finished drafting Newsletter #4.

### \*JULY 18

- Read report, "Impact on Forest Birds of the 1975 Spruce Budworm Spray Operation in New Brunswick."
- Proofed typed draft of Newsletter and delivered to printer.
- Worked on interpretive messages for highway pull-off interpretive signs.

### \*JULY 19

- Wrote to state legislator about proposed state boat launching site for Lake George.
- Listed legislative bills still outstanding to enable checking their disposition with legislature.
- Wrote Army Corps of Engineers about wetland fill on Lake Champlain.

### \*JULY 20

- Worked on highway pull-off interpretive signs.
- Gave slide lecture at Camp Dudley about the Adirondack Park.

### \*JULY 21

- Checked status of Adirondack legislation.
- Prepared financial information for accountant for six month accounting period.
- More work on highway interpretive signs, including telephone discussion with state geologist.
- Telephone discussion with Adirondack Mountain Club member about Olympic projects and other mutual concerns.

### \*JULY 24

- Attended pre-blasting meeting on Route 73.
- Expressed concerns over this meeting to DOT and the Adirondack Park Agency (APA).

### \*JULY 25

- Served as one of the leaders for an Adirondack Mountain Club ecology field trip to the Adirondack Conservancy's Silver Lake Preserve.

### \*JULY 26

- Delivered large solicitation mailing to Post Office.
- Letter to DOT Project Engineer about the blasting of rock at Pitchoff Mountain along Route 73.
- Begin preparation of statements for North Elba map amendment hearings.
- Proofed Newsletter #4 at printers.

### \*JULY 27

- Telephone conversation with Adirondack Mountain Club member and staff at the APA.
- Further work on North Elba map amendment statements.
- Research at Keene Valley Library on historical information for interpretive signing.

### \*JULY 28

- Picked up Newsletter #4 from printer.
- Paid semi-monthly bills.
- Further work on map amendment statements.
- Telephone discussion with DEC Deputy Commissioner about several items of concern.



## \*JULY 31

- Meeting with two property owners on their concern over the siting of the Barton Brook power line.
- Reviewed APA staff draft of their revised rules and regulations.
- Completed statements for North Elba map amendment hearings.

## \*AUGUST 1

- Completed review of Draft Revision of APA rules and regulations and prepared statement on the subject.
- Attended and testified at APA hearing on the rules and regulations.

## \*AUGUST 2

- Delivered Newsletter mailing to Post Office.
- Discussed content of Council's testimony on APA's rules and regulations with reporter at Adirondack Daily Enterprise.
- Reviewed slide files to select wildflower photographs for the Nature Conservancy.
- Telephone discussions with several people on APA's rules and regulations, APA, legislature, and next year's legislative outlook, in an attempt to solve the world's problems. Don't quite succeed.
- Discussion with secretary on procedure for solicitation of past supporters.

## \*AUGUST 3

- Conferred with Highway Council member about highway pull-off interpretive signs.
- Telephoned state geologist, APA staffer, and private artist in an attempt to coordinate art work for interpretive signs.
- Wrote DEC forester inviting him to present a workshop at the Adirondack Educator's Conference.
- Sent interpretive messages and sign specs. to APA staffer, who will do the art work on highway pull-off interpretive signs.
- Studied "Business Permits Bill" (on the Governor's desk for his signature).

## \*AUGUST 4

- Worked on long range planning proposals for the Council's Chairman of Long Range Planning.
- Worked on Membership Renewal Form and Appeal Letter for 1978 Membership Contributions.

## \*AUGUST 7

- Called Governor's office, expressing concern over the Business Permits Bill.
- Paid month-ending bills.
- Long telephone conversation with Chairman Harold Jerry upon his return from vacation.
- Completed first draft of membership solicitation letter.

## \*AUGUST 8

- Finalized membership letter.
- Coordinated an Albany meeting on highway pull-off interpretive signs.
- Telephone discussions with DEC Regional Director and Legal Counsel about ski trails on Whiteface Mountain.
- Sent mailing to Council's Executive Committee on DEC's proposed Acid Waters Management Program.

## \*AUGUST 9

- Read the joint DEC and Economic Development Administration's Environmental Assessment of Uphill Transportation for Mount VanHoevenberg.
- Read APA comments to Economic Development Administration re. the Draft Supplementary Olympic EIS.
- Read APA staff report on Whiteface Mountain ski trails.
- Drafted letters to DEC Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner on a variety of subjects.



## THE ADIRONDACK PARK (Part Two)

### HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

In 1609 Samuel de Champlain first laid eyes on the eastern fringe of the Adirondack region as he travelled the lake now bearing his name. Indians apparently did not settle permanently in the Adirondack Mountains because of the long, harsh winters. In mild weather they hunted and fished the area. For almost 200 years after Champlain, these mountains to the west of Lake Champlain remained unexplored by white men. Many western states were settled before the first hardy souls filtered into the Adirondacks to eke out a meager living by lumbering or trapping.

In 1779 New York State passed an Act of Attainder in which the people of the state became the collective owners of 7,000,000 acres of lands and waters, the bulk of all land in the state north of the Mohawk River. The forested state lands were soon stripped of timber, and the abundant fish and wildlife populations were drastically reduced by over-harvesting. Devastating fires often followed the careless timber cutting. State land was being purchased, stripped of timber, and allowed to revert to the state for nonpayment of taxes. By the 1850's practically all that remained undeveloped were the inaccessible mountain summits and passes in the heart of the Adirondack Mountains. Farsighted individuals soon began pleading that something be done to protect the dwindling "wilderness." Many were particularly concerned about the effect of land abuses on the forested watersheds, the most vital in the state. Verplanck Colvin, surveyor and cartographer of the mountains, best captured public attention. Colvin was "amazed at the natural park like beauty of this wilderness." In 1870 Colvin climbed Mt. Seward and observed,

"the view hence was magnificent, yet differing from other of the loftier Adirondacks, in that no clearings were discernible; wilderness everywhere; lake on lake, river on river, mountain on mountain, numberless."

As others joined Colvin in urging the creation of a public park, the state finally began steps to do just that. Three years stand as milestones in the early movement to protect the Adirondacks:

1885—The state legislature created the Adirondack Forest Preserve consisting of all state-owned land in the region.

1892—The legislature created the Adirondack Park by drawing the famous "blue line" on a map of northern New York. Within this blue line were both publicly-owned Forest Preserve and intermingling private lands.

1894—The voters amended the State Constitution to insure that the Forest Preserve "will be forever kept as wild forest lands." Henceforth no cutting, removal or destruction of trees would be sanctioned without a constitutional amendment.

Many years later, in 1952, the idea first surfaced to zone the Forest Preserve for different kinds of uses and purposes. The New York State Joint Legislative Committee on Natural Resources picked up on that idea in the early 1960's, when it initiated a study of the possibility of setting aside parts of the Preserve as wilderness areas and zoning the rest of the preserve for other purposes, including concentrated recreation. Eventually the Committee identified the vast majority of the lands that were to be officially designated wilderness a decade later.

In the late 1960's new pressures on the Adirondack Park surfaced. The completion of the Adirondack Northway (Interstate 87) suddenly made the Park within easy reach of millions of metropolitan area dwellers. The increased accessibility, along with increasing leisure time and growing affluence of an expanding population, posed a new threat—that of rapid, uncontrolled development. As a result the following took place:

1967—A report prepared under the auspices of Laurance Rockefeller recommended that the central 1/3 of the Adirondacks be turned into an Adirondack National Park (an idea almost unanimously opposed by the



state's citizenry).

1970—The Temporary Study Commission on the Future of the Adirondacks (appointed by Governor Nelson Rockefeller in 1968) published a report containing numerous recommendations, the most significant of which was the call to the legislature to create an independent, bipartisan Adirondack Park Agency (APA) with general powers over the use of private as well as public lands.

1971—The legislature established the Adirondack Park Agency.

1972—An Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan, authored by the APA, was approved by Governor Rockefeller. The master plan has since governed management of the Park's publicly owned lands (Forest Preserve).

1973—The Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan, also authored by APA, was approved by the New York State Legislature. Unavoidably controversial, because it controls the development of private lands, the law attempts to balance the need for protection of the Park's natural resources with the economic and social needs of the Park's residents. With legislative approval of this plan the Adirondacks became the largest area in the nation under comprehensive state land-use controls.

(to be continued)



## CHAIRMAN AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MEET WITH DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRON- MENTAL CONSERVATION COMMISSIONER BERLE

On September 22 several issues were discussed in Peter Berle's office. Highlights of that meeting follow:

*Whiteface Mountain Ski Trails* - The Commissioner explained that the width of a portion of the men's downhill slope exceeded the constitutional limitation of 80' because of the need to locate appurtenances such as the access road, lift lines, snowmaking equipment, etc. Additionally, two large islands of vegetation were removed because exaggerated downhill speeds attainable in this area and improper slope conditions would have created hazardous conditions for even expert skiers. The Commissioner seems to favor a constitutional amendment, specific to this situation, as the preferable remedial action because restoration of the trails pursuant to constitutional restraints would impose substantial recreational limitation. The Council is presently preparing a letter to Peter Berle requesting corrective action to redress this unequivocal constitutional violation. The Council will not take a position as to whether this should be accomplished by restoration or constitutional amendment.

The ski lodge expansion was discussed since that structure is now substantially closer to the Recreational River than the 150 foot setback requirement with which private landowners must comply. The Commissioner said it was unfortunate that expansion plans preceded the classification of the river and that the rules and regulations did not require compliance for state structures. He believes this should be corrected to eliminate a dual standard.

*Mt. VanHoevenberg Proposed Funicular* - The possibility of the construction of a cable car system as an "improved" uphill transportation system to move sleds, drivers, and visitors to the top of the Bobsled Run has caused the Council considerable concern. The Commissioner has not taken a position on the proposal because he feels that the Supplementary Environmental Assessment did not adequately measure the impact of the funicular to enable evaluating its consistency with the State Land Master Plan. Sasaki Associates, the consultants that helped prepare the final impact statement for the 1980 Olympics, will be asked to conduct an adequate impact assessment, including a more detailed look at alternative modes of transportation.

The Council is concerned about the visual impact, topographical alteration, and the vegetative cutting required. Additionally, there is concern that it will attract additional people to an already over-used area. It will also be very expensive to construct and operate. The Commissioner said he had no answer as to who would operate the funicular and how it would be funded. The cost of operating the present facilities at Mt. VanHoevenberg, along with the new refrigeration equipment, far exceeds the income of the Bobrun Complex.

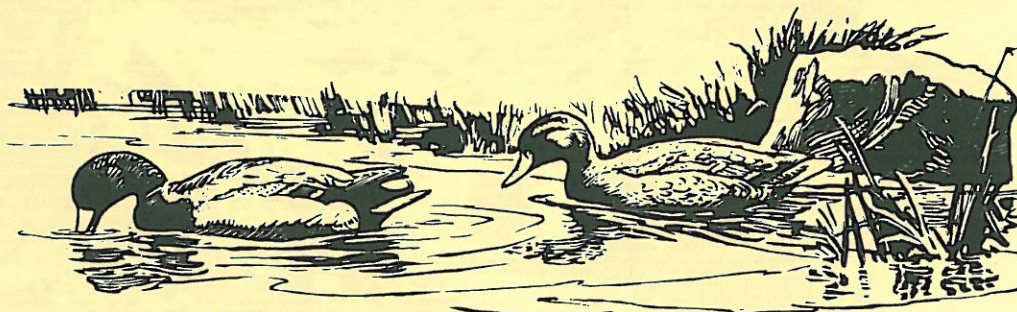
*Perkins Clearing* - The Commissioner stated he has made no deals with anyone on the classification and use of this area, should the proposed land exchange between the state and International Paper Company take place, although he admitted to pressure from some sportsmen to seek his approval of leaving Whitney Lake open to float planes and the road open to Pillsbury Lake. The Council feels this area should logically be annexed to the West Canada Lake Wilderness with motor vehicle access precluded.

*Acid Waters Management* - The Council's concern has to do with the penetration of wilderness areas with helicopters to conduct lake surveys and to lime waters. In this vein Harold Jerry asked Peter Berle if he would consider the following:

1. That the Department ascertain the cost and feasibility of conducting the program without the use of motorized equipment.
2. That the Department ascertain if comparable lakes outside wilderness, canoe, and primitive areas at similar elevation and longitude can be substituted for those identified in restricted areas.

The Commissioner said he would honor the request and asked for a formal resolution from the Council on the matter.

The Council is greatly concerned about the acid waters problem but feels wilderness management should not be compromised unnecessarily. Additionally, the Council would like to see a greater focus on curtailing the root cause of the problem, which is the air pollution reaching the Adirondack area from the west and north. Combating the symptoms is expensive and seems to provide only temporary beneficial results.





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## The Adirondack Council

Box D-2, Elizabethtown, NY 12932

*A coalition of the National Audubon Society; The Sierra Club, Atlantic Chapter; 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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