

## NEWS IN AND ABOUT THE SIX-MILLION-ACRE ADIRONDACK PARK

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- Climate Smart Community Grants
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## Wilderness Advocates Speak Out

Thousands of public comments support motor-free Wilderness

THANK YOU for helping urge Governor Cuomo's Adirondack Park Agency (APA) to seize this historic opportunity to expand the Adirondack High Peaks Wilderness by 30,000 acres and classify the Boreas Ponds, a buffer, and other key lands and waters as Wilderness.

The public comment period ended on Dec. 30. Across eight public hearings, citizens supporting Wilderness were almost double those in opposition to motor-free protections.

In addition to people dedicating time and resources to travel and speak at public hearings, tens of thousands of people submitted written comments (more than 80 percent supporting Wilderness), shared social media posts, signed petitions, wrote to regional newspapers, and helped spread the word. Your actions in support of motor-free Wilderness protection for Boreas Ponds had an impact.



*A large crowd attended the Rochester hearing. Hundreds of Wilderness advocates (in green shirts) turned out for the statewide public hearings, including supporters and staff from the Adirondack Council, the BeWildNY coalition groups, regional, state and national conservation organizations, and committed citizens.*

### What's Next?

The APA will present a preferred alternative to the Governor and he will then make a final decision. Please stay informed and in touch. We will need your involvement again.

We can all be very proud of our fight for Adirondack Wilderness and how we respected and made efforts to address the concerns of all while holding firm to our principles. If the Governor and his team listen to the huge outpouring of support for an expanded Wilderness that protects the legacy of the Adirondacks, and prioritizes facts, science and the law – not politics – to drive the classification decision, then by summer we should be celebrating an historic once-in-a-lifetime expansion of Wilderness that includes the Boreas Ponds.



*Bluebird skies and warm, winter sun greeted Council staff on an early February morning trek to Boreas Ponds.*

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### Legal Counsel:

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### Wilderness Campaign:

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Knickerbocker; Smartmeme Studios

### Clean Water Initiative:

David Miller; Bernard Melewski, Esq.

Newsletter photos by Adirondack Council staff  
unless otherwise noted.



## Political Forces Challenge the Adirondacks

Your support needed now more than ever

In these times of great social and political conflict, the timeless beauty and natural serenity of the Adirondack Park are a refuge from the anxiety and anger of political discord. Here, we can find inner peace simply by absorbing some of the tranquility of the vast forests and waters we inherited from our ancestors.

In this rapidly changing and unpredictable world, we need the Adirondacks more than ever – and the Adirondacks need us! On the state and federal levels, important decisions are being made that will determine the Park's future. Will our elected officials honor the science, laws and traditions that have made the Adirondack Park the greatest park in the world?

The greatest Adirondack test facing Gov. Andrew Cuomo is the fate of the Boreas Ponds tract. In this case, the science, law, tradition, and public opinion all point to the need to protect the ponds by adding them – and a buffer of a mile or more – to the High Peaks Wilderness Area.

In Washington, the Trump administration has vowed to reinvigorate the coal industry. In addition, the President appointed Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt as administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Coal-fired power plants are the largest source of acid rain falling on the Adirondack Park. Acid rain kills fish and forests while contaminating our soil and food chain with mercury. Pruitt's communications with the fossil fuel industry show a pattern of collaboration to undermine the clean air and climate change regulations that protect the Park and its communities.

Still, there are reasons to remain hopeful. The Adirondack Council enters this new political climate with record levels of support from members and partners. We are financially strong. Our outstanding staff and board are motivated – not intimidated – by the challenges we face. We have science, the law and popular opinion on our side. With your support, we can withstand the winds of change and secure lasting protections for the Adirondack Park.

Thank you,

William C. Janeway  
Executive Director

The mission of the Adirondack Council is to ensure the ecological integrity and wild character of the Adirondack Park for current and future generations.

We envision an Adirondack Park with clean water and air and large wilderness areas, surrounded by working farms and forests and vibrant local communities.

## CAPITAL MATTERS: ALBANY

### Increased Environmental Funding Proposed

#### New investments could complement Wilderness

Gov. Andrew Cuomo's fiscal year 2017-18 budget proposal includes funding for clean water, communities and tourism as requested.

The Council applauds the Governor's proposed \$300 million Environmental Protection Fund (EPF), which includes monies for invasive species prevention, smart growth projects, climate change mitigation, and open space protection. A new \$2 billion, five-year program for clean water funding is also proposed for water infrastructure upgrades and the protection of water sources from road salt and nutrient runoff.

Once again, the Governor has proposed to keep staffing numbers flat, following the drastic staff reductions that occurred nearly a decade ago. Also, the budget doesn't include forest tax reforms for which we requested.

Proposals to fund a "Gateway to the Adirondacks" in North Hudson at Exit 29 on the Northway, campground rehabilitations and the "Empire State Trail," a pedestrian pathway from Buffalo to Albany and NYC to Canada, all present economic development opportunities that would complement a Wilderness classification for Boreas Ponds.

### All-Terrain Vehicle Restrictions Needed

#### State must act to protect Forest Preserve

Adirondack forests and waters are at risk from the impacts of inappropriate all-terrain vehicle (ATV) use. The state has proposed opening part of the Grass River Wild Forest in the northwest corner of the Park to ATVs. State Forest rangers consider the illegal use of ATVs to be the "most problematic activity" taking place on state lands. The Council will continue to work on this issue to protect the Forest Preserve and promote incentives for best riding practices.



### Trump Team Causes Concern over Acid Rain

#### Will acid rain make a comeback?

Early movement by the Trump administration is creating uncertainty over the future of acid rain regulations and monitoring in the Adirondacks.

In January, the president's transition team ordered a "freeze" on all grants issued by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Most of New York's acid rain monitoring programs are funded through EPA grants.

New EPA Administrator, Scott Pruitt, frequently sided with power plant owners and the fossil fuel industry in legal disputes over EPA clean air regulations. He opposed the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule, which is responsible for recent cuts in air pollution that brought about widespread improvement in Adirondack lakes and ponds.



*Above: Kevin Chlad, Director of Government Relations, provides budget testimony before state legislators in support of Adirondack Wilderness, strong environmental funding and investments in clean water infrastructure and communities.*

### Water Infrastructure Funding

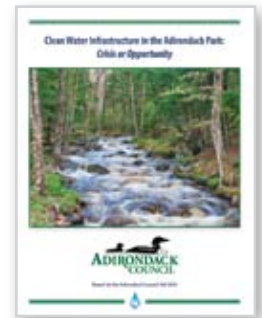
#### A priority in the Adirondacks

The Adirondack Council

released the *Clean Water Infrastructure in the Adirondack Park: Crisis or Opportunity*

report in the fall of 2016 that highlights more than \$100 million in current wastewater funding needs in the

Adirondacks. Statewide, the need currently exceeds more than \$40 billion. The small communities of the Adirondacks host 130,000 full time and roughly 200,000 part-time residents, but serve more than 10 million visitors annually. The high demands placed on their water infrastructure, paired with the funding gaps communities currently face, pose a threat to the Park's clean water and wildlife.



Thank you to the thousands who took action for the wilderness campaign and/or wrote to their legislators about the need for funding for the waters, wilderness, wildlife, and communities of the Adirondack Park.

Email is the most efficient and cost-effective way for us to keep you informed and help you connect with government officials when your voice will make a positive difference.

**Sign up or update your email address at [AdirondackCouncil.org](http://AdirondackCouncil.org). Thank You!**



## Conservation Design Consideration Needed

### Town of North Elba

During its February meeting, the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) Board approved a permit for a 17-lot subdivision in the Town of North Elba near Adirondack Loj Road. The subdivision will be located off Rte. 73 in one of the most heavily visited and visually stunning areas of the Park. The project comprises almost 600 acres of land and contains significant wetlands. After being subdivided, about 490 acres of these sensitive wetlands will be protected as open space with no future development. The remaining land will be developed into 16 residential lots, varying between 5 and 12 acres in size. The APA needs to incorporate more formal conservation development measures into future proposals.



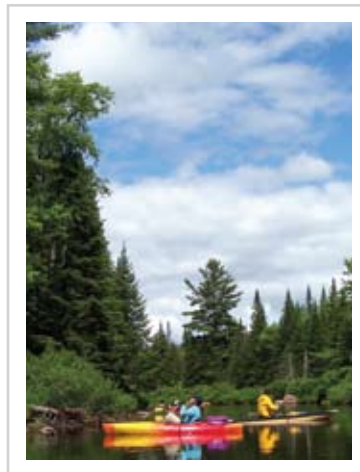
*Mount Marcy, Colden, Algonquin & Indian Pass from the Adirondack Loj Road.*

Photo © Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions Inc.

## Monitoring Conservation Easement Recreation

### Towns of Croghan and Diana

In comments submitted to the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) on the Recreation Management Plan (RMP) for the 16,929-acre Oswegatchie Conservation Easement (■), the Council appreciated that the RMP expressly prohibited public ATV use. For the first time in an RMP, the DEC included monitoring language to assess long-term impacts of recreational activities on the landscape. This is a positive action, and underscores the Council's ongoing efforts to have monitoring incorporated into RMPs to better understand and manage conservation easement lands in the Adirondacks.



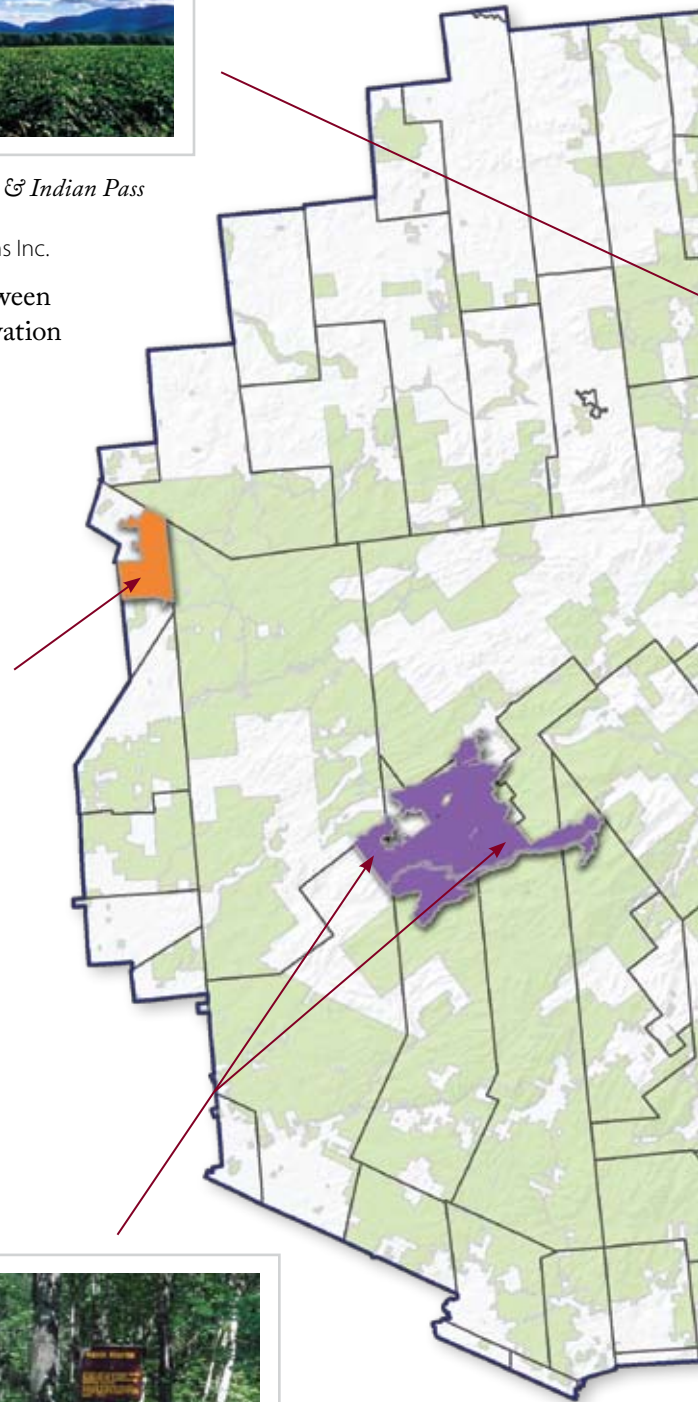
*Council staff enjoy a paddle on the Oswegatchie River.*

## Support for Moose River Plains Mtn. Biking

### Hamilton and Herkimer counties

The Council supports an amendment to the Moose River Plains Wild Forest (■) Unit Management Plan that will allow for the new construction of 23 miles of International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) designed, single-track mountain biking trails. The trail system complies with the Wild Forest guidelines outlined in the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan, protects natural resources and keeps mountain bikes in appropriate areas of the Park.

*Right: Mountain biking in the Moose River Plains Wild Forest.*



# 2016-17 State Land Classification Package

Action involves 54,418 acres across the Park's twelve counties

Along with the need to classify new state lands such as the Boreas Ponds, MacIntyre East & West and Casey Brook tracts (■), the Adirondack Park Agency will also take action on a total of 33 state land classification proposals totaling approximately 50,827 acres, 13 state land reclassifications totaling an estimated 1,642 acres and a number of classifications involving map corrections (1,949 acres). In December 2016, the Council submitted detailed comments on this state land classification package.

Comments can be found online under resources/public comments.

*Left: Overlooking the MacIntyre West tract. Photo © Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions Inc.*

## "Gateway to the Adirondacks" Envisioned

North Hudson - Exit 29

As part of his 2017-18 executive budget, Gov. Andrew Cuomo proposed a \$32 million investment for a 85-acre site near the old Frontier Town theme park in North Hudson just off Exit 29 of the Northway. The proposed "gateway" hub would include a visitor information center, tourist accommodations, state campground and day-use area along the Schroon River, event center for shows and festivals, commercial retail space, and historic interactive exhibits about the Adirondack Park. Schroon Lake based Paradox Brewery plans to invest \$2.8 million to expand its operations at the gateway site.



*The former Frontier Town theme park. Photo © Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions Inc.*

The DEC recently announced that the Hammond Pond Wild Forest Unit Management Plan (UMP) will be revised, following Gov. Cuomo's declaration to establish a "Gateway to the Adirondacks" in North Hudson at Exit 29 of the Adirondack Northway. A large, extended UMP planning effort is

## Hammond Pond Wild Forest

Northeastern Adirondacks and Lake Champlain

The DEC recently announced that the Hammond Pond Wild Forest Unit Management Plan (UMP) will be revised, following Gov. Cuomo's declaration to establish a "Gateway to the Adirondacks" in North Hudson at Exit 29 of the Adirondack Northway. A large, extended UMP planning effort is



*Moriah Pond and Moriah Mtn.*

expected due to the Wild Forest's proximity to the gateway project, and the possibility that associated uses will be tied to the new Boreas Ponds tract nearby. This Wild Forest (■) contains rolling hills, ragged mountains and small lakes and ponds that support many forms of outdoor recreation. The Council will be active and involved during the UMP process.

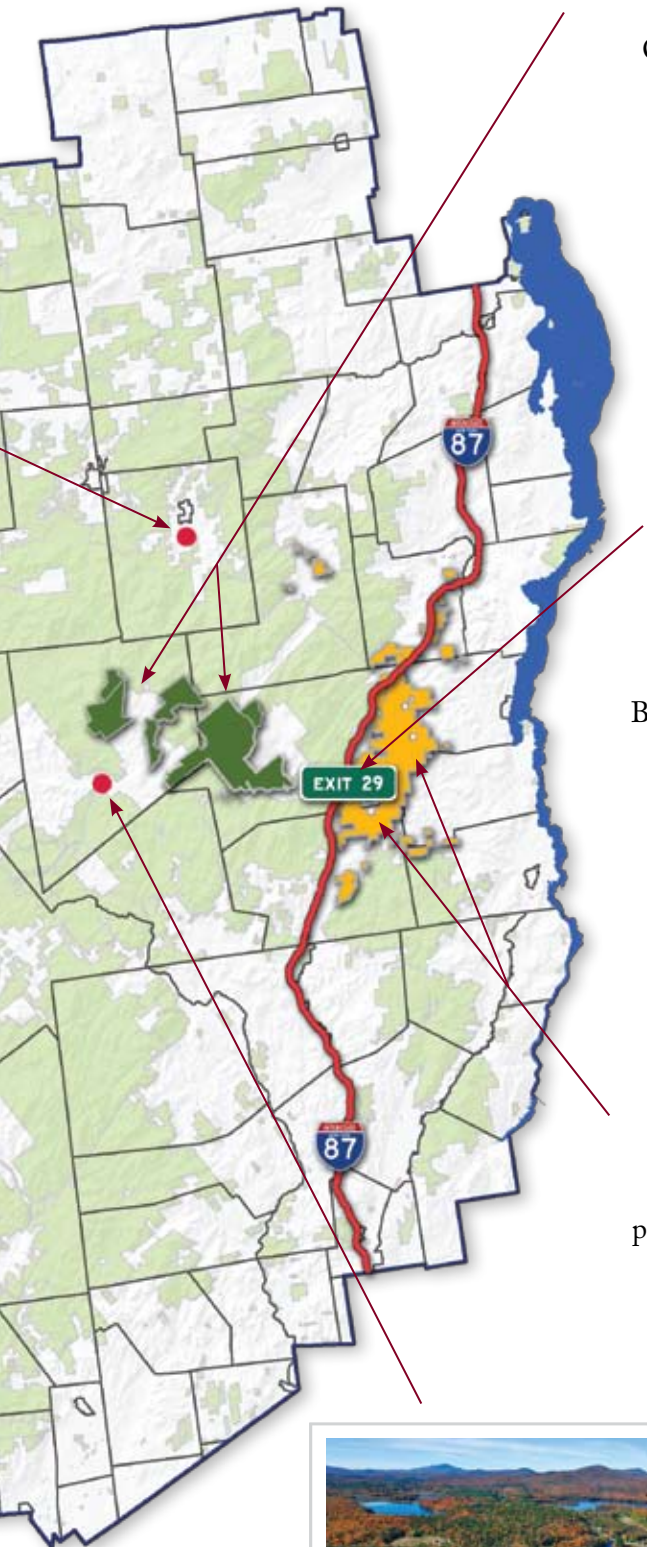
## Forever Wild Day 2017

July 8 - Newcomb, NY

Join the Adirondack Council Board, staff and fellow supporters for our annual members' meeting and awards luncheon on Saturday, July 8 at Overlook Park in Newcomb, NY. Celebrate your love of the Adirondacks with friends and fellow conservation advocates.

*Left: Overlooking the Hudson River and Harris Lake in Newcomb. Photo © Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions Inc.*

Photo © Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions Inc.



## CONSERVATION MATTERS



### Fish Coping with Climate Change

Progress on acid rain helps

Research scientists have found that Adirondack lakes recovering from acid rain are now protecting fish from climate change. It is all about how much sunlight reaches the lake bottom.

Lakes severely damaged by acid rain are incredibly clear because they lack any suspended organic matter. This clarity allows sunlight to penetrate and quickly heat up the lake water in summer months. Healthy lakes, on the other hand, have suspended organic matter which helps to retain a layer of cooler water that certain fish, like brook trout, need to survive.



Brook trout. Photo courtesy of Larry Master

Limiting acid rain damage will also keep cold-water fisheries healthy in the face of rising global temperatures. The stress to the most susceptible populations of native, cold-water fish appears to be shifting from acidification effects to warming impacts associated with a changing climate.

This research, led by Dr. Charles Driscoll of Syracuse University, was published in the journal *Global Change Biology*.

The federal Clean Power Plan is aimed at cutting greenhouse gas emissions, but would also further reduce the emissions that cause acid rain and accelerate the recovery of more Adirondack lakes. Congressional leaders and the new administration have been critical of the plan.

*Above: Boreas Ponds in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.* Photo by Francis Bayle, 1915; From the book, *An Adirondack Portfolio 1902 – 1935*.

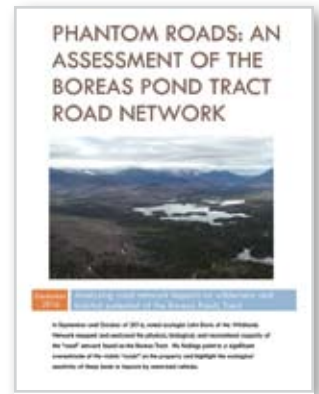
### Assessing Boreas Ponds Tract Logging Roads

Overestimate of viable “roads”

In September and October of 2016, noted ecologist John Davis of the Wildlands Network mapped and analyzed the physical, biological and recreational capacity of the “road” network found on the soon-to-be-classified Boreas tract. His report, *Phantom Roads: An Assessment of the Boreas Pond Tract Road Network*, points to a significant overestimate of the viable “roads” on the property and highlights the ecological sensitivity of these lands to impacts by motorized vehicles.

Specifically, Davis found and concluded:

1. The majority of the **Boreas tract’s underlying conditions, wetlands, soils, capacity to withstand use, and potential for restoration would most align with a Wilderness classification.**
2. **Current data overestimated the extent of “roads” now on the Boreas tract** and that there are in fact between 24 and 28 miles, not 53 miles.
3. Some of these **24-28 miles of road would require the placement of fill and/or drainage in wetlands, in addition to tree cutting, to make them suitable** and able to provide for motorized recreational uses.
4. In the more remote portions of the Boreas tract **even limited interior roads fragment and negatively impact wildlife habitat, and serve as a vector for the introduction of invasive species.**



### Climate Smart Grants

Cool Farms/Healthy Park program

The Council will expand its successful Cool Farms/Healthy Park micro-grants program this year. Launched in 2016, the program awards grants to Adirondack Park farmers aiming to reduce their carbon and pollution footprints. After a successful inaugural year, the Council is broadening the program to include small businesses and entrepreneurs seeking to reduce their energy consumption. Grant applications will be accepted from qualified applicants through the month of March with awards being announced in mid-April.

Purchase **Carbon Reduction Certificates** to support the *Cool Farms/Healthy Park* micro-grants program at [shop.AdirondackCouncil.org](http://shop.AdirondackCouncil.org).



## SUPPORTING THE COUNCIL

### Celebrate the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Park

Join the Adirondack Council's Legacy Society today

On May 20, 1892, New York State established the Adirondack Park. We are so fortunate that courageous leaders took the bold step to protect the waters and forests of the Adirondacks. The Adirondack Council is fortunate to work with YOU and other spirited people dedicated to the Adirondacks. Please consider including the Adirondack Council in your will or other estate plans. All bequests become part of the Council's Forever Wild Fund, established by our Board of Directors to ensure the Council is a strong advocate for the Park for decades to come.



With a strong financial foundation, the Council will continue to ensure that the Adirondack Park serves as a global model for conservation. When making a planned gift, you can choose to be recognized as part of the Council's Adirondack Legacy Society or keep your estate plans confidential.

For more information regarding the Adirondack Legacy Society, please contact Debbie Pastore, Development Director at 1.877.873.2240 (ext. 106) or [dpastore@adirondackcouncil.org](mailto:dpastore@adirondackcouncil.org).

### Bring your Adirondack Council Nalgene water bottle with you on your next Park adventure!

The 32 oz. wide-mouth bottle features the Council's loon logo.

Available in 5 colors: pink, red, gray, green, and orange.

Made in the USA and BPA free. Price: \$15.00



Purchase your bottle at: [shop.AdirondackCouncil.org](http://shop.AdirondackCouncil.org) or call us at 1.877.873.2240.



(L-R): Board Member Justin Potter, Deputy Director Diane Fish, Board Member Liza Cowan, Director of Government Relations Kevn Chlad and Board Member Sarah Collum Hatfield.

### Robert Wilson Challenge Update

Growing the number of Park advocates

The trustees of the Robert Wilson Charitable Trust offered the Adirondack Council a challenge matching grant of \$250,000, with \$200,000 to match new and increased gifts of \$1,000 or more and \$50,000 to encourage 1,000 new supporters of the Council by 2018. As a long-time supporter of the Adirondacks, Mr. Wilson was interested in challenging the organizations he cared about to build their capacity so they could have an even greater conservation impact.

Thanks to Mr. Wilson's vision and our members' shared commitment and generosity, 1,322 new and sustaining members have joined the Adirondack Council and 50 new and increased \$1,000+ leadership supporters have put us well on our way to reaching the \$250,000 challenge by 2018.

**IN MY VIEW THE ADIRONDACK COUNCIL HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE MOST PRAGMATIC OF THE PARK'S ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS...THE COUNCIL'S POSITIONS SEEM TO BE MORE RESPECTFUL OF THE LEGITIMATE CONCERNS OF THE PARK'S ADVOCATES FOR OTHER ISSUES LIKE DISABLED ACCESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. YOU ARTICULATE YOUR CONCERNS FOR CONSERVATION IN A WAY THAT IS MORE PERSUASIVE THAN ARGUMENTATIVE, AND THAT IS ONE OF THE REASONS THAT I AM A MEMBER OF ADIRONDACK COUNCIL.**



~ Joe Steiniger, Schroon Lake, NY



**ADIRONDACK COUNCIL**  
*Defending the East's Greatest Wilderness*

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## Grant Conservation Associate

### Meet Jacqueline Bowen

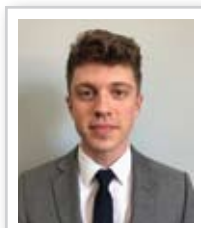
Jackie Bowen is our newest Grant Conservation Associate. She comes fresh out of Vermont Law School where she received a Master's degree in Environmental Law & Policy, with a certificate in Land Use Law. She will be supporting the Conservation Program while also coordinating the Council's Climate Smart Conservation efforts. These efforts will include the Cool Farms/Healthy Park micro-grant program and developing a climate smart communities program to engage Adirondack communities in climate change mitigation and resiliency efforts.



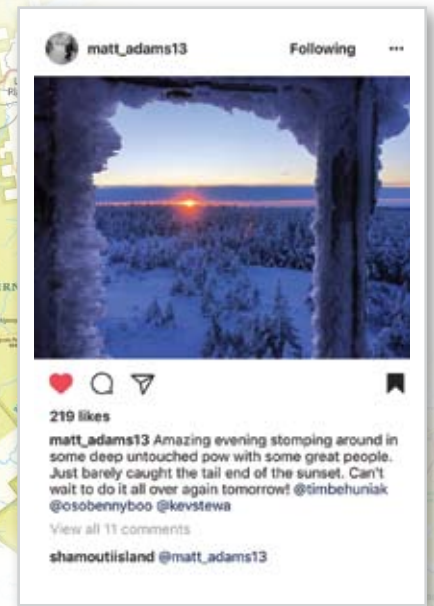
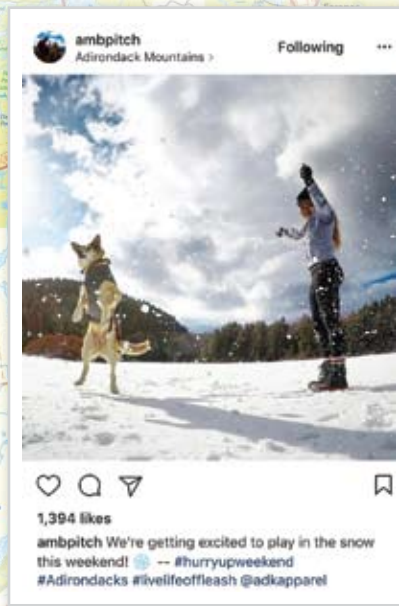
## Clarence Petty Intern

### Meet Kyle Plaske

Kyle Plaske began work in December as the Council's newest Clarence Petty Intern in our Albany office. Kyle is a 2015 graduate of the University at Albany, where he received a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism, and is currently a graduate student at the Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy. Prior to joining the Council, Kyle interned with the NYS Attorney General. At the Council, Kyle tracks legislation, writes bill memos, attends legislative committee meetings, and assists with communications. When he is not working, he will likely be found reading, hiking or taking photos.



The Council's internship program seeks to carry on the legacy of beloved Adirondack conservation activist Clarence Petty (1904-2009) by training and inspiring the next generation of conservation leaders.



## Are you #WildAboutThePark?

Tag us in your Adirondack photos on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter to be featured on social media, or in our next newsletter!

