



CALL OF THE LOON

Adirondack Council Newsletter | Spring 2019



Photo: Nancie Battaglia

Where's the Park's Gate?

The Adirondack Park is open to everyone for the enjoyment of nature, solitude and adventure.

There is no gate. There is no admission fee. The 2.6 million acres of public Forest Preserve are here for all to experience or to take pride in protecting from afar.

Thanks to the Park's legacy of accessibility and conservation and the recent investments by the state of New York, 12 million annual travelers can experience all that the Adirondacks has to offer. At the same time, the state is adopting new strategies to protect visitor safety, natural resources and the wilderness experience for future generations. The state has taken the first steps of the many actions needed to leave our children an Adirondack Park in equal or better condition than it is today.

A project worthy of recognition is the new, model sustainable trail on Mt. Van Hoevenberg near the village of Lake Placid. The trail is being built using best practices to endure significant foot traffic while minimizing erosion and natural resource damages. The 1.7-mile trail is appropriate for beginner hikers and families with children and leads to a summit with spectacular views of the famed High Peaks. The trailhead also has safe parking. These are the kind of measures the Adirondack Council's #KeepItWild campaign is encouraging.

Your support is having a positive impact on the #KeepItWild campaign; turn to page 7 for more.

Above: Hikers enjoying an Adirondack view from Mt. Van Hoevenberg

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**ADIRONDACK
COUNCIL** PRESERVING WATER,
AIR AND WILDLANDS

Collaboration = Results



William C. Janeway
Executive Director
@WillieJaneway

Dear Supporters,

The Adirondacks are a conservation success story. Through a shared commitment to this national treasure, stakeholders have made significant progress in protecting the water, air and wildlands of the Adirondacks. Still, we have more to do. Climate change, acid rain and overuse are real, and are harming our wildlands now. The polluting of clean water from sewage and over-application of road salt is an immediate threat to fish, wildlife and public health.

What these threats have in common is that a solution to each is possible because diverse stakeholders are setting aside differences and working together to implement solutions.

When we focus on solutions and not differences, when we disagree without being disagreeable, everyone wins. Collaboration produces results.

In the Adirondacks, the Council and a coalition of environmental, town, state, and business interests are working to address overuse of the Park's natural resources. Another coalition secured \$250,000 for the Adirondack Diversity Initiative. Yet another is working to stop the over-application of road salt, which is polluting groundwater. And more coalitions are working to combat invasive species, give the Adirondack Park Agency improved conservation tools, and address all-terrain vehicle (ATV) misuse. Your Adirondack Council is a part of all of these efforts and more.

Thank you for your support of the preservation of the Adirondacks, and the collaboration and partnerships it takes to make this national treasure a conservation model for the world.

Sincerely,

William C. Janeway

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Photo: Dan Rivera

Above: Racey Henderson, Essex Farm Institute Program Director, at the 2nd Annual Food Justice Summit



State Funds Clean Water

The New York State Budget process concluded March 31, with Governor Cuomo and legislative leaders approving \$500 million for new and improved clean water infrastructure.

This new money brings total clean water investments to \$3 billion since 2017, and leaves Governor Cuomo with \$2 billion remaining in his new \$2.5 billion clean water funding commitment issued in his 2019 State of the State address.

The budget also includes a \$300 million Environmental Protection Fund for the fifth year running, which supports open space preservation, state land stewardship, invasive species management, farmland protection, and climate change mitigation. The Adirondack Park was a primary source of

inspiration for the creation of this fund more than 25 years ago and continues to benefit from it.

The Adirondack Council thanks Governor Andrew Cuomo, Senator Todd Kaminsky (D-Rockville Centre), and Assemblyman Steve Englebright (D-Setauket) for their environmental leadership.

The Council also thanks Senator Jose Serrano (D-Bronx) and Assemblyman Robert Carroll (D-Brooklyn) for their leadership in obtaining funding for the Adirondack Diversity Initiative (see page 4).

Newly approved policy measures in the budget include a ban on single use plastic bags (with an option for municipalities to institute a fee on paper bags) and the requirement for major facilities

such as prisons, hospitals, and schools to compost food waste.

Work left undone in the budget includes the need to add staff to help Adirondack Park Forest Rangers, land managers and planners to manage overcrowding on the Forest Preserve. Discussions about enacting climate change legislation will continue to be a topic through the remainder of the 2019 legislative session.

Below: Sewage and other pollutants threaten clean Adirondack waters such as Lake George, the Fulton Chain and the AuSable River (below)

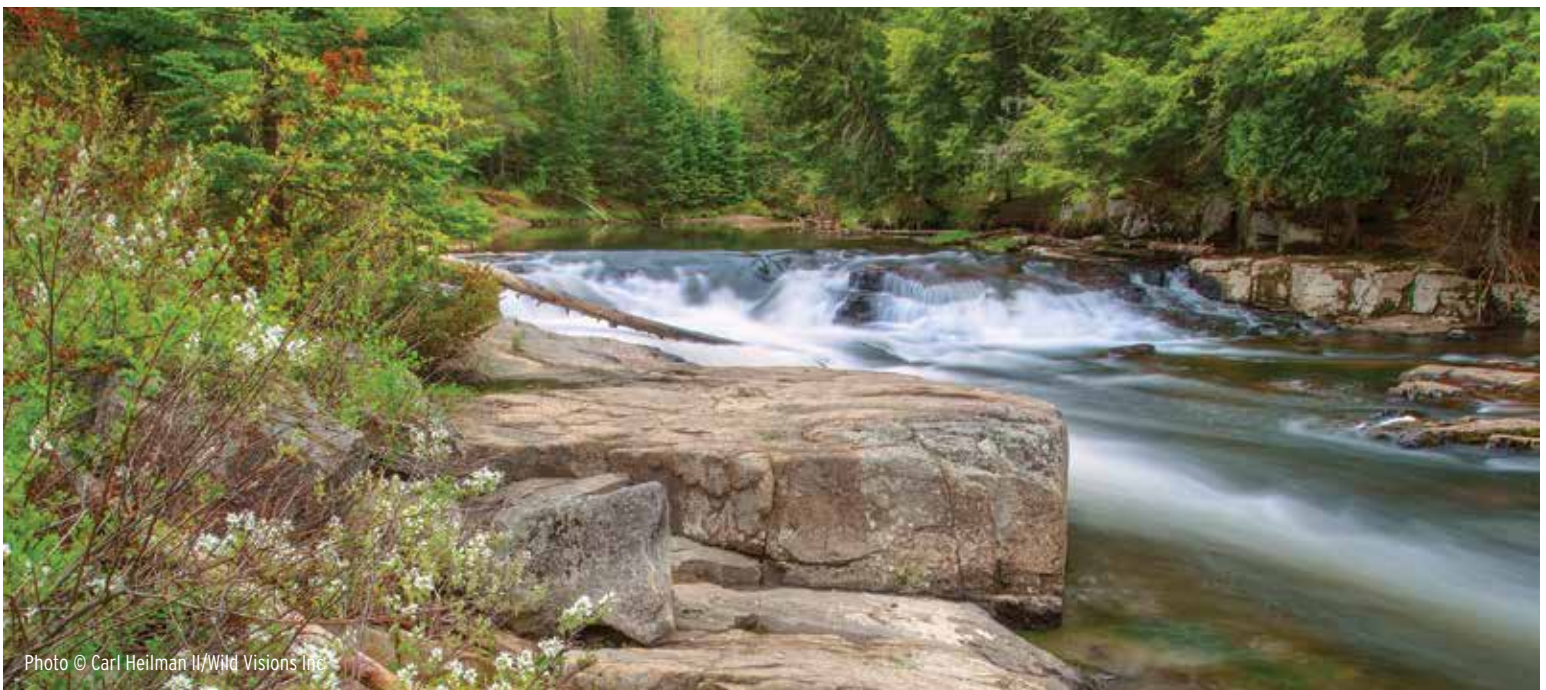


Photo © Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions Inc

IN & ABOUT THE PARK

1. Pepperbox Wilderness Threatened

The state is making plans for “improvements” in the Pepperbox Wilderness Area, widely known as one of the most remote places in the Adirondacks. Located near the western boundary of the Park, this unique unit is not easily accessible, with no formal trails or improvements. It offers one of the greatest opportunities for a true wilderness experience. In April, the Council strongly recommended that the state conduct scientific and technical inventories, assess carrying capacity to meet State Land Master Plan requirements and not develop this Wilderness area.



2. Experts: Excessive Road Salt Pollutes Adirondack Water

Recent studies have shown excessive road salt contamination in streams and lakes, as well as below-ground drinking water supplies. In lakes, excess salt creates a dead zone by preventing bottom layers of water from mixing with oxygen-rich upper layers. Elevated sodium in water can harm people with high blood pressure, and make water taste salty. The Council is part of a coalition working with the NYS Department of Transportation to reduce road salt in the Adirondack Park. Bold action is needed before next winter to ensure that the Park has both safe roads and clean water.



Photo © Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions Inc

3. Diversity Initiative Wins State Funds

The FY2019/20 State Budget includes \$250,000 in new funding for the Adirondack Diversity Initiative (ADI), as part of the \$300-million Environmental Protection Fund (EPF). Since 2015, the Adirondack Diversity Initiative has been a volunteer-run coalition of organizations and individuals who develop and promote strategies to help the Adirondack Park become more welcoming and inclusive for all. The funding from the EPF will allow the Adirondack North Country Association to hire an ADI director and expand outreach and programming.

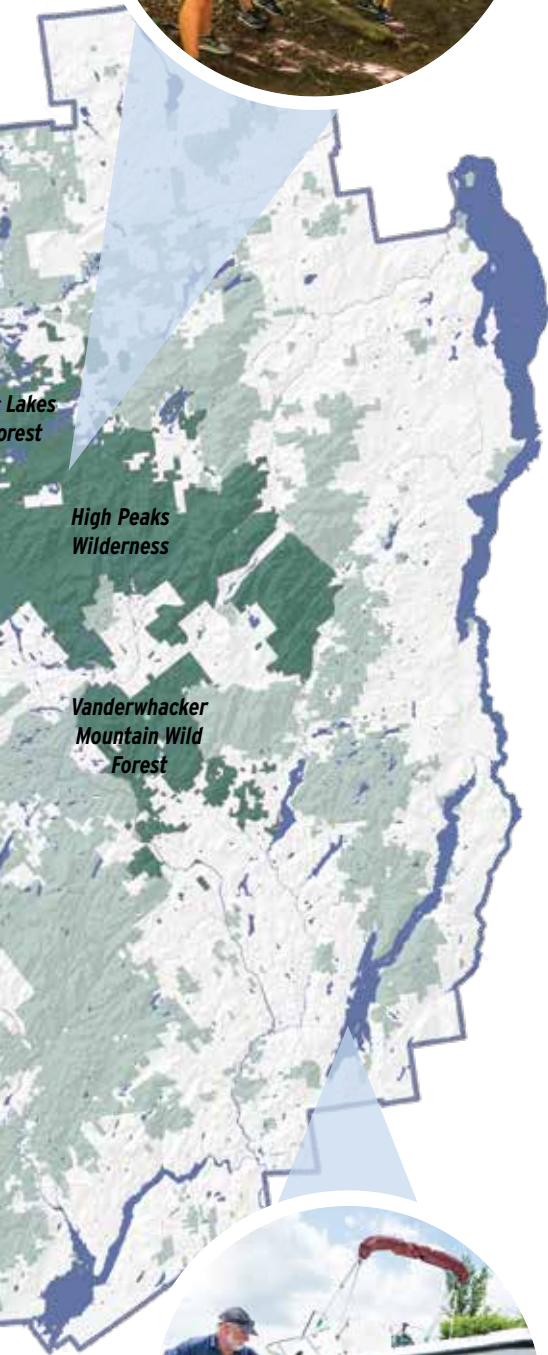




4. Carrying Capacity Determinations are Needed to Protect Waters and Wildlands

The State Land Master Plan, which carries the force of law, requires that the state determine the physical, biological and social characteristics and carrying capacity of each Forest Preserve unit. The state is supposed to then establish the types and levels of recreational use permitted on the Park's state-owned lands and waters. While the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Adirondack Park Agency are developing a standardized monitoring framework, most Unit Management Plans do not currently meet this requirement. This includes the recently approved High Peaks Wilderness Complex, Vanderwhacker Mountain Wild Forest and Saranac Lakes Wild Forest.

Photo: Nancie Battaglia



5. Farm and Business Climate-Smart Projects Awarded Council Grants

The Adirondack Council's Cool Farms/Healthy Park Micro-Grant Program entered its fourth year this spring. Grants are awarded annually to farms and small businesses that have innovative and climate-smart projects that will help reduce their ecological footprint and grow the low-carbon economy in the Adirondacks. This year, with the help of a five-organization review panel and the Klipper Fund, a founding supporter of the program, the Council awarded over \$26,000 for 18 projects that are energy efficient, emissions reducing, carbon sequestering, and more. To date, the Council has funded 72 projects, totaling over \$90,000.



6. State Aquatic Invasive Species Law Set to Expire

On June 1, the invasive species transport law will expire, jeopardizing the health of precious water bodies. In order to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species, the Adirondack Council and partners are calling upon state leaders to renew and strengthen this law by expanding mandatory boat washing in the Adirondacks. Invasive species cost the Adirondack Park millions of dollars each year, and can wreak havoc on ecosystems. Seven other states have already enacted mandatory boat washing legislation. New York should do the same so Adirondack waters will be better protected for future generations.





State Urged to Address ATV Misuse

At a press conference in April with a coalition of nine other organizations, the Adirondack Council released its report, *WRONG WAY: How New York State Can Course-Correct on ATV Use*.

This report explains how the misuse of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) is harming state-owned lands and waters, and public safety in the Adirondacks. The Council is pushing for a new law that makes it clear where ATVs are and are not allowed to better protect our forests, waters, wildlife, and public health.

The Daily Gazette in Schenectady and Utica Observer Dispatch have both editorialized in support of tougher restrictions on ATVs.



“ATV violations are the largest source of citations issued by the Ranger Force today.”

– Scott van Laer, Director of New York State Forest Ranger Benevolent Association

In his Glens Falls Post Star column, Will Doolittle said, “An ATV in a cathedral is just wrong, and it’s wrong in wilderness, too.”

Visit AdirondackCouncil.org and send New York State policymakers an email to protect Adirondack Forest Preserve lands from ATV misuse.

Park Visitors Should Plan Ahead

To enjoy outdoor recreation, while minimizing our impact on the natural world, we need to plan ahead and prepare for our adventure. It’s the bedrock principle of Leave No Trace Outdoor Skills and Ethics. But what does it mean to Plan Ahead and Prepare?

First, we need to choose a route that matches the experience of our group, so that we aren’t getting in over our heads.

Second, we need to have all of the essential equipment to provide a safe experience for us and for the resource. This includes waterproof shoes so we can hike directly

through mud puddles and a trowel to bury our waste to keep people and animals safe.

Third, we need to check the weather, conditions of the trails, and regulations so that we’re prepared.

Last, if we want to have the trails to ourselves, we can avoid busy trails and periods of high use.

The state is expanding efforts to prepare visitors to the Adirondacks and educate them about Leave No Trace.

Discover more at: AdirondackCouncil.org/LeaveNoTrace



PURE ADK
Exploration Without

SUPPORTING THE COUNCIL



#KeptWild With Your Support

In collaboration with a wide-array of stakeholders in the Adirondacks, the Council is providing data and analysis, inviting expertise from other large conservation areas, sharing information, and amplifying the public's demand for better care and custody of the Park's public lands and waters.

With your support in 2019, the #KeptWild campaign will:

1. Work with management experts from the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics to document management problems, and develop recommendations including encouraging people to explore smaller communities that host Forest Preserve recreation opportunities.
2. Promote state-of-the-art land and water protection based on accepted wilderness management practices from across the country and around the world.
3. Work with college students to analyze trail register data.
4. Continue to collaborate with other stakeholders including the state, Adirondack Mountain Club and local government.
5. Support comprehensive planning and world class protections, including help for Rangers and other staff.

Gear Up for Your Adventure

Visit our online shop at AdirondackCouncil.org or call us at 518.873.2240 to purchase a variety of branded merchandise. All proceeds support Adirondack conservation.



NEW! - Unisex Tri-Blend Tees - \$20

Shown in athletic gray - other colors are available!

Loon Logo Hats - \$20



NEW! - 3rd Edition Adirondack Park Maps - \$25/\$40

Unlaminated or Laminated



Canvas Tote Bags - \$15

NEW! - Handmade Mugs - \$25



Car Decals - \$5



Leave a Legacy

When you arrange for a contribution to the Adirondack Council through your estate, you help provide lasting support to protect the Adirondack Park for generations to come.

All estate gifts to the Adirondack Council grow as part of the Forever Wild Fund (unless otherwise indicated by the donor). This quasi-endowment is insurance that the Council will always be ready and able to take action to protect the legacy of the Adirondacks. Naming the Council in your will or as a beneficiary to a life insurance or retirement account are simple ways to contribute through your estate. Any gift amount is greatly appreciated.

It is always best to consult with your attorney for advice regarding an estate gift. For more information, please contact Debbie Pastore, Development Director, at 1.877.873.2240 (Ext. 106).



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Forever Wild Day | Willsboro | July 13, 2019

This year's Forever Wild Day will be held under a tent at Cornell's Willsboro Research Farm in Willsboro, NY. The day includes a celebration of our collective successes on behalf of our beloved Adirondacks, the Annual Members' Meeting and awards luncheon, and optional outings in the morning. It's a time to share your love of the Adirondacks with friends and fellow conservation advocates.



Photo © Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions Inc

Conservationist of the Year

Christopher J. (Kim) Elliman is the President and CEO of the Open Space Institute and has been a champion of open space protection in the Adirondacks and other eastern U.S. areas for decades. Kim is a past Chair of the Adirondack Council and one of the founders of the Adirondack Land Trust. He has served on the boards or advisory councils of many other environmental organizations and has overseen the conservation of millions of acres of lands, including thousands of acres of Adirondack forests, waters and farms.



Special Recognition

Champlain Valley resident **Sheri Amsel** has written and illustrated more than 30 non-fiction children's books and developed interpretive signs for museums, schools and nature centers. Sheri's work went online in 2005 with Exploringnature.org, a science education website used by schools and homeschool families around the world. Sheri's work continues with ongoing development of educational resources that help children understand and value science and the natural world.



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We are extremely grateful to our Forever Wild Day Patrons and Sponsors. To learn more and register for the event, visit AdirondackCouncil.org under Events.