



CALL OF THE LOON

Adirondack Council Newsletter | Autumn 2020

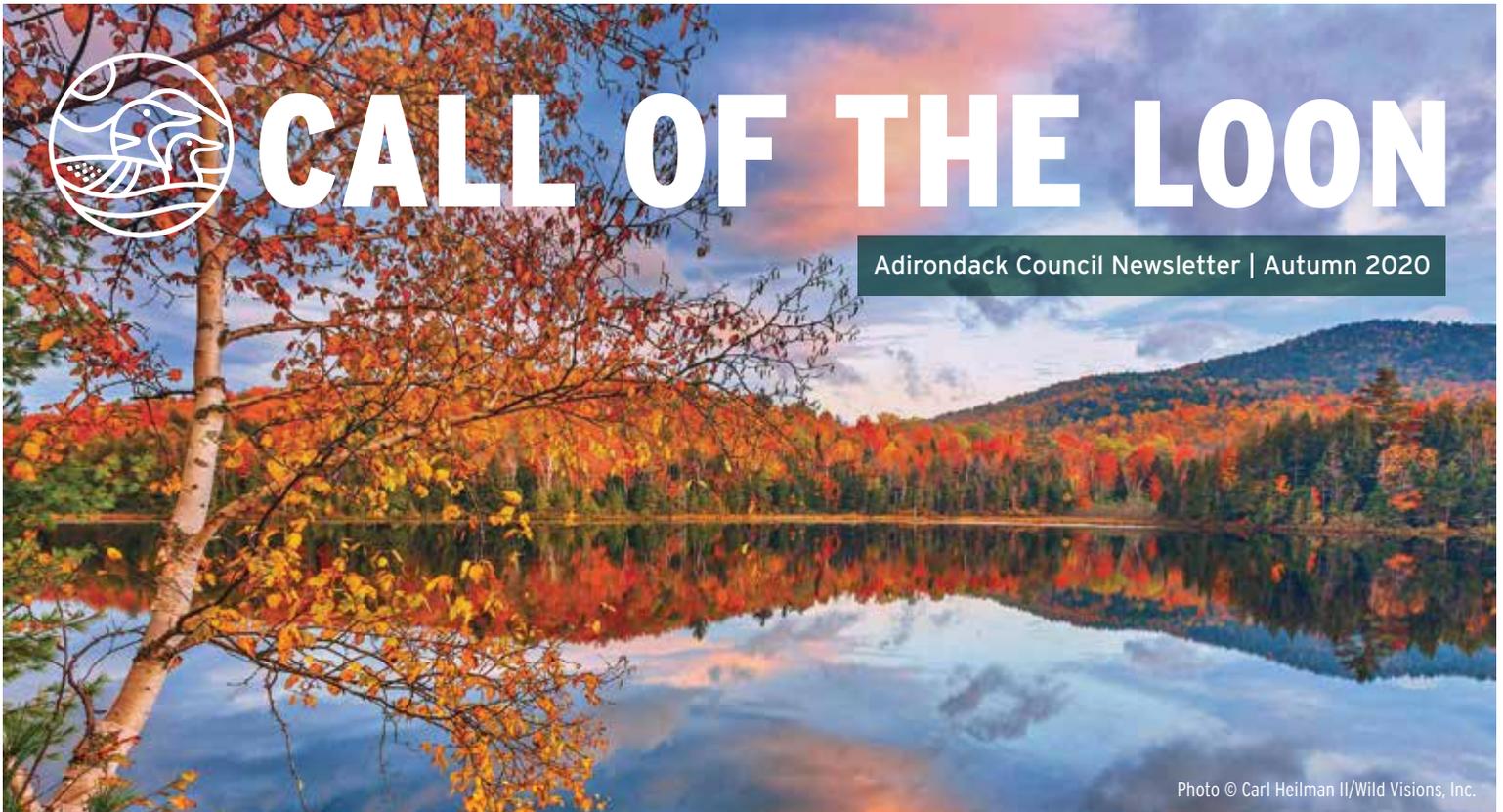


Photo © Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions, Inc.

Washington Impacts the Adirondacks

Decisions are being made in Washington, D.C. on climate change, cross-state air pollution, acid rain, invasive species, and federal funding of science that will forever impact the Adirondack Park. Actions taken in the next few months can cause additional harm to the Adirondacks, or provide an opportunity for bipartisan action to restore and enhance federal support for clean air and water, wildlands, and healthy rural communities.

Due to past damage (acid rain depleted much of the Park's soils buffering capacity), a small increase in chronically harmful pollution levels in the Adirondacks would cause new damage more rapidly than it did in the past. The weakening of federal regulations over the past four years leaves the Park vulnerable.

The Adirondack Council and our colleagues, including the NYS Attorney General's office, won a major legal struggle in 2020, directing the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to require summertime pollution reductions in the Midwest to prevent smog from reaching dangerous levels in the Northeast.

The EPA should return to its pre-2016 policy of granting such petitions when Northeast states seek help. But 2020 legal victories are at risk.

The Adirondack Council is launching a campaign for improved federal protection of the Adirondacks. This is a critical moment. We are at a tipping point. Federal efforts to weaken protections could gain momentum, causing an ecological and economic decline. There is also a chance to correct course, build on past bipartisan progress, and improve protections.

The Council is asking the EPA to repeal and replace the Affordable Clean Energy Rule (ACER), which replaced the 2014 Clean Power Plan (CPP). The CPP would have required cuts of 32% below 2005 carbon emissions levels from electric power plants. That would have brought a side-benefit of a 12% additional cut in acid rain. The ACER requires no carbon reductions and causes no cuts in acid rain. Also, federal funding is needed for acid rain and climate data collection, wilderness protection, and community fiscal relief.

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ADIRONDACK
COUNCIL PRESERVING WATER,
AIR AND WILDLANDS

Keeping the Park Wild and Accessible



William C. Janeway
Executive Director
@WillieJaneway

Dear Friends of the Adirondacks,

With the COVID-19 pandemic raging, and economic challenges, climate change, and political strife causing stress around the world, a record number of visitors are flocking to the Adirondack Park to experience the peace and safety of a wild, open landscape and small communities.

The surging appreciation for the Adirondack Park's wide-open spaces has brought its already-teeming trailheads even more traffic. Some Wilderness trails often resemble lines outside department stores on Black Fridays of yesteryear, with people queued-up as far as the eye can see. Realtors are seeing a booming business. Community infrastructure is stressed.

We recall and honor the work of those who began protecting this wild landscape more than a century ago. We will redouble efforts to prevent our own recreational desires from harming the forests, wildlife, and water quality that lured us here in the first place. We will find ways to restore some of the solitude and peace of the wilderness experience, take some of the constant recreational pressure off of the most worn-down trails and summits, and accommodate a growing need for healthy outdoor spaces.

We are experiencing a record outpouring of support for the Adirondacks, wildlands, wildlife, and communities. This is good news. Thank you for helping make the Park wild and welcoming to all visitors, while improving fair access for all.

Warmest regards,

William C. Janeway
Executive Director

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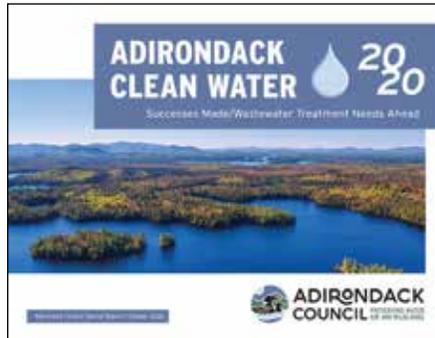
J. Michael Naughton
Young/Sommer

Director of Communications John Sheehan stands in front of the Supreme Court in Washington, D.C.



Protecting Clean Water and Public Health

As New Yorkers continue to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, the Adirondack Council and partners have continued important campaigns to protect clean water and public health. In July, the legislature passed the Randy Preston Road Salt Reduction Act, sponsored by Senator Tim Kennedy (D-Buffalo), Senator Betty Little (R-Queensbury), and Assemblyman D. Billy Jones (D-Plattsburgh). This bill now awaits the Governor's signature. If signed, this legislation would establish a task force comprised of state agencies, scientists, road management experts, and advocates, with the intent to design a salt reduction strategy to be implemented in a pilot study on all state roads in the Adirondacks. Road salt pollution has been found in lakes, streams, and groundwater along the Park's state roadways.



The Adirondack Council recently released a new report entitled: *Adirondack Clean Water 2020: Successes Made/Wastewater Treatment Needs Ahead*. The report celebrates more than \$58 million in grant funds that have leveraged \$152 million in clean water investments since 2015. An additional \$117 million in clean water investment needs have been identified, with additional needs expected in the future. The report also recommends that the state's Environmental Facilities

Corporation make adjustments to its clean water grant making process to help the smallest communities in the Adirondacks close the gap between project costs and the amount they can afford.

This year, Adirondack Council staff conducted surveys of boat inspection and decontamination stations at major entry points to the Adirondack Park on Memorial Day and Independence Day weekends. Staff observed no less than 85% of trailered motorboats pass by these stations on those busy holidays. The Adirondack Council and partners continue to advocate for strengthened boat inspection legislation at the Capitol, and appreciate the commitment of Environmental Conservation Chairs Todd Kaminsky (D-Rockville Centre) and Steve Englebright (D-Setauket) to strengthen this legislation.



Above: Winter road maintenance in the Adirondacks
Photo: Nancie Battaglia

Left: Ticonderoga wastewater treatment plant along the La Chute River
Photo © Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions, Inc.

IN & ABOUT THE PARK

1. ATV Lawsuit Filed...Again

Once again, the Adirondack Council has filed a lawsuit against the Town of Clare, St. Lawrence County, to repeal another local law that illegally allows all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) on a public highway impacting the “forever wild” state Forest Preserve. In 2018, the Council won a lawsuit that required the town to close the 10.75 mile-long Tooley Pond Road to ATVs because the town’s action violated state law. Disregarding its defeat, Clare passed the same law again in 2020 to re-open the road. While the Council supports the legal use of ATVs on private land, it is suing to protect the publicly-owned Forest Preserve from ATV abuse.



2. Adirondack Rail Trail Work Begins

In October, the NYS Departments of Transportation and Environmental Conservation announced the first steps in developing a world-class, multi-use recreational trail between Tupper Lake and Lake Placid. The first project will convert 34 miles of railroad corridor into a shared-use trail for hikers, bikers, cross-country skiers, and snowmobilers. Outdoor enthusiasts will have access to multiple campsites, miles of scenic trails, and waterways in adjacent Forest Preserve lands. A second project will rehabilitate the railroad tracks between Big Moose and Tupper Lake and establish the longest scenic railway in the country. Recreational trail construction will begin in 2022 and be completed by the end of 2024. The railroad track rehab is scheduled to be finished by the end of 2021.



Scenic railway crosses Raquette Pond in Tupper Lake | Photo © Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions, Inc.

3. Council Appointed to Advise Military Training

The Adirondack Council has been invited by the U.S. Army to be a member of a citizens’ advisory board to assist its personnel at Fort Drum in designing modern treetop-level helicopter flight training exercises that do not harm the fragile environment of the North Country/Adirondack region of New York State. This summer, the Army proposed a new series of five missions involving helicopter flights and thousands of troops. The Council will join colleagues from the Adirondack Park Agency, Dept. of Environmental Conservation, other state agencies, and conservation organizations in reviewing those plans. The Council had requested the formation of such an advisory board.





4. New Solar Power Projects

The Adirondack Council is supporting two new, in-Park solar power projects that will combat climate change and expand generation of local renewable energy, while creating local jobs and saving local utility customers money. The Saranac Lake Community Solar array will be a 2-megawatt, ground-mounted solar project located on 10 acres just north of the Village of Saranac Lake. Another 52-acre solar array on Street Road, north of Ticonderoga, will provide power for about 1,000 homes. It was approved by the Adirondack Park Agency with some conditions, including limits on summer mowing to protect flowers that attract and protect pollinators.

5. Climate Smart Saranac Lake

In September, the Village of Saranac Lake became a bronze-level certified Climate Smart Community (CSC). Under the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, CSC is a program that recognizes and helps local communities across the state reduce greenhouse gas emissions and fight climate change. In these uncertain times, local climate change victories are important to help preserve the Adirondack Park for future generations.

Saranac Lake | Photo © Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions, Inc.



6. State Responds Quickly to New Invasives

In August, the invasive Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) was found on at least one island and on 250 acres along Lake George. This new infestation in the Adirondack Park sets a potential new normal for the discovery of forest pests and pathogens. The Department of Environmental Conservation, along with the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program, and other regional partners, initiated a rapid response program to treat the infestation with an herbicide. The Council supports these efforts and is promoting stronger measures to prevent aquatic and forest invasive species including HWA, Emerald Ash Borer, and others from reaching the Park.

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid | Photo: iStock





Support Grows for Preserving Wilderness

Demand for protecting Wilderness from overuse is pouring in from all corners of the state. Voters, hikers, and newspaper editorial writers are expressing support for funding and implementing a comprehensive program that includes more education, better infrastructure, permits or limits on use at certain times in the most worn-out locations, and more Forest Rangers and other staff.

In September, the Times Union newspaper in Albany noted: “Restricting that access, even on a limited basis, is not something to take lightly. But it’s a step New York needs to take to protect its treasured mountains from being loved to death.” This was followed shortly thereafter by the Watertown Daily Times: “The state should establish a user permit system, at

least on a pilot basis, for the Forest Preserve. Give it some time to see if usage can be better managed.”

“Restricting that access, even on a limited basis, is not something to take lightly. But it’s a step New York needs to take to protect its treasured mountains from being loved to death.”

- Times Union Editorial Board Sep. 13, 2020

In September, the Adirondack Council commissioned a brief survey by the Siena College Research Institute in Albany. It showed that by 68% to 22% voters want New York State officials to protect overused Wilderness in the Adirondack Park from further

abuse by enforcing resource capacity limits, rather than building bigger and bigger parking lots.

In October, the Adirondack Council, the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry, and the Adirondack Mountain Club released preliminary results from a “Recreational User Experience and Perspectives” survey. Of the 673 Adirondack hikers surveyed in the High Peaks, 79% said they came to enjoy solitude and wilderness. Only 7% said they had no such expectation. More than half of all respondents supported visitor management tools such as closing parking lots, requiring parking permits, shuttle buses that bring hikers to the trailhead from offsite parking areas, limited trail-access permits, and temporary trail closures to manage surging crowds.

Climate Council Update

New York State’s Climate Action Council continues to implement the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions statewide by 2050. The Climate Council has made appointments for seven sector-specific advisory panels. The Agriculture and Forestry Advisory Panel will develop a list of recommendations that will help New York State’s farms and forests reduce greenhouse gas emissions and thrive under new climate change initiatives. The Essex Farm Institute, a program of the Adirondack Council, supports the NYS Climate Council and advocates for climate-friendly agriculture practices that benefit working farms and vibrant communities across the Adirondack Park.



Thanks to generous support from the Keith D. Stoltz Foundation, Clarence Petty Interns and Wilderness Research Associates Caroline Dodd and Ryan Nerp helped collect over 600+ hiker surveys this summer and fall

SUPPORTING THE COUNCIL



For Future Generations

YOU strengthen the Council's advocacy and outreach for the Adirondacks! Every dollar and every donor makes a difference. Consider a few ways your financial support can impact and help protect the Adirondacks:

- **Help us meet our \$80,000 year-end matching gift challenge!** Make a cash gift using the enclosed envelope or make a secure donation online at: donate.adirondackcouncil.org/yematch2020 and double your impact today!
 - **Give a gift of appreciated stock** and avoid capital gains.
 - **IRA** - If you are age 70+ or older, you may be able to **make a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD)** directly to the Adirondack Council tax-free.
 - **Commemorate a special someone with a tribute gift** in their memory or honor (wedding, birthday, or special occasion).
- **Become a Sustaining Member** by signing up to make automatic monthly contributions, thus saving the cost of yearly reminders.
- Join the Legacy Society and **name the Adirondack Council as a beneficiary in your will or life insurance policy.** Let us know so we can add your name and you can help inspire others.

Questions? Call 518.873.2240 or email foreverwild@adirondackcouncil.org.

Stay Engaged With the Latest News and Actions

We are here to keep you connected and informed on important Adirondack conservation issues. Email is the fastest, most cost-effective way to communicate with you. Sign-up today and receive important updates, digital newsletters, action alerts, and monthly *In and About the Park Blog* and *5 Things You Need to Know* emails.

It's easy to join our email list! Sign-up at AdirondackCouncil.org or send your email address by text message:

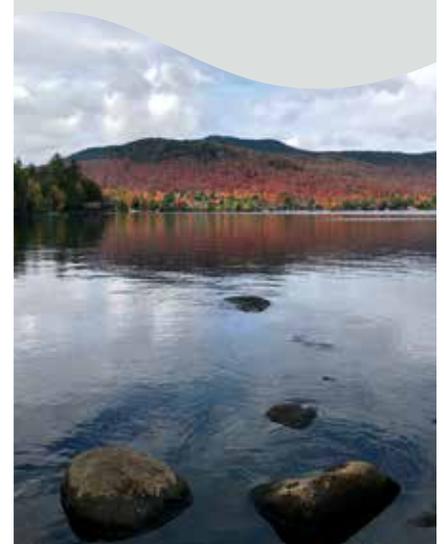
Please text
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to **22828** to get started.



Remarkable Investment

We are pleased to announce that the Adirondack Council has received a \$500,000 gift from John and Deanna Sammon. They share a deep love of the Adirondacks, and have grown to greatly value the work of the Adirondack Council on behalf of the environment and communities of the Park.

During this critical time, their transformative investment will open opportunities and provide lasting conservation impact for the waters, air, and wildlands of the Adirondacks for generations to come.



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Holiday Gifts That Give Back!

Introduce the wonder of the Adirondacks to someone special this holiday season. Shop online for these products and more at AdirondackCouncil.org or call us at 518.873.2240 to make a purchase today! All proceeds support Adirondack conservation.

Shop Amazon? Use smile.Amazon.com and choose the Adirondack Council as your charity and Amazon will send the Adirondack Council 0.5% on your eligible purchases.

NEW! Neck Gaiters | \$20

Available in three colors (blue, green, or orange) two designs (loon logo or mountains) and two styles (lightweight or insulated) Measures (9.5" x 15.5")



Loon Logo Hats | \$20

Available in baseball or trucker styles with loon logo patch or white embroidery - adjustable



Tri-Blend Tees | \$20

Available in cranberry, gray, green, coffee, & indigo (shown).
Sizes: S, M, L, XL, 2XL



Handmade Loon Mugs | \$25

12oz + capacity, handcrafted & Made in the USA - microwave/ dishwasher safe



NEW! 2021 Forever Wild Calendar | \$14

12-month calendar featuring award-winning landscape photographer Carl Heilman II

WILD -ABOUT THE- PARK

We love seeing your photos from around the Park. Use the hashtag **#WildAboutThePark** and tag us on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter and we may feature them here in our newsletter or on social media!

