



CALL OF THE LOON

Adirondack Council Newsletter | Autumn 2021



Photo © Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions, Inc

Advocacy for Clean Water, Jobs & Wilderness

Nationally known environmental advocate and scientist Aaron Mair has joined the Adirondack Council's advocacy team as Director of the Forever Adirondacks Campaign. Mair intends to raise awareness across New York State and the nation about the need to fund clean water, jobs, and wilderness protection in the Adirondack Park.

Mair recently retired as an epidemiologist with the NYS Dept. of Health. From 2015 through 2017 he was President of Sierra Club, one of the world's largest and oldest environmental organizations.

The Park has more than 2,800 large lakes and ponds, 1,500 miles of major rivers, 30,000 miles of brooks and streams, and billions of trees. Its protected forests sequester carbon and replace it with oxygen, help fight

climate change, filter our drinking water, provide the clean air we breathe, and keep our rivers and streams cool enough for native trout and salmon to survive.

The Adirondack Park's 130,000 year-round residents and 130 communities need state and federal investments to upgrade green infrastructure, to double and diversify the Forest Ranger force, to put people to work, foster more vibrant communities, and preserve the Park's clean water and wilderness.

The Park can expand job opportunities and New York can build a sustainable year-round population with new investments in improved housing, education, childcare, visitor management, cell service, and broadband internet communications infrastructure.

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

Securing Actions for a Brighter Future



William C. Janeway
Executive Director
@WillieJaneway

Dear Friends of the Adirondacks,

It would be hard to overstate how excited we are for the future. Thanks to you, the Adirondack Council's staff, advocacy, science, and conservation capacity has expanded rapidly over the past year. This allows for new efforts and campaigns. And after a long, COVID-related delay, we are finally traveling again, bringing your values and our shared priorities to other parts of the world and inviting new friends to come learn about the Adirondacks.

Thanks to your generous support, the Adirondack Council is better equipped than ever to respond to the rapidly changing challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

Your assistance comes not a moment too soon. This fall we unveiled our new Adirondack VISION 2050, a collaborative view of what the Adirondack Park could be 30 years from now. We hope it will spark lively conversations about the future of the Park's ecological health and management, as well as its communities.

The Council is seeking state and federal funding for the interconnected goals of clean water, new jobs, and

wilderness protection through Aaron Mair's Forever Adirondacks Campaign. As the Campaign's director, Mair will bring together a coalition of community, business, and wilderness preservation leaders to seek better policies and funding for all three goals.

We were thrilled to have held a reception in Lake Placid at the end of October to celebrate the first Adirondack visit of the NYS Legislature's Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic, and Asian Caucus. The Caucus graciously invited two Council staff members to speak to lawmakers and build relationships we hope will last for a long time.

Aaron Mair also spent the first half of November representing the Adirondack Council at the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference of Parties (COP26) in Glasgow, Scotland. At the same time, Kevin Chlad, the Council's Director of Government Relations, was networking with state officials at the Somos 2021 Conference in Puerto Rico.

We, with your support, are in the room with leading decision makers advocating for our shared values and securing actions needed for a brighter future for everyone. Thank you.

Sincerely,

William C. Janeway
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Unfinished Adirondack Business Awaits Governor

In October, Governor Hochul announced that John Ernst would serve as chair of the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) Board. John Ernst is highly knowledgeable in the Agency's authority and limitations and has twice received the Adirondack Council's Conservationist of the Year award. While the selection of Ernst as chair is cause for celebration, one seat on the APA board is currently vacant and two members are serving on expired terms. Two more terms expire in June 2022, which leaves the APA board in a weakened state. The APA needs a board with diverse backgrounds and many areas of expertise.



Adirondack Park Agency Chair John Ernst

Other unfinished Adirondack business awaits Governor Hochul's leadership as she finishes out the year. The Adirondack Road Salt Reduction Task Force has yet to be appointed, which will convene experts to synthesize road salt reduction strategies and recommend a Park-

wide pilot program. Legislation establishing a mandatory "clean, drain, dry" requirement for boaters using waters in the Adirondacks also awaits Governor Hochul's signature. If signed into law, boaters would be required to provide physical proof of compliance with aquatic invasive species prevention protocols before launching their boats in the Park.



L-R: Aaron Mair and NYS Governor Kathy Hochul

Governor Hochul's selection of John Ernst as Chair of the APA board is a positive signal of her vision for the Park. These unfinished clean water priorities provide opportunities for early Adirondack victories in the Governor's tenure. The Adirondack Council is optimistic that the Governor will quickly address these matters and pivot to an ambitious APA that benefits clean water, wilderness, and communities.

Advocacy for Clean Water, Jobs & Wilderness *(continued from page 1)*

The Adirondack Park is home to 90% of all motor-free wilderness from Maine to Georgia and irreplaceable wildlife such as moose, trout, and loon. The wilderness should be managed and enjoyed sustainably. The Park needs funding to address overuse and protect key conservation lands such as the 36,000-acre Whitney Estate and 14,000-acre Follensby Pond properties.



L-R: NYS Attorney General Letitia James and Aaron Mair

Additional support is needed for science, climate monitoring, acid rain research, and restoration. Programs have been cut significantly on the state and federal levels. They must be restored and expanded to protect nature and public health.



The Adirondack Council welcomed members of the Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic, and Asian Legislative Caucus at a fall reception in Lake Placid

IN & ABOUT THE PARK

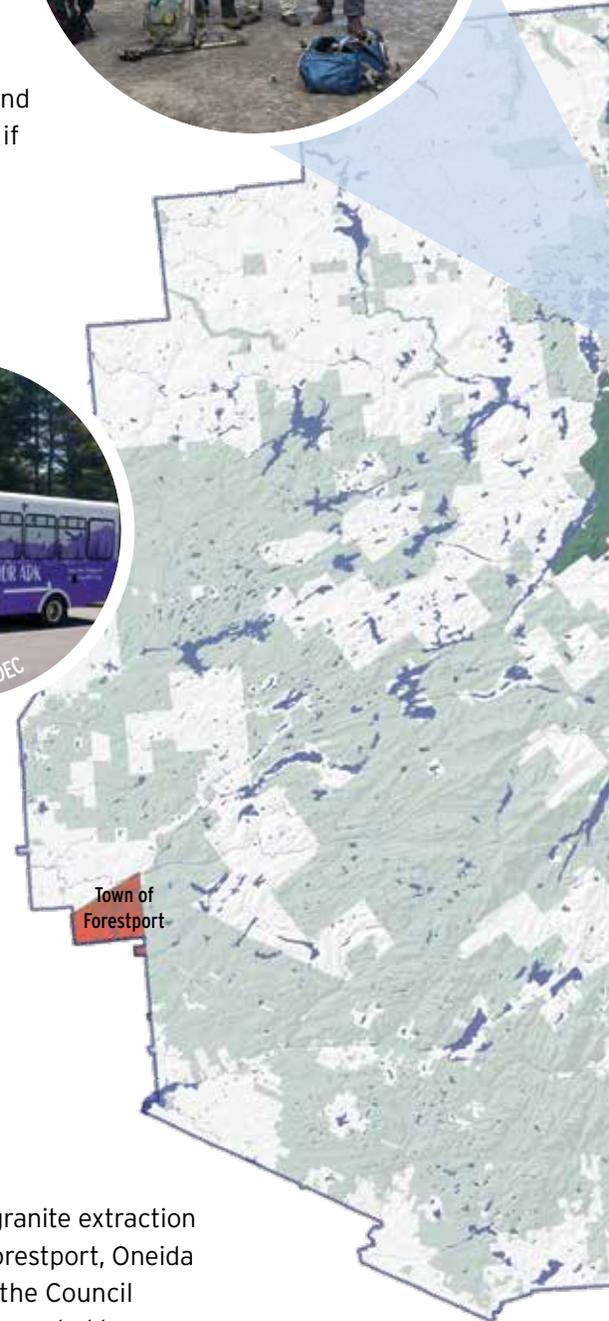
1. Science and Data Collection

The Adirondack Council partnered with the consulting firm Otak to design and implement a research study to better understand how hikers enter and move through the trail system in the High Peaks Wilderness. The Council staff was joined by seasonal technicians to capture the number of cars parked at trailheads, and the number of hikers along a given trail segment and at one time in summit areas. These figures, taken together with data from nine infrared trail counters deployed at common entrances and exits to the High Peaks Wilderness, will help managers model what happens if we adjust the number of users or undertake specific management actions.



2. A High Peaks Summer in Retrospect

Leisure travelers continued to flock to the High Peaks - occupancy tax revenues flowed in, local businesses were bustling, and the Marcy Field Farmer's Market averaged 1500-1800 visitors per week. But overall, High Peaks trail use was lower than last year, and the pattern of use has changed. Trailheads were less busy on weekends, and use was spread more evenly across the week. What drove this shift? The new pilot reservation system at the Adirondack Mountain Reserve, state limits on parking in the Route 73 corridor, and prolonged rainy weather this season could all factor into the observed decrease in total hiker activity. The Canadian border remained closed during the summer months, which could offer another explanation, as Canadian hikers typically account for 40% of users in the High Peaks in a normal year. If High Peaks' communities still buzzed with activity, but hiker numbers were down, did we see a different user group from last summer? More research and monitoring is needed to understand use patterns and better manage state lands and waterbodies across the entire Adirondack Park. A comprehensive visitor use management framework offers a holistic and inclusive strategy for success - the state just needs the will to implement it.



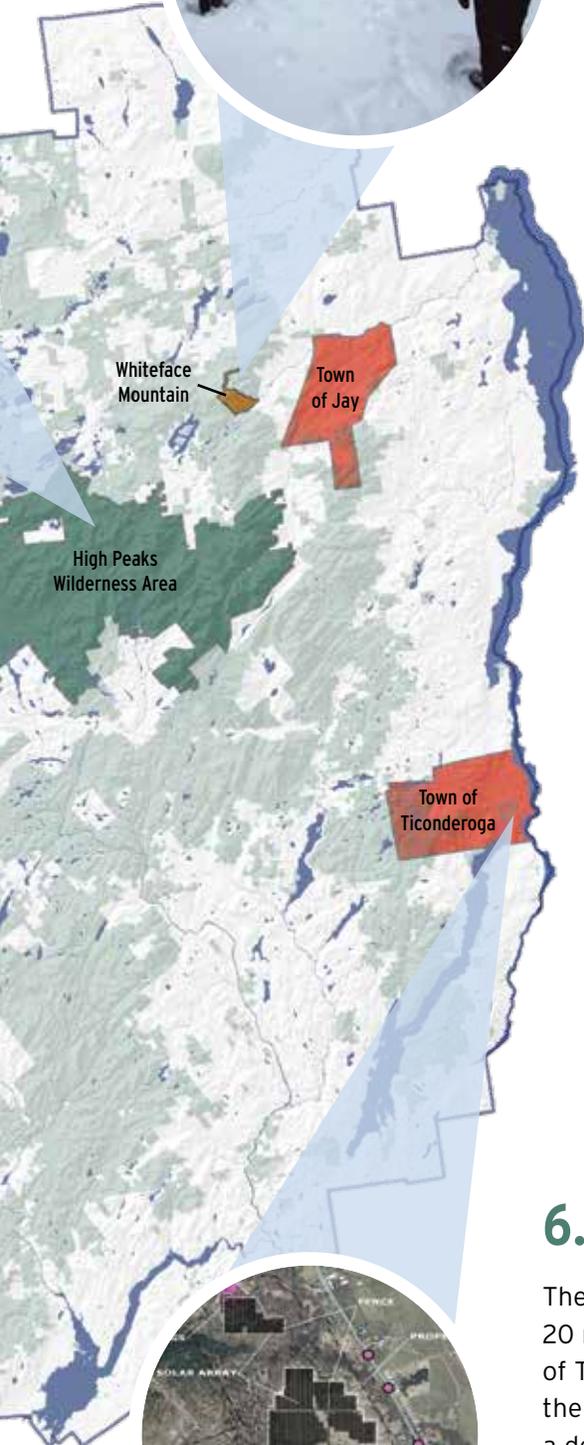
3. Troubling White Lake Mine Proposal

The Adirondack Council voiced its concerns regarding a proposed commercial granite extraction project that would be located on Moderate Intensity Use lands in the Town of Forestport, Oneida County. In a comment letter submitted to the Adirondack Park Agency (APA), the Council questioned if a mining operation of this scale is suitable on a small parcel surrounded by residential properties. The Council urged the APA to work with the applicant to strengthen its analysis of environmental impacts and the reclamation plan and methods. The White Lake Granite Quarry has garnered considerable public attention. The Council is urging the APA to hold an adjudicatory public hearing to provide a robust and transparent public review process.



4. Concerns Over Proposed Whiteface Mt. Trail Expansion

The Olympic Regional Development Authority (ORDA) is proposing a Unit Management Plan Amendment to expand the Whiteface Mountain Ski Center Intensive Use Area. The proposed actions include three new ski trails, widening eight existing ski trails, installing a new lift line, and developing 28.5 miles of new or improved existing trails for hiking, mountain biking, or multi-use. When actions are compliant with existing constitutional Article XIV limitations, which some of these might not be, the Council supports the modernization of existing facilities in Intensive Use units. Concerns include compliance with Forever Wild, and how tree cutting impacts high elevation endangered Bicknell Thrush breeding habitat.



5. Major 355-Acre Subdivision Proposed in Jay

A four-phased subdivision is proposed on a 355-acre parcel in the Town of Jay, Essex County where 25-35 lots or residential lots would be created per each phase. The project is predominantly zoned in Low Intensity Use (LIU), which allows for one housing unit per 3.2 acres, or about 120 units total. Multiple types of high end housing units and development are proposed, including townhouses, villas, mansions, a renewable energy farm, and river cabin general store. The subdivision is subject to the Adirondack Park Agency's large-scale subdivision application because 25 or more proposed lots, parcels, or sites are proposed. The Council submitted comments on the conceptual design plans in early December.



6. Praise for Solar Project in Ticonderoga

The Adirondack Council voiced its support for a well-designed and sited 20 mega-watt utility-scale solar project proposed to be built in the Town of Ticonderoga, Essex County. The solar facility will be located close to the community center, existing transmission infrastructure, and includes a detailed decommissioning plan. ELP Ticonderoga Solar, LLC worked with the Adirondack Park Agency and the Town to explore alternative site locations and minimize visual impacts. The Council continues to advocate for a balanced and holistic approach to solar development that takes existing natural resources and natural climate solutions into account.





Council Expands Conservation Team

The Council expands its conservation team with two recent hires. The first, Blake Neumann, full-time Clean Water Advocate, will work with local partners to develop and implement water quality protection and aquatic invasive species management strategies for Raquette Lake and surrounding watersheds. Neumann brings expertise from



Blake Neumann

his work at the US Environmental Protection Agency and The Nature Conservancy and holds a Master's degree in Water and Wetland Resource Studies from SUNY ESF and a Master's of Public Administration and Environmental Policy from Syracuse University.

Second is Dillon Klepetar, the Council's new, part-time Adirondack Farm Advocate. In addition to helping guide the Essex Farm Institute program for the Council, Klepetar is an active farmer and owner of Farmstead Catering at Echo Farm in Whallonsburg.

He holds a PhD in American Politics from American University with a focus on Government & Environmental Policy, has over

14 years of farming experience, and is a board member of the NY Farm Bureau. Klepetar also works toward more sustainable farming practices, including experimenting with making biodiesel fuel from beef and pork fat.



Dillon Klepetar

Council Seeks Clean Air Funding, New Standards in Washington, D.C.

The Adirondack Council is working with colleagues and supporters in Washington, D.C. to gain new funding for air quality monitoring, pollution data collection, and climate research, as well as policy changes that would protect the Park from acid rain, smog, and destructive weather caused by a warming global climate.

This spring, the Council coordinated a five-state advocacy team seeking a permanent \$5 million increase in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) budget for acid rain and climate research in the Adirondack Park and across the Northeast. The money would fund research under state guidance to document the damage done by

various types of air pollution (acid rain, smog, soot particles, mercury, etc.). Such proof has continually been needed to show federal regulators that the Park requires additional pollution cuts to rebound from decades of acid rain damage.

The Adirondack Council extends its thanks to Congressional Rep. Chellie Pingree, D-Maine, who chairs a key House appropriations committee, for adding language to the FY2022 federal budget for the Dept. of the Interior requiring the EPA to develop a plan to create a "critical loads" standard for acid rain. A critical load is the pollution threshold over which damage occurs to key components of an ecosystem.

The Council is also working with National Parks and Conservation Association, Environmental Defense Fund, Earth Justice, American Lung Association, and Sierra Club to gain cleaner ambient air quality standards and eliminate some of the Trump administration's reckless environmental regulation roll-backs.



(L-R): Executive Director William Janeway, Senator Chuck Schumer (D-NY), and Adirondack Campaign Director Aaron Mair

SUPPORTING THE COUNCIL



Ways You Can Have an Impact

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 preserve the Adirondacks for future generations:



- Help us meet our \$115,000 Year-End Matching Gift Challenge - please use the enclosed envelope or visit us online at donate.adirondackcouncil.org/yematch2021 and make a gift today!
- Give a **gift of appreciated stock** and avoid capital gains.
- **IRA** - If you are age 72+ (70 1/2 if you reached 70 1/2 before January 1, 2020), 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, special occasion, etc.).
- Become a **Sustaining Member** with automatic monthly contributions, thus saving the cost of yearly reminders.
- **Legacy Society** - Name the Adirondack Council as a beneficiary in your will or life insurance policy - let us know so we can list you as a member of the legacy society and you can help inspire others.

Questions? Call 518.873.2240 x106 or email foreverwild@adirondackcouncil.org.

Keeping You Engaged & Informed

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 by text message:

Please text
CALLOFTHELOON
to 22828 to get started.



Take Action for the Adirondacks

As the Hochul administration prepares for the 2022 State of the State message and FY 2022-23 state budget, your letters, emails, phone calls, and social media posts will make a lasting impact on our shared Adirondack legacy. Please join us as we call upon New York State to:

- Address overuse by doubling and diversifying our Forest Ranger force and providing funding for access and visitor use management, trail repair, and education.
- Protect public health by funding a 21st century study of climate change and Adirondack lakes ecosystems.
- Establish a jobs and education pipeline to the Adirondacks.
- Bring the Adirondack Park Agency board to full strength with members who have diverse backgrounds and areas of expertise.

Stay tuned for future calls to action by mail and online.

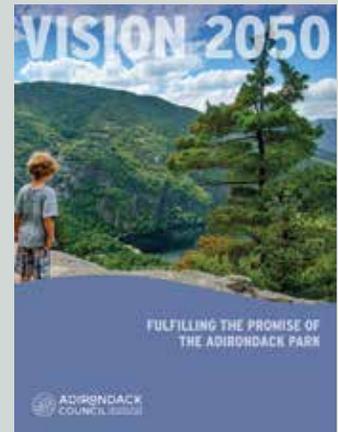


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Adirondack VISION 2050 Released

After three years of stakeholder engagement, background research, hours spent working with the steering committee, and copywriting and editing, the Council released its VISION 2050 report in mid-November. The 98-page report describes a long-range plan for the future of the Adirondack Park -- a shared vision for what the Park could look like 30 years from now. The overarching goal of the project is to build a shared appreciation for the Adirondacks, acknowledge the challenges and opportunities expected in the decades ahead, and catalyze broad support for specific funding, governance, and policy actions. It contains three inseparable pillars, 18 pathways, and more than 250 recommendations that can be undertaken by the state and/or localities with support from the non-profit community, academic institutions, local businesses, and community organizations.



A downloadable copy of the report and a list of places where hard copies can be viewed are listed on our website at www.adirondackvision2050.org.

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.



2022 Forever Wild Calendar | \$14

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

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.

Seasonal Candles | \$20

8oz candle burns up to 60 hours. Available in 3 scents (Classic ADK, Autumn Outing & Winter Moonlight). Made in Rochester, NY by Scents by Design, an independent, woman-owned small business



Loon Logo Trucker Hats | \$20 - \$25

Two-tone (blue/green), Richardson trucker hats with faux-leather patch or white embroidery



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"

