



CALL OF THE LOON

Adirondack Council Newsletter | Winter 2022



Governor Hochul Advances Adirondack Priorities

Governor Kathy Hochul announced actions on clean water, wilderness, and community needs, representing long-delayed progress.

After three years of advocacy, the Governor signed a permanent new aquatic invasive species prevention law authorizing the state to require motorized boats launched into Adirondack waters to first be inspected and cleaned of any invasive plant or animal species. Also, after a year's delay, Governor Hochul appointed members to the new Adirondack Park Road Salt Task Force, so it can now write a plan to curb salt contamination of drinking water and keep roads safe. In addition, \$20 million in new clean water infrastructure grants were announced for communities in the Park, and the state's Draft Climate Scoping Action Plan was released. And there are two new laws that will benefit

Adirondack agriculture, and another new law will help expand broadband.

Hochul also appointed Elk Lake Lodge owner and former Adirondack Council Board Chair John Ernst as the chair of the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) board. The Governor chose and the APA confirmed Barbara Rice as the new executive director. The Council's Megan Phillips was hired as APA deputy director of planning.

In her January State of the State message, the Governor pledged to better protect Wilderness and address overuse. Hochul backed that up with funding in her Executive Budget proposal and asked for a \$4-billion environmental bond act and added \$100 million to the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF). Her plan includes additional staff and a new Forest Ranger academy.

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

Will Future Generations Give Us a 👍 ?



William C. Janeway
Executive Director
@WillieJaneway

Dear Friends of the Adirondacks,

You, I, and others appreciate the Adirondack Park. We applaud the protections it offers for clean water, clean air, wildlands, and communities.

We honor those ancestors and the generations before us who created the Forest Preserve, envisioned the Adirondack Park, and enacted the “Forever Wild” protections in the New York State Constitution over 135 years ago. We have the same respect for those who created the Adirondack Park Agency just over 50 years ago. These individuals secured legal protections for what is now the greatest wilderness in the East and the largest park in the contiguous United States. We give them a “thumbs up.”

“We do not inherit the land from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children,” goes a saying often attributed to Native Americans, author Norman Krznaric notes in his 2020 book, “The Good Ancestor.”

He suggests “a radical prescription for long-term thinking” be embraced by today’s decision makers to address environmental degradation, climate change, unequal justice, and other threats. Krznaric suggests, and I agree, that now more than ever, we need to help our elected and appointed government officials embrace this ethic and take actions needed to preserve the clean water, clean air, and wildlands that we know future generations will need. We need to help them earn a thumbs up from future generations.

At the Adirondack Council, we thank you for your positive contributions to the preservation of the legacy of the Adirondacks. By participating in the work of the Council through your membership and contributions, actions, and support, you help to preserve the ecological integrity and wild character of the Adirondacks. If we do this right, together, future generations will give us all a “thumbs up.”

Sincerely,

William C. Janeway
Executive Director

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The Parkside Group (**Government Relations**)
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Donahue & Goldberg, LLP (**Federal/Clean Air**)
Phil Gitlen, Esq.
Robert Rosborough, Esq.
Paul VanCott, Esq.
Whiteman Osterman & Hanna LLP (**Legal/Article XIV**)
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Governor Hochul Proposed Green Agenda

In her first State of the State address and Executive Budget presentation, Governor Kathy Hochul put forward a suite of historic proposals that will greatly benefit the Adirondack Park.

As the feature of her natural resources agenda, the Governor proposed a \$4 billion Clean Water, Clean Air, Green Jobs Bond Act, a \$400 million Environmental Protection Fund, and \$500 million for clean water infrastructure. In addition, the Governor committed to addressing overuse in the Adirondacks and Catskills in her State of the State message, and her budget includes a proposal to increase the State Land Stewardship Fund from \$34 million to \$50 million.

The Governor's proposals are historic in their size and scope. The Adirondack Council is applauding them and advocating for additional details that clarify how the Adirondack Park will see the greatest benefit. Among the specific needs are \$500,000 for Visitor Use Management to address overuse for the Adirondack High Peaks region utilizing the recreation management approach used at the most popular national parks in the United States.



HOCHUL

The final budget also needs to invest \$6 million in a Survey of

Climate Change and Adirondack Lakes Ecosystems (SCALE), a comprehensive study of 400 waterbodies in the Adirondacks to combat air pollution, fight climate change, and prevent clean water threats like road salt pollution and harmful algal blooms. The Adirondack Council is also advocating for other community, environmental, and justice projects including a Timbuctoo Summer Climate and Careers Institute, which will provide a diverse group of high school students with exposure to environmental career pathways through a summer experience in the Adirondacks.



Aaron Mair and members of the Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic, and Asian Legislative Caucus discuss the legacy of civil rights and the black suffrage movement in the Adirondacks.

State and federal investment in science and data collection will be important tools in combatting air pollution, fighting climate change, and preventing threats to clean water.

IN & ABOUT THE PARK

1. Preliminary Results of Visitor Use Study Released

In response to the ongoing surge in visitor use, the Adirondack Council partnered with the consulting firm Otak to conduct a research study and collect data to estimate visitor use levels and conditions at roadside parking areas, on trails, and specific summits in the High Peaks Wilderness Area. While a final report is not expected until summer 2022, Otak has provided a summary of the study. In total, over 21,000 hours of trail use data was collected across seven locations in the High Peaks area utilizing human observations, photographs, and infrared trail counters. The results of the study will be shared with state agencies to support ongoing efforts in visitor use management in the High Peaks.



2. Draft Climate Plan Seeks Public Input

In January, New York's Climate Action Council released its draft Climate Scoping Plan for the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act. The scoping plan outlines how the state will achieve the ambitious climate goals outlined in the climate act, including 70% renewable energy by 2030 and 100% zero-emission electricity by 2040. The scoping plan was developed by the Climate Action Council, comprised of a broad range of sector-specific representatives, and the Climate Justice Working Group. In the 341-page plan, several recommendations are provided across many sectors, including forestry, agriculture, transportation, adaptation, and resilience. The scoping plan is out for public comment until May 1, and several in-person public hearings will be announced in April.



3. APA Approves White Lake Mine Permit

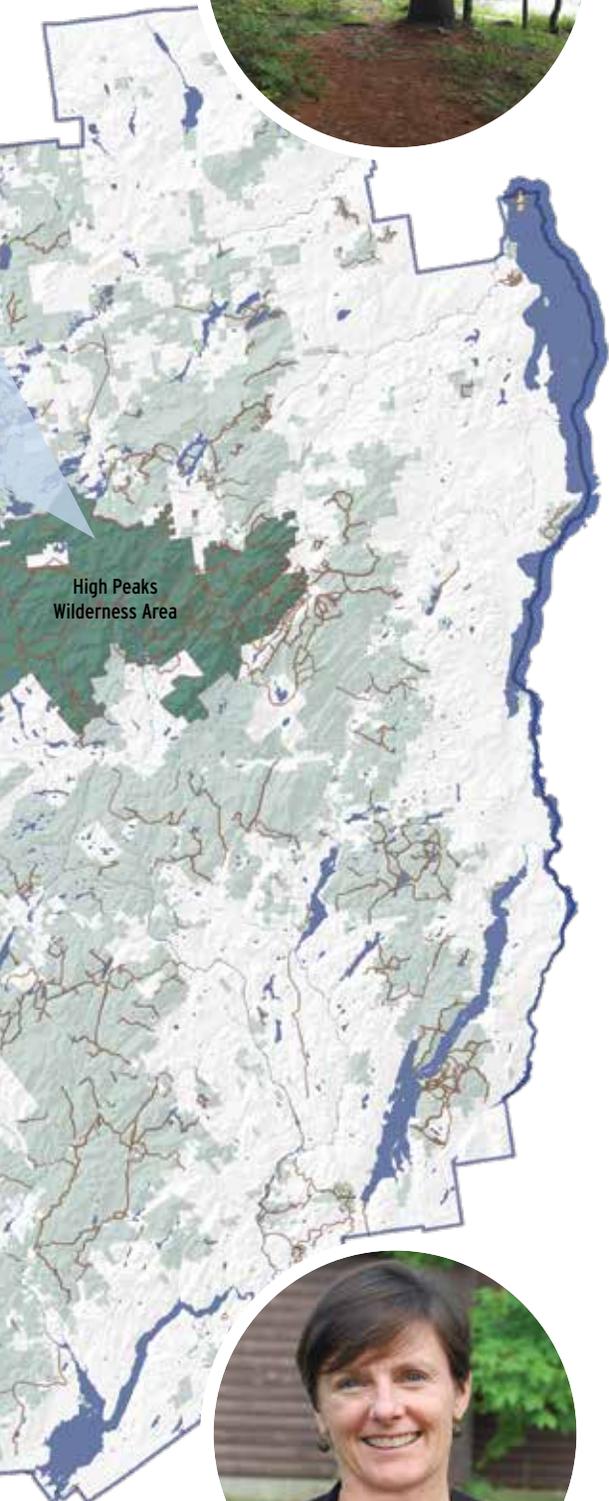
In January, the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) Board approved a permit for the White Lake Mine located in Forestport, Oneida County. The mine site is located on Moderate Intensity Use lands and is near several full-time and seasonal residences. When the proposal went out for public comment in the summer of 2021, it garnered strong comments and opposition. The Adirondack Council and other organizations called for the APA to hold an adjudicatory hearing on the project, which would have allowed additional facts not already shared by the applicant to be presented for the APA Board's consideration. The APA has not held an adjudicatory hearing since 2011 despite numerous warranted requests.





4. DEC Creates Working Group on Forest Preserve Trail Policy

The Council's Acting Director of Conservation Jackie Bowen was recently appointed to the Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) newly created working group that will review and propose revisions to Forest Preserve management and stewardship policies. These policies will affect future trail construction on Forest Preserve lands and must be consistent with the "Forever Wild" Clause of the NYS Constitution and case law standards. This working group was formed in response to the 2021 decision by the NYS Court of Appeals in Protect the Adirondacks! vs. DEC, which found the DEC violated the NYS Constitution when it cut down thousands of trees building wide snowmobile trails. The working group consists of diverse stakeholders.



5. New Laws Good for Agriculture

The Adirondack Council's Essex Farm Institute is celebrating two bills signed by Gov. Kathy Hochul that benefit farmers in the Adirondacks. The first is the Soil Health and Climate Resiliency Act which will protect soil fertility while limiting the release of greenhouse gasses caused by conventional tillage. The second requires the Department of Agriculture and Markets to create a searchable database of farm products for sale. This will create a new way for small farms to market their products while cutting through the misleading noise of products labeled as "local" or "produced in New York."



Photo: Ben Stechschulte

6. New Faces at the Park Agency

The Adirondack Park Agency underwent numerous staffing changes in January. Long-time Executive Director Terry Martino announced her retirement, and Saranac Lake native Barbara Rice would replace her as the new executive director. Rice had previously served on the APA board from 2016 - 2018, and then joined the Cuomo administration as assistant secretary for economic development. Also, former Adirondack Council Vice President for Conservation Megan Phillips joined the Agency as deputy director of planning and will also serve on the Adirondack Road Salt Reduction Task Force.



Photo: APA



Adirondack Rewilding and Moose

As the first large-scale experiment in rewilding - restoring and protecting natural processes and wild spaces - the Adirondack Park has been remarkably successful. Many species nearly wiped out a century ago - including river otter, fisher, bobcat, black bear, beaver, bald eagle, and peregrine falcon - have rebounded wonderfully. Most of this wildlife recovery has been through natural recolonization. The latest animal to return has been the moose (*Alces alces*).

Moose were slowly expanding in numbers across northern New York, and perhaps number about 700 in the Adirondacks. However, the long-term prospects for Moose in the Park are unclear. Climate change impacts may affect their already limited supply of habitat in the region and pose additional stresses. Moose don't like hot weather.

The Adirondack Park is the last best chance for New York State to retain a mega-herbivore. Assuring a future for moose in the Park means stabilizing climate; continuing to protect the Forest Preserve (which provides the habitat wide-ranging species need); encouraging ecologically sustainable forestry on large private lands (which affords rich browse); strengthening habitat connections within and beyond the Adirondack

Park, such as the Adirondack to Algonquin link (A2A), and installing safe wildlife crossings.

Ultimately, when moose achieve carrying capacity in northern New York, they'll need natural controls, such as carnivores, to keep the herd strong and keep their numbers in check.



Larry Master, masterimages.org

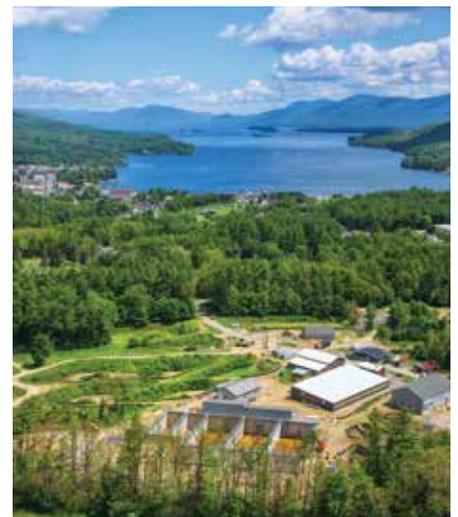
Moose are listed as a protected species in New York State. Since 2007, the Dept. of Environmental Conservation has conducted periodic aerial surveying in early winter to assess moose populations in the Adirondacks.

New Clean Water Grants Benefit Park Communities

In December, the state awarded \$20 million in new clean water infrastructure grants to Adirondack communities to upgrade wastewater treatment plants and sewer systems to protect the Park's waters.

To date, over \$80 million in clean water grants have been given to communities around the state. The Council is working with communities to identify needs and advocate

for projects and has found that over an additional \$100 million is still needed for other projects. Fortunately, another round of grants is due this spring, and more funds were included in the Governor's budget proposal. The Council will continue to work with local leaders and state officials to make sure these clean water projects get funded.



Lake George wastewater treatment plant

PHOTO © CARL HEILMAN II/WILD VISIONS INC. & LAKE GEORGE LAND CONSERVANCY

SUPPORTING THE COUNCIL



Year-End Challenge Successful

Thank you! You helped us meet and surpass the \$215,000 Challenge Match by December 31. Thank you for rising to the occasion and helping to raise over \$430,000 to help preserve the water, air, and wildlands of the Adirondack Park. We also thank the seven trustees and four supporters, including the Stoltz Family, for leading and investing in the Challenge Match to inspire this remarkable generosity and care for the Adirondack Park. Together, we are using the best science and the law to ensure that the Adirondacks are preserved and welcoming for all not only today but for future generations.



TAKE ACTION: Protect Clean Air & Public Health!

We must urge Congress to provide the vital science funding needed to protect the region's iconic landscape from upwind smokestack pollution that contributes to the climate crisis and harms people, businesses, forests, and waters.

New York State officials need good data to confirm whether federal clean air laws are working to protect public health and the Adirondacks from harm. Sadly, the nation's air quality monitoring system is losing its ability to keep track of the damage being done.

There is an immediate and urgent need to invest and rebuild the nation's air quality monitoring system.

**Take action online at:
AdirondackCouncil.org/
cleanairfunding**

Support Adirondack Conservation

Whether you are in the Adirondacks or elsewhere, you too can show your support for preserving the water, air, and wildlands of this national treasure. Visit our online shop at donate.AdirondackCouncil.org or call us at 518.873.2240 to purchase a variety of branded merchandise. All proceeds support our daily advocacy for the Adirondack Park.

Canvas Tote Bag | \$15

Made from 10oz sturdy, 100% cotton canvas, 19"W x 15.5"H x 5" gusset & long handles - double sided print with Council loon logo



Trucker Hats | \$20 - \$25

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



Handmade Loon Mugs & Tankards | \$25 - \$30

Handcrafted in the USA, 12 - 18oz capacity, microwave & dishwasher safe - mugs available in teal, burgundy, or sand (shown) - tankards available in dijon or heritage blue (shown)



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" - made in Colorado



PHOTO © CARL HELLMAN / WILD VISIONS INC.

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Save the Date | Forever Wild Day 2022

Please mark your calendar for Forever Wild Day. **This year we will gather virtually via Zoom on Friday, July 8, and in-person at Paul Smith's College on Saturday, July 9.** We welcome members to participate on-screen, in-person, or both. More details to follow in the coming weeks.



Fulfilling the Promise of the Adirondack Park

In late 2021, the Adirondack Council released its landmark VISION 2050 report, which contains over 250 recommendations on how the Council and other stakeholders can work holistically to sustainably manage and enhance the waters, wilderness, wildlife, and communities of the Adirondack Park over the next 30 years. Press coverage was widespread and supportive, and hard copies of the report have been distributed to stakeholders, public libraries, news organizations, and colleges around Upstate New York. Additionally, numerous videos on the executive summary and main points of the report have been released or are currently in production. Public reaction continues to be positive. Ongoing stakeholder input, engagement, and partnerships will be an important element of the VISION work over the coming years.



Special thanks to VISION 2050 Steering Committee Co-Chairs Charles D. Canham, Ph.D. and Tom Curley

A downloadable copy of the report and a list of places where hard copies can be viewed are on our website at: AdirondackVISION2050.org

