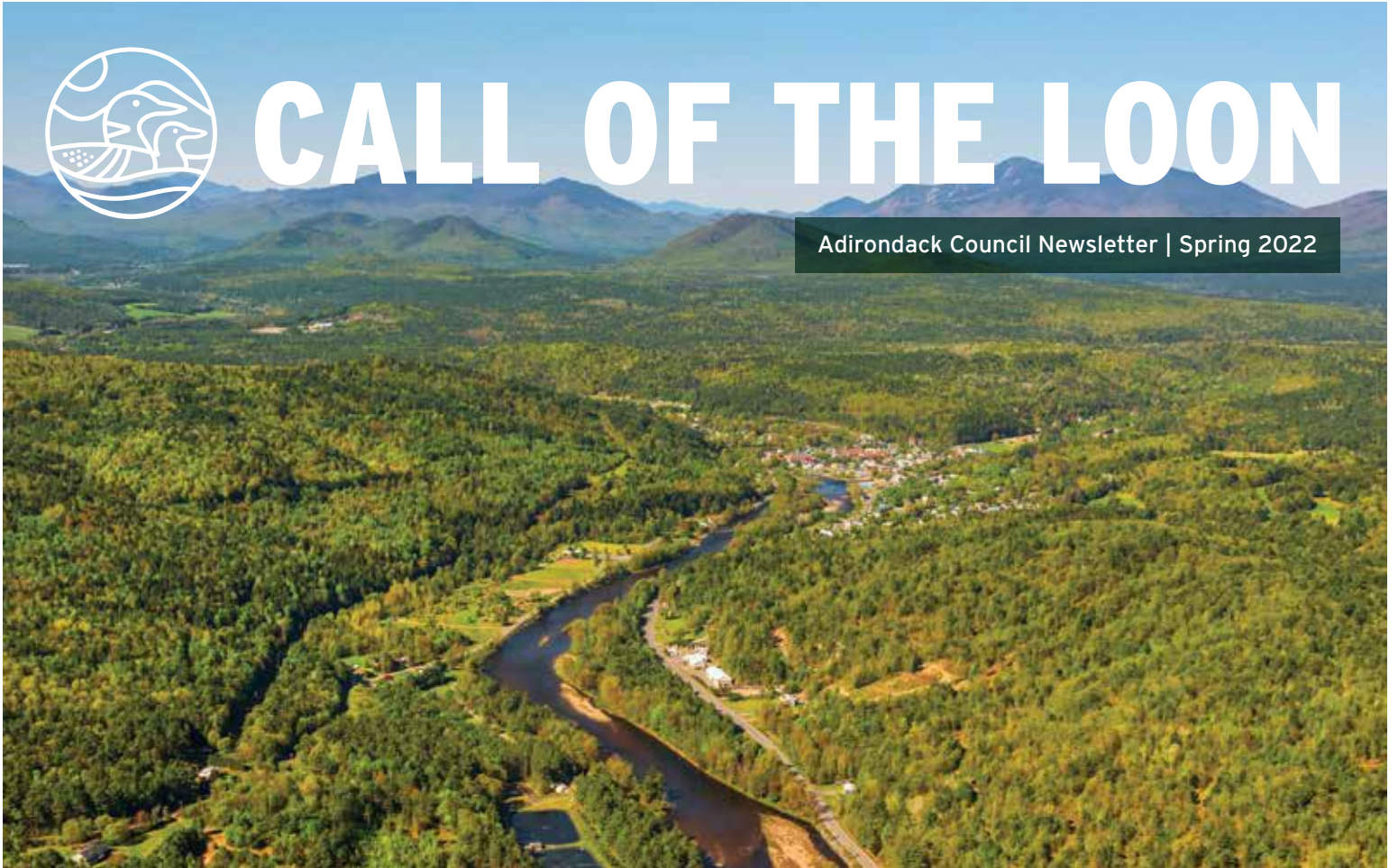




CALL OF THE LOON

Adirondack Council Newsletter | Spring 2022



Victories for Wilderness & Communities

The coalition supporting the new Forever Adirondacks Campaign for clean water, jobs, and wilderness, led by the Adirondack Council's Aaron Mair and funded by the Council, secured funding in April for all three of its priorities.

The new state budget included \$8.6 million for wilderness protection and addressing overuse with \$600,000 for a formal visitor management framework similar to those used in national parks. Such frameworks address the impacts of recreational overuse, protect wilderness areas, and ensure fair wilderness access for all.

The Park's water quality will benefit from a new comprehensive survey of Adirondack lakes, similar to the baseline acid rain study completed in the mid-1980s. The new *Survey of Climate and Adirondack Lake Ecosystems* won \$500,000 in start-up support this year, which can be built upon for a \$6-million multi-year, multi-institution effort.

Also, \$2.1 million was awarded to create a Timbuctoo Summer Careers and Climate Institute. This program would match City University of NY colleges, such as Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn, with environmental job training programs at the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY-ESF) in Newcomb and other Adirondack opportunities. The joint effort will act as a "prep school" for SUNY-ESF's Ranger Academy and other environmental career paths.

The Institute was named in honor of the Timbuctoo Suffrage Settlement, one of several communities formed by thousands of black men in the 1840s who accepted an offer to tend 40-acre farms in North Elba and surrounding towns. This allowed them to own the property needed to qualify as a voter in New York State.

ABOVE: AUSABLE FORKS | PHOTO © CARL HEILMAN II/WILD VISIONS INC.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page 3

Historic Budget for Water, Climate, & Communities

Page 4

Diversity Initiative Gets Funding Boost

Page 6

Farm Micro-grants Announced



ADIRONDACK
COUNCIL PRESERVING WATER,
AIR AND WILDLANDS

Shaping a Successful Future for the Adirondacks



Rocci Aguirre
Deputy Director

Dear Friends of the Adirondacks,

Spring at the Adirondack Council means navigating mud season in the North Country and budget season in Albany. Both are messy in their own way but set the tone for the important work that lies ahead for the year.

Having returned to the Council this past October as Deputy Director, I appreciate the invite by Executive Director William Janeway to open the spring newsletter and to reflect on the incredible successes we have had over the past few months.

Budgets come, and budgets go. Sometimes they are on time, sometimes they are not. This year the budget was a bit delayed, but with tremendous support from our legislative partners, members, and donors, we secured record wins that will help shape the future of the Adirondacks.

Wins aside, there are still major threats facing the Park, from road salt pollution to the complex management challenges facing our popular state wildlands. At the Council, we balance the reality of these challenges by seeing the potential opportunities they present. Such as turning the recreational use challenges into the leading national model of public-private park management.

We also see real movement on some of the most challenging issues facing our region, such as \$300,000 in dedicated state funding to support the Adirondack Diversity Initiative. This is a remarkable sign of how far we have come in making the region more welcoming, safer, and open to everyone.

In coming back to the region and the organization, I am truly grateful for our members and donors who champion the growth and success of the Adirondack Council. Your efforts are critical in protecting the ecological integrity and wildness of the Park. It sure is good to be home.

Sincerely,

Rocci Aguirre
Deputy Director

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Historic Budget Wins for Water, Climate, & Communities

The New York State budget, approved April 9, makes historic investments in clean water, wilderness, wildlife, and taxpayers.

While leading successful advocacy for Adirondack wilderness and clean water protection, jobs, and science (see cover story), the Adirondack Council also supported partner efforts that secured five historic wins for the state and other specific Adirondack wins.

1 The **Clean Water, Clean Air, and Green Jobs environmental bond act** of 2022, a new \$4.2-billion investment in combating climate change and protecting nature statewide. This goes to the state's voters in November.

2 The **Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) increased to a record level of \$400 million**, including \$40 million for open space conservation, \$48.7 million for state land stewardship, and \$15 million for climate and justice, \$21 million for farmland protection, and increased funding for the Park's Visitor Interpretive Centers.

3 New **statewide protections for wetlands** will preserve over 1 million acres across New York and offer opportunities to better preserve some Adirondack wetlands.

4 Adirondack communities will benefit from an investment of more than \$1 billion of state and federal money to **complete networks and help low-income residents afford broadband internet access**. A pole-connection corridor fee imposed on new broadband equipment installations was eliminated.

5 Local property taxpayers will get relief and cleaner water from a new **\$500 million appropriation for grants to communities for water and sewage treatment infrastructure** projects.

Efforts will continue to secure: a doubling and diversification of the Forest Ranger force and other needed staff at the Department of Environmental Conservation; \$5.5 million more for the \$6 million *Survey of Climate and Adirondack Lake Ecosystems (SCALE)*; Adirondack Park Agency staff and circuit riders to help communities; and items for the state to address climate change, justice, and a just energy transformation.

[See more budget highlights and details on pages 4 & 5.](#)

NYS Clean Water Grants Announced

In April, Governor Hochul and the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation announced that over \$8 million in clean water grants will be coming to the Adirondack Park. These clean water infrastructure dollars are critical to the Park's rural communities and are another step toward achieving our clean water goals in the Adirondacks. Over the past six years, Adirondack towns and villages have received over \$88 million in grants for their clean water projects, making them feasible and affordable to the Park's residents.



IN & ABOUT THE PARK

1. Increased Funding to Fight Invasive Species in Park Waters

A substantial increase to the Environmental Protection Fund from \$300 to \$400 million, the first since 2016, includes a \$2 million bump in funding directed toward invasive species eradication across the state. This crucial investment will ensure the continuation of financial and technical support to communities in managing invasive species populations, and in promoting social and economic benefits to these regions. Additional increases to funding levels for invasive species eradication could further bolster efforts across the Adirondack Park to take a preventative approach to invasive species management, and reduce the future costs of more reactive management strategies.

The boat washing/decontamination station at the Adirondack Welcome Center will help prevent the spread of invasive species in the Adirondacks | Photo: AWI



2. Funds for Stewardship & Visitor Safety Increased

The state budget included an increase of \$14.3 million for the State Land Stewardship category in the Environmental Protection Fund to \$48.7 million statewide. Included in this was \$8 million for Adirondack and Catskill visitor safety and wilderness protection. This funding will help managers of the Forest Preserve cope with overwhelming levels of use and overcrowding on the most popular public lands. It will also allow the state to provide more trailhead and backcountry stewards, shuttle services, visitor education, and increased trail work.



3. Adirondack Diversity Initiative Gets Boost in Funds

The Adirondack Diversity Initiative (ADI) received \$300,000 from the Environmental Protection Fund in the final state budget, an increase of \$50,000 from the last two years. This additional funding will allow ADI, housed at the Adirondack North Country Association, to expand its scope and reach and continue to make the Adirondack region a more welcoming and inclusive place for all New Yorkers, including visitors and permanent and seasonal residents.

Photo: Nicky Hylton-Patterson, Executive Director of the Adirondack Diversity Initiative





4. Better Protection of Wetlands

The final state budget included increased wetlands protection across New York State. Changes in the state's wetlands policy will reduce the minimum size for state jurisdiction from 12.5 acres to 7.4 for wetlands outside the Adirondack Park (which already have state jurisdiction at 1 acre). It also expands the types of wetlands that can get state protection and the scope of the Adirondack Park Agency's jurisdiction over development on lakeshores and other deep-water wetlands. Wetlands offer critical habitat and climate change resiliency, which makes this statewide increase in protection a win for all New Yorkers.

5. Increased Investment in Park Visitors' Centers

Funding for the two Visitor Interpretive Centers (VIC) in the Park was increased in this year's budget. SUNY ESF received a \$30,000 increase to \$150,000 to run the VIC in Newcomb, and Paul Smith's College received \$225,000 for the Brighton/Paul Smiths VIC, up from \$180,000 in the previous budget. Both VICs provide guided and self-guided nature trails, interpretive programming, and areas to conduct scientific studies.



6. Broadband For All Funding

The final state budget included a \$1.6-billion statewide investment in Governor Hochul's ConnectAll initiative, aimed at providing affordable broadband to all remaining underserved communities around the state. These funds will also provide price breaks and subscription subsidies for residents who cannot afford service. At the same time, the Legislature eliminated a utility pole fee that had prevented the speedy, affordable deployment of a new fiber-optic network throughout the Adirondacks. Both actions responded to concerns expressed in the Adirondack Council's 2021 State of the Park Report.



Executive Director Willie Janeway in the field | Photo: Nancie Battaglia



Farm Micro-grants Announced

The Essex Farm Institute (EFI), a program of the Adirondack Council, awarded 15 micro-grants totaling \$32,000 to local farmers and value-added food producers to build a climate-friendly local economy in the Adirondack Park. It was the seventh consecutive year that the Adirondack Council has sponsored this project with generous support from the Klipper Family Fund and other contributors.



Adam Wild, Director of the Uihlein Maple Research Forest, tours a micro-grant funded project with former EFI program coordinator Charlotte Staats

This year's grant criteria was modified to accommodate both larger operations as well as projects featuring collaborations among several qualified applicants. Included in the 37 applications were projects both larger and more diverse in scope than in previous years.

Funded projects include the installation of solar photovoltaic energy systems, solar hot water heating systems, the electrification of farm equipment, a shared-use implement to assist with cover crops, riparian planting to keep sediment from entering rivers, as well as several capacity-building grants at the \$1500 level.

The program remains popular among farmers and received positive press in several local online and in-print media. EFI is also exploring better ways of detailing the impact of funded projects in the short and long-term. Making the economic and environmental impact tangible will reinforce its relevance, increase support for the program's longevity, and inspire other farms to explore climate-friendly practices.

Opposition to APA Approval of ProcellaCOR Herbicide Use in Lake George

At its April meeting, the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) approved a permit for the Lake George Park Commission to apply the herbicide ProcellaCOR in two plots, approximately four acres in size, in Lake George to treat Eurasian watermilfoil beds.

The chemical was approved for use by the Environmental Protection Agency in 2018. The Council opposed the Commission's permit request due to the lack of known long-term environmental impacts the chemical could have on Adirondack waters and ecosystems. Four APA board members voted against the permit, citing ecological concerns and local governments opposition; six members voted in support.

Plot 1 is located at Blair's Bay west of Glenburnie. Plot 2 is located seven miles south at Sheep Meadow Bay north of Huletts Landing. Both locations are in the Town of Hague, Warren County.



SUPPORTING THE COUNCIL



Become a Sustaining Member

Never can remember when your last donation occurred? Consider becoming a sustaining member with a monthly gift! Instead of giving one lump sum of \$35, \$50, or \$100 every year, you can set up your credit card or your bank account to automatically contribute \$5 or \$10 a month - or any amount you choose. It's a lot easier on your budget because it spreads your support throughout the year. Plus, your membership will always be active - so you'll never have to worry about when it's time to renew your support. Best of all, you will be providing the Adirondack Council a steady stream of revenue throughout the year to help preserve the water, air and wildlands for current and future generations.



Become a sustaining member today by using the enclosed envelope or by joining on our secure website at donate.adirondackcouncil.org/givemonthly.

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.

NEW - 2023 Forever Wild Calendar | \$15

12-month calendar featuring the award-winning landscape photography of Carl Heilman II.



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)



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

If you have previously unsubscribed from our email list we would love to connect with you again.




Please subscribe or resubscribe to our emails at AdirondackCouncil.org or by text message:

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



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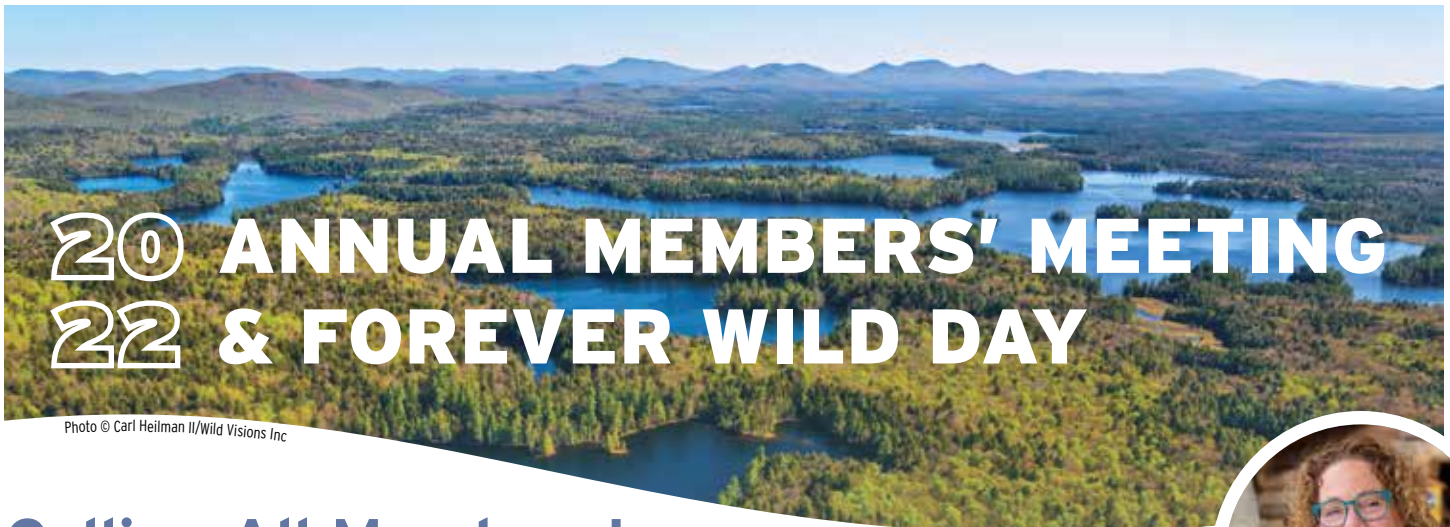


Photo © Carl Heilman II/Wild Visions Inc

Calling All Members!

Please join us virtually via ZOOM on **Friday, July 8 (12:30 to 1:30pm)** for our Annual Members' Meeting. You will have a chance to learn about the organization's major accomplishments for the year, review finances, and vote on a slate of candidates for the Board of Directors.

Then bring your family and join the Board and Staff in-person at **Paul Smith's College on Saturday, July 9 (9:00am - 2:30pm)** to celebrate our 2022 Conservationist of the Year recipient Jen Kretser and the Wild Center's Youth Climate Program and Special Award Recipient Assemblymember Billy Jones. Come early to paddle, walk, discuss and enjoy time with fellow members who share a passion for preserving the Adirondacks for current and future generations.

Thank you for your support and care for the Adirondacks. We hope to see you virtually or in-person!

2022 Conservationist of the Year

Jen Kretser & The Wild Center's Youth Climate Program

Jen Kretser is the Director of Climate Initiatives for The Wild Center in Tupper Lake, NY. Jen manages The Wild Center's climate change engagement programs, including: the global Youth Climate Program which was highlighted by the Obama White House Office of Science and Technology; interpretive programs for visitors; green building education and design; and other climate related initiatives/partnerships. She is working to help catalyze youth climate summits around the world. In November 2021, she led the Wild Center Youth Delegation and the US Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) Delegation at the UN COP 26 in Glasgow. She is also a founding member of the NY Climate Resilience and Education Task Force which elevates climate change education and action in NY Public Schools and the national Climate Literacy and Energy Awareness Network Board.



Learn more and register for the events at AdirondackCouncil.org under Events. Questions? Please contact Development Assistant Jess Kelley at 518.873.2240 Ext. 110 or jkelly@adirondackcouncil.org