



More to explore.

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summer update and
annual meeting announcement

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ADIRONDACK CHAPTER
 Protecting nature. Preserving life.™

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 Billy Martin, *Adirondack Invasive Species Education and Outreach Intern*
 Shannon Smith, *Adirondack Conservation Intern – Conservation Easement Mapping*
 Rebecca Steinberg, *Adirondack Conservation Intern – Stewardship and Conservation Science*

Dear Friends of the Adirondacks,



What constitutes conservation success?” Put that question to our staff and board, and we’re likely to go directly to the outcomes of our work: the protected lakes people can paddle on, the mountains people can hike up, the streams anglers can fish in, the stewardship work we do through partnerships like the

Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program and the Summit Stewardship Program. The fact that we achieve such tangible outcomes is what makes our story so hopeful.

When you look into our backstory—the why and the how—you’d find people there – of all ages and from all walks of life – and partnerships – across a wide discipline of agencies and non-profit organizations— as well as science, strategy, and innovation. Our conservation story is not linear, but a reflection of how we respond to or anticipate twists and turns along the way.

So, when we create a computer tool that helps the New York State Department of Transportation to identify road culverts where reconstruction would have the greatest benefit to wildlife as well as to the integrity of the roadway, and they say how helpful this tool is in allowing them to make the most of their limited resources, that is part of our partnership and innovation story.

And when a community leader says, “It would be great to have an app for people to record where they have found invasive species,” we can offer iMapInvasives, a free online tool developed by our partners and being tested in the Adirondacks and throughout New York—another result of innovation and partnership.

This edition of our newsletter summarizes some major outcomes, as well as evolving strategies. We hope you are as pleased with the way the plot moves forward in the Adirondacks as we are grateful for your support.

Sincerely

Bill Paternotte
Chair of the Board

Michael T. Carr
Executive Director



Common Loon



Confluence of Indian and Hudson Rivers

Please Welcome the Newest Additions to New York's Protected Lands

Heart of the Adirondacks update

As announced by Governor Andrew Cuomo on April 23, 2013, New York State closed on its second wave of purchases from The Nature Conservancy in a five-year plan to add 69,000 acres to the publicly-owned Forest Preserve. This is yet another piece in the monumental Heart of the Adirondacks conservation effort that will, in the end, protect almost 175,000 acres of globally important forests and freshwater resources, including 161,000 acres of former Finch, Pruyn lands.

Following the 2012 year-end transfer of the 18,300-acre Chain Lakes-Hudson River tract from the Conservancy to New York State, this latest addition features spectacular mountains, forests, rivers and one of the park's most iconic waterfalls. New York paid the Conservancy \$6.7 million from its Environmental Protection Fund for these parcels, which total 9,885 acres.

"With these newest acquisitions", said Governor Andrew Cuomo in a press release, "we are building upon past state investments in the Adirondacks as we enhance a world-class Park that contains a wealth of private and public lands in one of the most beautiful settings on earth."

The successful outcomes of this epic conservation effort include not only the preservation of extraordinary lands, but also create economic opportunities for the communities that have close access to the Heart of the Adirondacks lands.

The Nature Conservancy is funding a grant program in the amount of \$500,000 to help local communities leverage the positive economic impacts associated with outdoor recreation and tourism. This project will foster closer ties between the communities and the protected lands and the ways in which they add value to the Adirondacks as an ecotourism destination and attractive place to live. We would welcome your capital contributions toward this meaningful commitment and look forward to keeping you apprised of the projects being supported.

The next steps for the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation will be to prepare the properties for public use and issue an interim recreation plan to allow access. The Adirondack Park Agency has already begun its process to classify the lands according to the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan to guide future management and public use. (Please visit NYSDEC's Web site for information about access: www.dec.ny.gov, and the APA's site for information about the classification process: www.apa.ny.gov.)

We happily anticipate hearing people's stories as they explore these special places, especially our Nature Conservancy donors whose steadfast support is enabling our staff to carry forward this compelling and historic conservation project. We continue to hold 41,000 of former Finch lands for transfer to the Forest Preserve. Descriptions of these new state lands follow. ■

New paddling opportunities on the Hudson



Melody Thomas



Hudson River Gorge



Connie Prockett / TNC

Carl Heilman II at OK Slip Falls

New Adventures Await

Visit NYS DEC's website for information about access at www.dec.ny.gov

Indian River/Hudson River, Towns of Indian Lake and Minerva, Hamilton and Essex Counties: The most exciting and popular whitewater rafting experience in the Adirondacks, which draws 25,000 visitors annually, starts on the Indian River and continues for 17 miles down the Hudson River Gorge. Adding this 940-acre tract to the publicly-owned forest preserve keeps the experience wild. It also unlocks new recreational opportunities by providing long-awaited access and take-out points that will make a northern stretch of the upper Hudson River a viable option for paddlers wishing to experience calmer waters (flat water with some class I/II rapids) over the class III/IV rapids of the Gorge.

OK Slip Falls /Blue Ledge, Town of Indian Lake, Hamilton County: One of the most spectacular waterfalls in the Adirondack Park, OK Slip, is part of this 2,800-acre property. The tract also features

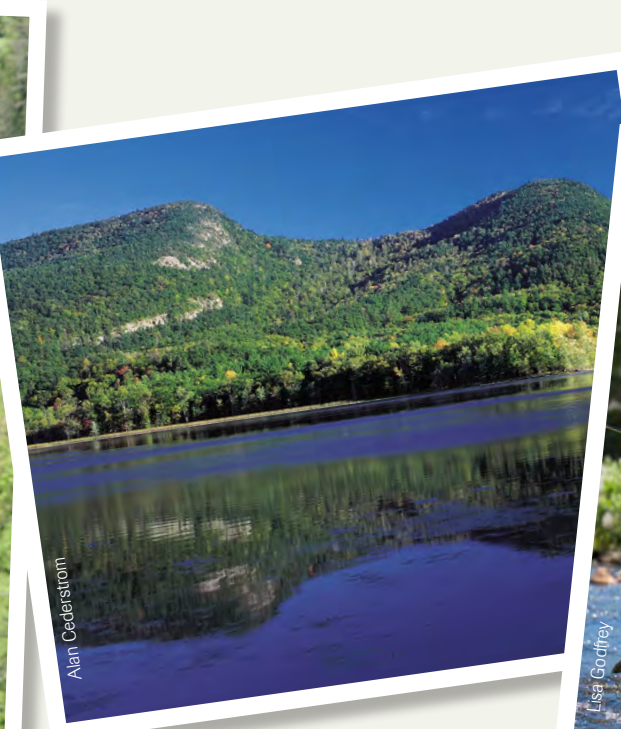
Blue Ledge, an outcropping of one billion-year old marble, as well as 2.1 miles of undeveloped shoreline deep within the Hudson River Gorge. It is believed to harbor more rare and significant plants, mosses and liverworts than any other site in the Adirondack Park. It is also the only place in New York State where purple mountain saxifrage, hair-like sedge, wild chives and other rarities are known to exist.

Hudson Riverside,* Town of Chester, Warren County: This 727-acre parcel features nearly 1.5 miles of undeveloped shoreline on the Hudson River. It links an isolated, 546-acre parcel of Forest Preserve surrounding Palmer Pond to the Hudson, thereby extending forest protection important for water quality and fish habitat.

East River Road,* Bolton, Warren County: This 565-acre parcel, on the east side of the Northway, near Exit 24, borders Cat and Thomas Moun-

tains—two parcels protected by the Lake George Land Conservancy and recently added to the publicly owned forest preserve. The acquisition will make it possible for the already popular trail system on Cat and Thomas to be expanded.

The Saddles, Town of Whitehall, Washington County: This 2,540-acre property is outside the Adirondack Blue Line. It was not part of Finch Paper's holdings, but was acquired by The Nature Conservancy with the intent that it be transferred to the state. The tract features dramatic cliffs and more than 2,250 feet of undeveloped shoreline on Lake Champlain's South Bay. Streams, marshes, swamps, and floodplain forests dominate the lowlands there. The large, intact forest, exposed rocky ridges and slopes provide foraging grounds for Eastern timber rattlesnake (threatened) and habitat for peregrine falcon (endangered). There is a unique wild rice marsh at the base of the Saddles.



Alan Cederstrom

The Saddles on Lake Champlain

Anglers are looking forward to new fishing opportunities



Lisa Godfrey

Spruce Point (AKA Dolph Pond),* Town of Whitehall, Washington County - this 726-acre parcel adjoins state conservation easement land to the west and lies within an important wildlife pathway area between the Champlain and Lake George basins and Vermont's Green Mountains. The property features interesting ridges, a variety of forest types, including Appala-

chian oak hickory and hemlock northern hardwood, and provides habitat for black bear, white tail deer and other wildlife.

***Like the Essex Chain Lakes,** these tracts are leased by private hunt clubs and will become available for public access after September 30, 2013. ■

PARTNERS IN CONSERVATION

The Nature Conservancy is a leading international non-profit organization working to protect ecologically important lands and waters for nature and people. Since 1971, the Adirondack Chapter has been working with a variety of partners to achieve a broad range of conservation results. The Chapter is a founding partner of the High Peaks Summit Stewardship Program, dedicated to the protection of alpine habitat, as well as the award-winning Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program, which works regionally to prevent the introduction and spread of non-native invasive species.

The Adirondack Land Trust, established in 1984, protects working farms and forests, undeveloped shoreline, scenic vistas and other lands contributing to the quality of life in the Adirondacks.

Together, these partners in Adirondack conservation have protected more than 571,000 acres, one out of every six protected acres park-wide. On the Web at www.nature.org/adirondacks.

Annual Meeting & Cocktail Reception

Date: Saturday August 3, 2013 **Time:** 2:30 p.m .

Place: Heaven Hill Farm, 302 Bear Cub Lane, Lake Placid

Keynote Speaker – New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Joe Martens (invited)

Conservation Update – Mike Carr and Bill Paternotte

Featured guests - Wendy & Steve Hall and their educational raptors from Adirondack Wildlife Refuge and Rehabilitation Center, Wilmington, NY

For more information: contact Erin Walkow, 518-576-2082 x133 or ewalkow@tnc.org

Save the Date!
August 3, 2013



Jon Zander



Larry Meister

Brook trout do not thrive in water temperatures over 65°F. The right culvert designs allow them to move to cooler waters when necessary.

waterways and intersections

where eco-friendly and people-friendly overlap

Bit by bit, our Adirondack Chapter conservation staff, in concert with a host of capable partners—from highway departments to state agencies to non-profits — are chipping away at the pervasive problems for people and wildlife caused by poorly -sized and -sited road culverts. Culverts, largely invisible to most of us, are important conduits for our freshwater resources and the life they sustain. Problems arise when these conduits turn into barriers, blocking fish from passing through or causing flooding. Increases in precipitation and the high intensity storms that we've already been experiencing are predicted to continue, fueling future problems.

The 2011 storms that we know so well we now refer to them like neighbors — Lee and Irene — proved that many culverts cannot withstand the amount of water dumped during these intense storm events in Northern New York. Now Hurricane Sandy and the damage it has caused in New York and other states has added “climate resiliency” and “the new normal” to the common lexicon, and local, state and federal agencies are being challenged to find cost-effective ways to help transportation infrastructure stand up to these storms.

Our conservation professionals' research and successful funding applications have created a ladder of progress toward that goal, in one instance creating a computer-based prioritization tool that identifies the state road culverts that are the most critical for aquatic species of conservation concern to access the waters they need throughout their lifecycle. “The new tool identifying the most crucial sites makes the most of limited resources,” according to New York State Department of Transportation official Debra Nelson. “You can do a lot of research that ends up being a report on a shelf. That doesn't help. The information they've given us has been really helpful,” Nelson said in an Associated Press article this spring.

Most recently, an application by NYS-DOT and The Nature Conservancy's Adirondack Chapter was chosen as one of 19 projects nationwide for funding by the Federal Highway Administration (and the only one to include a non-government partner as a co-lead) to advance work in the New York portion of the Lake Champlain Basin. This project will: identify and prioritize culverts and road segments that are most vulnerable to changing precipitation; develop engineering-based design options; create an economic tool to evaluate the full benefits and costs of adaptation options (including costs to non-DOT entities); incorporate climate vulnerability assessments into existing NYSDOT standards, guidelines, and tools; and, finally, upgrade a culvert on the AuSable River in the town of Jay as a pilot project.

The eventual view from the top of the ladder? Transportation departments using best practices that incorporate climate resilience policies; ecosystems protected by re-engineered culverts that can withstand bigger storms; and, communities less susceptible to floods that damage roads, homes and businesses. ■

Adirondack park invasive plant program receives national recognition

Protecting invaluable resources

The Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP) received the 2013 National Invasive Species Awareness Week Award in the category of Outstanding Achievement in Invasive Species Leadership. This national recognition is for APIPP's leadership in invasive species prevention and control, including collaboration and coalition building. New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Joe Martens presented the award to APIPP Director Hilary Smith during a Forestry Awareness Day celebration at the state capitol.

APIPP, a partnership program founded in 1998 by The Nature Conservancy's Adirondack Chapter, New York State Departments of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and Transportation (DOT) and the Adirondack Park Agency, started as a grassroots effort to implement a landscape-level approach to address threats posed by invasive species and to minimize their costs to governments, businesses and landowners. It has since harnessed the energies of hundreds of volunteers, forged countless partnerships and influenced local and state-wide action against invasive species. APIPP served as the model for seven other programs across the state, known as Partnerships for Regional Invasive Species Management, now supported in large part through New York's Environmental Protection Fund.

Examples of APIPP's work that earned the group the Outstanding Invasive Species Leadership Award:

- Reaching thousands of people through a seasonal news column, Eye on Invasives, published in the Adirondack Daily Enterprise and Adirondack Express.
- Leveraging private funds to deploy professional rapid response teams to eradicate new infestations encroaching on ecologically significant areas.
- Helping to support boat launch stewardship programs that reach more than 30,000 recreational users per year.

Invasive species are a top threat to our lands and waters. Invasive animals and plants drive out native species and upset the food chain, ruin crops, degrade forests and fisheries, negatively impact recreation and can harm humans. They typically come from other parts of the world and, in the absence of natural



APIPP Director Hilary Smith with New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets Division of Plant Industry Director Kevin King and New York State Department of Conservation Commissioner Joe Martens

checks and balances, rapidly reproduce and spread. Japanese knotweed, spiny water flea and Eurasian water milfoil are currently among those that pose the largest threat in the Adirondacks. Emerald ash borer, Asian longhorn beetle and hydrilla loom nearby. Researchers estimate invasive species cause environmental losses and damages of nearly \$120 billion a year nationwide. ■



Rapid Response Team producing visible results Clearing the way for native plants to thrive

The image on the left shows a roadside wetland on Forest Preserve near Whiteface Mountain, with a dense infestation of the non-native common reed grass (*Phragmites australis*) that had been rapidly spreading. The Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program deployed its first ever Rapid-Response team to treat this site with an approved herbicide, working under permits from state agencies. As the invasive reed grass dies off, native plants – which serve as food to birds and other wildlife – are returning. With support from a private foundation, the response team is funded through this summer, working around the park to hold the line against damaging invasive species. ■

Northern hawk owl



Larry Master

Adirondack Land Trust awarded grant Bolstering stewardship capacity

The Adirondack Land Trust (ALT) was recently awarded a \$20,000 New York State Conservation Partnership Program grant to help our staff streamline and update its conservation easement tracking system. ALT holds 50 conservation easements with 66 ownerships on almost 14,000 acres—a lot to keep track of. These protected properties range from apple orchards in the Champlain Valley to forested islands in Cranberry Lake; undeveloped lakeshore on Upper St. Regis Lake to working forests in Blue Mountain Lake. This grant will allow ALT to continue to meet the high standards and practices set by the Land Trust Alliance for land trusts across the country. Whenever we take on a conservation easement, we assume long term responsibilities to ensure the easement is serving its purpose. Every easement is unique to each individual property to reflect the landowner's conservation goals and the natural attributes of the land. Maintaining records is a critical component of fulfilling our long-term legal responsibilities. This new grant, administered by the Land Trust Alliance, is leveraging additional support toward this important work from the Adirondack Community Trust and the Norcross Wildlife Foundation, Inc.

The New York State Conservation Partnership Program is a public-private partnership that provides competitive matching grants for qualified land trusts throughout New York State for building land trust capacity and increasing the pace and quality of conservation. It is funded through New York's Environmental Protection Fund and administered by the Land Trust Alliance.

Looking for a way to put your IRA to work for conservation?

If you are 70-and-a-half or older, you can make a tax-free charitable gift distribution to the The Nature Conservancy and/or Adirondack Land Trust from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA)

The Federal deadline for this opportunity is December 31, 2013.

Contact us today to find out how you can make this “tax-wise” gift and help us protect our Adirondack waters, forests and wildlife for future generations.

CONTACT: Nancy Van Wie
PHONE: (518) 576-2082
EMAIL: nvanwie@tnc.org

Please consult a qualified financial planner.



Lisa Godfrey

ADIRONDACK CHAPTER

wish list

A few needs around the office, both big and small, with which The Adirondack Chapter could use some help.

Barnett Center for Conservation: garage addition for canoe storage, accessibility ramp repair, porch roof repair: \$44,000

Canoe wheels for portaging (two sets): \$270

New Subaru Forester (to replace an aging vehicle): \$20,000 after trade-in

New Chevy Silverado truck with cap: \$30,000

Canoe yoke pads (two sets): \$150

Trail (motion sensitive) cameras - we need 20 for wildlife monitoring: \$250/apiece

For more information contact

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