



ADIRONDACK WILD
FRIENDS OF THE FOREST PRESERVE

2012 ANNUAL REPORT



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Left to right: Ken Rimany, Partner; Peter Brinkley, Senior Partner/Chair; David Gibson, Partner; Dan Plumley, Partner. Photo by Naj Wikoff



Adirondack Wild: Friends of the Forest Preserve builds upon the work of hundreds of spirited men and women who have stood up for wilderness and the forest preserve – against tremendous odds – since 1885. For 125 years, New Yorkers have been guided by these conservationists.

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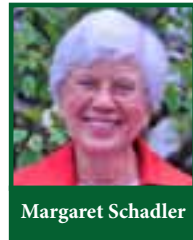
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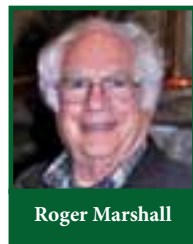
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ADIRONDACK WILD: FRIENDS OF THE FOREST PRESERVE

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Dear Friends of Adirondack Wild,

In 2012, Adirondack Wild succeeded in reaching varied communities through advocacy, dialogue and recognition of what ordinary people can accomplish for a wild landscape. While the State of New York retreats from treating the wild Adirondacks and Catskills as exceptional places on this earth, we embrace that view and raise a high flag for the best standards of wilderness management, and for wilderness stewards from all walks of life.

In Old Forge we presented five courageous, spirited citizens with our first Wilderness Stewardship Awards: to John Nemjo an outdoor businessperson and employer who thrives because of protected lakes and rivers (Mountainman Outdoor Supply Co.); Gary Lee, a retired DEC Forest Ranger who now watches over his wild forest as a volunteer; and three citizens, Shirley Cornish and Shelia and Ron Cuccaro, who successfully challenged excessive tree-cutting by the state and a utility along a prominent Park highway.

At Paul Smith's College, we sponsored the first workshop ever held about Stewarding the Wild Adirondacks, attended by over 25 organizations and 50 stewardship practitioners. It was an extraordinary and emotional day of shared success stories, lessons learned and ways to collaborate even better in the years ahead. Adirondack Wild will be following up.

In Keene Valley, we were a significant impetus behind an expert coalition of private, state and federal agencies that restored half a mile of the eroding East Branch of the Ausable River to enhance its ecological integrity and trout fishery.

Throughout the year, we also partnered with the Adirondack Wildlife Refuge and Rehabilitation Center in Wilmington near Whiteface Mountain, a remarkable organization devoted to educating about wildlife and their habitats in the most intimate and impactful ways.

I hope this, our 2nd annual report, will inspire you to partner with us still, and to donate generously to the only organization that is completely dedicated to safeguarding, extending and educating about our wild lands – where wilderness preservation began in America.

Peter Brinkley

Peter Brinkley,
Senior Partner/Chair



Adirondack Wild, the DEC and inner city students from Albany team up on the Upper Hudson River for tree planting on Arbor Days, April 27-28. Photo © Dave Gibson

The lands of the state, now owned or hereafter acquired, constituting the forest preserve as now fixed by law, shall be forever kept as wild forest lands. They shall not be leased, sold or exchanged, or be taken by any corporation, public or private, nor shall the timber thereon be sold, removed or destroyed.

*Article XXII Section 1
New York State Constitution*



(left to right) Dan Plumley, Sheila & Ron Cuccaro and Shirley Cornish (Gateway of Wilderness Award recipients), David Gibson and Peter Brinkley. Photo © Ken Rimany



FINANCIALS

Dear Friends of Adirondack Wild,

I'm thrilled to report that our second year was as solid fiscally as it was programmatically.

For a second year, Adirondack Wild met our \$300,000 budget goals. Our revenues totaled \$295,623, where \$279,754 came from your contributions, \$15,700 from grants, and \$169 from miscellaneous income. Disbursements were \$300,820, leaving us with a net positive and year ending cash balance carry forward of \$31,223 for our two years of operations.

Notable achievements for the year included the publishing of our opinion about the Adirondack Club and Resort in The New York Times, our partnerships on river restoration, and our sponsorship of the recent workshop, Stewarding the Wild Adirondacks.

The Adirondack Explorer magazine readers have noticed our new awareness campaign, utilizing a full page ad on the magazine's inside front cover.

Our biggest fiscal achievement for the year however was the initiation of an Endowment Fund. Kicked off by a generous gift from the Johanson Family, their support along with other contributors gives us a solid foundation totaling \$196,105.

Our goal is to achieve a fund of \$1,000,000 to help fulfill our goals to Safeguard, Extend and Educate for the Wild.

All of us at Adirondack Wild thank you for your continued support.



Terry L. Jandreau
Treasurer

A SPECIAL THANKS

To all who supported Adirondack Wild: Friends of the Forest Preserve in its second year of operation, we thank you so very, very much for your generosity.

Your financial support has provided the necessary 'fuel' for Adirondack Wild to represent you as a leading public voice speaking for wilderness and wild land values and stewardship in the Adirondack and Catskill regions.

In early November Adirondack Wild convened a Stewarding the Wild Adirondacks workshop. It's your financial support that allows us to forge new educational partnerships like this event. We hosted over 25 Adirondack

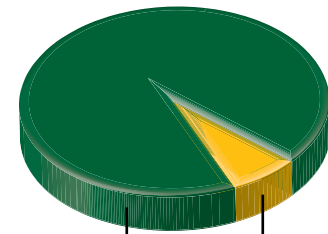
organizations and the national Student Conservation Association; over 50 people attended. This meeting of the Park's diverse natural resource stewardship programs was the first of its kind, and generated a host of ideas for improving communication and collaboration. This is just one example of our 'Dialogue for the Wild' series of events and programs where we seek to deepen conversations about the importance of wild lands in our lives, what we all share and care about, and what moves us to take action - together.

We invite you to visit our website often and to subscribe to our free monthly e-Newsletter so we can keep you informed of our many endeavors. You will learn more about our involvement in the many important wild land issues that matter to us all.

Lastly, please know that your financial support matters, a lot. It enables us to pursue our most important goal: to ensure that the priceless legacy of 'Forever Wild' will be passed on to . . . "the youth of distant tomorrows."

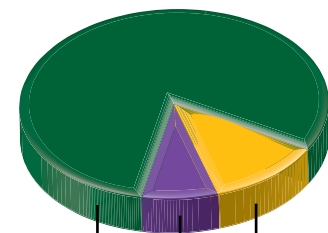
Thank you once again, for all.

REVENUES: \$295,623



95% Individual Contributions
5% Grants

DISBURSEMENTS: \$300,820



80% Programs
8% Fund Raising
12% Management & General

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Our youngest member:
Colin J. Rowe

SAFEGUARDING THE WILD



“Applying Aldo Leopold’s land ethic in ecologically-based river and stream management, as in the Rivermede Farm River Restoration Project on the East Branch of the AuSable River in Keene Valley, offers new hope that we can foster a better relationship between our communities and our rivers throughout the Adirondack Park.”

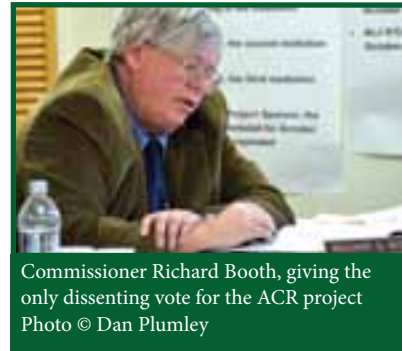
– Dan Plumley

Photo © Ken Rimany

“Adirondack Park Agency Failed the Public’s Trust”
– from Adirondack Wild’s full page advertisement in the Adirondack Explorer.

ADIRONDACK WILD FIGHTS FOR THE PARK’S BACKCOUNTRY

In January, the NYS Adirondack Park Agency voted 10-1 to approve the 650-unit Adirondack Club and Resort subdivision. The only commissioner to adhere to the APA Act and to therefore vote against the resort was Dick Booth. As Commissioner Booth stated, “if you don’t know what lives on the site, and where their habitats are, how can you determine the impacts? That is the “big hole” in the application that “never got filled.” Adirondack Wild had previously petitioned the agency to reopen the public hearing to gain more evidence about wildlife habitats and impacts without which APA could not have made the necessary legal findings. In rejecting our motion and in their vote, APA cast their law and 40 years of precedent to reserve large blocks of Resource Management land for forestry, agriculture and open space out the window.



Commissioner Richard Booth, giving the only dissenting vote for the ACR project
Photo © Dan Plumley

In full page ads and an opinion piece published by the *New York Times*, we held Governor Andrew Cuomo and his APA accountable for this bad decision which would fragment 4800 acres of backcountry forest classified Resource Management where wildlife habitats and alternative ways of developing through conservation design were superficially examined and assessed, if at all.

The New York Times

The Opinion Pages

OP-ED CONTRIBUTORS

“A Development Test in Adirondack Park”

By DAVID GIBSON and DAN PLUMLEY

Published: January 16, 2012

We also organized a letter-writing drive to the governor asking him to assure the public that ACR-type development was not the future he envisions for over two million acres of the Park’s private land which are currently unprotected by conservation easement, yet where maintaining open space character should, according to the law, be paramount.

Adirondack Wild is urging the governor to appoint people to the APA who will truly stand up for its mission. Meanwhile, Adirondack Wild’s work highlighting the wildlife deficiencies in the ACR hearing evidence were among the important causes of a lawsuit filed against APA by Protect the Adirondacks and Sierra Club. Adirondack Club and Resort is a long way from starting construction, not merely because of this lawsuit but because it was shown to be flawed in its marketing, sales projections and cost estimates.



Beaver Mountain. Photo © Ken Rimany

ADIRONDACK WILD’S WORK FOR RIVER INTEGRITY AND RESTORATION

This summer’s restoration project along the East Branch of the Ausable River in the Town of Keene was undertaken as a partnership of Trout Unlimited, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Essex County Soil and Water, NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation, Rivermede Farm and the Town, and the Ausable River Association. Adirondack Wild was an active participant. Dr. John Braico, Trout Unlimited’s project leader, credited Adirondack Wild’s advocacy with helping to create a sea change in thinking which empowered the use of river restoration principles in this and other projects. The project aims to reduce erosion of

critical farm lands while incorporating natural materials and ecologically sound design which restores river character and function.

After Irene’s flooding in 2011, heavy machinery was allowed to turn beautiful trout streams into armored sluiceways cut off from their floodplains. More than forty miles of rivers in the Adirondack and Catskill Parks were needlessly damaged in this way. Fortunately, old attitudes are slowly giving way to a newfound awareness to apply the principles of ecology and hydrogeology to river restoration and management. Adirondack Wild’s coalition pressured Governor Cuomo and his DEC which helped to alter both attitude and approach, including re-training of public works departments.



Dr. John Braico of Trout Unlimited (left) and Carl Schwartz of USFWS direct placement of rock boulders in the East Branch. Photo © Ken Rimany

The Rivermede Project used natural materials, trees and root wads, as well as native boulders to mimic nature and create natural riffles, runs, pools and meanders which enhance channel stability while restoring and improving trout habitat and economic value. In time, natural processes will help restore the wild character of the river and enhance its unrealized access, tourism and fishing potential. The East Branch project can be a model for other stream restoration projects, including Johns Breek and Styles Brook in Keene. Neighboring West Branch of the Ausable River brings in some \$4 million annually in fishing and related tourism. That’s good incentive to accelerate ecological restoration wherever communities and rivers meet throughout the Park.

High Peaks Wilderness Area. Photo © Ken Rimany



Loon on Jenny Lake. Photo © Ken Rimany

EXTENDING THE WILD



“This caps a 161,000-acre conservation project that has earned the support of all New Yorkers. We congratulate Governor Cuomo, Commissioner Martens, and Mike Carr of the Adirondack Nature Conservancy for their joint commitment to protect for the ages some of the wildest, most ecologically diverse lands within the Park.”

– David Gibson

Photo © Ken Rimany

EXTENDING STANDARDS OF ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY:

On the occasion this summer of the 40th Anniversary of the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan, Adirondack Wild issued a report that calls upon Governor Andrew Cuomo and his state agencies to elevate their vision for a wild land park, and what it takes to get there. To read the full report, please go to www.adirondackwild.org

“The Adirondack Park is where wilderness preservation began in America,” said Adirondack Wild’s David Gibson. “However, government often approaches such an important landscape with a muddled sense of mission, and in an uncoordinated and shallow way. We are urging parties to venture deeper, and with greater purpose.”



Deer Pond in the Essex Chain of Lakes, part of the Nature Conservancy’s purchase from Finch, Pruyn. Photo © David Gibson

“Governor Cuomo and his agencies should focus upon the paramount purposes set forth in the Master Plan for protecting our wild land heritage in the Forest Preserve,” said Adirondack Wild’s Dan Plumley. “That requires leadership which places the protection of natural systems above strictly recreational interests. This landscape inspires people around the globe and serves as a crucial, working global model for parks and protected areas.” Adirondack Wild’s report makes a number of recommendations, including:

- Manage Forest Preserve and State-held conservation easements for their ecological integrity, to advance biological diversity, and mitigate the effects of climate change
- The APA should undertake a long-term trend analysis of ecological changes taking place in the Park, and measure indices of ecological health
- Strictly control motorized uses on the Forest Preserve, undertake carrying capacity studies, and subject the Snowmobile Trail guidelines and All-Terrain Vehicle Policy to public hearings
- The agencies should call for a quantifiable economic study and evaluation of the economic contributions made by all Adirondack and Catskill wild lands

“Advancing this wild land model would be a result worthy of our state’s history as wilderness pioneers, and of the 40th anniversary of the State Land Master Plan,” the paper concludes.

EXTENDING THE WILD, AND THE WILD ECONOMY

From its inception, Adirondack Wild has pushed the state to commit to incorporate a significant part of the former Finch, Pruyn Paper Co. lands within the Adirondack Forest Preserve. Thus, we were delighted by Governor Andrew Cuomo’s commitment in August to acquire 65,000 acres (and 4,000-acres elsewhere in the Park) from the Adirondack Nature Conservancy over the next five years, starting right away. We were especially pleased that the Governor brought his entire cabinet to experience Boreas Ponds in the early fall. When the acquisition concludes, it will complete a 161,000-acre conservation project of national and global importance.

Our founder Paul Schaefer advocated for the state to acquire some of the Finch lands from 1962 until his death in 1996. He believed these forests, rivers and waterfalls constituted critical core lands with great ecological and scenic character. Time has shown Paul was right. The Conservancy studied these lands during 2007-2009 and uncovered evidence of ecological rarities and richness at the very heart of the Park. Their long-term conservation increases the chance that many migratory birds, as well as the marten and the moose can be sustained in the face of climate change. They add eco-tourism values at the core of the Park in towns that need a boost from enhanced visitation and local spending.



Paul Schaefer. Photo © Ken Rimany



Boreas Ponds. Photo © Carl Heilman II

The Essex Chain of Lakes, Upper Hudson Stillwater and the Boreas Ponds will add diversity to the Adirondack paddling experience. If carefully managed, the lands will open new opportunities for all kinds of uses including guiding, fishing, hunting, camping, skiing, snowmobiling, or casual visitation. These public lands will also encourage ecological research, education, arts and healing. School classes in Newcomb, Long Lake, Indian Lake and other places will have chances to meaningfully interact with scientists and recreational professionals. New state-private partnerships can be envisioned with the Adirondack Interpretive Center, Adirondack Ecological Center, Adirondack Architectural Heritage, among others.

The Governor and his DEC Commissioner Joe Martens seized an opportunity this summer to add something very new and exciting to the central Adirondacks - an unparalleled arc of public wild lands and waters to explore at the very center of the Park. Adirondack Wild is pushing everyone to reach for and achieve high standards in the way that these landscapes are managed to enhance the overall wilderness management and ecological integrity of the Adirondack Park.

Twilight at Fish Creek Ponds.. Photo © Ken Rimany

EDUCATING FOR THE WILD



“Stewardship programs for the Adirondack Park’s wild summits, lakes, backcountry and biota have proliferated, yet there are few opportunities for all these programs to communicate among each other. Adirondack Wild wants to start that process. That is the purpose of our Stewarding for the Wild educational workshop on November 3.”

– Ken Rimany

Photo by © Kristen Swaney

WILDERNESS STEWARDSHIP TRAINING:

This past year, Adirondack Wild helped an environmental studies class at North Country Community College to better understand the impacts of the 650-unit subdivision known as the Adirondack Club and Resort, and how the APA permit for ACR violated the law and past APA precedent. The class subsequently presented a critique of local and state government’s review of ACR over a seven-year period, and how those processes failed basic tests of public information, participation, transparency and disclosure needed to render a fair, informed decision.

In the past twelve months, Adirondack Wild also held wilderness stewardship training with students from the SUNY ESF Ranger School at Wanakena, SUNY Plattsburgh, Clinton County Community College and St. Lawrence University. On Arbor Day, Adirondack Wild worked with 15 students from Albany’s Green Tech Charter School to help NYS DEC to plant hundreds of trees at the Hudson River Special Management Area along the Upper Hudson River in Luzerne.



NCCC students Elyse Relyea and Mark Daby. Photo © Ken Rimany

DIALOGUE FOR THE WILD: STEWARDING THE WILD ADIRONDACKS

On November 3, Adirondack Wild sponsored a first of its kind workshop, Stewarding the Wild Adirondacks, at the Paul Smith’s College Visitor Interpretive Center. Over 50 people participated, and 25 organizations were represented. Sponsoring this workshop has been a goal of ours since we organized in 2010, and its success suggests that we hit a powerful chord.

For the first time, natural resource stewardship programs which seek to educate hikers, paddlers, residents and visitors, protect our alpine summits, prevent aquatic invasives from entering our lakes, improve hiking trails and fire towers, and safeguard iconic Adirondack wildlife, as well as train young people to take on these and many other diverse stewardship responsibilities met to strengthen connections, make new linkages, and envision enhanced ways to collaborate. The workshop was underwritten by a grant from International Paper.

It was a great day, and resulted in many good ideas to follow up, particularly concerning the recruiting, training and retaining of young professional stewards in the Park, involving more landowners, businesses, and recreational hunters and fishers in the discussion, and broadening the base of funding support for all deserving stewardship programs. These and other ideas and recommendations emerging from the workshop are reported on our website.



Participants attending workshop, representing over 25 organizations gathered to share about Stewarding the Wild Adirondacks. Photo © Brian McDonnell

As our workshop collaborator Curt Stager, Professor at Paul Smith’s College, noted, “as the North Country changes under the pressures of backcountry development, invasive species, climate change and other factors, it is increasingly important for diverse practitioners and organizations to work together in developing new and effective visions for stewardship. And that sort of collaborative effort is the main aim of this workshop.”

We thank Dr. Stager, Dale Penny, President of the Student Conservation Association, and our many panelists and diverse participants for sharing their inspiration and ideas so readily. We also thank Paul Smith’s VIC Director Brian McDonnell and his staff for hosting the event, and International Paper for its financial support.

Organizations represented at the workshop: Adirondack Wild: Friends of the Forest Preserve, Adirondack Council, Adirondack Mountain Club, Adirondack Nature Conservancy, Adirondack Center for Loon Conservation, Adirondack Explorer, Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP), Paul Smith’s College, The Wild Center/ Natural History Museum of the Adirondacks, Wildlife Conservation Society, Adirondack Wildlife Refuge and

Rehabilitation Center, Adirondack Fire Tower Association, Friends of Mt. Arab, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry’s Adirondack Interpretive Center, SUNY ESF’s Adirondack Ecological Center, St. Lawrence University, North Country Community College, SUNY Plattsburgh, SUNY Potsdam, Queens University, NYS Adirondack Park Agency, and NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. Many other people from the region without explicit affiliations contributed greatly to the discussion.

“We are all here because we are part of a movement. ‘Stewardship’ derives from a Norse word meaning ‘Keeper of the House.’ Our housekeeping is never done”

– Dale Penny, Student Conservation Association

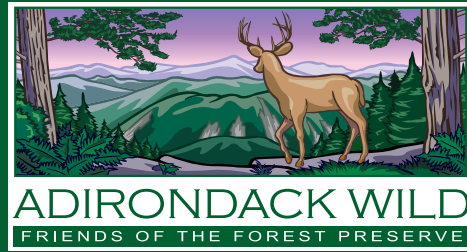
DIALOGUE FOR THE WILD: GREEN FIRE

This past year we sponsored or assisted with several screenings of Green Fire, the recent film by the Aldo Leopold Foundation (soon to be shown on PBS) about the ongoing influence of Aldo Leopold’s land ethic today around the country and the world. The community dialogue which the film spawned was tremendous.



Steve and Wendy Hall (co-Founders of Adirondack Wildlife) presenting Tylon, a Barn Owl at our 2012 Annual Meeting. Photo © Ken Rimany

Jenny Lake. Photo © Ken Rimany



SAFEGUARDING THE WILD

by protecting the wild legacy, transcendent values, and benefits of the NYS Constitution's "Forever Wild" provision for the three-million-acre Forest Preserve in the Adirondacks and Catskills.

EXTENDING THE WILD

by advocating for the addition of particularly valuable wild lands to the Forest Preserve, and for conservation easements which further ecologically-beneficial stewardship of private lands.

EDUCATING FOR THE WILD

through training, photography, cultural arts, literature, conferences, and partnerships with those who help recruit aware, active wilderness stewards.



Dave Gibson and Dan Plumley stop to rest at a tranquil wetland and pond in the Moose River Plains Wild Forest. Our team was investigating a new snowmobile trail constructed between Inlet and Raquette Lake. Photo © Ken Rimany.

ADIRONDACK WILD: FRIENDS OF THE FOREST PRESERVE

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