



July 31, 2009

Dear Members, Supporters, and Friends:

We are now Protect the Adirondacks! We wanted you to know as soon as possible about the successful vote of the memberships to consolidate our two organizations, and a little about what lies ahead for us.

Following months of discussion and evaluation, the decision was made on Saturday, July 11, 2009, at Heaven Hill Farm in Lake Placid to formally consolidate the Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks and the Residents' Committee to Protect the Adirondacks, and to form a new organization called **Protect the Adirondacks! (PROTECT)**

The Vote: The memberships of both organizations voted in favor of consolidation, which enables the process to move through the final legal steps of incorporation later this summer. The membership of the Residents' Committee voted 83-0 in favor of the consolidation. The membership of The Association voted 111-2 in favor. The positive vote of the memberships is the culmination of months of effort by the boards and staffs of the two parent organizations to build a strong case for consolidation.

Locations: PROTECT will manage its programs and services from two locations, the Adirondack Park Office in Saranac Lake, New York and the *Center for the Forest Preserve* in Niskayuna, New York.

Mission: PROTECT is to be dedicated to the protection and stewardship of the public and private lands of the Adirondack Park, and to build the health and diversity of its human communities and economies for the benefit of current and future generations. Protect the Adirondacks! looks to a future in which the wild character, ecological integrity and mutual well being of the natural and human communities of the Park are sustained.

Membership: All members active as of July 11, 2009, are considered Charter *Members* of the new organization. If you have any questions about your membership in the new organization, please contact Karmel DeStefano, Director of Development and Membership at 518-377-1452, ext. 3.

Programs: PROTECT plans to break new ground in research and policy analysis, educational outreach, grassroots activism and hands-on contact with Park landowners and land managers to promote exemplary stewardship of Adirondack landscapes. PROTECT plans to strengthen and expand existing programs, which include:

1. **Forever Wild: Affirming a Wilderness Forever:** As advocates and educators, the people in PROTECT affirm, embrace and apply the NYS constitution's Forever Wild clause to public policy for the Adirondack and Catskill Parks, and for sound management of the publicly-owned Wilderness and other lands in the NYS Forest Preserve, one of the largest, most significant wilderness areas in eastern North America.
2. **Park Integrity – Sustaining the Park's Private Farm and Forest Landscapes:** As the conservation voice of the Park, PROTECT will continue the work of AFPA and RCPA in holding state and local governments accountable for fair implementation of law and policy and for careful oversight of private lands. We will devote special attention to the State's Conservation Easement program, and to projects which incorporate conservation design into proposed development of the Park's private lands.
3. **Private Stewardship: Forests and Lakes:** PROTECT's Forest Sustainability Project connects the Park's lands to the internationally recognized Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification program to improve forest stewardship, reinvigorate forest product

economies and bridge the gap between forest landowners and wood procuring businesses such as furniture makers. In addition, the Adirondack Lake Assessment Program will expand its work with over 80 lake associations to help citizens of the Park monitor water quality in partnership with the Adirondack Watershed Institute at Paul Smith's College.

4. **Education for Action:** The *Adirondack Park Stewardship Training Program* partners with key educational institutions to train young stewards for Park internships, jobs and future conservation careers. Also, at the *Center for the Forest Preserve Programs*, the Adirondack Research Library serves as a premier, professional, accessible research library specializing in Adirondack conservation history and connected to other Adirondack collections via the web. Educational programming at the Center will continue, introducing people of all ages to the Adirondacks, the Forest Preserve and New York State's conservation history.

Thank you so much for your strong, continued support! We look forward to working with you to **Protect the Adirondacks!**

Sincerely,

Charles M. Clusen, Chair & CEO

Robert Harrison, Vice Chair

Lorraine M. Duvall, Vice Chair

Dale F. Jeffers, Vice Chair

David H. Gibson, Executive Director

PROTECT THE ADIRONDACKS! is a new, non-profit, grassroots membership organization dedicated to the protection and stewardship of the public and private lands of the Adirondack Park. PROTECT! is a consolidation of *the Residents' Committee to Protect the Adirondacks* and *the Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks*.

Executive Committee and Board of Directors:

Executive Committee

Charles M. Clusen, Chair & CEO

Lorraine Duvall, Robert Harrison and Dale Jeffers, Vice Chairs

David Quinn, Treasurer

Maryde King, Secretary

Nancy Bernstein, Assistant Secretary

Nicholas Robinson and Anne Weld, Members-at-Large.

Board of Directors

I will include the names of the Directors here when I receive an updated listing.

Staff

David H. Gibson, Executive Director

Dan Plumley, Director of Conservation Programs

Josh Wilson, Conservation Associate

Jeremy Caggiano, Director of Adirondack Stewardship

Mike DiNunzio, Director of Special Projects

Karmel DeStefano, Director of Development and Membership

Kathy Scott, Membership Associate and Office Manager

Ken Rimany, Director of Operations
April VanHeusen, Office Administrator