



PRESS RELEASE

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## **Article 14 Constitutional Amendment for Mt. Van Hoevenberg Winter Sports Complex Needs Second Passage**

*The Article 14 Constitutional Amendment and enabling legislation for Mt. Van Hoevenberg need second passage in 2025 so that it can go to the voters in November*

**For more information, call Protect the Adirondacks:**

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Protect the Adirondacks, Inc. (PROTECT) supports a proposed amendment to Article 14 of the New York State Constitution, and the accompanying enabling legislation, in order to resolve constitutional violations at the Mount Van Hoevenberg Winter Sports Complex in Lake Placid. Major upgrades and expansion of the facilities at Mount Van Hoevenberg Winter Sports Complex have taken place over the years, most recently in advance of the 2023 World University Games, that were in violation of the “forever wild” clause in Article 14 of the New York State Constitution.

“The facilities at Mount Van Hoevenberg are an important part of the Adirondack community and economy, but their expansion and continued management need to be brought into compliance with Article 14 of the Constitution,” said Claudia Braymer, Executive Director of PROTECT. “The proposed Constitutional Amendment will authorize the work that was already done and provide clear parameters for what will be allowed in the future.”

The proposed Article 14 Constitutional Amendment, which must pass in two consecutive Legislative sessions, passed in 2023 during the 2023-2024 Legislative session. The proposed Article 14 Constitutional Amendment, and enabling legislation, is poised to pass the Legislature in 2025 during the 2025-2026 Legislative session. Senator Harckham and Assemblymember Jones have introduced the Constitutional Amendment (S.5227/A.7454) and the enabling legislation (S.6888/A.3628).

The proposal would authorize the State to use up to 323 acres of the 1,039 acres in the Mount Van Hoevenberg Winter Sports Complex for the construction, operation and maintenance of Nordic skiing and biathlon trails and a stadium for training, competition

Protect the Adirondacks!

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and world class events, and necessary facilities such as access roads, parking lots, offices, lodges and snowmaking equipment. The enabling legislation sets forth what types of facilities would not be allowed (e.g., hotels, swimming pools, zip lines). In exchange, the State must acquire for incorporation into the Forest Preserve at least 2500 acres of forest land in the Adirondack Park.

The Mount Van Hoevenberg complex is a state-owned and operated facility managed by the Olympic Regional Development Authority (ORDA) and is located on the constitutionally protected Forest Preserve. The lands occupied by the complex are classified as “Intensive Use” by the Adirondack Park Agency. The complex also includes 319 acres of adjoining land owned by the Town of North Elba; the Town-owned lands are not subject to the Constitutional Amendment. The complex includes the Olympic bobsled and luge track, cross-country skiing and biathlon trails, and associated facilities.

### **Protect the Adirondacks**

Protect the Adirondacks is an IRS-approved non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and stewardship of the 6-million-acre Adirondack Park. Our mission is to protect the Adirondack Park’s wild character for current and future generations. PROTECT pursues this mission through a combination of advocacy, grassroots organizing, independent public oversight, research, water quality monitoring, education, and legal action. Protect the Adirondacks was formed in 2009 as the result of a merger between two long-standing environmental conservation groups in the Adirondack Park, the Resident’s Committee to Protect the Adirondacks (est. 1991) and the Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks (est. 1901).

Protect the Adirondacks is managed by a 20-member Board of Directors of Adirondack leaders with expertise in environmental law, local government, Adirondack environmental and cultural history, state agency management, and small business. Protect the Adirondacks maintains an office in a 100% energy efficient, solar-and wind-powered office in Johnsbury in the central Adirondacks. For more information see [www.protectadks.org](http://www.protectadks.org) and @ProtectAdkPark.

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