



PRESS RELEASE
October 16, 2025

Vote Yes to Amend Article 14 of the NYS Constitution for Mt. Van Hoevenberg Winter Sports Complex

*Protect the Adirondacks urges voters to vote YES on the proposed
Article 14 Constitutional Amendment for Mt. Van Hoevenberg*

For more information, call Protect the Adirondacks:
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Protect the Adirondacks, Inc. (PROTECT) supports a proposed constitutional amendment—on the ballot in November 2025—that resolves past Forest Preserve constitutional violations at the Mount Van Hoevenberg Winter Sports Complex near Lake Placid and requires that the State purchase an addition 2,500 acres of land to be added to the Adirondack Forest Preserve.

“This amendment will ensure that the integrity of Article 14, the “Forever Wild” clause, of the Constitution is respected, and it restricts development at Mount Van Hoevenberg to no more than 323 acres of land for the explicit purpose of Nordic skiing and biathlon trails and related facilities. The enabling legislation makes clear that other facilities not directly related to the operation of the Sports Complex, such as zip lines, hotels, and swimming pools, are not permitted,” said Claudia Braymer, Executive Director of PROTECT. “We urge the voters to vote yes on this amendment in November.”

As required by the Constitution, the resolution proposing an amendment to Article 14 of the New York State Constitution, the famed “Forever Wild” provision, for the Mount Van Hoevenberg Winter Sports Complex near Lake Placid, passed in two successive legislative sessions. The resolution sponsored by Senator Pete Harckham and Assemblymember Billy Jones (S.5227/A.7454) passed in 2023 during the 2023-2024 Legislative session and again in 2025 during the 2025-2026 Legislative session. In addition, enabling legislation (S.8047/A.3628) also passed the Legislature in 2025. Accordingly, the Constitutional Amendment now goes to the voters in November for a vote on whether to amend the Constitution with the proposed language. The language of the resolution for the proposed Constitutional Amendment is as follows:

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NOTWITHSTANDING THE FOREGOING PROVISIONS, THE CONSTRUCTION, OPERATION, AND MAINTENANCE TO INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS FOR NORDIC SKIING AND BIATHLON TRAILS THAT WILL ACCOMMODATE GLOBAL COMPETITIONS, TRAINING, AND EVENTS, TOTALING NOT MORE THAN THREE HUNDRED TWENTY-THREE ACRES OF TRAILS AND APPURTENANCES THERETO, IS AUTHORIZED ON ONE THOUSAND THIRTY-NINE ACRES OF FOREST PRESERVE LANDS AT THE MOUNT VAN HOEVENBERG OLYMPIC SPORTS COMPLEX IN THE TOWN OF NORTH ELBA IN ESSEX COUNTY, AND AS AN OFFSET THERETO THE STATE MUST ACQUIRE FOR INCORPORATION INTO THE FOREST PRESERVE AT LEAST TWO THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED ACRES OF FOREST LAND FOR INCLUSION IN THE FOREST PRESERVE IN THE ADIRONDACK PARK ON CONDITION THAT THE LEGISLATURE SHALL DETERMINE THAT SUCH LANDS ARE EQUAL TO OR GREATER IN VALUE.

The proposed constitutional amendment authorizes 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 and world class events, as well as necessary facilities such as access roads, parking lots, offices, lodges and snowmaking equipment. The enabling legislation specifies the types of facilities not allowed, including hotels, swimming pools, and 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 adjoining lands 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.

More background information is available here:

<https://www.protectadks.org/vote-yes-on-constitutional-amendment-for-the-mount-van-hoevenberg-winter-sports-complex/>

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 21-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 and @ProtectAdkPark.

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