

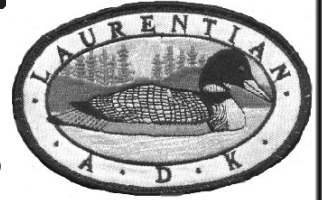


North Wind

The Laurentian Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club

St. Lawrence & Ottawa River Valley Region

October - December 2015



RRAC Explained

If you enjoy the Raquette River and care about its future, you probably should know more about the RRAC (pronounced “rack.”) I was present at its birth 13 years ago and I’m still ADK’s representative at meetings.

The Raquette River Advisory Council was formed in 2002 when the federal government issued a new hydroelectric license to Niagara Mohawk to operate most of the generating facilities between Piercefield and the St. Lawrence River. All told, there are more than a dozen dams covered by the license, linked to almost as many generating plants. Brookfield Renewable Energy (Erie Hydropower, Inc. is the holding company) now has that license.

Because the license is for 35 years, the RRAC was created to adapt to changing conditions in the human or natural scene that may affect the terms of the license, such as river flows and land use management. We focus on the environmental and recreational aspects of the license-holder’s operations. We meet twice a year in Potsdam to perform that review. We have a small fund of money, added to annually by the license-holder, to spend on environmental research or protection and current or new recreational facilities.

The council is composed of the 14 stakeholders who signed the settlement agreement in 1998, one of which is ADK. The late, great Betty Lou Bailey and I sat at table with Ni Mo representatives and other stakeholders for two years, hammering out the terms of the license.

Other representatives on the RRAC are from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, New York’s Department of Environmental Conservation, Trout Unlimited, NY Conservation Council, and St. Lawrence County, among others. Collectively we representatives are well versed in the geography, history, ecology, biology, and human activities on the Raquette River.

The 2002 license created the Red Sandstone Trail and confirmed interest in Stone Valley Cooperative Recreation Area. Steps were taken to improve the fish habitat, such as keeping water in the “bypass reaches” (engineer lingo for the original river beds). Several car-top boat launches were built, and carries were laid out between each reservoir. In recent years we’ve asked for changes in the company’s land use regulations, such as including mountain biking, and discussed legal and illegal ATV access.

Other issues before the RRAC include the Town of Colton’s plans at the Stone Valley trail to upgrade visitor’s facilities for whitewater release days, and a plan to protect the river against aquatic invasive species (see my Conservation column). Brookfield strives to make RRAC happy because watching over us both is the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), which issues—and enforces— its license.

Other councils in this region are the St. Regis Advisory Council (SRAC), which Blair Madore attends as ADK’s representative, and the Oswegatchie River Advisory Council (ORAC), which is just starting up and (I think) still needs an ADK representative.

John Omohundro (Vice Chair for Conservation)

<http://www.adklaurentian.org/>



*Little Haystack and Haystack as seen from Tabletop. Photo
John Barron*

Chair

Tom Wheeler

Greetings from the Chair. President Obama in Alaska spoke of the effects there of global warming. The Adirondacks, especially the alpine areas, will also have significant impacts.

Late August and early September this year have been especially warm. Moreover, we are informed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration that for the world 2015 will almost certainly be the warmest year on record. Although the first sentence is just about the weather, the second is more corroborative evidence of climate change and global warming. Scientists world wide agree that there is near certainty that our world is warming...and warming significantly. The culprit is us: we depend too heavily on fossil fuels whose combustion products include carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas. It is refreshing to see a number of communities such as Canton and Ogdensburg supporting programs to increase the use of solar power. I was pleased to see in ADK's budget that its facilities are increasingly relying on solar and geothermal energy. The contributions of individuals, communities, and small organizations to reducing reliance on fossil fuels can be an important part of what must be a global response to this serious problem. Our current rate of carbon emissions will have consequences long after we are gone. We should try to ensure that those consequences are not catastrophic. We are each a little bit responsible for the problem and likewise can each be a little bit of the solution.

Executive Committee

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Conservation

John Omohundro

Lampson Falls - DEC Forester Pat Whalen, Tom Ortmeyer, engineering professor Robert Davis, who is coach of the Clarkson bridge-building club, and I walked the riverside trail at Lampson Falls this spring, assessing where bridges were needed. Our chapter built four nice ones in 2009 but Irene washed two of them away. A third one is now too short for the slough it is supposed to cross. The fourth has rotten stringers. Professor Davis' students will be coming back this fall to build four new bridges. I'll post photos of them at that time. Thanks to Tom for bringing Professor Davis into the mix and to Pat Whalen for his enthusiastic support!

Aquatic Invasive Plants - I organized a meeting in Keene Valley of the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP), Paul Smith College's Adirondack Watershed Institute (AWI), SUNY Potsdam Environmental Studies, Adirondack Mountain Club's Backcountry Stewards Program, and the Au Sable River Association. You couldn't assemble a more knowledgeable group to combat invasive aquatic plants. These experts were advising me for a grant I was writing to the Raquette River Advisory Council (see p. 1) to fund a steward at Blake Flow reservoir in summer of 2016. AWI is funding a steward at Carry Falls and NYSDEC is co-sponsoring a boat cleaning station on Rt. 56 near the Snow Bowl, but too many of the Raquette access points are still un-monitored, and we fear aggressive invasive species such as Eurasian milfoil or zebra mussels will get into the river. Research by AWI in 2005 indicated only a light infestation of vari-leaf milfoil in the upper Raquette. So we still may have time to protect these waters. It's going to take a lot more than my little grant, but I'm treating this as a pilot project in hopes of encouraging Brookfield to invest more in the near future to protect the Raquette.

Appointed Positions

Chapter Archivist: Carolyn Kaczka
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Measuring for a bridge to be built on the riverside trail at Lampson Falls. L to R: Robert Davis, Pat Whalen, Tom Ortmeyer. Photo by John Omohundro.



Biking the Seaway Trail. At the Massena Intake Boat Launch are, L-R, Marie Fernandez de Alaiza, John Barron, Marianne Hebert. Photo by TL Jeanna Matthews.

OUTINGS

Oct. - Dec. 2015

Marianne Hebert

Sat, Oct. 3rd - Sat, Oct. 3 - Paddle Debar Pond and Bushwhack to the Ledges of Baldface Mountain. A classic Fall foliage, Adirondack outing. Debar Pond is nestled between Baldface and Debar mountains with views of Whiteface, Loon and Sable mountains. The first half of the outing includes a 3/10 mile canoe carry, the first tenth on an elevated boardwalk over an old marsh. The paddle is just short of 1 mile. We will have lunch on the shelving rock at the south end of the pond. The second half of the outing is optional. We will bushwhack up to Baldface's cliffs (about 2 1/2 to 3 hours round trip). Those who prefer to skip the bushwhack can leisurely explore the pond, swim off the ledges, or just relax, read, or photograph. Bring camera, binoculars, swimsuit, lunch, extra water and snacks. Level 3 for the paddle; Level 4 with the bushwhack. Meet at 10:00. Contact Lois and Duncan Cutter, 315-328-4675 for further information..

Sun, Oct. 4 - Ampersand. One of the Saranac Lake 6er peaks, Ampersand offers colorful history and 360 degree views. 5 miles RT, 1800 feet of gain. Strenuous but leisurely, Level 4. Contact John Barron, (613) 828-2296 or johnbarron@sympatico.ca.

Sat, Oct. 10 - Prospective Member walk. Thinking about joining the Adirondack Mountain Club? This is the outing for you. Meet some members and discover that there is something for everyone (contrary to rumor, we have not all climbed Everest, in the dark, barefoot). We'll walk on the Red Sandstone Trail for a mile on mostly level terrain to the old Parmeter quarry, then return. Our walk, even with all the chat about the club and the trail, should take about 90 minutes to two hours. Visit our website at adklaurentian.org, and contact the leader for details. John Omohundro, 315-265-8365, omohunjt@northnet.org.

Foot travel

Difficulty Level	Feet of ascent	miles
5. Very strenuous	over 1500	10+
4. Strenuous	1000-1500	8-10
3. Moderate	500-1000	5-8
2. Fairly easy	to 499	3-5
1. Easy	level mostly	1-3

Cycling

Leaders should specify mileage, elevation, and surface.

Check for additions, deletions and changes on our chapter website, www.adklaurentian.org

Please contact the leaders at least a day before the trip.

Car pooling makes sense, as does sharing the cost of gas.

Sat, Oct. 24 - Stone Valley Trail Work. Trail work will consist of trail maintenance and some new construction. Beginners and experienced trail workers alike are encouraged to help with building and maintaining trails. Difficulty level will depend on which project that you are involved in; some projects will be very strenuous, other projects such as installing trail markers are easy. Call Mark Simon 315-262-2571.

Sat, Oct 31 - Climb St. Regis Mountain. A climb up St. Regis on a clear fall day provides great views of the St Regis canoe area. 6.8 miles RT, 1,250 feet of gain. Level 4, strenuous. Contact Tom Ortmeyer, 265-8219, tortmeyer@gmail.com.

Sat, Nov 7 - Hike up Mt. Van Hoevenberg Round trip distance from the trailhead is about 4.5 miles. The ascent is 740 ft. Easy pace. Beautiful views of some of the High Peaks and South Meadow. Call for meeting place and time. 315 386-2482 Tom and Eileen Wheeler.

Sun, Nov. 15 - Red Sandstone Trail. An afternoon's nature-and-history walk on Sugar Island. 4 miles RT, mostly level, but rough ground in places: sturdy boots will protect your ankles, and if it's icy, spikes or at least ski poles will help. Members only. John Omohundro, 315-265-8365, omohunjt@northnet.org.

Sun, Nov. 22 Annual Meeting and Fall Pot Luck - First Presbyterian Church on the Park, 17 Park St., Canton. Bring a dish to share and your own tableware. Arrive at 5:00 PM for supper to start promptly at 5:30. Our speaker will be Dr. Manoj Vora from Lowville, New York where he has practiced for over 20 years. He has climbed the highest summits in each of the seven continents. He will take us on his journey to this accomplishment and the lessons that he learned from this experience. He has received high praise for his presentations to other chapters. Contact Tom Wheeler 315 386-2482 or northflow@gmail.com.

Sun, Dec. 13 - Early Winter Hike/Ski/Snowshoe at Higley Flow State Park. We'll walk/ski/snowshoe as conditions



Wellesley Island. L-R: Niall Barron, Janet Green, Linda Kinney, Jean Giblin, TL Lila Hunnewell, Charles Hunnewell. Photo John Barron

permit for about 2 miles and finish off with a campfire at the Beaver Pond Lean-To. Hot dogs and marshmallows provided. You bring the kids, their grandparents and the dogs (leashed of course). Contact Blair Madore 315 265 0602 or email madorebf@potsdam.edu.

Sat. Dec. 19 - Ski to Great Camp Santanoni. - A 10 mile RT ski on the access road to these historic structures just north of Newcomb. Grades are mainly easy. Bring lunch to have at the great camp. Level 3. Contact David Trithart 315-265-8117 or email dtrithar@twcny.rr.com

Wed. Dec. 30 - Ski to Grassy Pond (off route 30, Hayes Brook trailhead). A 3-hour outing, with lunch at the lean-to, overlooking Grassy Pond. Trail crosses the Osgood River and features a beautiful mature pine forest for about 3 miles. Meet in Nicholville at 10:00am or at the trailhead at 10:45am. Contact Lois and Duncan Cutter (315-328-4675) for further information.

Fri, Jan 1 - New Year's Day at Clarkson - Our annual New Year's Day pot-luck will take place once again at the Adirondack Lodge at Clarkson University. There are no cooking facilities, so hors d'oeuvres and similar items that don't require cooking or heating are standard. There will be short, easy walking, snowshoeing, or skiing tours on the scenic trails of the campus. Outdoor activities start by 2:00 and continue all afternoon until dark, snacks about 4:00 PM. Clarkson asks no pets indoors. Contact Tom Wheeler 315-386-2482 or northflow@gmail.com.

Tue. -Wed, Jan. 12-13 - Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour. View a selection of the best films of the Festival at the Bytown Cinema in Ottawa. Starts about 7 PM Tuesday. Optional supper in the Byward Market area beforehand. Option to stay overnight and go skiing on Wednesday in Gatineau Park. Participants welcome for films, skiing, or both. Contact John Barron, (613) 828-2296 or johnbarron@sympatico.ca as early as possible, preferably by December 1 so tickets can be obtained (they go fast). Members only.

Director

Tom Ortmeyer

Notes from the June Board Meeting. The meeting included a nice remembrance of Perry Yaw, including fond memories of Yaw family participation at Loj work weekends.

Increasing concerns on invasive species was noted. The club advocacy website has information on two volunteer programs, one designed to combat the spread of aquatic invasives and the other to monitor for the presence of the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid in the park.

Also at the meeting, it was announced that the Western Trails Guide will be out in 2015. This guide covers many of the hikes in our area (many were formerly in the Northern Guide), and also will include the Cranberry Lake 50 for the first time.

The Iditaride completed its 10th year in good fashion, with 453 riders from 19 states and 3 countries.

Gleaned from the Club website and E-letter. If you've never been to Johns Brook Lodge, ADK's back country lodge, check out the blog on the ADK web site. The August video "On the Trail with ADK: Johns Brook Lodge" gives a nice overview of the lodge, and highlights recent improvements there. This video can be found on the ADK blog, as well as on You Tube.

ADK's Education Program is offering a "Map and Compass Fundamentals" course in October, and both pack basket and a wilderness first aid courses in December.

These are just a few of the club activities on the web site. A little browsing will show many other activities and events.

Last chance to enter 7th Annual Laurentian Chapter Photo Contest.

Entries for this year's Photo Contest will be accepted until October 5. The photos must be taken from Oct. 1, 2014 through September 30, 2015. Chapter members may submit photos from any occasion, and non-members may submit photos taken on chapter trip. Submissions should be sent to Tom Ortmeyer at ortmeyer@gmail.com

BACKTRACKS



Call for Outing Leaders

The Chapter is always looking for volunteers to help lead outings. If you have ideas about hikes, bikes or paddles you would like to lead, we can help bring you up to speed with trip leaders dos-and-don'ts and administrative logistics. Contact: Marianne Hebert hebertm@potsdam.edu for more info.

ADK Laurentian Backtracks – July - September 2015

Weekend June 19-21 - Grace Peak Celebration. Toni Towle, Peter Blood, Marianne Hebert, Ann and Armond Spencer, TL John Barron. We had a gorgeous sunny day for the party on Saturday. Everyone enjoyed camping, technique demonstrations by Lean2Rescue and the 46er trail crew. Also the entertainment by Adirondack performers, bison burgers and strawberry shortcake, unique Grace Peak beer, the award ceremony of the Grace Hudowalski essay contest, and short statements by some of the people involved in having East Dix renamed Grace Peak. Sunday brought the remnants of tropical storm Bill, so Toni, Peter, and John down-scoped the hiking plan from a mountain climb to a traverse of the Bloomingdale Bog, an interesting landscape and the ideal hike for the day.

Sat, Jul 11 - Cycling from Ingleside to Morrisburg. Hot and sunny, with a strong west wind. We enjoyed the shorelines, the Bird Sanctuary Visitor Center, and lunch and a swim at the Morrisburg town beach. We were fortunate to have perfect timing to watch a reenactment of the War of 1812 Battle of Crysler's Farm. TL John Barron.

Wed, Jul 22 - Brandy Brook Paddle - Tom Ortmeyer (TL), Bill and Pat Mueller, John and Susan Omohundro, Jeanna Matthews, Bill Lynch, Alison Charles, and Ann and Armond Spencer. Our slightly delayed Wednesday night paddle gave us some good weather and interesting clouds behind the cold front that had recently passed by. We were greeted by a swimming mink at the boat launch, and accompanied by numerous terns as explored out to the St. Lawrence and then down towards Coles Creek. We had our sack suppers on a sandy beach, and then paddled back accompanied by kingfishers, blue herons and a single green heron.

Compiled by Marianne Hebert

Sat, Aug 1 - Biking the Seaway Trail. Jeanna Matthews (TL), Marie Fernandez de Alaiza, John Barron, Marianne Hebert. We started at the Massena Intake and continued west by the Massena Beach and then along the Richard Landing Dike Trail, through the golf course and along the paved stretch of trails to Whalen Park where we had lunch. After lunch, we headed for Wilson Hill where we saw some escaped cows and beautiful views of the water. We circled back around to Whalen Park by way of Rt 37 and then retraced our path to the Massena Intake. Everyone agreed to keep going past our cars and further east until we almost reached Eisenhower lock on an offroad trail behind Alcoa. We returned to our cars for a total of 28.5 miles. Beautiful sunny day for cycling along the river.

Sat, Aug 8 - Indian Head and Fish Hawk Cliffs Marianne Hebert (TL), John Barron, Marie Fernandez de Alaiza, Jon Montan. We were fortunate to have a beautiful sunny day. Hiking the Ausable Club road was pleasant but long. The climb to Indian Head was typically steep. The views from "Gothics Window" were unfortunately obscured by vegetation, but views of Ausable Lake from Indian Head were spectacular. We had lunch on the ledge, then climbed down and back up to Fish Hawk Cliffs for more outstanding views.

Sat, Aug.15 - Alexandria Bay and Wellsley Island. Linda Kinney, Janet Green, John Barron, Jean Giblin, Niall Barron, Charles and Lila Hunnewell (TL) met for a convivial bag lunch at the pavilion in Alexandria Bay, then caravanned to the Nature Center on Wellesley Island. We hiked, in beautiful weather, enjoying beautiful water views and varied terrain. It was Janet Green's first hike since a winter skiing accident and long recovery, and she did well! — smiling all the way!

Sat, Aug 22 - Kring Point State Park Cycling Tom Ortmeyer (TL), Jeanna Matthews, Annegret Staiger, Hamid Eisazadeh, Mona Torabizadeh, Charlie and Lila Hunnewell. We had beautiful partly sunny weather for our 4 bicyclists pedaling to Kring Point Park, with a scenic stop at Chippewa Bay along the way. We arrived at Kring Point and enjoyed biking through the park to the beach. There we met Mona, Charlie and Lila for an extended lunch, which included swimming and a visit to Morgan Island in the park. It was a bit warmer on the return ride, so we again stopped in Chippewa Bay for a cold drink and to rest our weary leg muscles.

Sat, Sept. 12 - Catamount (near Whiteface). Bill and Debbie Lynch, Marie Fernandez de Alaiza, Jeanna Matthews, Niall Barron, TL John Barron. With rain falling everywhere to the north and west, our mountain was in ideal dry hiking weather. There were plenty of stories and anecdotes to tell, and we enjoyed each other's company immensely. Time passed quickly and we decided to settle for the lower first summit. The views were already terrific, and it seemed enough for the day.



Cycling Ingleside to Morrisburg. L-R, Jeanna Matthews, TL Gene Gaffney, Tom Ortmeyer, Brett Lehigh, Toni Towle, Peter Blood. Photo by John Barron

Welcome New Members

Lila Hunnewell

Christina Albers and Matthew Thomas, Ottawa, ON
 Kathleen and Richard Chapman, Dickinson Center
 Justin Coen, Canton
 Matt Lavarney, Ogdensburg
 Anton Meznaric and Rafaela Davila, Toronto, ON
 Martine Plourde, Gatineau, QC
 Brooke and Dennis Rutkauskas, Potsdam
 Edward Yaw and Karen Milne, Morristown, NJ



Brandy Brook Paddle. Photo: Alison Charles.



Indian Head. L-R: John Barron, Jon Montan, Marie Fernandez de Alaiza, Marianne Hebert (TL) Photo: Bystander



Catamount. L-R, Niall Barron, Jeanna Matthews, Bill and Debbie Lynch, Marie Fernandez de Alaiza. Photo TL John Barron



Kring Point State Park Cycling. L - R: Jeanna Matthews, TL Tom Ortmeyer, Annegret Staiger, Charlie Hunnewell, Lila Hunnewell, Mona Torabizadeh, Hamid Eisazadeh. Photo: Bystander.



North Wind

The Newsletter of the Laurentian Chapter
of Adirondack Mountain Club
7 Barclay St. Potsdam, NY 13676

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Just Connect

VISIT the chapter website, ably maintained by David Katz, for color photos, trail maps, updated officer reports, and outings:

www.adklaurentian.org

LIKE US on Facebook, edited by Marianne Hebert:

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/140013066028774/>

FOLLOW US on Twitter:

<http://twitter.com/#!/ADKLaurentian>

SUBSCRIBE to our chapter E-letter, published by Dick Mooers, who e-mails late-breaking news and outings:

Request to **rmooers@twcny.rr.com**

Remember the Annual Laurentian Chapter Photo Contest

Submit photo entries to Tom Ortmeyer at tortmeyer@twcny.rr.com. If you have questions or want to transfer photos in other ways, contact Tom at that address or at (315) 265-8219.

Details were in the Jan. - Mar. 2015 *North Wind*.

Photo contest winners will be announced at the Laurentian Chapter Annual Meeting in November, 2015. A Grand Prize photo will be selected. Best photos and honorable mention will also be selected in the categories:

Action
Landscape
Nature
People

In 2015, an award will also be made for the best "selfie" photo.

For ease of handling, digital photos are preferred, but hardcopy versions are acceptable. If your photos are originally digital, please submit the highest resolution you have (photo file size of at least 500kbytes are best). Submitters are encouraged to include descriptive titles with their submissions.