

AJES

Adirondack Journal of
Environmental Studies

EDITOR

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MISSION STATEMENT

The *Adirondack Journal of Environmental Studies* (AJES) exists to foster a dialogue about the broad range of issues that concern the Northern Forest.

AJES serves to bridge the gaps among academic disciplines and among researchers and practitioners devoted to understanding and promoting the development of sustainable communities, both human and wild.

The journal purposefully avoids serving as a vehicle for any single or special point of view. To the contrary, in searching for common ground AJES welcomes variety and a broad spectrum of opinion from its contributors.

CONTRIBUTING TO AJES

We encourage the submission of manuscripts, reviews, photographs, artwork and letters to the editor. For additional information please visit the AJES website at www.ajes.org/ or contact Gary Chilson at chilsog@paulsmiths.edu or 518-327-6377.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

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PREROGATIVE

Upgrading

By GARY CHILSON
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The Adirondack Research Consortium (ARC) and the *Adirondack Journal of Environmental Studies* (AJES) will be transformed this year. The ARC, a volunteer association since January 1994, will become a not-for-profit, tax-exempt organization eligible to receive grants and donations to promote its mission. From its very beginning, the ARC has promoted our knowledge and understanding of the region while enhancing professional networking through its Annual Conference on the Adirondacks, its listserve and its website. The ARC also sponsored several scoping sessions and workshops to help focus our energy and abilities on significant issues facing the Adirondack Park. Through its conferences and spin-off work groups, the ARC's volunteer committees and officers have accomplished much.

Now, as a qualifying 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt organization, the ARC can be expected to achieve much more with new funding and resource opportunities. Among the many new opportunities, an important step would be development of a research agenda for the Adirondacks established and endorsed by the ARC. A research agenda would enable managers and scientists to demonstrate how their research fits into a larger, collaborative research effort – an effort endorsed by the many stakeholders involved in the consortium.

In the year ahead many tasks are planned to help our association more effectively pursue its mission. New By-Laws defining the responsibilities of Directors and Officers are expected to be ratified in May at the ARC's business meeting during its 12th Annual Conference on the Adirondacks. Filing with the Internal Revenue Service for tax-exempt status is expected to follow directly thereafter. Also, a decision to use a portion of the ARC's limited funds as seed money to

hire a part-time Executive Director will be made. A part-time Executive Director would be expected to aggressively pursue and carefully manage a broader range of funds, as well as organize the Annual Conference, and facilitate the work of committees.

Transformation of the ARC into a more effective organization leads naturally to a reassessment and transformation of its journal, the *Adirondack Journal of Environmental Studies*. Since its inception, AJES sought to promote the development of sustainable communities in the Adirondacks or, more specifically, in the Champlain-Adirondack Biosphere Reserve. More recently, the journal enlarged its regional focus to include the entire Northern Forest. With so many diverging views about the region and the policies associated with its management, AJES intended to become a balance point where common ground among a multitude of viewpoints could be found. Focused by its theme and region and guided by its watchword of balance, AJES published a wide variety of articles from property-rights advocates and preservationists, residents and visitors, academics and politicians, scientists and philosophers.

Thus, AJES took on a somewhat unique tone somewhere between a regional magazine and an academic journal, sometimes even featuring peer-reviewed articles when appropriate. Targeted readers of AJES are educated though not necessarily academic people concerned about the region. Contributing authors represented a wide variety of disciplines and perspectives, among them industry, colleges and universities, local and state government, the natural and social sciences, and advocacy groups. As Editor of a transdisciplinary journal my purpose was to promote the transfer of useful and interesting information from those who generate it to those who can best use it.

While successful in some respects, AJES did not achieve a status or prestige sufficient to elicit a flood of unsolicited manuscripts from which to choose for publication. Nor were there sufficient manuscripts submitted for peer review to warrant maintaining the ARC's Editorial Board, formerly chaired by Phil Terrie. Unfortunate, too, is the fact that subscriptions to AJES generally ran around 150 percent of ARC memberships each year, sometimes not even achieving 200, the number necessary for bulk mailings. As a result, AJES has continuously run at a loss of about \$2,000 per year, not counting the generous release time offered by Paul Smith's College to the Editor.

Paul Smith's College, after eleven years of very generous support, now desires a more prestigious, scholarly publication as a complement to its recent baccalaureate status and has challenged the ARC to rethink *all* aspects of the journal for continued support. Consequently, another important goal of the ARC this year will be to establish an ARC Journal Review Committee to explore the ARC's needs and opportunities in a publication and to initiate a process that, over the next year or two, through a series of transitional steps, transforms AJES into a transdisciplinary yet peer-reviewed, scholarly publication focused on the science, management and culture of our bioregion. By doing so, and with the enthusiastic cooperation of ARC members, it is expected that AJES will see an increase both in manuscript submissions and in membership and non-membership subscriptions while meeting the publication needs of our highly educated and professionally diverse membership.

Given the amount of work involved in transforming the journal, Paul Smith's College has appointed Dr. Craig Milewski to work with me in the review process. Craig is an Assistant Professor of Fisheries Biology and coordinator of the new Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences baccalaureate program in the Division of Forestry, Natural Resources and Recreation. Together with the ARC Journal Review Committee, we

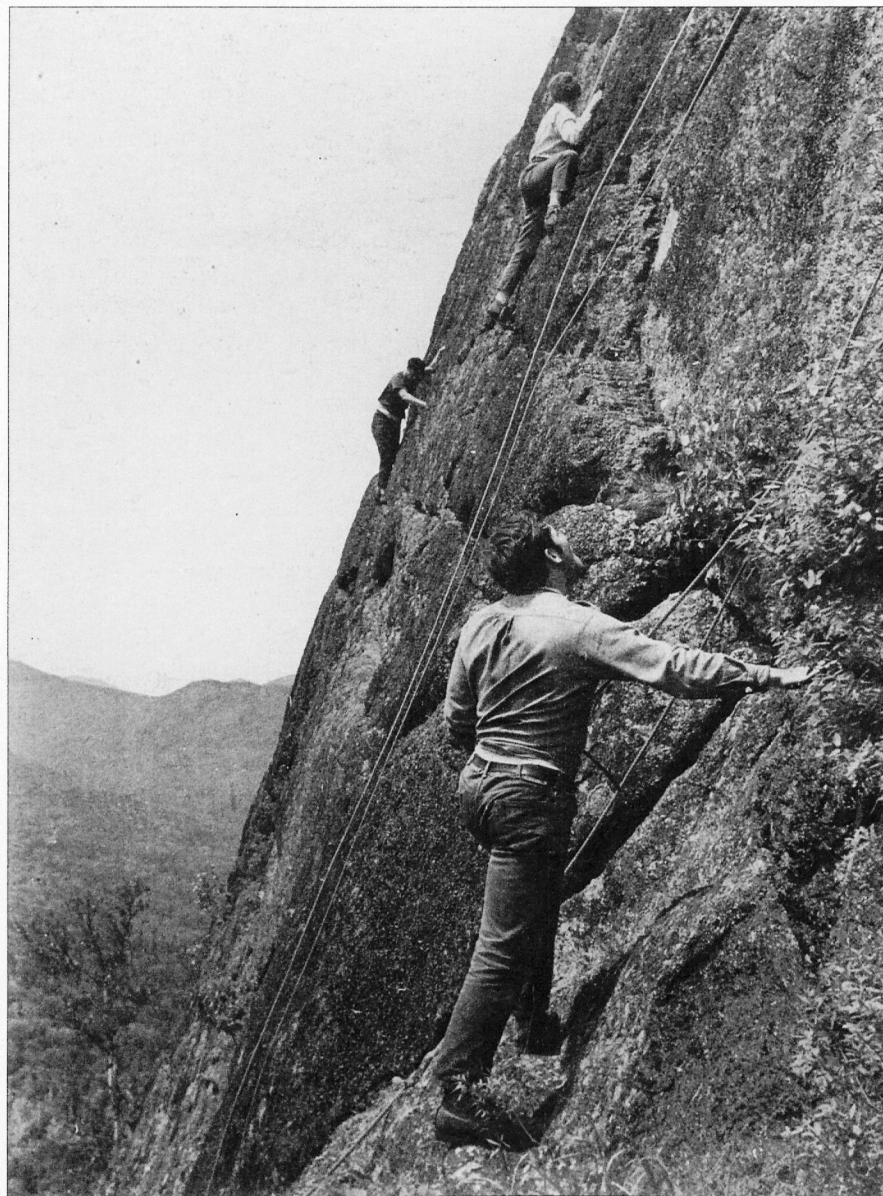


PHOTO COMPLIMENTS OF ADK

Participants in ADK's rock climbing school ascend cliffs above Keene Valley in June, 1967.

will review the following five broad areas: 1) the journal's purpose/mission, 2) content, 3) peer-review and the editorial review process, 4) solicitation process, and 5) promotion and support. The strength and relevance of the journal's purpose and mission will guide much of the review process and audience analysis. A peer review and editorial process will involve the creation of an editorial review/advisory board, development of criteria for the review process, classification of accept/reject criteria and solicitation of manuscripts. A solicitation process would help maintain a rotating source of publishable manuscripts. Finally,

a process for journal promotion and subscription renewals needs to be developed and sources of support identified.

The rebirth of AJES will be both exciting and challenging and I am grateful to the ARC for enabling the process to proceed without a break in the journal's continuous publication.

Please direct your comments, suggestions or ideas for material for *AJES* to Gary Chilson, Editor, Adirondack Journal of Environmental Studies, Paul Smith's College, Paul Smiths NY 12970, or via email to chilsog@paulsmiths.edu.