

# Message from the President

BY JON ERICKSON

The Adirondack Research Consortium was founded in 1994 in the spirit of lowering barriers among diverse disciplines, political agendas, and stakeholders in research and education within, about, and for the Adirondack region. Founded on the premise that sound information and open dialogue is the best starting point for policy and management decisions, the ARC has made great strides in ensuring that the rich body of knowledge and ongoing research in the region is not lost to international conferences, obscure academic publications, or archives of dusty dissertations. The membership of this unique regional consortium should be very proud of its accomplishments to date including support of this journal, an electronic mail forum (Adiron-L@lists.rpi.edu), the ARC web page, and the *Annual Conference on the Adirondacks*.

But we can do so much more. The *Annual Conference on the Adirondacks* has been the principal mechanism for the sharing of research, forging of partnerships, and promotion of new ideas. At the seven annual conferences to date, 40 universities and colleges, 25 local, state and federal government bodies, and 41 non-governmental organizations and private sector firms have been represented in 54 research paper and poster sessions, and 22 discussion forums, workshops, and topical panels. The traditions of an annual keynote address, Adirondack Achievement Award, and strong support for student attendance have helped create an atmosphere of integrity and civility that has attracted disparate voices to neutral grounds. It has been exciting to witness the evolution of this formal dialogue, but even more remarkable to see the exchange of

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business cards, e-mails, and phone numbers during coffee breaks or conference events.

However, the ARC can better capitalize on this exchange and help shape new research agendas, grant applications, and ultimate findings and conclusions. We propose two steps in this direction. Both the electronic mailing list and the web page were created in a spirit of research promotion, but have been insufficiently supported and thus underutilized. As a first step toward raising the bar, discussions have been initiated with Paul Smith's College to have this arm of our outreach mission find institutional support in the College of the Adirondacks' new research library and information center. The goal is to create a first-rate system for archiving past and current research, coordinating ARC events, and promoting dialogue during the months between our annual conferences.

The second initiative is to create an ARC Planning Committee to support a formal process to seek out and encourage research partnerships. Currently there are three such partnerships in the works. First, the ARC was represented in testimony to New York's Quality Communities Taskforce, chaired by the Lieutenant Governor, and has since been asked by the Department of State to help coordinate a statewide effort to define and implement principles of sustainable development. Clearly the Adirondack region has a lot of experience to offer to this topic, and indeed, this has been a central mission of the *Adirondack Journal of Environmental Studies* and a recurring theme at our annual conference.

Second, stemming from a session on invasive exotic species at our May 2000 conference, the ARC has been asked to organize an effort to apply for federal research and management funds to address the spread of Eurasian Watermilfoil in

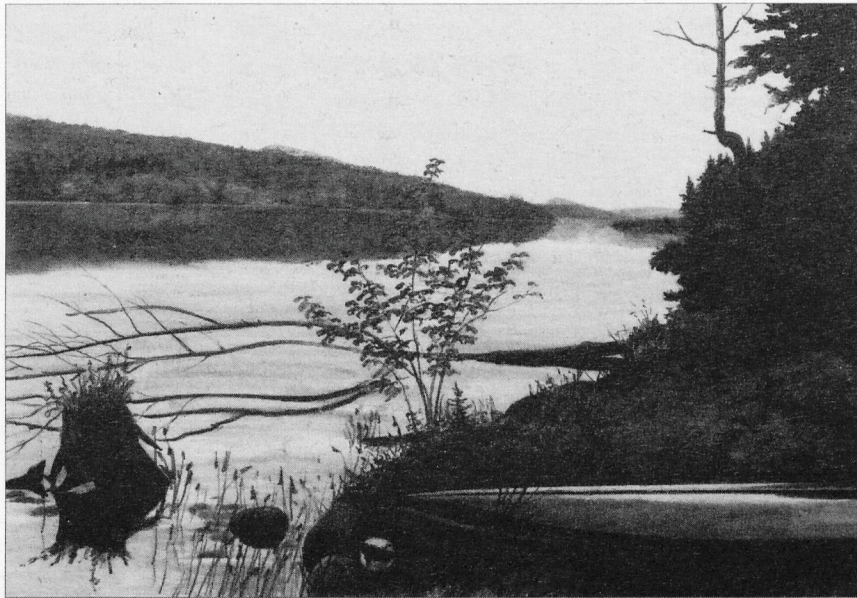
Adirondack waters. Third, and also building from a major theme at our last conference, the ARC co-sponsored, with the Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks, a follow-up session on the process of completing Park unit management plans. This meeting took place at the Association's family conference on October 19-21 at the Silver Bay Conference Center on Lake George.

These are just three of many important roles the ARC can play in encouraging research partnerships. Support of the Adirondack curriculum project, the design of ecological economic regional indicators, and, of course, organization of the *Eighth Annual Conference on the Adirondacks* are other examples on our radar screen.

However, all of this coordination currently falls to the efforts of the few officers in the ARC. To make sure that these types of opportunities are not passed by, and are pursued with sufficient effort, we propose the creation of a broadly represented ARC Planning Committee. The Committee's charge would be to encourage, build, and accomplish an Adirondack research agenda designed from and responsive to community and regional research needs. Committee members would be asked to head up topical projects, coordinate workshops and scoping sessions, organize grant applications to government agencies and private foundations, guide the development of the annual conference, and solicit papers and topics for the *Adirondack Journal of Environmental Studies*.

The ARC has come a long way in seven short years. These two very doable steps — securing institutional support of the listserv and web page, and forming an executive committee to help build new research partnerships — will help raise the visibility and efficacy of a regional research consortium process.

Please e-mail your comments and suggestions to [erickj@rpi.edu](mailto:erickj@rpi.edu).



*Loon Call. Drawing by Barry Hopkins.*

## Call for Papers

### Eighth Annual Conference on the Adirondacks

The Adirondack Research Consortium (ARC) will hold its Eighth Annual Conference on the Adirondacks on May 23-25, 2001, at the Hotel Saranac in Saranac Lake, New York. The ARC encourages research papers and topic sessions on all aspects of Adirondack natural environment, history, politics, economics, and culture. This interdisciplinary, regional consortium is home to physical and social scientists, humanists, planners, environmentalists, government officials, and all those interested in this important region.

Papers, posters, discussion panels, and workshops that explore the natural, economic, cultural, historic, and philosophical features of the Adirondacks, Lake Champlain, and the North Country are encouraged. Of particular interest are themes addressing the intersection of the social and natural sciences in research, and issues of public-private ownership and management of complex natural and social systems. Past conference agendas and abstracts can be found at the ARC's web site: [www.rpi.edu/~erickj/ARC/](http://www.rpi.edu/~erickj/ARC/)

Graduate and undergraduate students are strongly encouraged to participate in the conference through both paper and poster presentations. All student papers will be evaluated for an annual award. Presentations should be designed for 20 minute summaries and 10 minute question and answer

sessions, with a general audience in mind. Technical language should, to the greatest extent possible, be limited and fully explained.

Abstracts should be sent to the address below no later than January 31, 2001. *Electronic submissions are strongly encouraged.*

Each proposal should include:

1. Title of the presentation.
2. Name and address of author(s), with presenting author specified.
3. The type of presentation proposed (paper, poster, panel, workshop, etc.).
4. A 250-word abstract of the presentation, which will be published in the conference program.
5. The need for audio-visual equipment. Poster session presentations will be on 5' x 7' boards.

Send inquiries and proposals for presentations to:

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Send e-mail submissions to: [erickj@rpi.edu](mailto:erickj@rpi.edu)