

The Adirondack Park: A Look Back, A Look Ahead

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The title for this article was suggested by Al Schwartz when he asked me to open the 1995 St. Lawrence University Adirondack Conference. Looking first back and then ahead is exactly what I have set out to do here. Taking a brief look at the historical record reminds us of where the current situation has its roots. This means searching for what we might call original intent, asking what the various legislators and constitution makers of the 1880s and '90s were aiming for in creating both the Adirondack Forest Preserve and the Adirondack Park? Since most of us by now have a pretty good idea of what the record shows, this excursion into the past will be brief and fairly cursory, but it's important to recall a few matters that I think are especially relevant.

An important caveat to be borne in mind as we conduct this checking-the-record exercise is that original intent shouldn't necessarily dictate to the present or future. Just as the provisions of the original U. S. Constitution that denied equal rights to women and African-Americans, for example, have been tossed aside by a, presumably, more enlightened age, so we should not let nineteenth-century attitudes toward the land, or nature, or the physical environment dictate what we can or

should do or hope for today or tomorrow. Indeed, one of the benefits of scrutinizing the written record of planning and conservation for the Adirondacks is to see where the vision of the founding fathers was shortsighted or incomplete. In some significant ways the problems of today are a function of decisions made—or not made—over a century ago.

After this quick perusal of how we have arrived where we are today, I want to suggest a few ways of looking at the future. To do this I will be looking at the Adirondack Park through a series of different lenses. The fact that the picture one sees of the future varies according to the lens through which one looks reminds us that the Adirondacks has always been contested territory. By this I mean that today, no less than in the past, different groups of people have different understandings of what the Adirondacks as both a real place and an imaginative construct is (the use of the singular verb there is a nod to the memory of Bill Verner, who always insisted that the word *Adirondacks* is a singular noun). These understandings appear in how we describe the place; in the stories we tell about it, the narratives we construct.

As a cultural historian, I

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find it somewhat satisfying, aesthetically, that this notion of the Adirondacks as contested territory itself begins in narrative, in the almost mythic tradition that the Adirondacks was fought over by the Iroquois and Algonquin Indians. The first white man known to have set foot in what is now the Adirondack Park, Samuel de Champlain, did so in 1609 as part of an Algonquin war expedition against the Iroquois. The battle that Champlain helped his Algonquin allies win set the tone for what has been nearly four centuries of conflict, as the Adirondack landscape has been fought over with bows,arquebuses, fleets of warships, and, more recently, legislation and lawsuits.

The primary source of conflict is the different needs that different groups of people project onto the landscape. To reduce this notion to its crudest level, a forest acquires its meaning, its narrative value, as a function of who is looking at it. The timber cruiser for Finch-Pruyn understands a forest through a certain lens; this lens constitutes and largely determines his or her environmental attitude, which in turn largely determines what he or she wants to do with the forest. A backpacker might see the same forest and because of a different

set of assumptions understands it in different terms. Likewise the wildlife biologist, the second-home developer, the deer hunter, the bird watcher, the hydrologist, the angler for trout, and so on. This is no doubt an obvious point, but it's worth noting that the contests about the Adirondacks derive from how different groups, with varying resources and power, express their understandings of and hopes for what the Adirondacks as a region is, what it has been, and what it is good for. This notion of the Adirondacks as contested territory is a major theme of this essay. These contests are easy to see when the result is litigation and other forms of overt conflict. They begin in the narratives, the stories, we tell about the physical world. Conflict also develops when certain stories are given more currency than others, or when some stories are ignored. One of our goals should be to figure out where various stories overlap, to identify those narrative elements shared by the range of Adirondack stories.

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As I look back over the literature leading up to and then supplying the legislative and constitutional record of the establishment of both the Forest Preserve and the Park, one

significant fact stands out. The Adirondacks was understood by the rest of New York to be a distinct region, one in which all of the people of New York had an important interest. The reasons for this interest varied and occasionally conflicted—that's where different narratives lead to the idea of contested territory. But the one thing that ties them together is the strong sense that the Adirondacks is a single region with important defining characteristics. To the early hunters, anglers, and other recreationists, the Adirondacks was a sportsman's paradise. To lumber barons, the Adirondacks was a resource to be exploited. And to downstate commercial interests, the Adirondacks was a watershed in need of protection lest the Erie Canal and Hudson River dry up.

You'll note a group missing here. Conspicuously absent from most of our discussions of Adirondack history, especially our record of the nineteenth century and the steps leading up to the Forest Preserve and the Park, is any significant notice of the region's year-round residents. I'm as guilty of this oversight as any other historian. We've looked closely at writers like Joel Headley. S. H. Hammond, and "Adirondack" Murray and at other important outside figures

like Verplanck Colvin, David McClure, F. B. Hough, Charles Sprague Sargent, and many others, and we've included local people like John Cheney, Alvah Dunning, or Paul Smith when they seemed colorful, picturesque, or eccentric. But the local view of what the Adirondacks as a region *means*, what it means to people raising families, working, living, and dying here, has often been absent from the stories we repeat about the Adirondacks. Partly, that's because it is hard to find, but I don't think we've looked hard enough. One thing I think we'll find when we do look more closely is that Adirondack people, too, generally thought of the region as distinct, somehow different from the rest of New York. This is an element of the Adirondack story that appears almost everywhere. It's one we should emphasize.

Obviously, these definitions of what the region was good for and what its future ought to be—even those we've studied—were often not completely synchronized; i.e., a unifying or comprehensive vision was rare, and it's hard to find consensus. Beginning with some of the earliest Adirondack narratives, the reports of the New York Natural History Survey, we find conflicting visions of what this place is. In the response of geologist Ebenezer Emmons, for example, a thoughtful, perceptive individual (who gave us the name "Adirondack") we find stories about what the Adirondack region is good for that appear impossible to reconcile. Emmons extolled the beautiful scenery and opportunities for recreation and spiritual renewal, and he

warned against excessive logging, but in nearly the same paragraph he could wax ecstatic about mining, clearcutting, agriculture, and other money-making ventures.¹ Emmons and his colleagues thus set the tone for what would be a century and a half of Adirondack stories. There are glaring inconsistencies, but there are also important patterns: the Adirondacks is a region, it is distinct, and its future depends on how its natural resources are either used or protected.

In the views of Verplanck Colvin, the first person known to have used the expression *Adirondack Park* in print, much of this comes together. In his account of the first ascent of Mount Seward, accomplished by Colvin and Raquette Lake hermit Alvah Dunning in October of 1870, Colvin recognized the threat to the watershed posed by uncontrolled logging, noted the importance of the Adirondacks as a recreational retreat, and proposed the "creation of an ADIRONDACK PARK or *timber preserve*."² This oft-quoted proposal is worth noting for at least two reasons: first it foresaw multiple uses for a Park in which the entire state had a significant interest. Second, like so many other proposals of its time, it completely failed to acknowledge the existence and needs of the communities which even then dotted the region. On the way to Seward, Colvin and Dunning passed through the village of Long Lake, where they profited from a consultation about their plans with the famous guide Mitchell Sabbattis. Both Dunning and Sabbattis lived in what became—just over two decades later—the

Adirondack Park. Their role in the Seward ascent was paradigmatic: without their involvement Colvin, the visiting outsider, probably would not have reached the Seward summit. Did Colvin want their residences to be within his Park? Did he want them erased? He doesn't say.

It's true that from later of Colvin's statements we can conclude that at this point in the development of his thinking he probably meant for a park to be established just around the high peaks, but neither here nor elsewhere, including the 1873 *First Annual Report of the Commissioners of State Parks of the State of New York*, of which Colvin was joint—perhaps primary—author, did the people trying to shape the future of the Adirondacks pay attention to the needs of local people. In this document, much was made of scenery, wildlife, forests, and watershed, while the towns were noted only as a "few settlements" and the local residents as lumberjacks, trappers, and guides "ek[ing] out their subsistence."³ Perhaps if the commissioners had been more sensitive to the existence and needs of local residents, we would have more consensus and less conflict today.

This failure to look at the whole picture shows up repeatedly in subsequent primary documents concerning the creation of the Forest Preserve and the Park. By now, we're all pretty familiar with the arguments for protecting watershed that led to the establishment of the Forest Preserve in 1885. Somewhat less noted but equally important are the reasons for creating the Park in

1892.

One important point to be recalled today is that the movement toward establishment of both Forest Preserve and Park derived from the widely held conviction that what happened to Adirondack forests and waterways was critically important to all of New York State. I think it's useful to dwell on this: the state was worried about forests and water. With the tools for planning then available, the people of New York, insofar as they were represented in both the legislature and, later, at the 1894 constitutional convention, declared that the health and even existence of Adirondack forests and of the lakes and rivers they shaded were essential to the welfare of the entire state. The fact that for well over a hundred years the people of all New York have been intensely concerned about the environmental health of the Adirondacks often gets overlooked, especially in routine declarations from developers bemoaning what they perceive as a relatively recent manifestation of "outside interference" in local affairs. In the Adirondacks, there is little that is strictly a local matter. What happens here continues to be of at least state-wide and probably of national and even international significance. Whether or not the rest of the state has adequately paid for its interest in the Adirondacks is another, more debatable matter. (I'll insert here, though, my sense that it has done so generously.)

It was the failure of the 1885 Forest Preserve law to protect the interests of the state that led to the Park law in 1892

and then to the forever-wild provision of the 1895 constitution. Throughout the late 1880s, sportsmen, businessmen concerned about transportation arteries, doctors connected with the sanitarium movement around Saranac Lake, and journalists and others worried about the existence of a future supply of lumber and pulp filled the press with expressions of the importance of the Adirondacks to New York State. Governor David Hill's well-known instruction to the legislature to identify a contiguous area, of "the wilder portion of this region covering the mountains and lakes, at and around the headwaters of the several rivers that rise in that locality," such place to embrace an area of "fifty to seventy miles square,"⁴ was a crucial expression of state-wide interest in the Adirondacks and of Hill's sense of the Adirondacks as a distinctive region.

The same year, 1890, the Forest Commission pleaded with the legislature to effect some sort of protection enabling the "State to acquire and hold the territory in one grand, unbroken domain."⁵ Again, what's important is the state's interest in the whole region, not just the Forest Preserve. It was the failure of the Forest Preserve law to address the state's concern with private lands in the Adirondacks that led to the creation of the Park. And it was the further and utterly crucial—for our purposes—failure of the Park law to address the distinction between public and private lands that brought us to where we are today. With both the Forest Preserve and the Park we have something today not

foreseen by the establishing legislation and constitution. The Forest Preserve was created to protect watershed, with recreational concerns decidedly secondary. The Park was intended to be a contiguous public domain, not the mix of private and public lands that endlessly confuses people from outside New York.⁶

But I don't mean to say that this is a bad thing. The Park law was a "failure" only in that it didn't do something. It didn't say how the state should express and exercise its interest in private land. The framers of the Park law assumed—and never adequately examined this assumption—that what we know as the distinction between the Park and the Forest Preserve would eventually disappear, as the state gradually acquired all the private land and added it to the Forest Preserve. If this had happened, we'd have something quite different in the Adirondacks today. I think we'd have a contiguous area, protecting watershed and forests and available for recreation. I imagine that if the state had assembled "one grand unbroken domain" in the Adirondacks, it would be administered and used like a national park (except hunting would be permitted), and it would be smaller than today's Park—certainly excluding the Champlain Valley. (Indeed, I've often wondered why the same zoning plan governs development in both Newcomb and Westport, towns with profoundly different histories, topographies, and land-use patterns.) As the watershed-protection argument seemed less compelling, the protected landscape would have

been increasingly dedicated to recreation, valued for its scenery, open space, wildlife, and opportunities for camping, hunting, and fishing. In the earlier years of this century these sorts of recreational and environmental assets were harder to find in New York outside the Adirondacks and Catskills than they are today.

Twenty years ago I would have said I wished this scenario had come to pass. That was when I was deep in my wilderness-cult phase. The untouched, left-alone landscape is the best, I would have insisted. A wilderness (whatever that means) stretching from Lake George to Cranberry Lake, from the Fulton Chain to the Chateaugay Country would have been my idea of paradise. These days I'm less doctrinaire. For one thing, I'm not at all sure what "wilderness" means. I subscribe nearly completely to the conclusion reached by most environmental and cultural historians that "wilderness" is a cultural construction that especially appeals to Americans and that employing it in an unexamined fashion generally ignores both human and topographical reality and history. More important to the evolution of my thinking is my growing affection for what I will call a cultural landscape.

In the Adirondacks, this means a landscape where nature and people come together. They come together in the history of the forests, in the traces of old tote roads high on the slopes of the Swards (and recall that the Swards are in the High Peaks Wilderness Area). They come together at the great camps, where civilization fits into the

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landscape in ways that most people probably find aesthetically appealing. Nature and People also come together in Adirondack towns and villages, in the bridge across Long Lake, the Northway, state snowmobile trails, the deer laws, and a host of other modes and forms—even the Private Land Use and Development Plan.

My point is that when we think about what's best for the future of the region, we must do it in terms of a cultural landscape, a place of people, their artifacts, and nature. The Adirondacks has a natural and a human, cultural, social history. What we should all be aiming for is the protection of this cultural landscape. This means walking a fine line between preservation, which sometimes carries the fundamentally illogical implication of freezing something in time—it can't be done—and the notion of an informed, benign, nourishing attitude toward the land and the people who live on and with it. Most important, it means identifying what makes the Adirondacks a distinct region.

In *Changes in the Land* environmental historian William Cronon makes an important point about change. His book is about the New England landscape between the time of the first white settlement and the onset of the Civil War. He asks, how can we assess change without comparing one thing to another? In other words, are we assuming that nature existed in some sort of timeless equilibrium before the arrival of Europeans began what was clearly a significant alteration of the New England landscape? If we are, we would be saying that

changes occur only as a function of human, or, to be more accurate, European activity. And, he asks, are we assuming somehow that human-caused change is automatically deleterious for the land?⁷ In the Adirondacks, we clearly have a landscape where human activity and natural forces have combined to make the place we have today. Change is a major feature of its past, and we must accept it as part of its future. The human presence—which I'm calling culture—is part of Adirondack history. The job of responsible planners and conservationists is to work on reaching some sort of consensus on what the characteristics of that human presence will be.

Not all human-effected change is benign; we have to make qualitative judgments about what sorts of change are acceptable and which are not. My point is simply that we need to move way past what has often been an obsession with wilderness—a word that nobody can adequately define. (And let me confess right here that I'm one of the worst offenders in using it in an unexamined way, to the point of having it in the titles of no less than two books.) I hope there will be no more battles like the one over the Crane Pond road: it isn't worth it. And the significance of that road to the people who wanted it kept open should remind us that cultural issues are at stake here. The whole dismal affair also points out the shakiness of our definitions of—or perhaps of our reluctance to try to define—the word *wilderness*. The road was there, and it was routinely used by many people. How can denying them

use of the road be part of protecting a landscape where, the State Land Master Plan tells us, "the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man," where, the plan goes on to say, we protect "an area of undeveloped forest preserve land retaining its primeval character and influence"?⁸

The Adirondack landscape is a cultural landscape. It was the failure of the legislators and constitution writers of the last century to realize this that has led to the often troubled efforts to deal with the landscape of today. It is equally the failure of many conservationists to address fully the cultural and social history of the Adirondacks that has precipitated much of the conflict of recent years.

What does this mean? It means simply that we should aim to protect a mutually supportive symbiosis between nature and culture. Lest some of what I've just said be interpreted to suggest that I don't favor conservation or planning or environmental protections, I'll try to be more specific.

Protecting a cultural landscape means defining what we want protected, not just saying what we don't want. A major shortcoming of the Private Land Plan and, though to a lesser extent, of the State Land Master Plan is that they do not offer an adequate definition of what it is they want to protect. The State Land Plan does presents its definition of wilderness, which I find to be generally illogical and mostly useless, if not historically ridiculous. But at least it's there. The Private Land Plan is too much a negative document, providing a long list

of prohibitions and proscriptions. But where is the vision of what is desired? I propose that what is to be desired and worked for is just this notion of a cultural landscape. To grasp a sense of the Adirondacks as a cultural landscape we should ask what are the narratives of that landscape? What elements do they have in common? How are these narratives different from those of the rest of New York?

Here are some examples of looking at the future of the Adirondacks through a series of lenses, with the idea of protecting a cultural landscape in mind. Each lens suggests a possible narrative. I offer these diverse visions in the hope that they can coexist, that every scenario that follows is possible, and all simultaneously. The lenses, or narratives, that I've chosen reflect my sense of how this cultural landscape has come to be what it is and what makes—or could make—it distinct.

First, the lens of biodiversity. If we adopt the philosophy and stance of biodiversity, what would we like to see in this region? The return of extirpated species, including moose, mountain lions, and the eastern timber wolf. The consolidation of a Bob Marshall Wilderness Area (I know: I just said that the term is vague—I'm using it in an administrative sense of marking a boundary, positing the characteristics of the land within it, and defining the human activities permitted). One might add that creating the Bob Marshall Wilderness Area will mean adding key parcels to the Forest Preserve and that the local

resistance to enlarging the Forest Preserve will have to be addressed. In a March 1995 interview with the *New York Times* DEC Commissioner Michael Zagata, apparently playing to local prejudice, repeated the old canard that state purchase of land in the Adirondacks diminishes the tax base for local towns, ignoring the fact that the state pays taxes on Forest Preserve Land, to the tune of \$40 million annually. Since then he has ostensibly embraced more enlightened views, noting in an interview with the Audubon Society that the state does pay taxes but insisting that changing the status of some parcels of land from private to public could still hurt the local economy.⁹

It means the adoption of a Park-wide land ethic, where the Park's human residents—both permanent and transient—aim for a life *with* nature. No one has articulated this ethic more succinctly or more eloquently than Aldo Leopold: "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends to do otherwise."¹⁰ Adoption of a land ethic would mean healthy forests no longer subject to the degradation of acid precipitation, lakes and rivers whose shorelines are not further punctuated with jerry-built vacation homes, and a biocentric understanding of how people and nature need to coexist. It would mean a genuine dedication to maintaining species diversity and understanding the many different types of ecosystem represented in the Adirondacks. As Rainer Brocke has pointed out, moreover, if all these aims

are to be pursued, they needn't and can't be limited to state land. Striving for an ecologically viable cultural landscape does not mean the whole Park is devoted to publicly owned wilderness areas. Lands that are owned privately and managed responsibly are key both to the ecological integrity of state lands designated as wilderness and to the maintenance of Park-wide

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biodiversity.¹¹

The lens of the year-round residents. First, an economy at least no less healthy than that of the rest of rural America. This is an important point. For many years I've been listening to and reading complaints from local politicians and business people about the poor health of the Adirondack economy. These lamentations are seldom offered in the context of the state of affairs obtaining for all of rural America. Unemployment in, say, Hamilton County is high, we are told. High compared to what? Not compared to Mingo County, West Virginia. Rural America is in trouble, from coast to coast, from north to south. This is a national problem, one that neither major political party appears to want to pay much attention to. The children of America's rural families seldom have the chance to stay in the towns where they grow up.

Good jobs and the better life are found, when they are found at all, near or in metropolitan areas.

Not just a national problem, this is a world-wide crisis, as the international economy undergoes dramatic and wrenching convulsions. But it's not the fault of the Adirondack Park Agency. If the regional economy is as healthy as that of the rest of rural New York or of rural New England, then planners are headed in the right direction. If it's not, then either the planners or their plan need to be re-examined. To be sure, there's no reason to accept "doing as well as the rest of New York" as the ultimate goal. My point is simply that planning as such should not be blamed every time someone in the Adirondacks discovers he or she isn't rich.

But year-round residents have rights that must be considered inalienable. These include the right to public schools, health care, housing, support for families and family planning, meaningful employment, and vibrant community life at least as attractive as the state-wide norm.¹²

And if we look at the record, I think there are signs that the Adirondack economy has in fact done relatively well recently. In a report prepared by the Rockefeller Institute of Government on "Employment and Payrolls in the Adirondack Park," we learn that during the recession of 1989-92 "Employment and payrolls rose faster in the park ... than in the state and nation." Further, between 1985 and 1992, "employment rose by 25% in the park compared with a drop of 0.4%" in the rest of

New York. This report goes on to say that all industries relating to tourism did well during those years, that both population and total number of jobs grew, and that the only industry suffering net losses in number of jobs was woods products.¹³

Which brings us to the lens of forestry. It has become almost ritualistic in the last few years to say how important the logging industry is to the Adirondacks, but that doesn't mean it's any less true for being on the verge of cliché status. Everyone knows what will happen if the logging industry starts to feel that it cannot survive here. The thought of the environmental and cultural disaster that would ensue if Finch-Pruyn, International Paper, and the other major woods-products companies sell off their holdings to second-home developers should trouble the sleep of every person reading this. Perhaps it has already begun. In any case, the report I cited above reminds us yet again of how Adirondack trends should always be seen as part of a larger context: the local slump was a function of a larger national pattern.¹⁴

There is a long list of ways to foster sustainable local economies and low-impact forestry. Both local economies and the environment can benefit, for example, from encouraging "a decentralized energy policy [with] smaller-scale, environmentally sustainable production and homestead energy independence through energy tax credits." Education policies should emphasize environmentally friendly vocational skills with the same level of funding that college prepara-

tion receives. Investment pools for forestry and agriculture should be created through taxation of value added to raw materials extracted regionally.¹⁵

Keeping logging viable in the Adirondacks involves more than just preventing currently forested lands from becoming tract developments or saving the jobs that that industry now offers to Adirondack residents—important as these are. It's part of the larger mission of protecting a cultural landscape. Forestry is part of the cultural, environmental, social, and economic history of this region. Conducted intelligently, on a sustained-yield, low-impact basis (something that has not always been the case), logging helps to maintain the Adirondacks as a cultural place, a place where people live with nature.

Finally and most important, protecting the Adirondack Park as a cultural landscape does not mean a development plan that allows the issuing of seven thousand permits for subdivisions and developments in 25 years and the construction of one thousand new homes every year. It does not mean allowing the construction of the slope-destroying, suburban sprawl at Hollywood Hills in the Town of Webb or the clustering of over fifty second homes on less than 160 acres of Rural Use land on Oven Mountain Pond in the Town of Johnsburg. Nor does it mean putting a Wal-Mart in the Town of North Elba. Wal-Mart represents everything that is homogenizing and sterile about twentieth-century American life, in other words, everything that

would destroy what has kept the Adirondacks a distinctive region. Finally, protecting the cultural landscape of the Adirondacks demands categorical resistance to the subversion of the Adirondack Park Agency currently being pursued through inappropriate appointments to the Agency and its staff.

There is no contradiction here: earlier I acknowledged the inevitability of change. But I don't equate change with growth. Protecting a cultural landscape means re-examining the whole notion that we tell our stories, narrate our histories, through the lens of growth and development.

In a provocative article in *Environmental History Review*, historian J. Donald Hughes questions one of the fundamental, and usually unexamined, axioms of the practice of history.¹⁶ Most historians, argues Hughes, especially those writing the lengthy tomes used in survey classes in both World or American history, employ "development" as the fundamental organizing principle of their narratives. Titles such as *The Development of Civilization*, used for a popular text book, illustrate the tendency of historians, and no doubt most others, to understand the human story in terms of a putative rise from one level of economic and social organization to another. The notion that this "rise" is an altogether good thing is seldom if ever questioned. Among other things, Hughes asks whether the last several millennia of human history have been good for the land, water, and biota of the earth. Is this notion of growth-equals-good the only lens

through which we should perceive history? Should it continue to function as the primary organizing device for the stories through which we understand our relationship with the non-human world?

To move from the macro to the more or less micro, is development, as such, an altogether good thing for the Adirondacks? Is growth always good for both people and nature? Does it promote the integrity of the land in the ways that Aldo Leopold asked us to consider? Is it appropriate that housing starts in the Park are now three times the rate in the rest of New York, to the point of 1200 annually?¹⁷ Is it better for the cultural landscape to build new houses on some remote and hitherto undeveloped pond or to rehabilitate already existing structures? In human history, whether we're talking about the rise and fall of great empires or the sequence of events that makes up the history of a relatively small part of the world like the Adirondacks, when we speak of development or growth, we almost always mean some modification, extraction, or elimination of a natural resource in the name of profits.

The whole world needs to learn to live with stasis, with predictability, with a life that we hope can get better but not necessarily bigger, faster, slicker, or newer. It might as well start here in the Adirondack Park; in many respects it already has. Can we learn to think of development and progress not in terms of growth but in terms of better health care, better education, better access to cultural amenities, better relations between parents and children or

between people and nature? Bill McKibben, with his characteristic eloquence, puts it this way: "The whole world is going to have to learn to live differently. The whole warming, depleting, unraveling planet will no longer be able to grow its way out of problems. [W]e in the Adirondacks [must] learn to find joy in our situation—to see ourselves made rich and not poor by loon and beaver and pine and bog and trackless snow."¹⁸

If there is agreement that limits are necessary, then there is hope for reconciliation in the Adirondacks; how those limits are described and implemented can be worked out by people of good will. If people concerned with the future of this region can accept it as a cultural landscape and can adopt different organizational strategies for narrating the region's stories, moving from a narrative either of growth and development or of wilderness to one of mutually beneficial relations between people and nature, then the Adirondacks can indeed provide the first chapter in a new story for the whole world.

NOTES

- 1 See Philip G. Terrie, *Forever Wild: A Cultural History of Wilderness in the Adirondacks* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1994), pp. 27-43.
- 2 Colvin, "Ascent of Mount Seward and Its Barometrical Measurement," *Twenty-Fourth Annual Report of the State Museum of Natural History* (Albany: Argus, 1872), p. 180. Small caps and italics in original.
- 3 Commissioners of State Parks, *First Annual Report*, (Albany: Weed Parsons, 1874), pp. 6-7.
- 4 New York State Forest Commission, *Annual Report...for 1890* (Assembly Document 84, 1891;

Albany: James B. Lyon, 1891), pp. 67-68.

- 5 New York State Forest Commission, *Report...for 1890*, pp. 57, 77.
- 6 See Philip G. Terrie, "'One Grand Unbroken Domain': Ambiguities and Lessons in the Origins of the Adirondack State Park," *The Hudson Valley Regional Review* 6 (September 1989), pp. 1-19.
- 7 William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), pp. 9-11.
- 8 Adirondack Park Agency, *State Land Master Plan* (N. pub., 1972), p. 9.
- 9 James Dao, "Consumers Must Pay to Clean Environment, Commissioner Says," *New York Times*, 25 March 1995, sect. A, p. 26, col. 1; see also "New DEC Commissioner Wins Praise, Raises Hackles," *Adirondack Explorer* 1 (July 1995), p. 5. "Interview With a Policy Maker," *Adirondack Advocate* (June 1995), p. 4.
- 10 Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1949), pp. 224-25.
- 11 Rainer Brocke, "The Role of the Private Sector in Fostering Wildlife Diversity in the Adirondack Park," *Looking for Answers* (Schenectady, NY: Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks, 1994), pp. 27-29.
- 12 See Claire Barnett, "Crossing the Blue Line," *Adirondack Journal of Environmental Studies* 2 (Spring 1995), pp. 13-16.
- 13 Quoted in *Hamilton County News*, 23 May 1995, p. 6.
- 14 *Hamilton County News*, 23 May 1995, p. 6.
- 15 A[ndrew] W[hittaker], "Actions That Promote Sustainable Local Economies," *The Northern Forest Forum* 3 (Headwaters Restoration), p. 12.
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