



30th Annual Conference on the Adirondacks
April 15th and 16th, 2026
High Peaks Resort, Lake Placid, NY



“Key Issues Shaping the Adirondack Future”

This year’s program tackles some of the region’s most significant issues—from the expansion of mass timber and new energy technologies to wildlife impacts, water quality challenges, and partnerships with Indigenous communities.

DRAFT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Wednesday, April 15th, 2026

- 8:00 a.m. Registration, Coffee, Poster, and Exhibit Set-Up (Avalanche Pass)
- 8:45 a.m. **Welcome and Messages:** Dr. Ellen Percy Kraly, ARC President
- 9:00 a.m. **First Adirondackers: 12,000 Years of Indigenous Peoples in the Adirondack Uplands**
- Dr. Curt Stager, Draper-Lussi Endowed Chair in Lake Ecology and Paleoecology, Paul Smith’s College
 - David Kanietakeron Fadden, Wolf Clan of the Kanienkehaka
- 10:00 a.m. **Panel: Timbuctoo: Creating Awareness, Access, and Opportunity**, Paul Hai, SUNY
- 10:45 a.m. Break
- 11:15 a.m. **Panel: Nature on the Move - Wildlife in a Changing World**, Mark Watson, Moderator,
- Joelee Tooley, Cornell University, Snapshot NY
 - John Davis, Adirondack Council, Overview of Wildlife Movement and Habitat Connectivity
 - Jessica Raspitha, Assistant Director, Environment Division, Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe
- Noon Lunch – (Great Range)
- 1:00 p.m. **Panel: Invasives Update:**
- Brian Greene, Moderator, What is an Invasive Species?, PRISM in NYS, APIPP
 - Lake George Hemlock coalition
 - Blue Mountain Lake Association
 - Michele Curry, DEC ISGP grant implementation for AIS management in the Eckford Chain
 - Angello Johnson, Environment Division, Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe

2:00 p.m. **Panel:** The Expanding Role of Mass Timber in the Built Environment

2:45 p.m. Break

3:00 p.m. **Concurrent Sessions**

Panel 1	Remoteness in the Adirondack Park: Why It Matters and How We Protect It , Jackie Bowen, Adirondack Council, and Pete Nelson, Author
Panel 2	Drinking Water Source Protection Program , Chaz Rorick, NYS Department of Health Opportunities for Water Infrastructure Funding , Nicholas Demitraszek, Environmental Facilities Corporation
Panel 3	How You Too Can Build Watershed-Wide Connections - The Black River Watershed Coalition Case Study Moderator: Sunita Halasz, Adirondack Council Panelists: Nichelle Swisher, Lewis County Soil and Water Conservation District Katie WhitKovits, Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District Jillian Lee, NYS Tug Hill Commission

3:45 p.m. **Concurrent Sessions**

Panel 1	Shoreline Biodiversity on Upper Saranac Lake , Michale Glennon, Paul Smith's College Adirondack Watershed Institute, Alec Cimini, Paul Smith's College Adirondack Watershed Institute An Assessment of the use of ProcellaCOR in Lake George, NY , SUNY Plattsburgh
Panel 2	Equity, Belonging & the Land We Share , Tiffany Rea-Fisher, Director, Adirondack Diversity Initiative
Panel 3	"Publishing in AJES , Joe Henderson, University of Vermont, Ellen Percy Karly, Colgate University

4:30 p.m. **Reception**

Thursday, April 16th, 2026

8:00 a.m. Opens, Coffee

9:00 a.m. **Keynote: Bridging the Social and Ecological Sciences through Community-engaged Research: Insights from Appalachia**, Jamie Shinn, Associate Professor, SUNY ESF

9:45 a.m. **Panel: Where People and Ecosystems Meet—Perspectives on Carrying Capacity, Saranac Chain of Lakes**

- Claudia Braymer, Moderator, Executive Director, Protect the Adirondacks
- Chris Amato, Conservation Director and Counsel, Protect the Adirondacks
- Dave Gibson, Managing Partner, Adirondack Wild

- 10:15 a.m. Break
- 10:30 a.m. **Panel: The Evolution of Energy Technologies:**
- State of the Grid, Kevin Lanahan, NYISO, (invited)
 - Renewable Energy Sector and Economic Development/Jobs, Laura Gibson, CHPE
 - The Importance of Energy Storage, Camille Warner, NYSERDA
- 11:15 a.m. **Panel: Adirondack Rural Community Opportunities and Challenges: Essex County Perspectives**, Sunita Halasz, Moderator
- Joe Pete Wilson, Supervisor, Town of Keene, NY
- 12:15 p.m. Lunch (Great Range) - **Annual Awards Luncheon**
- Unveiling of the ACORN Rural Resilience Roadmap Website, Cedar Young
 - Presentation of the Richard H. Morse Student Award:
 - Presentation of the 2025 Elizabeth Thorndike Adirondack Achievement Award:
- 1:30 p.m. **Workshop: Connecting Higher Education Research with Community Priorities**, Moderators: Sunita Halasz, Adirondack Council, and Diane White Husic, St. Lawrence University. *This workshop is a follow-up to the North Country Climate Ready Workshop and St. Lawrence University's Community-High Ed Collaboration for Community Resilience fall program.*
- Panel Presentation, Audience Discussion, and "Speed Dating" Exercise"
- 3:00 p.m. Adjourn