



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



Key Issues Shaping the Adirondack Future

Note: This is a draft program, we are adding a few more things, please check back!

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 Paleocology, 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 ESF, Timbuctoo Institute, Moderator, "What is the Timbuctoo Institute"
 - Emme Christie, SUNY ESF, Systems Manager and Research Coordinator, "Measures of Success"
 - Alex Walls, SUNY ESF, Assistant Director, "Demonstration of Success"
- 10:45 a.m. **Break**
- 11:15 a.m. **Panel: Nature on the Move – Wildlife and Habitats 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*)
- Presentation:** "From Nepal to the Adirondacks: Community, Conservation, and Lived Landscapes", Dr. Melanie Johnson, Assistant Professor David Simmons, and students from Paul Smith's College will share reflections and insights from their recent trip to Nepal.

- 1:00 **Movement Session:**
- Rose Pasquarello Beauchamp, University of Rochester

- 1:30 p.m. **Panel: Invasives Update:**
- Brian Greene, Moderator, APIPP
 - Jason Denham, DEC and Jim Lieberum, Warren Co. SWCD - Lake George Hemlock Coalition
 - Michele Curry, Blue Mountain Lake Association - Aquatic Invasive Species Management
 - Angello Johnson, Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe Environment Division - Black Ash Protection Measures

2:30 p.m. **Break**

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

Panel 1 <i>(Algonquin)</i>	Remoteness in the Adirondack Park: Why It Matters and How We Protect It, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jackie Bowen, Adirondack Council • Pete Nelson, Adirondack Wilderness Advocates
Panel 2 <i>(Iroquois)</i>	Drinking Water Source Protection Program, Opportunities for Water Infrastructure Funding, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chaz Rorick, NYS Department of Health • Gabby Smith, Environmental Facilities Corporation
Panel 3 <i>(Wright)</i>	How You Too Can Build Watershed-Wide Connections - The Black River Watershed Coalition Case Study Moderator: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunita Halasz, Adirondack Council Panelists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <i>(Algonquin)</i>	Shoreline Biodiversity on Upper Saranac Lake, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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, Kayla Grant, SUNY Plattsburgh

Panel 2 <i>(Iroquois)</i>	Equity, Belonging & the Land We Share, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tiffany Rea-Fisher, Director, Adirondack Diversity Initiative
Panel 3 <i>(Wright)</i>	Publishing in AJES, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joe Henderson, University of Vermont • Ellen Percy Karly, Colgate University

4:30 p.m. **Reception** (*The Den*)

Thursday, April 16th, 2026

8:00 a.m. **Conference Re-opens**, Coffee

9:00 a.m. **Keynote: Bridging the Social and Ecological Sciences through Community-engaged Research: Insights from Appalachia,**

- Dr. 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:**

- The Importance of Energy Storage, Camille Warner, Moderator, NYSERDA
- Navigating New York’s Energy Transition, Kevin Lanahan, New York ISO
- Renewable Energy Sector and Economic Development/Jobs, Andrew Rush, CHPE

11:15 a.m. **Panel: Adirondack Rural Community Opportunities and Challenges: Essex County Perspectives,** Sunita Halasz, Moderator

- Moderator: Sunita Halasz, Adirondack Council
- Joe Pete Wilson, Supervisor Town of Keene
- Hannah Neilly, Deputy Director Essex County Office of Community Resources
- Jim Dougan, Essex County Superintendent of Public Works
- Adirondack Community Foundation

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: Alexander Amann, SUNY Plattsburgh, Colin Fuss, Sponsoring Professor
- Presentation of the 2026 Elizabeth Thorndike Adirondack Achievement Award: Jon Erickson, University of Vermont

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

Tables:

- The Intersection of Art and Science, Michale Glennon, Paul Smith's College, Adirondack Watershed Institute
- Drinking Water Source Protection Program, Chaz Rorick, NYS Department of Health
- Opportunities for Water Infrastructure Funding, Gabby Smith, Environmental Facilities Corporation
- Survey of Climate Change and Lake Ecosystems (SCALE) Project, Jon Borrelli, The Jefferson Project at Lake George
- Protect the Adirondacks, Claudia Braymer
- AdkAction, Sawyer Bailey
- Ausable Freshwater Center, Marque Moffett

New this year:

Visual/Auditory Exhibit: Stephanie Ashenfelder, University of Rochester, Stationary Visual and Auditory Art Installations Setup Throughout the Conference Space