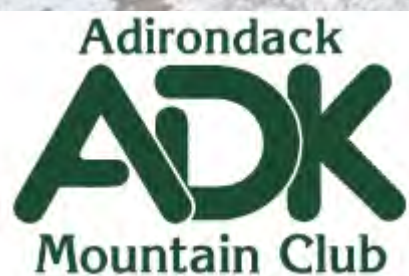


Black River Currents
A Publication of the
ADK/Black River Chapter



Heart Lake Loop

Indian Pass



Spring 2025
MUD SEASON GUIDE
AND NEWSLETTER
Volume 34 Issue 1

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About Us

The Black River Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club is composed of members primarily in Jefferson and Lewis Counties. The region includes Eastern Lake Ontario shoreline, the Northern portion of Tug Hill, the Black River Valley, and the Western edge of the Adirondack Mountains.

The chapter offers something for everyone, from active support for conservation to a variety of outdoor activities and social events. Outings include hiking, canoeing, cross country skiing, and other outdoor activities. We also have social events such as chapter picnics and dinners. You do not have to be a triathlete or drive long distances to enjoy many of our activities. Hikes range from short, easy walks to more difficult high peaks climb. Many activities are local and do not all require a long drive to the Adirondacks.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, See us on Facebook at: **Black River Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club**, or Email us at: blackriveradk@gmail.com

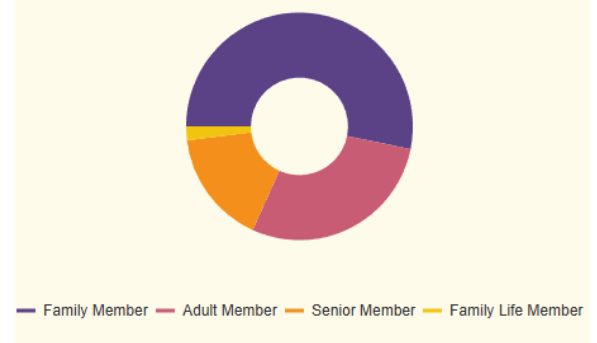
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Color copies are available at the ADK Website: <https://adk.org/chapter/black-river/>

Membership

As of 2/10/2025

Family Member	108
Adult Member	58
Senior Member	33
Family Life Member	4



Next newsletter deadline May 1st, 2025

From the Editor

From the Editor:

As we wrap up 2024, we're excited to share a thought-provoking message discovered by one of our members—an inspiring way to kick off the new year.

Welcome, spring! We can't wait for your arrival. This winter has treated us to a generous snowfall and an abundance of winter activities, making it one of the best in years. If you've stayed indoors, cabin fever might be setting in. This newsletter is packed with tips for hiking and navigating MUD Season, which, unfortunately, precedes the summer.

We've lined up some fantastic events. Ongoing activities like Tuesday Trails and other mid-week trails are frequently updated on our Facebook page—be sure to mark it as a favorite: Black River Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club (look for our chapter logo). When you find an event that interests you, please complete the registration form. This helps us coordinate better and adjust for group size and ages. Kindly inform us in advance if you're attending, just in case of schedule changes.

In the past few months, we've hosted several exciting events detailed in the Backtracks. While a few were canceled or postponed, there were still many memorable ones.

We want to recognize our members who have participated in the Outing and Trip Leader's Guide (OLG) & Certification program. It's reassuring to join a trip with leaders trained in first aid, map and compass, Leave No Trace principles, and leadership skills. This is especially valuable for those unfamiliar with local trails or hesitant about hiking in the Adirondacks. Remember, relying solely on a phone app won't help if you injure yourself. Always hike with someone who can assist in unexpected situations.

Safety is paramount. Our chapter plans to organize bicycling trips this year. With numerous dedicated trails and roads, we must be vigilant about safety, especially with distracted or impaired drivers. Member safety is our top priority, and our bicycling trips will be carefully planned and led by OLG-certified leaders, ensuring fun and family-friendly adventures.

Our chapter is growing, with more members actively suggesting, organizing, and leading events. We are united in the ADK organization and embrace the "ADK is One" con-



cept. Learning from one another, we're making a significant impact across New York State. Recently, we had a successful presence at the Winter Environmental Conference in Clayton, and there's more to come.

Upcoming events include the Baker Woods Preserve and ADK/Heart Lake Work weekends. These events are enjoyable and foster a sense of community. Please consider signing up—you won't regret it!

We're looking at combining some of our events into full-day activities, possibly including a picnic or cookout, weather permitting. Imagine Adopt-a-Highway, lunch, trail maintenance, and a hike or even a swim—all in one day!

Expect to meet new people, as several of our events are partnered with other chapters and non-profit organizations. Small groups have their charm, but often, the phrase "the more, the merrier" holds true. Our partners include OBI (Ontario Bay Initiative), Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust, SLELO (St Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario), Thousand Island Land Trust, Zoo NY, Save the River, Fort Drum, IRLC (Indian River Lake Conservancy), and many others.

Family fun is central to our chapter's mission. Every event in the past four years has been family-inclusive, and we aim to keep this momentum going.

We always welcome more help. While we've gained many families recently, some members have moved away or can't participate as they used to. If you're interested in helping, regardless of age, we'd love to hear from you. Whether for one or two events, every bit of help makes a difference. There are also opportunities to create a legacy by purchasing a Memorial Pathway stone at Heart Lake or contributing to the Johns Brook Lodge Centennial Celebration.

ADK is New York's leader in providing outdoor education, promoting responsible recreation, and organizing stewardship experiences. Since 1922, the organization has worked to increase access to the backcountry by building trails, conserving natural areas, and developing a stewardship community that supports the ethical and safe use of New York's outdoor spaces. Thanks to support from donors like you, we can continue this work in the Adirondack Park and other public lands across the state.

The Black River Chapter thanks you for making us a great chapter. Several of our members are deeply engaged in the ADK Advisory Council, various council committees, and we even have a member on the ADK Club Board of Directors.

Thank you for being a great member in making this a great chapter. Rich

Updates

Johns Brook Lodge Centennial

Johns Brook Lodge (JBL) has been providing hikers a back-country experience in a remote wilderness setting with some comforts of the front-country for a century. Opened to the public on July 4, 1925, JBL has been a popular base camp for trips up many of the High Peaks. Since then, JBL has maintained this legacy by creating a century of memories for all those who have visited it.



There will be several events scheduled this summer celebrating the Johns Brook Lodge and its history. Stay tuned in upcoming issues of the Newsletter. Photo by : Ben Brosseau

As preparations are being made, the Adirondack Mountain Club wants to hear your JBL story. Tell us about your adventures, whether those be backpacking trips, a night at Camp Peggy O'Brien, or other ways that you connected with Johns Brook Lodge. We will publish your stories online and in print to help share the importance of Johns Brook Lodge. Please contact us at info@adk.org if you have any questions.

ADK/Outings & Trip Leaders

Update as of January 24 at 5:59 PM ·

In 2023, ADK created the Outing and Trip Leader's Guide (OLG) to establish common protocols for outings that create a safe and enjoyable experience for all participants.

We're proud to announce that 549 members have earned at least one certification level, with 46 leaders fulfilling the requirements of our top tier, Level 3. Another 85 have started the process and are on their way to becoming a certified trip leader.

Thank you to our volunteers, members, and staff for helping us accomplish this major achievement! Together, we can create meaningful experiences that prioritize responsible recreation and foster connection with the natural world.



The Black River Chapter is pleased to recognize the following members and their achievements in the OLG.

Level 3: Lindsey Smith, Rich Ross, Dave Clements, Caryn Clements

Level 2: Cindy Stewart

Level 1: Doreen Hanson, Linda Burns, Ray Spahn, Vicki Jo White

Almost 9% of all the Level 3 leaders are from the Black River Chapter which is outstanding for such a small group as ours. And almost 5% of our chapter members are certified leaders.

If you are interested in becoming a leader of any of our events, please let us know and we can fill you in on the details. These classes are being provided at no charge (\$550 value) with your paid membership. Many are on-line except the Wilderness First Aid.

Certification Program for Outing & Trip Leaders

Per the [Outing and Trip Leader's Guide](#), ADK requires chapter outing leaders to complete certification programs to lead Level One, Two, and Three outings.

Details about each program and their annual renewal requirements are listed below.

If you intend to work as a volunteer or staff at any ADK activities, you will need to complete the Work Participant certification shown below.

Questions about the Outing and Trip Leader's **Guide?**
[Watch our tutorial video](#) and [read the guide on our FAQ page](#).

Certification Programs	Description	Units Required	Time Allowed
Leave No Trace 101	Complete this standalone Leave No Trace certification to participate in volunteer stewardship programs.	1 Units	4 Years
Outing & Trip Leader's Guide - Level 1	Level 1 - Outing and Trip Leader's Guide Certification You must be a current ADK member and 18 or older to enroll. Certification requires completion of Sexual Harassment Training , a Leave No Trace 101 course (Awareness Workshop), and co-leading two outings with a certified leader. Paperwork must be uploaded, and once all requirements have been satisfied, you will be approved by ADK.	4 Units	4 Years
Outing & Trip Leader's Guide - Level 1 Renewal	Annual requirements to maintain your OTLG level 1 certification	1 Units	12 Months
Outing & Trip Leader's Guide - Level 2	You must have completed Outing & Trip Leader's Guide - Level 1 prior to enrolling in this certification. At all times annual training and membership at ADK must be current in order to lead outings and participate in certification.	3 Units	12 Months
Outing & Trip Leader's Guide - Level 2 Renewal	Annual renewal program for Outing and Trip Leader's Guide Level 2 certification	1 Units	12 Months
Outing & Trip Leader's Guide - Level 3	You must have completed Level 2 certification before you can enroll in Level 3. You must also be current on all annual OLG requirements (e.g., sexual harassment training) and an ADK member.	2 Units	12 Months
Outing & Trip Leader's Guide - Level 3 Renewal	Annual renewal program for Outing and Trip Leader's Guide Level 3 certification	1 Units	12 Months
Sexual Harassment Prevention	If you have not already completed Sexual Harassment training for another program, you can submit your documents here using this standalone sexual harassment prevention certification.	1 Units	1 Years
Work Participant	To participate in ADK events as a volunteer or staff member, you must be a current ADK member and 18 or older. Certification requires completion of Sexual Harassment Training. Paperwork must be uploaded, and once all requirements have been satisfied, you will be approved by ADK.	1 Units	12 Months
Work Participant - Renewal	If you have already completed your work participant certification, you will need to complete this renewal certification annually to remain qualified to participate in work events as an employee or volunteer.	1 Units	12 Months

MUD SEASON AND THINGS TO CONSIDER

Spring Fever: Let's Hit the Trails!

As winter comes to an end and spring unfolds, the longing to get outside and explore is at an all-time high. With longer days and no more darkness at 4:30 PM, it's the perfect time to shake off the winter blues and embrace the great outdoors. For many, spring cleaning extends beyond the home and into the trails with some much-needed maintenance.

Ready for a Local Hike?

Springtime hiking comes with its own set of challenges and delights. Expect some wet areas, spring showers, and high water levels from the melting snow. Wildlife is awakening too—birds, bears, beavers, and other animals are either emerging from hibernation or returning from their migratory journeys. There's a lot to see and enjoy, and the fresh spring air is sure to rejuvenate your overall wellness. But before you head out, let's plan properly.



Gear Up for the Elements

Weather can be unpredictable in spring, so it's essential to be prepared. Wear waterproof footwear or boots, and bring a rain jacket or poncho. A light insulated jacket and warm gloves might also be necessary, especially if you're hiking near large bodies of water where the breeze can be quite chilly. Don't forget to pack water, a first aid kit, snacks, a map, a compass and maybe even a walking stick. Slips and falls can happen on even the easiest trails, so consider bringing a buddy to share the experience and lend a hand if needed.

Navigating the Trails

A good topological map is invaluable. It should show elevations, gradients, water bodies, and creeks. Fast-flowing creeks with high water levels might displace bridges, and low-lying areas could be flooded. You'll be glad you brought waterproof footwear. Always have an alternate plan in case your intended route needs adjusting.



Trail Preservation Tips

To preserve the integrity of trails during mud season, it's best to avoid muddy paths. Hiking on muddy trails can cause significant damage, such as erosion and trail widening. If you do encounter muddy trails, walk right through the middle to prevent further damage. Durable hiking shoes will make this less daunting. Remember, muddy shoes can be cleaned, but trail erosion is much harder to reverse. Embrace the mud as an adventure and a chance to connect with nature.

Enjoy the Experience Together

Hiking with friends can make the experience more enjoyable and manageable. Support each other, share the adventure, and ensure safety. Teamwork can help navigate difficult sections of the trail and boost morale.

Stay Fit for the Trails

After your hike, don't stop there. You might feel a bit sore from hopping across rocks or stumbling over roots, but it's worth it. While waiting for your favorite trails to dry out, spend time in the gym to stay in shape. Focus on exercises that build strength, endurance, and flexibility, which will benefit your outdoor activities once the trails are ready. Training in the gym can also help you avoid injuries and improve your overall fitness.

By following these strategies, you can enjoy the outdoors while minimizing your impact on the environment during mud season. Happy hiking!

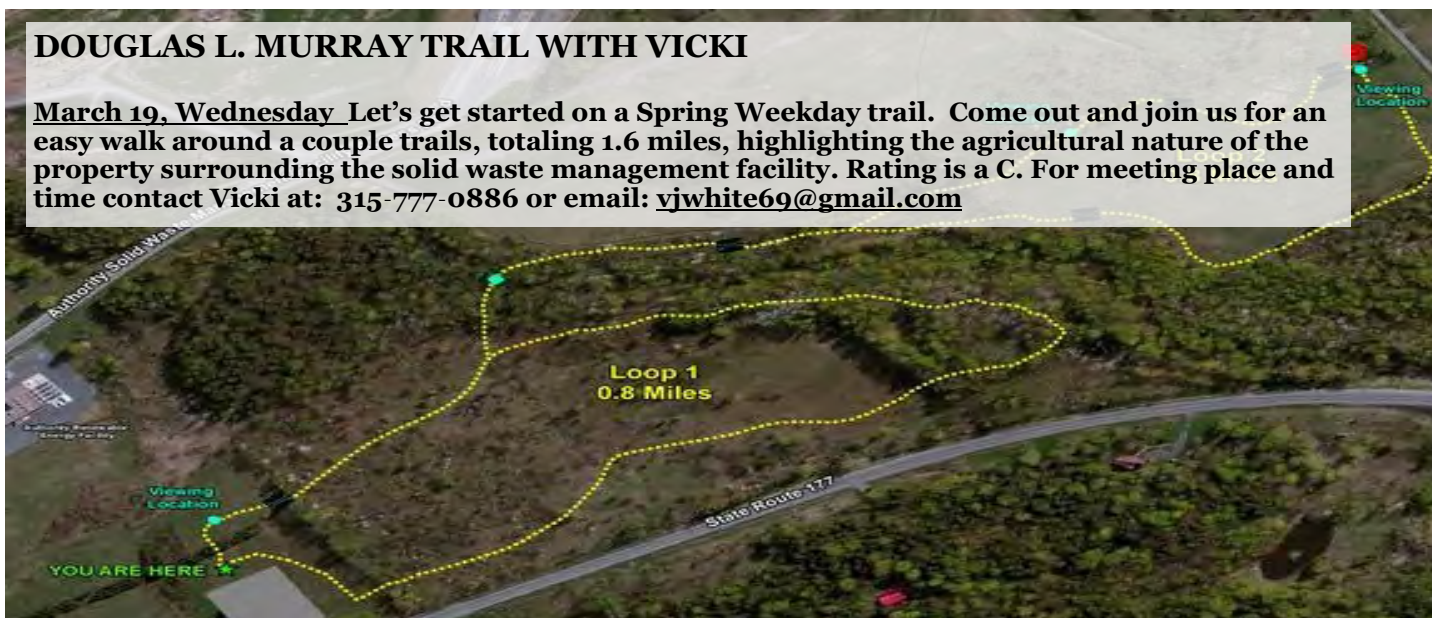
Upcoming Chapter Events-2025

MARCH 2025

CHAPTER BOARD MEETING-ZOOM CALL


March 6th, Thursday, 7:00 PM, Come one. Come all. Come listen to what our committees are doing, the latest updates on the Adirondack Mountain Club and what we're working on for the summer. There's a lot going on for you to become part of.

March 9th, Sunday, Daylight Savings Time Starts



DOUGLAS L. MURRAY TRAIL WITH VICKI

March 19, Wednesday Let's get started on a Spring Weekday trail. Come out and join us for an easy walk around a couple trails, totaling 1.6 miles, highlighting the agricultural nature of the property surrounding the solid waste management facility. Rating is a C. For meeting place and time contact Vicki at: 315-777-0886 or email: vjwhite69@gmail.com



ROOSTER COMB & SNOW MOUNTAIN LOOP WITH CINDY

March 23rd, Sunday—Are you yearning for that mountain-top view of the high peaks?... but it's shoulder season, so we need to stay lower. From atop Rooster Comb Mountain, we will be welcomed with sweeping views of the Great Range. Then, making a loop to Snow Mountain, we should see the Dix Range, Giant and Chapel Pond Pass. Rooster Comb stands at 2,762 ft. elevation and Snow is 2,360 ft. elevation. Combined in a loop, we can expect a 6.2-mile hike with an elevation gain of 2,050 feet. Rating B+ (moderately strenuous). Be prepared for early spring conditions in the mountains with micro-spikes and possibly snowshoes. For meeting place and time contact Cindy at 315-405-2195 or cindykaystewart@yahoo.com

Upcoming Chapter Events-2025

APRIL 2025

SPRING WORK DAY AT BAKER WOODS

April 12th, Saturday, 9:30 AM—12:30 PM Despite being on "injured reserve," Matt Carney is determined not to let his current physical limitations stop him from coordinating a much-anticipated workday on Saturday, April 12th. The goal: to maintain and enhance these beloved local trails, ensuring they remain in top condition for the community to enjoy. While Matt will be sporting a sling until May as part of his recovery, he has put together a robust plan to make the day productive and enjoyable for all participants. "The doc claims I'll fully recover and be able to do stupid stuff again if I don't screw it up - so I'm gonna try," he jokes.

In his absence from physically demanding tasks, Linda Burns. has graciously stepped in, taking charge of organizing, sign-ups, and snacks. Moreover, the workday is set to benefit from the participation of members from the ADK Black River Chapter and possibly the Laurentian Chapter. Help is always welcome from a few family members, neighbors, and perhaps even, the Indian River Lakes Conservancy (IRLC).



A Day of Diverse Tasks—The day promises a variety of tasks designed to cater to different skills and interests, with activities divided between Baker Woods Preserve (BWP) South and North. At BWP S, volunteers will focus on trail clearing and, weather permitting, replacing a section of bog bridging. Meanwhile, BWP N will see efforts directed towards necessary trail work, painting, staining, sprucing up the sensory trail, filling the sandbox, and perhaps a bit of gardening or mulching.

Preparation and Community Spirit—Matt has ensured that all necessary tools, materials, and plans are in place to make the day run smoothly. "We'll have a tarp, a plan, and the appropriate tools ready. Some tasks will depend on the weather, so we're hoping for sun," he notes optimistically.

Linda Burns., known for her dedication and ability to rally volunteers, will be key to the event's success. Her traditional role in organizing and providing snacks ensures that participants will be well-fed and coordinated throughout the day.

Inviting All to Participate—This workday is a testament to the community's commitment to maintaining the trails and spaces they cherish. It's not just about the work itself, but the shared sense of purpose and camaraderie that such events foster. Matt's spirited coordination, despite his injury, highlights the resilience and collaborative spirit that defines the community of Ulysses. As participants gather on April 12, they will not only be working towards a common goal but also building and strengthening the bonds that make their community strong.

Whether you're an experienced volunteer or a newcomer looking to make a difference, your presence and effort will be greatly valued.

RSVP is required by contacting
BlackRiverADK@gmail.com.



Upcoming Chapter Events-2025

OWL PROWL WITH VICKI

April, 17th, Thursday 6:00 PM—8:00 PM - Who, who, who would like to join the Black River Chapter for an owl prowl at the Lowville Forestry Demonstration Area? We will meet at the parking area next to the fire tower located at 7319 Route 812, Lowville, at 6:00 PM and we will begin our owl adventure from there. This is a family friendly event and is free and open to the public.

Have you ever heard a Barred Owl ask “who cooks, who cooks for you all?” Did you know that an Eastern Screech Owl makes a whinnying noise that sounds similar to a horse? Please come out and join us for this great event! RSVP to Vicki at 315-777-0886 and please dress according to the weather.



EARTH DAY AT ZOO NY

April 19th, Saturday 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM. Come join the Black River Table at the Zoo at Thompson Park. This is always a fun event to share what we do and recognize this special occasion. Contact: blackriveradk@gmail.com to sign up and more details..



ADK/HEART LAKE-LOJ SPRING WORK WEEKEND

April 25th, Friday, till April 27th, Sunday -Every year, ADK members from across the state gather at Heart Lake (the LOJ) for our annual Spring Work Weekend. This cherished tradition sees volunteers come together to prepare the property for the upcoming summer season, and the Black River Chapter has been a fantastic supporter of this event.

Volunteers will help ADK get ready for summer operations by tackling a variety of projects. We truly appreciate the hard work and dedication of our many excellent volunteers. Please note that all Spring Work Weekend Volunteers must have a sexual harassment training certificate from a course completed within the past twelve months.

Participants get to stay on-site and enjoy meals prepared by our talented cooks. Typical tasks include but are not limited to: Setting up tents, Cleaning up campsites and lean-tos, Raking leaves and returning them to the woods, Taking down storm windows and putting up screens, Bringing Adirondack chairs out of storage and checking for repairs, Splitting and stacking wood, Oiling hinges on all LOJ doors, Checking chairs in the great room for chair pads and applying new felt strips if needed, Weighing and loading supplies for Johns Brook Lodge.

Despite the unpredictable weather, a good time is almost guaranteed. Volunteers even get a chance to plant gardens, adding a touch of beauty to the property.

Join us in making this year's Spring Work Weekend a success! We look forward to seeing you there.

Volunteer Work Weekend Requirements:

- To join our fantastic volunteer team, please ensure you meet the following:
- Must be an active ADK member.
- Must have an updated Sexual Harassment certification on record.
- Must be prepared for some physical activity but also ready to have fun in a beautiful environment.

How to Register: Here's a step-by-step guide to register for the volunteer event:

- Visit <https://members.adk.org/members/get-involved/spring-work-weekend>.
- Sign in to your iMIS account (or create one if you don't have one).
- Click the “Register Myself” button.
- Answer the registration questions that appear and click “Save Responses”.
- Click “Add” next to each day you plan on attending.



Upcoming Chapter Events-2025

- Answer the meal questions for each day and save responses.
- Scroll to the bottom of the page and click “Proceed to Checkout”.
- Click “Submit Order”. You will receive a confirmation email at your iMIS account's email address.
- For registration assistance, email: support@adk.org.

Per Tim, “I am collaborating closely with ADK staff to ensure everything is set and ready. As the event date approaches, I will provide updates to all attendees. If you have any questions, concerns, suggestions, or feedback, please reach out. I look forward to hearing from you and seeing you for the 2025 weekend.”

Thank you for volunteering! Let's make this year unforgettable. Any questions please contact: [Tim Randolph](mailto:trand6863@outlook.com), phone (585) 690-4135 or email: trand6863@outlook.com



MAY 2025

ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY CLEANUP PROGRAM CHAPTER HISTORY

The Black River Chapter embarked on a public service project in May 1992, inspired by New York State's successful Adopt-A-Highway program. Under this initiative, participants “adopt” a two-mile stretch of highway, committing to four annual clean-ups. Our chosen highway is Route 177, located approximately one mile east and west of the cross-country skiing parking lot between Barnes Corners and Rodman. Most of our section lies in Jefferson County, with a half-mile in Lewis County. As part of our participation, the New York State DOT erected signs at both ends of our designated two-mile stretch, recognizing our chapter's efforts. This project not only provides positive public exposure for our chapter but also offers an opportunity for those unable to participate in other activities. We eagerly anticipate your involvement. The very first effort was originally led by Phil Ashwood and Clara Bingham was the Chapter Chair.



BARNES CORNERS DAY

May 3rd, Saturday (Tentative) This year we hope to combine some of our events to make it a fun filled day of family fun. We'll start with a road clean up, have a picnic or cook out and then consider some trail maintenance in the John Young trail system. Keep this on your radar as the details get finalized. Contact: blackriveradk@gmail.com for sign-up or questions.

CHAPTER BOARD MEETING-ZOOM CALL

May 8th, Thursday, 7:00 PM, Come one. Come all. Come listen to what our committees are doing, the latest updates on the Adirondack Mountain Club and what we're working on for the summer.

ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY (RT-3) CLEANUP

May 10th, Saturday, (Tentative) Join us once again in the northern section of our chapter's reach. At the intersection of NYS RT 3 and NYS RT 3A (Fargo), heading northeast 2 miles to Filbert Rd (Cowan Corner). Our goal is to clean up 4 miles of this highly visible corridor for travelers to and from the Adirondacks. During the morning, we'll be picking up trash along our adopted stretch of highway. Gloves, bags, helmets, vests and trash grabbers will be provided. Consider bringing water and bug repellent. Contact blackriveradk@gmail.com for meeting location and more information.

Upcoming Chapter Events-2025

JUNE 2025

GENESEE VALLEY CHAPTER'S 25TH ANNUAL OUTDOOR EXPO

Saturday, June 14, 2025, 9:30am – 3:30pm

Our chapter will be attending and displaying at the **Genesee Valley Chapter's 26th Annual Outdoor Expo**. Free and open to the public, the Outdoor Expo is held at one of the area's best places for outdoor gatherings and recreation, Mendon Ponds Park. Local clubs and organizations are on-site to talk about their work, share their knowledge of the outdoors, and provide a chance to try out the latest gear. This event offers a day of learning opportunities to enhance your enjoyment of outdoor recreation on both land and water.



Participate in workshops for hiking, canoeing, kayaking, backpacking, camping, cycling, and many other related outdoor skills. The expo will be held at Mendon Ponds Park, Beach Area, 95 Douglas Road, Honeoye Falls, NY 14472. **If you're interested, please contact Rich at adkblackriver@gmail.com.**

NOTE: WATCH FOR MANY OTHER INTERESTING, EXCITING AND FUN THINGS TO DO ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE. IT IS UPDATED FREQUENTLY. MANY EVENTS DON'T MAKE IT TO THE NEWSLETTER BECAUSE THEY HAPPEN SO QUICKLY.

SEPTEMBER 2024 (CORRECTION)

INDIAN HEAD AND RAINBOW FALLS HIKE

Saturday, September 28th- It was the perfect day to visit Indian Head and Rainbow Falls. The weather was beautiful and the leaves were just changing colors. The trail was in pristine condition and there were many waterfalls to see along the Gill Brook Trail. The views along the hike were more amazing around each corner. The group had a great day of hiking and sharing stories. We saw a great amount of wildlife. Thank you to everyone who was able to join us for the hike.



We hope to see everyone on our next adventure!

TUG HILL TRAVERSE TRAIL WORK—2025



**TUG HILL TRAVERSE TRAIL VOL-
UNTEER OPPORTUNITY**

June 13, Friday 10am-2pm
June 21, Saturday 10am-2pm

Our region is well known for the Tug Hill plateau, but how many have actually experienced it? Come along on one of our work days while we build the trail from end to end. Working on this 20 mile trail, you will immerse yourself in pure forest that is a scarcity nowadays.

Bring insect repellent, gloves, water, lunch, and tools such as pruners and loppers. Rating C (fairly easy).

Contact Cindy for questions and meeting place at cindykaystewart@yahoo.com or 315-405-2195.

For registration go to Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust. <https://tughilltomorrowlandtrust.org/>

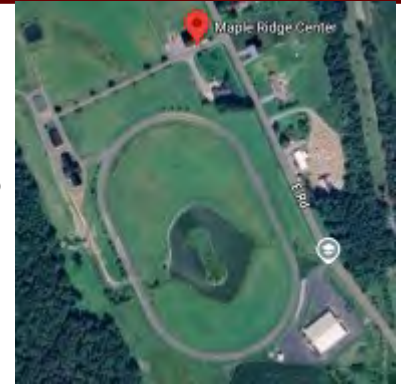
**TUG HILL
TOMORROW
LAND TRUST**

Backtracks

FAREWELL 2024 NEW YEAR'S EVE WALK WITH VICKI

December 31st, Tuesday. The Maple Ridge Center hosted a serene and enjoyable walk around the track, where a couple members could bask in the unseasonably warm and comfortable weather. Vicki began the journey with inspiring words of wisdom, reflecting on the past year and offering insights on how to navigate the present as we step into 2025.

Throughout the walk, engaging discussions centered on exciting plans for the upcoming year, sparking enthusiasm and anticipation for what's to come. The picturesque setting and thoughtful conversations made it clear that Maple Ridge Center is a prime venue for future events.



January 2025

WELCOME 2025 FIRST DAY HIKE WITH VICKI

January 1st, Wednesday, 10:00 a.m.—Noon It was a cloudy cool day at the Lowville Forestry Demonstration Area. Fourteen eager hikers, bundled up against the winter chill, gathered for the 2025 First Day Hike, bidding farewell to 2024 and embracing the promise of the new year.



The troupe, a diverse mix of families, friends, and solo adventurers, assembled at the main parking area. Laughter and



chatter filled the air as they set off towards the Lean-to.

They passed the Arboretum, its trees stark and beautiful against the winter sky, and the Sugar Orchard, quiet now but promising sweet treats in the spring.

As they made their way to Observation Hill, Vicki, a seasoned naturalist, captivated the group with tales of her encounters with the local wildlife. She described the playful critters she'd seen frolicking in the ponds and the elusive marsh birds she had tracked through the reeds. Her enthusiasm was contagious, and the group paused frequently to take in the serene beauty around them.

Crossing a quaint wooden bridge, they stopped for a group photo, capturing the joy and camaraderie of the moment. On their return journey, they passed the storage area where they learned



Backtracks-2025

about the history of the Zoo Fire-Tower. Brought to the area, meticulously refurbished, and prepared for its new home at the zoo, it stood as a testament to dedication and craftsmanship.

The young adults in the group relished the opportunity to stretch their legs, eagerly marching to the DEC fire tower. Their excitement was palpable as they climbed to the top, rewarded with a breathtaking panoramic view of the winter wonderland below. The hike concluded with the descent from the fire tower, the group bonded by the shared experience and invigorated by the fresh start to the year.



WINTER ENVIRONMENTAL CONFERENCE, CLAYTON NY

January 25th, Saturday, 10:00 am—4:00 PM. This was the 26th Annual WEC Conference sponsored by Save The River Upper St. Lawrence RIVERKEEPER held at the 1000 Island Harbor Hotel. There were about 15 booths of which The Black River Chapter supported the Adirondack Mountain Club. There were a number of handouts and a continuous feed video showing many of the events the chapter has held in the past year. Several members stopped by and many new faces, fresh to the area, who had no idea of what the ADK was or did in this region. Several folks signed up for additional information and given membership applications.

Rich Ross manned the booth and both Dave and Caryn Clements had an active roll in the overall operations of the day. In attendance were about 150 registrants who got to listen to many great presentations. Presenters included topics such as “10 years of FINS” [Fish Identification Nearshore Survey], a research partnership between the River Institute and the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, “Mapping the Purple Menace” by SUNY Potsdam, “Loon & Lead” by ADK Center for Loon Conservation, “Northern Pike & Muskellunge” by SUNY College of Environmental Science



and Forestry “Conservation Efforts for Blanding’s Turtles” by SUNY Potsdam, “Roadside Wildlife & Animal Connectivity” by SUNY Potsdam and “Updates on Blind Bay” by Thousand Island Land & Trust.

A number of awards were presented for “Friend of the River” and the “Muskie Catch & Release Tournament”.

Many of the presentations are available for viewing on YouTube at: https://youtu.be/c8A_jHcF-1E?i=Kx5hnvpiPbRAwYZ2



Backtracks-2025

More photos from the WEC Conference



February 2025

WINONA FOREST SKI WITH CINDY

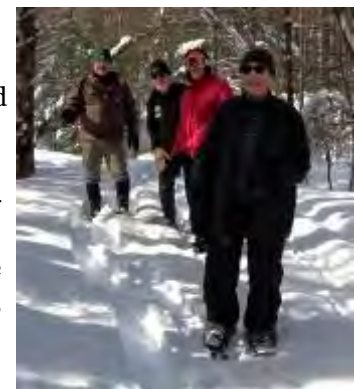
February 1st, Saturday, 10:00

am. The forecast was bitter cold with below zero wind chills, but the forest was calling. We showed up all bundled up for the cold and entered the most beautiful scene of snow clinging to every tree branch. Sunny with a deep blue sky, the tree tops lit up like a gateway to heaven. Thanks to Cindy, Liz and Ray for braving the cold. If you have not experienced Winona Forest in Winter, you are missing out. Please join us next time.



FRANK JADWIN XC SKI AND CHILI WITH RICH

February 8th, Saturday, 10:00 am. It was a perfect day to be outside with a blue sky and mid-20's temperature and lots of snow. Everyone met at White Pine Pond Lodge and donned their gear shortly after introductions. Actually the 2.6 mile trail was through unplowed seasonal roads which wind back through the white pines and birches as well as hardwoods amidst many cabins in the forest. All told, there were 10 in attendance and only 5 XC skiers and the remaining few held down the fort, stirring the chili and keeping the woodstove going. There were corn muffins, brownies, cheesecake, pineapple nut cake, chips, coffee, tea, soda and of course a huge batch of homemade chili. Everyone had a great time and a belly full of good food.



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Upcoming Events

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| March 6th | Chapter Board Meeting |
| March 9th | Daylight Savings Time Starts |
| March 19th | Douglas L. Murray Trail Hike |
| March 23rd | Rooster Comb & Snow Mountain Hike |
| April 12th | Spring Work day at Baker Woods Preserve |
| April 19th | Earth Day at Zoo NY |
| April 17th | Owl Prowl |
| April 25-27th | ADK/Heart Lake Spring Work Weekend |
| May 3rd | Barnes Corner Days |
| May 8th | Chapter Board Meeting |
| May 10th | Adopt-a-Highway, Rt 3 |
| June 13th | Traverse Trail Work Day |
| June 14th | Genesee Valley Outdoor Expo |
| June 21st | Traverse Trail Work Day |

Follow us on **FACEBOOK** for additional events and updates. Please make sure your address and email information is up to date. Send any updates to our email address: blackriveradk@gmail.com