

ANNUAL REPORT

2024 & 2025



THE ADIRONDACK MOUNTAIN CLUB
WORKS TO PROTECT NEW YORK STATE
WILD LANDS AND WATERS BY
PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE OUTDOOR
RECREATION AND BUILDING
A STATEWIDE CONSTITUENCY OF
LAND STEWARDSHIP ADVOCATES

DEAR ADK MEMBERS, SUPPORTERS, AND FRIENDS,

It's hard to believe we are closing our 103rd year as an organization protecting, exploring, stewarding, and advocating for the lands, waters, and wildlife we all cherish so deeply.

Enduring as an organization over the changes each season and century brings is not the only measure of a great institution, but it certainly is one of them. I attribute our continued relevance regionally, nationally, and even internationally to remaining true to our shared mission and values, especially during times of transition.

As you will read in the following pages, the past two years were outstanding for ADK. From welcoming our new Executive Director, Cortney Koenig Worrall, to helping secure \$10 million for regional natural resources to hosting a first-of-its-kind training in American Sign Language to accompanying local fourth graders on their very first hikes, ADK is stronger than ever.

All of this, of course, is thanks to you—your continued confidence, generosity, and passion.

In the words of my fellow board member, Paul Leinwand, **“Lasting is not something that we can take for granted. It takes every summer, every winter, every staff member, every person.”**

WE HOPE YOU
ENJOY THIS
REPORT, AND
WE CAN'T
WAIT TO SEE
WHAT NEXT
YEAR BRINGS.



Sincerely,

Mickey Orta

Mickey Orta
President, Board of Directors



TOP OF THE TOP: SUMMIT STEWARDS TACKLE TOP-NOTCH TRAILS, RESEARCH, AND EDUCATION

You might expect climbing a mountain to be a solitary experience, but ADK ensures that when you reach the top, you receive a warm welcome in the form of our summit stewards. “It’s really a gold standard of alpine stewardship throughout the Northeast,” says Kayla White, ADK’s Stewardship Director.

These stewards interact with visitors on a person-to-person level, **sometimes more than 100 hikers in a single day**, educating them about these fragile mountaintop ecosystems and inspiring them to become stewards themselves. They also maintain trails and conduct research that looks at how alpine plant populations change over time.

It’s an important topic, especially given how climate change could disproportionately impact these high-altitude places, where a thriving existence is already tough to come by. **“It’s just a very harsh place to exist,”** says Kayla. **“Alpine plants know that, but we find that out too. I think people understand it’s very rewarding work, but it is very, very challenging. But you have this wonderful community to lean on, which is also really special.”**

This program is a partnership between ADK, the Adirondack Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

NEW PERSONAL TRIP PLANNING PROVIDES MORE MEANINGFUL, SAFER ADVENTURES

This past year ADK started private trip planning sessions to help even first-time visitors create safe, fun, and special adventures. Our educators guide patrons through every aspect of trip planning, from choosing routes to identifying camp sites to selecting appropriate clothing. They also cover regional rules and regulations and basic Leave No Trace tenants.

“By reaching people before they arrive, we can encourage folks to prepare before they reach their destination, so they create less environmental impact and less need for search and rescue,” says Tom Manitta, ADK’s Interpretive Facilities Director. **“They then have a better sense of stewardship and a stronger outdoor ethic.”**

TEENS TO THE RESCUE!

We hosted four teen volunteer trail crews in 2024 on Mount Jo, one of which was ADK’s first ever all-girls trail crew.

These young people installed:

23.5 ft
of rock turnpiking

8
stepping stones

2
rock steps

Patrolled 3.4 miles
of trail removing debris

ADK’S PROFESSIONAL AND VOLUNTEER TRAIL CREWS STAYED BUSY AS BEAVERS THE LAST TWO SEASONS

They worked for **14,675 hours across 27 locations** within Adirondack Park.
(3850 of which were in Forest Preserves)

THE SUMMIT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM EDUCATED

58,284 HIKERS

in 2024 & 2025, ensuring the protection of New York’s rarest ecosystem for all.

NEW ROUTE 73 TRAILHEAD STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM SEES HUGE SUCCESS

Our new Route 73 Trailhead Stewardship Program (a partnership with DEC) saw major success in its first two years. Designed to foster an outdoor ethic in every trailhead visitor, at places like the Garden and the trailheads for Giant, Rooster Comb, the Beer Walls, Chapel Pond, and Cascade Mountain, the program provides the skills and knowledge needed to protect the state’s wild lands and waters. And it did just that. **In its first year alone, our trailhead stewards educated 20,870 hikers,** backpackers, and rock climbers, reaching a broader audience than ever before and in 2025, that number was nearly the same at 20,782.

TOGETHER IN 2024 & 2025, THE TRAIL CREWS



“

There are lots of environmental organizations that do amazing work, but we’re the ones getting dirty, doing the hard work up on the peaks, out in the woods building trails, and educating folks at trailheads and on summits.

– KAYLA WHITE
ADK Stewardship Director

NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
SAME SHARED VISION

We were beyond pleased to welcome our new Executive Director, Cortney Koenig Worrall, to the team in the spring. Cortney brings deep experience in conservation, development, fundraising, and organizational effectiveness. She also brings a deep connection to public lands, especially the Adirondacks where her own children learned to ski.



THE ADIRONDACKS FOR ALL

The Adirondacks is a rugged landscape, it's why visitors flock to them for discovery, escape, and adventure. But this doesn't mean people of all lived experiences shouldn't be able to enjoy and explore them. Here at ADK, we've strengthened our dedication to ensuring all who visit the region and participate in our programming feel a deep sense of connection and belonging.

HERE ARE A HANDFUL OF OUR RECENT INITIATIVES

“ADK has a unique and critical role to play in the future of the Adirondacks and future stewards and supporters of this incredible place. Every step I am taking with our board and staff is to ensure the next 100 years of ADK impact and protection of these treasures.”



I have made so many amazing network connections just from going out and hiking, lifelong connections.

– JEN SHEPHERD
ADK Director of Operations

ADK: A PLACE FOR LIFELONG COMMUNITY
AND FRIENDSHIPS

As ADK's Director of Operations, Jen Shepherd keeps things running—from payroll and benefits to insurance and technology. **“Anywhere I can help pick up things, I help. I'm looking out for the organization,”** she says. To Jen, ADK is much more than a job—it's a community and a family. **“Essentially, everyone I know, I met on an ADK hike,”** she says. Her hiking journey began with the goal of summiting Mount Marcy. To prepare, she joined an ADK chapter and trained on fire tower hikes. A hike leader invited her to join a smaller group at a slower pace. **“We went out and we did Cascade and Porter that day, and it was a wonderful day.”** Jen later led hikes, served on chapter committees, and when a staff position opened four years ago, she didn't hesitate. Today, she's summited Mount Marcy—and all 46 High Peaks.

REST, REFLECT, AND RECONNECT
AT ADK LODGINGS

Each year, thousands of adventurers find rest and renewal at ADK's lodgings—waking to the brook at Johns Brook Lodge, stargazing at our wilderness campground, cooking family meals in cozy cabins, or sharing stories in the Loj's Great Room. In the past two years, over 10,000 guests have called these places home, drawn by a shared promise: connection to the Adirondack wilderness and to one another. More than places to stay, ADK's lodgings are places to belong—where community, reflection, and a love for the wild thrive.



At Heart Lake, we installed two wheelchair-accessible campsites with wheelchair-accessible picnic tables and fire rings. One site also includes a six-person canvas cabin. Further, a wheelchair-accessible lean-to is in the works, and we are laying plans for more accessible trails.

To ensure the Adirondack Forest Preserve remains protected but welcoming to all, we encouraged New York State's Department of Environmental Conservation to develop a thoughtful, other power-driven mobility devices policy as well as statewide accessibility policy.



In partnership with CorpsTHAT, we held the first-ever Leave No Trace Level 2 Instructor Course in American Sign Language (ASL), allowing Deaf participants to directly communicate with an instructor and classmates in their primary language. This class is the highest Leave No Trace education available to the public; ADK is one of only about a dozen organizations in the country to offer it. Course graduates left qualified to instruct Level 1 courses, meaning they will have a ripple effect across the Deaf Community for years to come.

“This place is absolutely magical! So much history, charm, and beauty! Right in the heart of the high peaks region for awesome access! Staff are very friendly, engaged and passionate about what they do and how they do it! I will be coming back for sure!” —RUDY H.

JOHNS BROOK LODGE TURNS 100



JOHNS BROOK LODGE — CELEBRATION, CONNECTION, AND STORYTELLING

We celebrated Johns Brook Lodge’s 100th birthday and all it has provided to outdoor enthusiasts hoping to tackle the high peaks. Or, in the words of ADK board member Paul Leinwand, **“Right now, we’re celebrating 100 years of JBL—but more importantly, we’re looking ahead to the next 100 years and the community that will carry us forward.”**

Accessible only by foot via a 3.5-mile trail, JBL is a place for hikers to rest and recharge as they venture into the Adirondack Mountains. It is also a place where friends, families, and generations of outdoor enthusiasts connect through the natural world, community meals, and volunteer projects.

We paid tribute to JBL with in-person gatherings at the lodge itself and in Lake Placid, and by partaking in the long, proud tradition of storytelling.

Peggy Russ Barney, who made her way to the lodge for July’s celebration, was one such story bearer. Peggy worked at JBL as a teenager between 1960 and 1963, sometimes making the trip from the lodge to the trailhead three times a day, at times even barefoot (it was the 60s after all).

She recalled taking guests for stunning moonlit hikes up Mount Marcy, singing folk songs with visitors after dinner, and many more adventures. In 1963 her cousin and brother even bet her \$25 each (~\$260 each in today’s dollars) that she couldn’t climb the Great Range with Skylight and Gray in a day.

I left early in the morning and just kept trucking... and by the time I was getting from Gray to Marcy, I was very tired... [but] when I got to the top of Marcy, I got a second wind. I was ecstatic and I just started skipping and jumping and running down the trail. And I got down here [to JBL] before dinner... and their mouths dropped wide open, and they didn’t even question. They knew I had done it.”

– PEGGY RUSS BARNEY

CHAPTERS

ADK CHAPTERS LEAD THE WAY

Our chapters across New York and beyond are the lifeblood of ADK. Hiking, picnics, paddling outings, and more connect people to wild lands in their home areas while maintaining support for Adirondack natural and cultural treasures. Chapters lend strong voices to the advocacy that pushes our most influential legislative leaders to act on more robust decision-making.

As the organization we share continues to evolve, the chapters remain essential to ADK and its future. As chapters continue to offer their tried-and-true programming and attracting new and younger generations, ADK will be able to strengthen and develop relationships across the state to further our shared goals and passion.

We sincerely thank all of the chapters, their leadership, and members who volunteer their precious time and resources to keep ADK strong.



ADVOCACY

Safeguarding the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) remains one of ADK’s top advocacy priorities.

The EPF is a critical fund that provides hundreds of millions of dollars for New York’s lands, waters, and people, including the Adirondacks and Catskills.

Currently, the EPF supports our Summit Stewardship Program, Route 73 Trailhead Stewards, High Peaks Information Center, professional trail crew, interpretative staff, and more.

While much of ADK is focused on putting boots on the ground across the Adirondacks and High Peaks, we also aim to keep our feet moving in the legislative halls of Albany. Here are just a handful of advocacy accomplishments from the past year to ensure that all we do lasts in perpetuity.

FOREST PRESERVE SUMMIT

We co-organized the annual Forest Preserve Summit which brings over **40 organizations** together with state agency representatives to assess and define funding needs for the state’s forest preserves across the Adirondacks and Catskills.

THIS YEAR THE GROUP ADVOCATED FOR THE FOLLOWING PRIORITIES WITH GOVERNOR HOCHUL:

- ▶ Retain dedicated stewardship fund in the Environmental Protection Fund and invest in trails
- ▶ Increase Department of Environmental Conservation capital funding and staff
- ▶ Accelerate land acquisitions to meet environmental and climate goals
- ▶ Invest in Adirondack and Catskill Park communities
- ▶ Continue support for visitor centers
- ▶ Continue support for educational stewards
- ▶ Push for equity and accessibility

ADK visitor centers serve over **100,000 ANNUALLY**

and provide guidance to **42,000+ HIKERS**

COLLECTIVE ACTION

Alongside over 100 partner organizations and municipalities of New Yorkers for Clean Water and Jobs, we successfully advocated for a **\$425 million dollar investment in our air, water, forests, and farms** via the state’s Environmental Protection Fund (EPF)—a historic high. Other environmental funding wins include \$500 million for clean water infrastructure, \$200 million for park capital projects, and \$90 million in Department of Environmental Conservation capital projects. ADK led teams for EPF Lobby Day and Parks and Public Lands Lobby Day, and co-organized Adirondack Lobby Day as part of this advocacy campaign.



ADK co-led over 40 partner organizations and municipalities to successfully advocate for **\$10 million in EPF funding specifically for stewardship in the Adirondack and Catskill Forest Preserves**. This funding supports our Summit Stewardship Program, Route 73 Trailhead Stewardship Program, and professional trail crews. This campaign also successfully advocated for \$1 million for visitor centers, including \$250,000 for ADK’s High Peaks Information Center, and \$600,000 for science and monitoring. ADK continues to partner with other organizations and environmental agencies as a member and co-chair of the Forest Preserve Advisory Committee.

ONLY FEW OF MANY ADK LEGISLATION WINS!

 Supported the Climate Resilient New York Act (S3590) which passed the state Senate. The act would, among other things, establish an office of resilience to coordinate strategic climate resilience initiatives across the state; require the development of a comprehensive, statewide plan to assess climate threats and inform effective strategies; and engage the public in these goals and strategies.

 Supported S1069 to protect public lands from oil and gas production.

 Stopped legislation that would have permitted ATVs to be used in forest preserves to avoid unintended ecosystem impacts while advocating for sound and thoughtful accessibility plans.

SPURRED BY ADK ACTION ALERTS, SUPPORTERS SENT OVER

3000 LETTERS

to state and federal legislators to protect public lands and prioritize stewardship funding.



OUTDOOR EDUCATION & TRAINING

BRINGING SKILLS TO MANY

ADK offers highly sought-after guided day and overnight trips into the heart of Adirondacks. We are proud to offer experiences that are unparalleled and help bring people the skills, knowledge, and community on the trails. In 2024 & 2025 we hosted:

46
Day Hiking
Trips

245
Participants

27
Multiday
Backpacking
Trips

156
Participants



23 YEARS OF THREE SEASONS AT HEART LAKE

The Marie L. Haberl School Outreach Program: Three Seasons at Heart Lake continues to provide local and regional fourth graders with outdoor education that will impact them today and throughout their lives. Last school year, the program served 420 students across 14 schools, all within an hour and a half of Lake Placid.

The program encompasses classroom visits, nature journaling, and field visits. Topics include Leave No Trace, outdoor preparedness, natural and cultural history, map-making, and more. At ADK’s Heart Lake Program Center, they get to try seasonal activities.

While some students are well on their way to becoming seasoned outdoors people, for many, the program provides their first experiences in wild places, even though they live only miles away from trailheads. ADK’s Education Manager, Eliza Phillips recalls a field trip from last fall when students hiked up Mount Jo: **“It had snowed the night before and it made everything muddy as it started to melt. So, the hike up Mount Jo was hard, everybody was slipping left and right. I had this one kid who kept falling, and when we got within 500 feet of the summit she laid down in the mud and said, I give up. I said, you can do it, we’re going to get to the top, we’re going to get lunch! And she did. When we got down she said that was the best hike, she loved it, and she wanted to go hiking again.”**

MOTH LIGHTING

ADK naturalists lit up the night to attract butterflies’ shyer relatives, moths. Two kinds of moth “traps” brought several species out of the shadows for all to enjoy and appreciate. So much fuzziness!



HOMESCHOOL IN THE WOODS

Coming off the tail of the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2023 ADK started its homeschool initiative, which now offers two six-week sessions for homeschoolers ages 5 to 12 from all over the North Country. Each session has a theme, like ecosystem engineers (think beavers and squirrels!), that ties the classes together and introduces questions and reflections about personal connections to nature. This year the program served 50 students and their families.

BIOBLITZ FOR BIODIVERSITY

Five o’clock in the morning is an early wake-up call, but that’s when community members, scientists, and ADK staff turned off their alarms to partake in our BioBlitz. “During a BioBlitz, you go out and try to identify every single living thing in whatever area you’re trying to study,” explains Eliza. The team used tools like iNaturalist and eBird to catalogue their findings—195 species total over the course of 17 hours. What’s more, participants were able to connect with a local herpetologist, mycologist, entomologist, and ornithologist.

SKILLS & LEADERSHIP TRAINING

ADK offers one-of-a-kind skills and leadership trainings for members who want to lead trips in the outdoors. In 2023 ADK created the Outing and Trip Leader’s Guide (OLG) to establish common protocols for the outings that create a safe and enjoyable experience for all participants. By the close of 2024 ADK had:

500+ OLG CERTIFIED TRIP LEADERS

406
Level 1
trip leaders

98
Level 2
trip leaders

46
Level 3
trip leaders

To support the launch of this program, ADK converted 45% of its courses to OLG programs and held weekend-long volunteer training symposiums for trip leaders. Many of these courses were offered for free.



“

I wanted to follow up on the “Thru-Hiking 101” event from this past week, where we hiked the northern portion of the NPT. Our leader, Lorelei, was outstanding.

She expertly navigated the challenging trail conditions and was incredible at maintaining a positive atmosphere, even when it was pouring. Lorelei is a fantastic leader, and I sincerely hope to have the chance to hike with her again.

– SCOTT F.

LAST YEAR ALONE...

 **420**
People
participated in ADK’s free public educational programming

 **1460**
Hikers
on Mount Jo engaged with ADK staff

2024 FINANCIALS

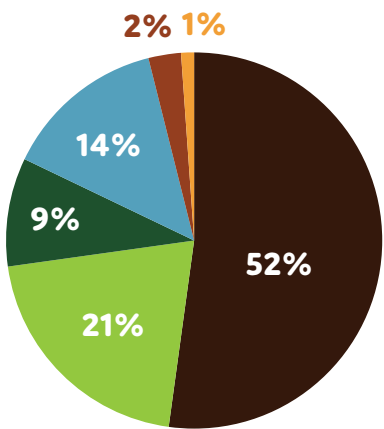
WE HOPE YOU CAN SEE IN THIS REPORT ALL OF THE MANY WAYS YOUR SUPPORT AND INVESTMENT IN ADK MAKES A DIFFERENCE.



REVENUE OPERATING

- Program Services: \$3,015,602
- Contributions: \$1,177,519
- Membership Dues: \$532,883
- Grants & Contracts: \$797,571
- Special Events: \$112,729
- Other/Misc Income: \$73,152

GRAND TOTAL: \$5,709,456

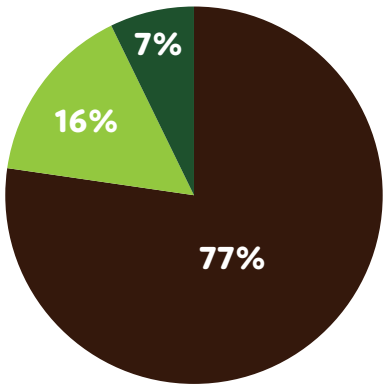


OTHER INCOME
Investment Income: \$224,201
Stock Sales: \$13,880

EXPENSES

- Program: \$4,654,568
- Mgmt & General: \$932,407
- Fundraising: \$434,978

GRAND TOTAL: \$6,021,953



*2025 financials available upon request

YOU MAKE THE DIFFERENCE!

Dear friends, members, and supporters,

We hope you can see in this report all of the many ways your support and investment in ADK makes a difference. From working with local children who will be the next generation of Adirondack stewards to protecting rare alpine plants while at the same time meeting hikers' needs on the High Peaks, your support makes so much possible.

We are grateful for your attention and care for ADK's critical mission and impact, especially during uncertain times. It is people, communities, and organizations like you who have made the difference, time and time again.

Thank you,

Cortney Koenig Worrall

Cortney Koenig Worrall
Executive Director

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