

GREATER ADIRONDACK RESOURCE
CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL

AREA PLAN

Documenting the Greater Adirondack RC&D Council
Program Direction for 2009 to 2014

*Greater Adirondack RC&D Council
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INTRODUCTION

This document is the long-range plan for the Greater Adirondack Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council, Inc. It was developed by the Council after receiving input from public meetings, returned questionnaires, and website feedback. New York State counties served by this Area Plan include Clinton, Essex, Fulton, Hamilton, Saratoga, Warren, and Washington.

This plan will provide strategic direction for the organization. Maintaining a current area plan ensures a strong, sustainable organization that effectively serves the communities in its area by reflecting its resource needs and concerns.

Congress passed the Food and Agricultural Act of 1962, which authorized Resource Conservation and Development areas. The purpose of the act was to expand opportunities for conservation districts, local units of government and individuals to improve their communities in multi-county areas. This included assistance in enhancing the economic, environmental and social well-being of the RC&D areas. Currently, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) administers the RC&D program.

This document serves as an agreement between NRCS and the Greater Adirondack RC&D Council, Inc.

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Vision

The vision of the Greater Adirondack RC&D Council is for its seven-county area to be a region prospering from the balanced use of its natural resources.

Mission

The mission of the Greater Adirondack RC&D Council is to promote the wise use of natural resources and to enhance the economic vitality of the area.

Background and Structure of the Council

The Greater Adirondack RC&D Council, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization serving the communities of the central and eastern Adirondack region of New York State. It was formed 1970 by soil and water conservation districts, planning boards, and legislative bodies in Clinton, Essex, Hamilton, Warren, and Washington counties. In 1975, USDA designation of the Greater Adirondack RC&D Area authorized federal assistance and staff. Saratoga County was added to the RC&D Area in 1986, and Fulton County was annexed into the RC&D Area six years later.

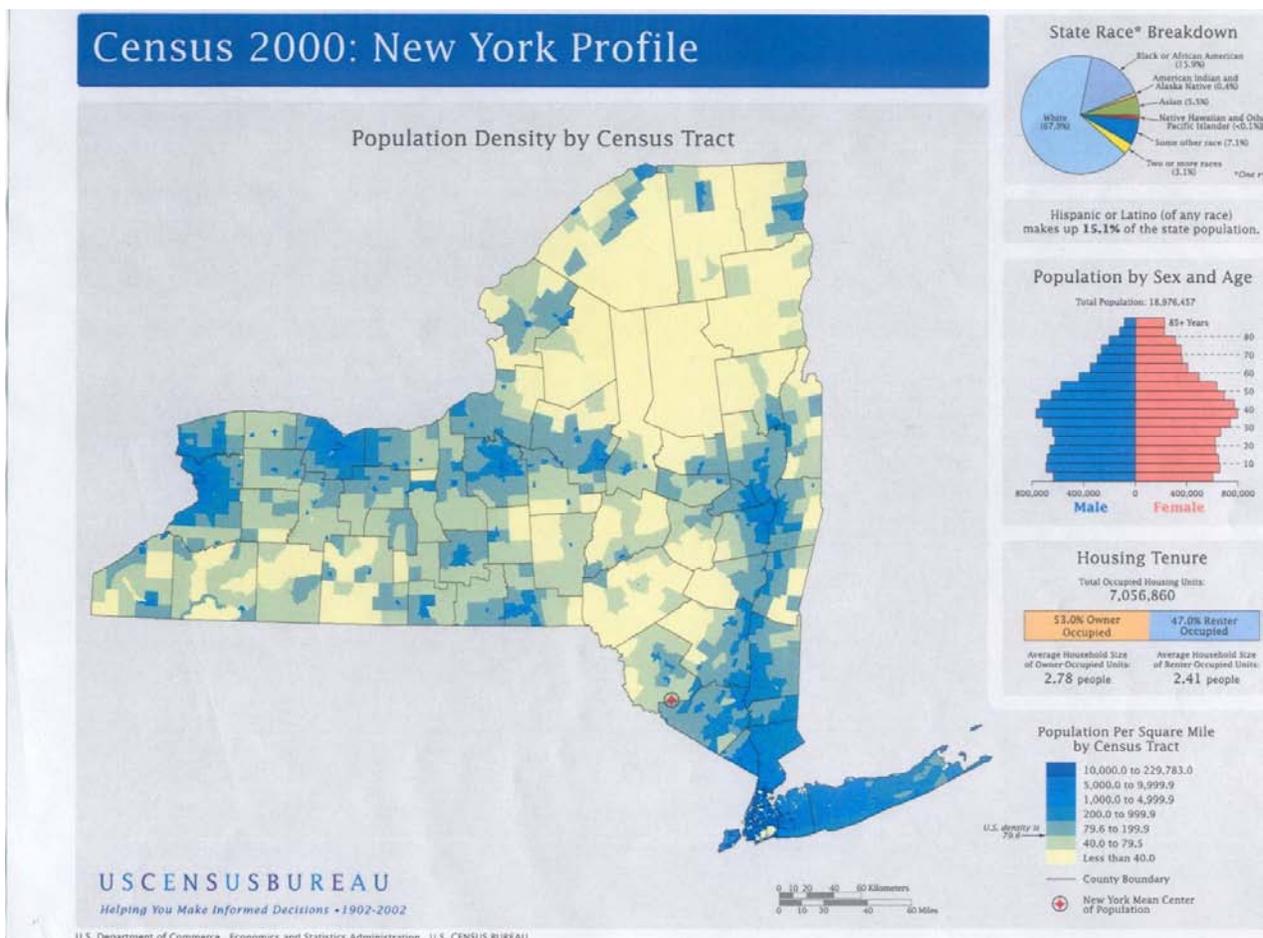
Members are locally appointed representatives from each of the seven counties soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs), planning boards, and legislative bodies. At-large members may be appointed by the Council President. Officers and Executive Board members are elected at the Council's annual meeting.

AREA OVERVIEW

People and their communities are the most important resources within the Greater Adirondack RC&D Area. Their interaction with the Adirondack region's bountiful natural resources presents dynamic opportunities for conservation and economic enhancement.

Demographics

As displayed on the Census 2000 map of New York State, the population density in the northeastern Adirondack region of the state is generally very low. Most of the 4.9 million acre area has fewer than 40 people per square mile.



Most of the Area's 497,047 people live in the southern and northern counties. The communities near the southern portion of the Area are closely associated with the Albany/Schenectady/Troy urban center, while the northernmost communities are more often connected to Burlington, Vermont or Montreal, Canada urban centers. The largest cities are Saratoga Springs and Plattsburgh with populations of 28,000 and 19,000, respectively.

Compared with New York State's non-white population of 32 percent, the Greater Adirondack demographics are much less diverse. Five percent of the RC&D Area's population is Black, Hispanic, Native American, or other minority group (Table 1).

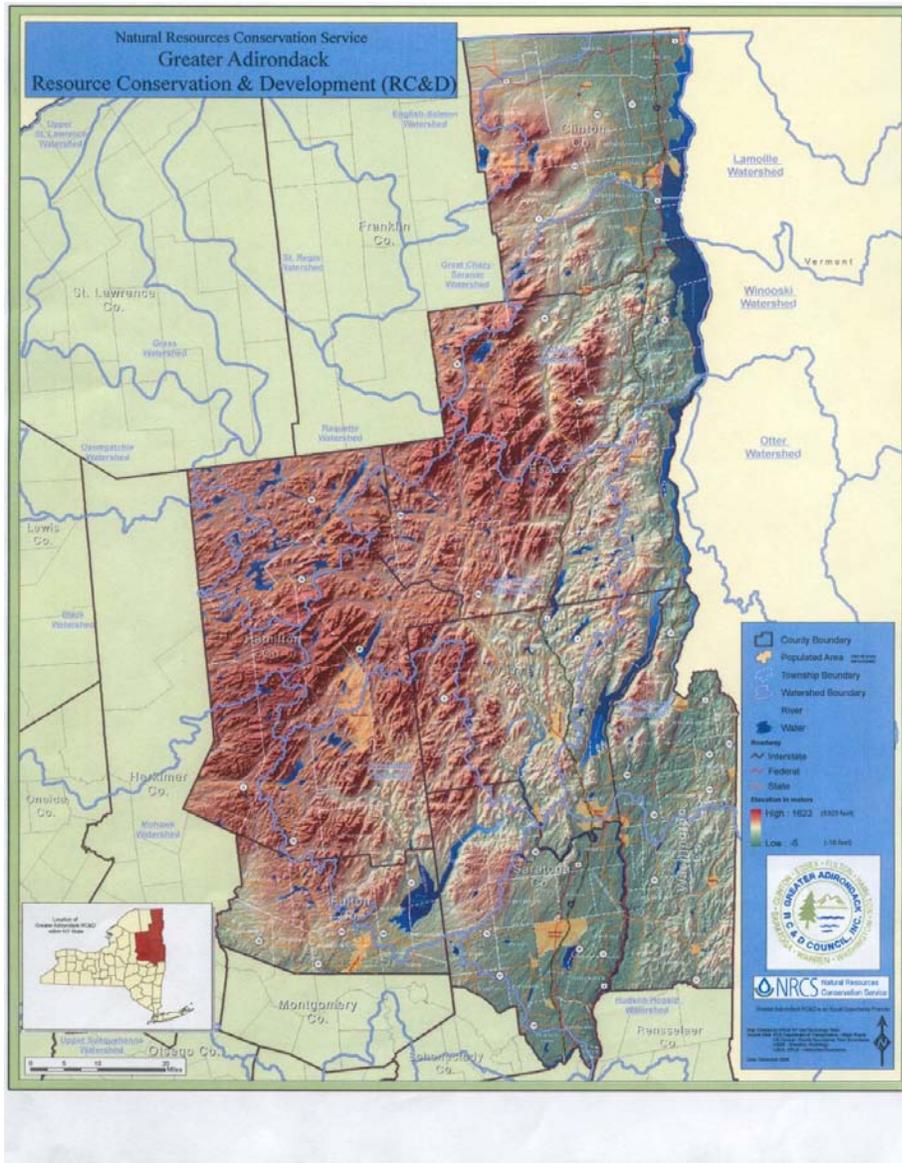
Table 1

White	Black or African American	American Indian or Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Asian	Other	More than one race	Hispanic
480,277 (96.62%)	9,700 (1.89%)	1,144 (0.23%)	44 (0.008%)	3,466 (0.69%)	2,905 (0.58%)	4,644 (0.93%)	6,680 (1.34%)

source: US Census 2007 estimate

Natural Resources

Predominant to the Greater Adirondack RC&D area is the mountainous terrain of the Adirondack Park. The Park includes public and private lands in all seven of the RC&D area counties and covers approximately three-quarters of the 7650 square mile RC&D area.



The forest resources and the wood industry they support are vital to the economic well-being of the region. The region's environmental health is also strongly linked to well-managed forests on both public and private lands. Northern hardwoods (beech, maple, birch) are the dominant forest type, with significant areas of white pine and spruce-fir also present. Woodland is the dominant land use in every RC&D county with Essex, Warren and Hamilton counties being more than 90 percent forested (U.S. Forest Service data).

The abundance of clean lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams within the RC&D Area is critical to its tourism and recreation industries. Population centers, healthy forests, wildlife, and farmland also depend on reliable supplies of clean water.

There are three major watersheds in the Greater Adirondack RC&D Area. The Upper Hudson River watershed is the largest and includes significant portions of Essex, Fulton, Hamilton, Saratoga, Warren and Washington counties. Waterbodies in the Hudson watershed include Great Sacandaga Lake, Sacandaga River, Battenkill River and the historic Champlain Canal.

The Lake Champlain watershed is nearly as large as the Hudson and covers most of Clinton and Essex counties as well as parts of Warren and Washington counties around Lake George. The Saranac, Ausable, and Boquet rivers are major tributaries to Lake Champlain. The Great Lakes/St. Lawrence River watershed covers western portions of Clinton, Essex, and Hamilton counties.

Agriculture

Agriculture is a major industry for much of the Greater Adirondack RC&D Area, accounting for approximately \$250 million in annual sales of products (USDA-National Agricultural Statistics Service 2005 estimates). Although farmland acres have declined 6 percent during the past five years (Ag Census data), agriculture remains especially important to the economies of the northeastern and southern sections of the region.

According to USDA data for 2006, Washington County has 835 farms. Saratoga and Clinton counties each have 560 farms, while Fulton and Essex counties have 230 and 225 farms, respectively. There are fewer than 100 farms in Warren and Hamilton counties combined.

Counties within the Greater Adirondack RC&D Area are among New York State's top ten for the production of several agricultural products. Washington County is in the top ten for the production of milk and tomatoes; Clinton and Saratoga counties rank among the top ten apple producers; and Washington and Clinton counties are both in the top ten in maple production (2006 Ag Census data).

There has been growth in direct-market sales of local agricultural goods from the Adirondack region. Value-added and farm-fresh products are increasingly being sold roadside, at local farmers markets, and directly to groceries and local restaurants.

Socioeconomic Information

Most of the Greater Adirondack Area is very rural. As is often the case with rural sections of the nation, its income levels (and particularly those of the least populated RC&D counties) fall

below the statewide and national averages. As shown in Table 2, the rural population of Greater Adirondack counties is also somewhat older than that of most regions.

Table 2

	Median Age	% Pop. in Labor Force (over 16 yrs. of age)	Per Capita Income	Median Household Income
Clinton County	36	59	18,000	37,000
Essex County	39	57	18,000	35,000
Fulton County	39	60	17,000	34,000
Hamilton County	45	58	19,000	32,000
Saratoga County	37	69	24,000	58,000
Warren County	39	64	21,000	39,000
Washington County	38	60	18,000	38,000
NYS	36	61	23,000	43,000
U.S.	35	64	22,000	42,000

Source: US Census Bureau 2000 Census Data

The Adirondack Park Regional Assessment was released in May 2009. The summary of findings revealed that:

- Only 7 park communities have complete cell phone coverage, while the remainder have limited or no service at all.
- Park residents average just under 43 years of age, older than any state for median age.
- By 2020, only the west coast of Florida will exceed the Adirondacks as the oldest region in America.
- In the park, K-12 students represent 13.5 percent of the population, as compared to 18 percent nationally.
- Individuals with mailing addresses outside the park own about 40 percent of the parcels listed as residential which constitute half of the total residential property value.
- Government sector jobs account for more than 30 percent of all employment in Hamilton, Essex and Washington counties.
- The regional economy is highly dependent on correctional services. One of every 26 people counted as living in the Adirondack Park resides in a correctional facility.

“The obvious need to merge long-term economic revitalization with environmental protection must occur soon for the towns and villages within the Adirondack Park. Bold new strategies and investment will be required to address the complex needs of communities within a protected landscape. Such strategies must support sustainable development of communities consistent with both quality of life and environmental stewardship.”

~ from the Adirondack Park Regional Assessment

RESOURCE NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Public Participation Activities

The Greater Adirondack RC&D Council began public outreach activities at its March 2007 business meeting when a committee was established to provide leadership and guidance during the development of the Council's new Area Plan. The committee presented its progress on the planning and public outreach at monthly intervals thereafter.

Presentations were made at each of the seven SWCDs public board of directors meetings. A questionnaire addressing future RC&D goals and priorities was distributed at these meetings, as well as at meetings of other county officials during Spring 2007. During this same time period the questionnaire was also posted on the Council's website, and emailed to members and partner groups on the RC&D distribution list. Thirty-five were additionally mailed with cover letters and self-addressed, stamped envelopes to diverse organizations included in the Council's program outreach plan.

Questionnaires were completed and returned to the RC&D Council's office from April through August 2007. In all, 56 responses were received and analyzed by the Council as it developed its strategy to address the resource needs in the seven-county area. A draft version of the Area Plan was prepared during February 2008 and posted on websites of various partner organizations with requests for comment by July 1, 2008. The draft document was also reviewed at public forums held in Ballston Spa on June 18 and in Westport on June 19. Thirteen people attended the forums.

Summary of Findings

Input from partner groups and the public reinforced much of the RC&D Council's current program direction in the four RC&D resource areas of Community Development, Water Management, Land Conservation and Land Management. The outreach process to develop the Area Plan helped the Council identify issues of importance to potential customers.

Community Development activities of greatest importance were the encouragement of forest stewardship, securing expertise from engineers and natural resource specialists for community projects, and facilitating partnerships among watershed groups and others. Supportive comments were also received for RC&D efforts with the Adirondack Waterfest, the venison donation program, and Adirondack Harvest.

Water Management activities of highest priority were RC&D support for county water quality coordinating committees and assistance with the protection of local drinking water supplies. Needs were also expressed for help with rural fire hydrant installations, grantwriting, and reducing farm phosphorus and sediment runoff.

Land Conservation activities of greatest importance were controlling soil erosion from streambanks and roadbanks. Land Management concerns involved strengthening the agricultural community through farmland protection and farm viability and marketing programs.

Comments were received supporting RC&D efforts in other areas, such as improved grazing systems, new farmer programs, and agriculture’s role in carbon trading.

The chart below summarizes the results of outreach efforts and the relative importance of various activities. Detailed results of the Council’s public outreach effort are available at the RC&D office. The Area Plan Committee and the Council considered all responses and every comment as it developed its new Area Plan.

ACTIVITY	RANKING			WEIGHTED*
	High	Med	Low	TOTAL
Control erosion along streambanks and roadbanks	43	10	0	245
Support county water quality coordinating committee efforts	38	15	2	237
Encourage forest stewardship on public and private lands	38	12	3	229
Locate sound engineering support & natural resources expertise for community projects	38	11	4	227
Facilitate cooperative partnerships among community & watershed groups	33	18	1	220
Help protect local drinking water supplies	37	10	3	218
Promote farmland protection programs & strengthen the agricultural industry	34	15	3	218
Retain and strengthen the wood products industry	29	23	2	216
Inform the media & community groups of RC&D activities through reports, tours, exhibits & the website	31	18	3	212
Seek funding for watershed initiatives	29	22	1	212
Improve access to water for firefighting in rural areas	33	12	4	205
Provide forest landowners with support for managing their natural resources	28	21	2	205
Encourage the establishment of riparian buffer zones	26	24	2	204
Support farmers’ efforts to improve grazing systems	26	22	4	200
Assist soil & water conservation districts with annual Envirothon events	24	23	6	195
Improve aquatic habitat	26	20	4	194
Assist farmers with nutrient management & composting projects	24	18	8	182
Distribute grant information and program opportunities for USDA & others	22	23	3	182
Support the development of interpretive nature trails and barrier-free recreational facilities	16	30	7	177
Encourage alternative agricultural enterprises	28	9	4	171
Help coordinate livestock marketing initiatives	24	11	17	170
Sponsor scholarships for attendance at the Ecology Camp at Pack Forest	13	26	10	153

*High rankings were assigned a weight of 5; Medium a weight of 3; and Low, a weight of 1

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

A. Community Development

Create or improve resource based industries, improve recreation facilities, promote food security, economic development, education and increase council capacity so as to be able to effectively carry out all its goals, objectives and strategies.

Goal: A.1 - Enhance the environmental and economic value of forests in the Greater Adirondack RC&D (GARC&D) area by educating landowners about forest stewardship and assisting at least 25 wood product businesses by 2014.

Objective: A.1.1 Encourage increased forest stewardship on public and private lands by providing access to informational materials throughout the GARC&D area by 2010.

Strategies: 1. Work with Cornell Cooperative Extension to implement its seven-county forest landowner program by 2010.

2. Complete distribution of 40,000 forestry educational placemats by 2010 with at least 8000 distributed in Clinton, Essex, Fulton, Hamilton, and Warren Counties.

3. Respond to all follow-up requests for information from the Forestry Letter Series through 2014.

Objective: A.1.2 Retain and strengthen the region's wood products industry by providing support to 25 businesses by 2014.

Strategies: 1. Update the Portable Sawmill Directory by 2010 and every two years thereafter, post on the council website and distribute the directory to the seven Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) and area Chambers of Commerce.

2. Work with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) at the International Woodworking Atlanta trade show in 2010 and 2012.

3. Develop a strategy to educate communities about biomass and renewable energy opportunities by 2010.

Goal: A.2. – Enhance the health and vitality of local communities in the RC&D area by providing technical or financial assistance for new projects related to recreation, tourism, or watershed protection in five communities by 2014.

Objective: A.2.1 Provide five communities - one each in Essex, Fulton, Saratoga, Warren and Washington Counties - with technical or financial assistance for completing projects related to recreation, tourism, or watershed protection by 2014.

Strategies: 1. Develop plans for the Stony Creek Trail System by 2009 in conjunction with the Town of Stony Creek.

2. Obtain permits and build the Lake Algonquin Fishing Site by 2010.

3. Complete the Willsboro Black Ash and Rock City Falls projects by the end of 2010.

4. Locate funding to build the Stony Creek Trail System and Ephratah Pond projects by 2010.

Objective: A.2.2 Facilitate information sharing of grant opportunities and needs among 22 government, nonprofit, and private organizations by 2014.

Strategies: 1. Participate in one or more meetings of the seven soil and water conservation districts each year.

2. Meet with representatives of 10 or more nonprofit groups or governmental entities annually to collaborate on at least two projects of mutual interest.

3. Assist one community per year with efforts to up-grade their wastewater treatment facilities.

Objective: A.2.3 – Expand opportunities for persons of all incomes and abilities to benefit and enjoy the region’s abundant natural resources by 2014.

Strategies: 1. Complete the handicapped-accessible Lake Algonquin Fishing Site by 2010.

2. Construct the handicapped-access improvements to the Rock City Falls Park by 2010.

3. Maximize awareness about the venison donation to the needy by distributing a press release about the program to at least 10 newspapers, four television stations, six radio stations and media sources each fall.

4. Reimburse venison processors for eligible expenses within two weeks of receipt of invoices.

5. Educate four of our governmental leaders about the benefits of the venison program annually.

Goal: A.3 – Expand opportunities to learn about conservation and natural resource management and activities in the Adirondack region by 2014.

Objective: A.3.1 – Provide educational opportunities for 2500 youth in the area by 2014.

- Strategies: 1. Prepare testing materials for each county's Envirothon by March each year.
2. Award two or more scholarships to NY Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) Ecology Camp by February each year.
 3. Assist with one or more Conservation Field Days each year.

B. Water Management

Improve water quality and conservation in the region.

Goal B.1 – Assist 25 organizations and communities with locally-directed efforts to enhance water quality by 2014.

Objective: B.1.1 By 2014, support all seven counties' water quality coordinating committees with their strategic initiatives.

- Strategies: 1. Establish a Greater Adirondack RC&D Council Water Committee in 2009 to review and evaluate issues and present activities appropriate for the Council to address water resources.
2. Help one county water quality coordinating committee revise its strategic plan each year.
 3. Organize and conduct the annual Adirondack Waterfest in a different community each summer and expand the number of vendors by two each year.
 4. By 2010, assess a possible Council role to help SWCDs address Ag Environmental Management needs.

Objective: B.1.2 - Encourage 16 organizations to address connectivity issues in aquatic ecosystems by 2014.

- Strategies: 1. Address fish passage needs with one river association, two SWCDs and 12 highway departments by 2010.
2. Work with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, (USF&WS), Trout Unlimited, and the State University of New York at Plattsburgh to develop a strategy for prioritizing and publicizing barriers to fish passage by 2009.
 3. Remove the Crowningshield Dam from the North Branch of the Boquet River by 2009.
 4. Work with USF&WS, the SWCD, and the Town to determine the feasibility of improving fish passage in Rock City Falls by 2009.

5. Work with five town highway departments to identify culverts that limit fish passage by 2011.

Objective: B.1.3 - Work with three Adirondack communities to enhance stream corridors and/or riparian buffers by 2014.

Strategies: 1. Implement improvements along the Kayaderosseras Creek in Rock City Falls by 2010.

2. Work with the SWCD, Hamilton County, and USF&WS to improve aquatic habitat conditions in Elbow Creek by 2010.

3. By 2010, help the SWCDs and other partners with the development of a reasonable plan for protecting the Lake George Watershed and its stream corridors.

4. Assist the Champlain Watershed Improvement Coalition of NY (CWICNY) with annual applications for funding to reduce streambank and roadside erosion.

Objective: B.1.4. – Work with DEC, USF&WS and other interested parties to inventory and prioritize dams on waterways within the GARC&D area for removal or remediation with priority on dams on streams classified as trout streams by DEC.

Strategies: 1. Develop partnership relations with potential donors and landowners interested in dam removal.

2. Conduct information and planning sessions with Essex and Washington SWCDs and two sporting groups by 2011.

3. Educate state and local agencies and private citizens in the conservation benefits of dam removal through the development of a brochure and information on the council website by 2011.

4. Encourage the formation of a state dam removal task force by 2010 through executive action.

Goal: B.2 – Improve management of public water sources by helping 25 local entities by 2014.

Objective: B.2.1 Support efforts to protect five local drinking water supplies by 2014.

Strategies: 1. Work with one county water quality coordinating committee each year to identify drinking water concerns.

2. Direct all concerned communities to appropriate sources of funding for drinking water supply protection.

Objective: B.2.2 – Expand year-round access to water for fighting fires in 40 rural communities by 2014.

Strategies: 1. Complete the Adirondack Fire Protection project by the end of 2009.

2. Acquire funding and complete the North Country Rural Fire Control and the Lower Adirondack Rural Fire Control projects by 2012.

3. Supply dry hydrant materials for installations in two additional communities each year.

4. Maintain a supply of replacement parts for dry hydrants.

Goal: B.3 – Improve water quality by supporting watershed-based water quality initiatives

Objective: B.3.1 – Help strengthen the operational capabilities of six watershed associations and coalitions by 2014.

Strategies: 1. Provide CWICNY with year-round office space and technical support for its annual water quality tour and stormwater trade show.

2. Meet with representatives of two or more watershed groups annually to discuss mutual needs and opportunities.

Objective: B.3.2 – Provide grant writing support and assistance with grant administration to 6 organizations by 2014.

Strategies: 1. Provide assistance bi-annually to CWICNY with writing and reporting on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) targeted watershed grants.

2. Help one additional watershed association with a grant application each year.

Goal: B.4 – Maintain groundwater resources for local and private use in the seven county GARC&D area by identifying threats to springs and aquifers

Objective: B.4.1 – Identify RC&D area aquifers and assess status of aquifer recharge and develop report by 2014.

Strategies: 1. Work with the seven SWCD offices, DEC and one college or university to collect well log data.

2. Assess the impact of industrial and commercial water withdrawal on environmental quality in Saratoga County by 2012.

3. Work with four town or county highway departments to reduce or eliminate the use of road salt by 2014.

Goal: B. 5. Monitor and evaluate the status of invasive plant and aquatic species within the GARC&D area

Objective: B. 5. 1. – Develop relationships with appropriate DEC and non-governmental organizations to identify and develop control procedures for invasive species by 2014.

Strategies: 1. Work with lake associations to develop education programs for personal watercraft and boats to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species by 2014.

C. Land Conservation

To conserve water and soil resources by controlling erosion and sedimentation.

Goal: C.1 – Assist the area’s agricultural community with the sustainable use of its natural resources by providing access to financial, information and innovation sources.

Objective: C.1.1 – Increase grassland in the RC&D area by providing access to management methods and support innovations that promote grassland resources by 2014.

Strategies: 1. Provide outreach assistance for annual NRCS Grazing Land Conservation Initiative (GLCI) workshops.

2. Provide internet means to match interested farmers with grazing specialists from NRCS, Adirondack North Country Association and GLCI by 2011

3. Assist local efforts to develop grass pelletizers for energy.

Objective: C.1.2 – By 2013, provide assistance to five farmers and/or agricultural organizations to manage nutrients and waste more effectively.

Strategies: 1. Provide funding/cost share sources to five SWCDs and farmers for improved manure management.

2. Assist with annual SWCD and Champlain Watershed farm tours highlighting nutrient management practices.

3. Compile a list of model programs for manure management in GARC&D area by 2012.

4. Promote Clinton County’s agricultural plastics recycling program on the GARC&D website with downloadable brochure by 2010.

D. Land Management

To promote wise land management through energy conservation, including the production of energy crops; the protection of agricultural land as appropriate from conversion to other uses; and the protection of fish and wildlife habitats.

Goal: D.1 – Strengthen the agricultural viability within the region by helping at least 100 farmers lower production costs through energy efficiency, protect farmland, successfully use direct marketing, and overcome livestock processing and marketing challenges by 2014.

Objective: D.1.1 – Explore efficient methods of conserving and developing on-farm energy sources in Fulton, Saratoga, Washington, Essex and Clinton counties by 2014.

Strategies: 1. Provide soil and water conservation districts with the latest information on renewable energy through the council listserve and links on the webpage.

2. Hold one workshop for landowners on carbon trading in 2009.

Objective: D.1.2 – Help strengthen local programs and efforts to protect farmland in Fulton, Saratoga, Washington, Essex and Clinton counties by 2014.

Strategies: 1. Provide NRCS' Farmland Protection Program materials to partners each year through the council listserve and webpage.

2. Promote NYS farmland protection programs within two weeks of their announcement by distributing information on the council listserve and website.

3. By 2011, assist local agricultural groups to develop business planning workshops to support the success of beginning and underserved farmers.

4. Work with four county Planning Boards to present workshops on farmland protection by 2011.

Goal: D.2 – Improve the economic viability of area farms by creating and expanding agricultural marketing opportunities and by providing information on transitioning to alternative operations.

Objective: D.2.1. - Assist Adirondack Harvest to promote local agriculture through 2014.

Strategies: 1. Assist the Adirondack Harvest Farm Committee each year with planning and projects.

2. Help the Adirondack Harvest Southern Chapter secure funding in 2009 by assisting with at least one grant application.

3. Share Adirondack Harvest information with all inquiring growers and with SWCDs at monthly meetings through 2014.

Objective: D.2.2 - Support grassroots efforts to increase access to processing and marketing outlets for livestock farmers for 10 operators by 2014.

Strategies: 1. Update local groups and producers with information about the latest services available from the Northeast Livestock Processing Service Company, USDA processors, the Adirondack North Country Association, Adirondack Harvest and others on an annual basis.

2. By 2010, develop an assessment report on opportunities for expanded processing facilities with other RC&D Councils and agricultural groups.

E. Partnership Development and Outreach

Expand partnerships and outreach to comprehensively address regional issues affecting the GARC&D area.

Goal: E. 1. Strengthen and enhance the cooperation and development of programs and outreach with appropriate RC&D councils in the Northeastern U.S. and other organizations that share natural resources and economic conditions with GARC&D.

Objective: E.1.1 - Host a joint meeting with at least one Vermont RC&D council by 2010.

Strategies: 1. Contact Vermont RC&D coordinators in 2009 and arrange meeting to discuss and review programs and identify projects of mutual benefit.

Objective: E.1.2 - Explore the potential for international cooperation with similar organizations in Quebec by 2011.

Strategies: 1. Contact the Lake Champlain Basin Program to meet and identify partnering opportunities by 2010.

Goal: E. 2. Ensure that all citizens in the Greater Adirondack RC&D area have the opportunity to learn about, benefit from and participate in the RC&D program.

Objective: E.2.1 – Update and maintain a minimum of five forms of outreach for community groups and the public by 2010.

Strategies: 1. Distribute 500 GARC&D Annual Reports to a diverse list of individuals and groups by March of each year.

2. Create and distribute a GARC&D newsletter to partners by August each year.

3. Update the Council's website four times annually.

4. Revise the Council's informational brochure by 2009.

5. Create a new Council display/exhibit board by 2010.

CURRENT AND POTENTIAL PARTNERS

The Greater Adirondack RC&D Council's strongest partners are its sponsor organizations. The soil and water conservation district, planning board, and legislative body from each of the Council's seven counties (Clinton, Essex, Fulton, Hamilton, Saratoga, Warren, and Washington) provide direction and financial support to the organization. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service is also a major partner, providing staff and administrative assistance to the Greater Adirondack RC&D Council and to more than 300 other RC&D Councils nationwide.

Listed below are many of the other partner organizations which help make the Greater Adirondack RC&D Council's program so successful. Their dedication to a collaborative, grassroots approach enables the Council to achieve its goals and objectives.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Forest Service
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets
NYS Department of State
NYS Department of Economic Development
NY Soil and Water Conservation Committee
SUNY College of Environmental Science & Forestry
SUNY Plattsburgh
Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board
Adirondack Harvest
Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program
Adirondack North Country Association
Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York
Venison Donation Coalition
Center for the Disabled
Lake Champlain Basin Program
Lake Champlain Research Institute
Lake Champlain Sea Grant
Champlain Watershed Improvement Coalition of New York
Lake George Watershed Conference
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Clinton, Essex, Fulton, Hamilton, Saratoga, Warren, & Washington Counties
BOCES Conservation Program and Horticulture/Landscape Program
Water Quality Coordinating Committees of Clinton, Essex, Fulton, Hamilton, Saratoga, Warren, & Washington Counties
Fulton County Chamber of Commerce
Saratoga County Environmental Management Council
Essex County Department of Public Works
Hamilton County Highway Department
Washington County Department of Public Works
Empire State Forest Products Association
New York Forest Owners Association
North East State Foresters Association

Soil and Water Conservation Society
Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative
Farm Bureau
Trout Unlimited
Ducks Unlimited
Boquet River Association
Ausable River Association
Battenkill Conservancy
Battenkill Watershed Alliance
Battenkill Watershed Council
Poultney-Mettawee Watershed Partnership
Cossayuna Lake Association
International Paper Company
Finch Pruyn and Company
General Electric Company
Northeast Livestock Processing Service Company
Participating venison processors

LINKAGES TO THE NRCS STRATEGIC PLAN

The Greater Adirondack RC&D Council mission and the direction of its Area Plan are closely linked to the 2005-2010 Strategic Plan of the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The three NRCS overarching strategies (Cooperative Conservation, Watershed Approach, and Market-based Approach) are all strongly reflected in the goals, objectives and actions outlined in the Area Plan.

The Area Plan also steers Greater Adirondack RC&D project towards all six of the mission goals and outcomes described in the NRCS strategic plan. These goals and outcomes are described below; each one followed by a list of corresponding RC&D strategies.

Clean and Abundant Water – The quality of surface waters and groundwater is improved and maintained to protect human health, support a healthy environment, and encourage a productive landscape. Water is conserved and protected to ensure an abundant and reliable supply for the nation. (Strategies A.2.1.1 through A.2.1.4, A.2.2.1 through A.2.2.3, A.2.3.1, A.2.3.2; Strategies B.1.1.1 through B.1.1.4, B.1.3.1 through B.1.3.4, B.2.1.1, B.2.1.2, B.2.2.1 through B.2.2.3, B.3.1.1, B.3.1.2, B.3.2.1, B.3.2.2; Strategies C.3.2.1, C.3.2.2)

Healthy Plant and Animal Communities – Grassland, rangeland, and forest ecosystems are productive, diverse, and resilient. Working lands and waters provide habitat for diverse and healthy wildlife, aquatic species, and plant communities. Wetlands provide quality habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife, protect water quality, and reduce flood damages. (Strategies A.1.1.1 through A.1.1.3, A.1.2.1 through A.1.2.3, A.2.3.3, A.2.3.4; Strategies B.1.2.1 through B.1.2.4, B.1.3.1 through B.1.3.3; Strategies C.3.1.1 and C.3.1.2)

Working Farm and Ranch Lands – Connected landscapes sustain a viable agriculture and natural resource quality. (Strategies D.1.2.1 through D.1.2.4, D.2.1.1 through D.2.1.3, D.2.2.1, D.2.2.2, D.3.1.1, D.3.1.2, D.3.2.1, D.3.2.2)

Clean Air – Agriculture makes a positive contribution to local air quality and the nation’s efforts to sequester carbon (Strategies A.1.2.3, C.1.1.1, C.1.1.2, and C.3.2.1)

An Adequate Energy Supply – Agricultural activities conserve energy and agricultural lands are a source of environmentally sustainable biofuels and renewable energy. (Strategies A.1.2.3, C.1.1.1, C.1.1.2, C.3.1.3, C.3.2.3).

High Quality, Productive Soils – The quality of intensively used soils is maintained or enhanced to enable sustained production of a safe, healthy, and abundant food supply. (Strategies C.1.2.4, C.3.2.1, C.3.2.2)

RC&D Strategies A.3.1.1 through A.3.1.3 and E.2.1.1 through E.2.1.4. will address each of the NRCS mission goals and outcomes noted above. These actions focus on improving natural resource management education and outreach in the Greater Adirondack RC&D Council’s communities.

COMPLIANCE STATEMENTS AND SIGNATURES

The local sponsors make application for federal assistance under the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981 Public Law 97–98, 16 U.S.C. 34523461 as amended by Public Law 101–624, Section 1452.

The Greater Adirondack RC&D Council’s program will be conducted in compliance with the nondiscrimination provisions as contained in Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (P. L. 100–259) and other nondiscrimination statutes; namely, Section 504, of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and in accordance with regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture (7CFR–15, Subparts A&B) which provide that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, marital status, or handicap/disability be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial (or technical) assistance from the Department of Agriculture or any agency thereof.

The Greater Adirondack RC&D Council agrees that the signing of this document constitutes agreement to comply with federal laws concerning restrictions on lobbying, a drug-free workplace, and responsibilities for procurement, suspension, and disbarment.

The Greater Adirondack RC&D Council has had this application reviewed by the state. Comments made through the state single point of contact have been considered prior to submission of the application and that all applicable procedures have been followed. An environmental impact statement will not be prepared during the development of the area plan, but an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement will be prepared concurrently with the development of each project, when applicable, in accordance with federal procedures.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service hereby acknowledges that the 2010-2014 Area Plan of the Greater Adirondack RC&D Council meets the requirements of the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981 Public Law 97-98, 16 U.S.C. 34523461 as amended by Public Law 101-624, Section 1452 to receive federal assistance.

By: _____ Date: _____

New York State Conservationist
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Appendix A

News release of public meetings

Greater Adirondack RC&D Council
60 Park Forest Road
Chestertown, NY 12817

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: John Rieger, President
Phone: 518-623-3090
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E-Mail: garcd1@hughes.net

June 2, 2008

NON-PROFIT PLANS FOR FUTURE -PUBLIC IS INVITED

The Greater Adirondack Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council is in the process of restructuring its "Area Plan" and invites members, partners and the public within its boundaries of seven counties to assist in the direction of the Council for the next five years.

The Council is a not-for-profit corporation comprised of volunteer members from soil and water conservation districts; planning boards, and supervisor/legislator representatives in the seven county area. The Greater Adirondack RC&D Council area includes the counties of Clinton, Essex, Fulton, Hamilton, Saratoga, Warren and Washington. The Council's mission is to promote the wise use of natural resources and enhance the economic vitality of the region.

Upcoming meetings are being held in northern and southern locations to better accommodate members, partners, and the general public. The first of these meetings will be held on June 18th at 5:00 p.m. in Ballston Spa at the Municipal Building, 50 West High Street. The northern session will be held at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Essex County in Westport, on June 19th at 2:30 p.m.

Interested parties should contact the Greater Adirondack RC&D Council office by phone at 518-623-3090 one week prior to the meeting.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Greater Adirondack RC&D prohibit discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Appendix B.

Questionnaire presented at meetings and mailed to general public.

Greater Adirondack RC&D Council Objectives

Please help us by ranking these objectives as High (H), Medium (M), or Low (L) priority.

Community Development

- _____ Facilitate cooperative partnerships among community & watershed groups.
- _____ Inform the media and community groups of RC&D activities through reports, tours, exhibits and the website.
- _____ Sponsor scholarships for attendance at the Ecology Camp at Pack Forest.
- _____ Assist Soil & Water Conservation Districts with annual Envirothon events.
- _____ Support the development of interpretive nature trails and barrier-free recreational facilities.
- _____ Locate sound engineering support and natural resources expertise for community projects.
- _____ Encourage forest stewardship on public and private lands.
- _____ Retain and strengthen the wood products industry.
- _____ Distribute grant information and program opportunities for USDA and others.
- _____ Provide forest landowners with support for managing their natural resources.

Others: _____

Water Management

- _____ Support county water quality coordinating committee efforts.
- _____ Encourage the establishment of riparian buffer zones.
- _____ Help protect local drinking water supplies.
- _____ Improve access to water for firefighting in rural areas.
- _____ Seek funding for watershed initiatives.

Others: _____

Land Management and Land Conservation

- _____ Improve aquatic habitat.
- _____ Control erosion along streambanks and roadbanks.
- _____ Promote farmland protection programs and strengthen the agricultural industry.
- _____ Support farmers' efforts to improve grazing systems.
- _____ Assist farmers with nutrient management and composting projects.
- _____ Help coordinate livestock marketing initiatives.
- _____ Encourage alternative agricultural enterprises.

Others: _____
