

Summer, 2016



**ADK  
ACTION** "Your Voice in the  
Future of the Adirondacks"

# E-Newsletter

[Join Now or Renew Your Membership](#)

**Note from Brittany Christenson, Executive Director**

At AdkAction.org we pride ourselves on being a member organization, and we know that our work would not be possible without the ideas, energy, and contributions of our members. Over the past few months, as part of an effort to build membership outside of the Tri-City area, I have been traveling the Adirondacks meeting with people who are interested in our projects, and enlisting new members. I've been to Bolton Landing, Lake George, Old Forge, Newcomb, Northville, North Creek, and Blue Mountain Lake attending rotary club meetings, farmers' markets, and community arts events. The biggest lesson I have learned on the road is that our projects address issues that really matter to people in the Adirondacks. From supporting the arts to working towards fast, reliable internet for all, our projects are relevant to every community in the park.



We are looking for new members and new communities to serve. If you know of anyone who would be interested in our projects, please let me know and I will personally reach out. We are currently in the process of developing a student membership to help students become involved in shaping the future of the Adirondacks. We will be welcoming Hamilton College students to Great Camp Wenonah in late September with a presentation on our current projects to kick-off the student membership efforts. If you are involved with a local college contact us and we would be happy to create a special experience for students.

### **Other Membership Development Initiatives**

As part of our broader membership development efforts that are directly tied to our current projects (see below), we are delighted to be a sponsor of the annual Cycle Adirondacks, a 7-day cycling tour of the Adirondacks that highlights seven of local towns and villages. Over 350 cyclists from all over the country (and world!) will participate in the event. As a sponsor, AdkAction will have many opportunities to highlight for both riders but especially local residents in each community two of our key projects: monarch conservation and community revitalization. We will be setting up a booth at several of the nightly

entertainment spots along the ride to tell riders and locals about these and other AdkAction projects. We will also be organizing and speaking at a special “Farm to Table Dinner” in Keeseville on August 22.

**We have five tickets to the Farm to Table Dinner in Keeseville on Monday evening. If you would like to join us for a beautiful and completely local meal, please let us know ASAP (email [brittany@adkaction.org](mailto:brittany@adkaction.org)). The first 5 AdkAction.org members to respond will get the seats! In exchange for dinner, you can make a contribution to AdkAction.org in any amount you choose. Come see AdkAction.org in action!**

[Contact us to claim a spot at the Cycle Adirondack's Farm to Table Dinner](#)

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## Project Updates

### 1. Broadband

AdkAction.org’s work on providing high-quality broadband access to all residents of the Park continues with outstanding progress.

On August 3<sup>rd</sup>, Governor Cuomo made 3 major Broadband related announcements:

1. The New NY Broadband Program Phase 1 awards were announced. Roughly \$54 million of the Program's \$500 million in funding was awarded to 25 applicants. Four awards were made that cover census blocks in the North Country.

## New NY Broadband Program Phase 1 Awards in the North Country

| Applicant   | Technology | Census Blocks | Housing Units | Total Units  | State Grant        | Private Match \$   | Private Match % | Total Project Cost |
|---|------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Citizens Telephone Company of Hammond, N.Y., Inc. | FTTH       | 146           | 1,789         | 1,860        | \$3,316,810        | \$829,202          | 20.0%           | \$4,146,012        |
| Frontier Communications                           | FTTH       | 3             | 188           | 216          | \$129,634          | \$32,409           | 20.0%           | \$162,043          |
| Frontier Communications                           | FTTH       | 105           | 1,928         | 2,096        | \$1,702,246        | \$425,562          | 20.0%           | \$2,127,808        |
| TDS Telecom                                       | FTTH       | 74            | 506           | 543          | \$1,084,000        | \$1,084,000        | 50.0%           | \$2,168,000        |
| <b>Totals</b>                                     |            | <b>328</b>    | <b>4,411</b>  | <b>4,715</b> | <b>\$6,232,690</b> | <b>\$2,371,173</b> | <b>27.6%</b>    | <b>\$8,603,863</b> |

FTTH = Fiber to the Home

2. The new Time Warner Communications-Charter company will complete upgrading its roughly 2 million NYS subscribers to 100 mbps by the coming winter, two years earlier than promised in January 2016. The company also submitted the addresses of the 145,000 additional households that it will add to its network throughout the state over the next 4 years.
  
3. Phase 2 of the New NY Broadband Program was announced with applications being accepted from October 17 thru November 30. This phase is design to fund the expansion of high-speed broadband access to the many underserved and unserved areas in the North Country.

On August 11, Dave Wolff, Chair, presented an update on the status of Broadband Access in the North Country at the quarterly meeting of the Population Health Improvement Program of the Adirondack Health Institute. It is a NYS Department of Health-funded program that is charged with improving the health of communities in Franklin, Clinton, Essex, Hamilton, Warren and Washington counties. Lack of Internet access is viewed as one of the factors that impedes the health of North Country residents.

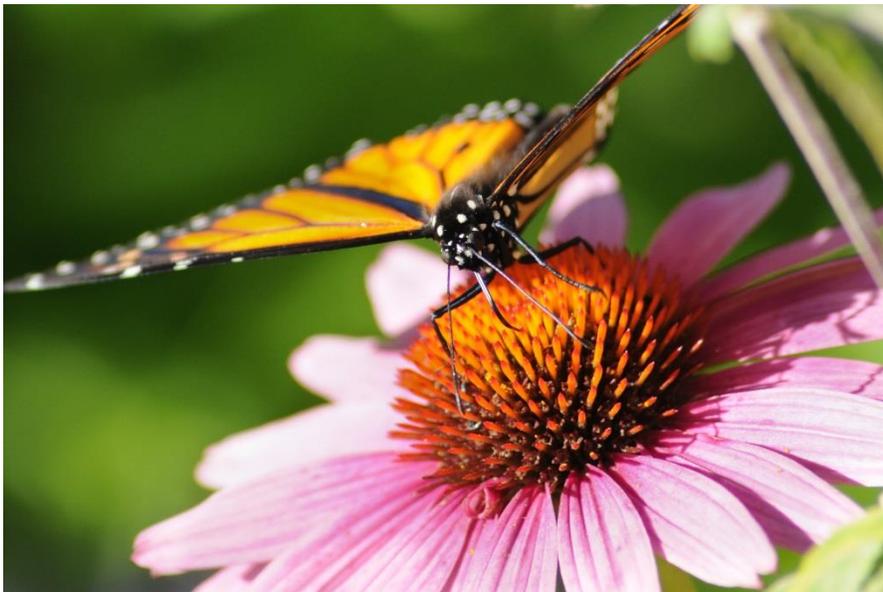
AdkAction.org continues to host a monthly Broadband Conference Call to encourage communication between community members, state and local government officials, and service providers.

## 2. Monarch Butterflies

On August 3, eminent monarch scientist Dr. Lincoln Brower delivered a lecture at The Wild Center in Tupper Lake, painting a starkly cautionary outlook for the long-term survival of the wondrous Eastern migration of the colorful insect.

It was Dr. Brower's second lecture at The Wild Center, both sponsored by AdkAction.org as part of our butterfly initiative.

The survival of the monarch species itself is probably not in jeopardy, Dr. Brower said, but their 2,500-mile-or-more journey from winter sanctuaries in Mexico to Texas, the Midwest, Canada and our Adirondacks is highly threatened.



As recently as February, monarchs seemed to be on the rebound. Scientific estimates of their numbers in the fir forests in high mountains west of Mexico City showed an impressive increase to 10 acres, more than three times what was counted in 2015, but still a drastic decline from 20 years ago. Right at the time when monarchs were rousing from their winter torpor to fly north, a harsh storm of snow, ice and winds estimated at up to 70 miles per hours struck the sanctuaries. Butterfly scientists were not allowed access to study the loss, but some have estimated a 50% to 80% mortality rate of the butterflies.

Since the storm, Mexican officials have allowed large-scale “salvage logging” in the butterfly sanctuaries. Dr. Brower showed pictures of long convoys of logging trucks hauling trees out of the area. The impact on this vital habitat for monarchs will not be clear until next year’s population count in February.

Journey North, an online network which tracks monarch sightings as they spread north into the U.S. and southern Canada, is reporting low numbers this year. Loss of milkweed habitat in the Midwest continues with near-ubiquitous use of GMO corn and soybean crops immune to the effects of Roundup and other pesticides, which are deadly to milkweed, on which monarchs totally depend on for reproduction.

However, Dr. Brower reported some bright spots.

- Texas, the key state for monarch re-establishment in the U.S. every spring, has been a leader in restoration of habitat.
- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service appears to be taking a close look at a petition spearheaded by Dr. Brower and others seeking to have monarchs added to the threatened species list. A decision is due in 2017.
- Public awareness and action to protect and restore monarch habitat has soared.

If you missed the lecture, you can [watch it here](#) on The Wild Center’s website.

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### 3. Local Arts Community Support



Nearly 70 fine artists will be taking part in this annual event in beautiful Saranac Lake.

In the Adirondack Mountains of northern New York State, this event gives artists a wide variety of landscapes to paint.

Come watch the artists at work or catch the Nocturne Contest, the "Paint the Town" Silent Auction, the Quickdraw Competition, or attend the Special Preview Party, 8/19 from 6 - 9 pm or the Show & Sale, 8/20 from 12 - 5 in the Town Hall.

AdkAction.org is proud to sponsor the Adirondack Plein Air Festival's Special Preview Party on Friday, August 19th, from 6:00 -9:00 pm, in the Town Hall in downtown Saranac Lake. We are proud to sponsor such a successful event that has a large positive economic impact on the local community, and provides an opportunity to showcase the breathtaking beauty of the Adirondacks through the work of 70 artists. The Special Preview Party will provide a first look at the still wet paintings, and a chance to take one (or several) home. As a sponsor, AdkAction.org will also be present, and actively recruiting new members to AdkAction.org, at the Plein Air Show and Sale on August 20th from noon to 5:00 pm.

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#### 4. Road Salt



*Caption: Brittany Christenson, Director of AdkAction.org, presenting Willie Janeway, Executive Director of the Adirondack Council, with the “Rusty Spike Award,” for being the largest contributor to our study. Willie was so confident in our efforts that he contributed \$500 to our new road salt study on behalf of the Adirondack Council.*

AdkAction.org continues to be a regional leader in the fight against road salt.

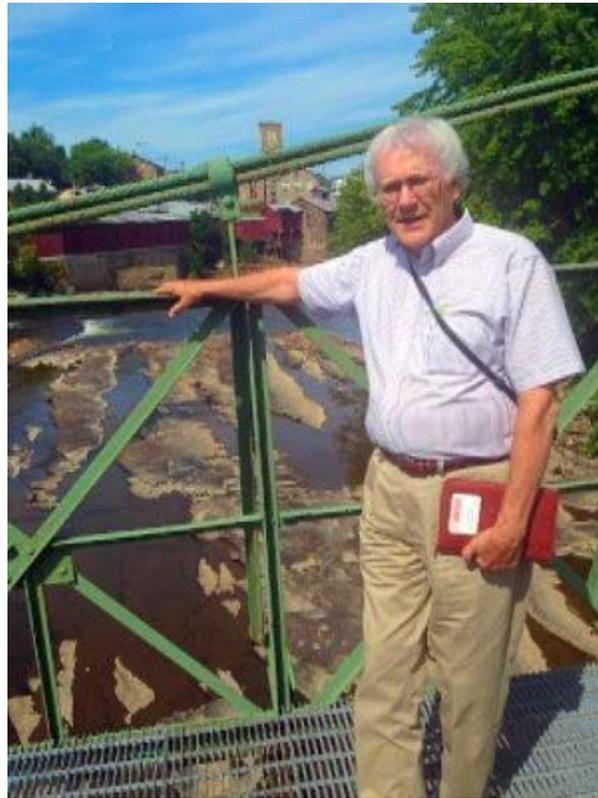
We have created a new road salt working group comprised of town supervisors, government agency representatives, and nonprofit leaders that are ready to join our road salt reduction efforts. The timing of the formation of the working group is ideal, as public awareness of the many harmful impacts of road salt continues to grow. The *Watertown Daily Times* published several recent articles (see especially: <http://www.watertowndailytimes.com/news03/the-problem-with-salt-road-salt-contamination-a-plague-across-the-state-20160807>) highlighting the many problems with road salt use in New York State over the past 40 years.

AdkAction.org is committed to continuing to reduce the harmful use of road salt on our roads. AdkAction.org's new campaign, "How Much is Road Salt Costing Us?" is utilizing crowdsourced fundraising in order to fund a study to document the many harmful economic impacts of road salt, particularly the rusting and destruction of roads, bridges, and other transportation infrastructure. Since launching this campaign, we have raised \$3,130 of our \$4,500 goal. We need your help to raise the remaining \$1,370 by September 6th. To donate on-line, please click the button below.

[Help Fund the Road Salt Study, Donate today!](#)

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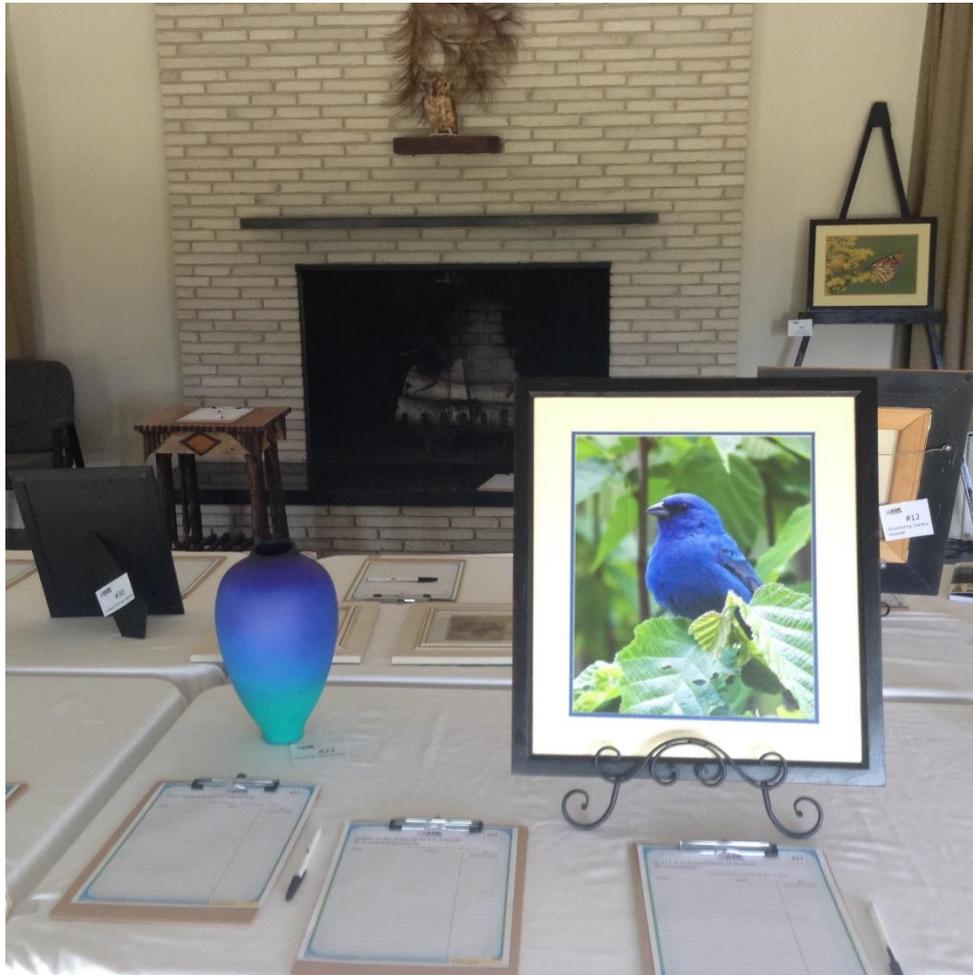
## 5. Community Revitalization



Our current Community Revitalization Project brings us to Keeseville, NY. On August 9th and 10th, we sponsored Roger Brown, a Creative Consultant and Architect from Rochester, to visit Keeseville and share his expertise and ideas for the charming agricultural community. Roger Brown and AdkAction.org's Director, Brittany Christenson, met with the two town supervisors for the hamlet of Keeseville and learned about the opportunities and challenges facing the recently dissolved village that is now a hamlet. Stay tuned for more information about Roger's insights and potential plans for AdkAction.org to be a part of the revitalization.

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### **Annual Membership Meeting**



We want to thank all of our members for contributing to our very successful annual meeting on Thursday, July 21 at Heaven Hills Farm. A spectacular summer evening saw almost 100 members in attendance, a presentation by Brittany Christenson, our new Executive Director, and a record \$5,800 in silent auction proceeds. This revenue will provide a boost to various current AdkAction projects in need of additional revenue support.

### **Election of New Officers and other Board News**

At a recent Board meeting, the following Board members were elected or re-elected to these positions:

- Dave Wolff, Chair
- Steve Maikowski, Vice-Chair
- Mike Preis, Secretary
- Tom Boothe, Treasurer

Also, three Board members, Airlie Lennon, Fred Schwartz, and Mark Kurtz have recently left the Board. We want to thank them for their tireless work, strong advocacy, and many years of outstanding service for AdkAction.org.

### **Event Announcement**

The next AdkAction.org sponsored annual Tax Assessor's Conference will take place in late November or early December 2016. Details to follow in the next e-newsletter.

*Brought to you by the Communications Committee: Steve Maikowski, Chair;  
Members: Joan Grabe, Betsy Minehan, and Holly Wolff.*

[Join or Renew  
your  
membership](#)

*AdkAction.org*

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