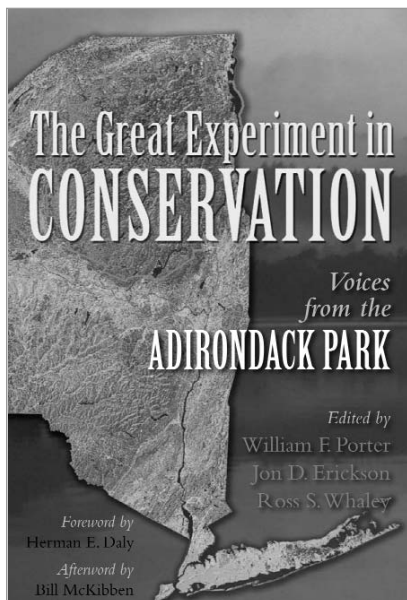


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Syracuse University Press



The Great Experiment in Conservation

Voices from the Adirondack Park

Edited by William F. Porter, Jon D. Erickson, and Ross S. Whaley

Cloth \$45.00s 978-0-8156-3231-3

6 x 9, 704 pages, 6 black-and-white illustrations, 13 tables, notes, bibliography, index

"As individual perspectives change, the very rocks that are the Adirondacks are ever evolving. This great ecosystem demonstrates resiliency yet the future is certain to include continued change, both natural and man made. This must-read book successfully captures these insights in a snapshot that will help measure our future actions."—Dan Fitts, Executive Director of the Adirondack Research Consortium, and former Executive Director of the Adirondack Park Agency

"I'd love to see this important book be required reading for every New York State legislator and opinion-maker. Alive with personal voices, it is also packed with vital information and at times justifiably angry at what we human beings have done to the Adirondacks. It reminds us of what we've lost, of what we can still save, and of what a rare treasure this extraordinary region is."—Adam Hochschild, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa*

"Large pieces of the landscape inherently represent the integration of ecology, climatology, geology, economics, psychology, history, archeology, and everything else. But very few books about large landscapes ever get close to actually presenting an integrated picture. This one does. It is a landmark and a must read for anyone concerned with conservation in the broad sense."—Robert Costanza, University of Vermont and co-founder of the International Society for Ecological Economics

"This book presents a thorough and instructive study of the ecologically rich six million acre Adirondack Park and of the human struggles to maintain the integrity of one of the nation's great conservation areas in the face of demands for timber harvesting, recreation, and second home development. The authors achieve a unique combination of regional environmental history and analysis together with describing the search for striking a balance between development and the protection of natural resources. It is an important book for environmentalists, ecologists, planners, policy makers, and citizens who want to pursue sustainable growth in rural areas."—Tom Daniels, University of Pennsylvania and author of *The Environmental Planning Handbook*

The Adirondack region of New York State is, in many respects, America's cauldron of conservation. It was there, more than a century ago, that wanton exploitation of forests first aroused concern about human impact on the environment. It was there that Americans first began to set aside lands proclaimed as "forever wild." The establishment of the Adirondack Park created an immense landscape of 6 million acres composed of a mixture of public and private lands in nearly equal proportion. This unprecedented blend of human communities within wild lands makes the Adirondack Park perhaps one of the greatest case studies in conservation and development in U.S. history.

Representing a remarkable achievement in environmental scholarship and drawn from decades of research, *The Great Experiment in Conservation* captures the wisdom born of the last thirty years of the park's evolution. The editors bring together leading scholars, activists, and practitioners—those who know the Park's origin and the realities of living in a protected area—to narrate this history. Organized into three sections, contributors explore the ecological, cultural, and economic aspects of the region, drawing lessons from successes and failures as they struggle to find the right balance of private interests and public controls. With keen insight and deep passion, the authors reveal the Adirondack Park's rich natural and cultural history in shaping conservation policy, providing vital contributions to the future study of land preservation.

William F. Porter is professor of wildlife ecology and director of the Adirondack Ecological Center at SUNY ESF. **Jon D. Erickson** is associate professor of ecological economics at the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources, faculty of the Environmental Program, and fellow of the Gund Institute for Ecological Economics at the University of Vermont. **Ross S. Whaley** is emeritus president and professor of SUNY ESF. He is former chairman of the Adirondack Park Agency and served on the Governor's Commission for the Adirondacks in the Twenty-First Century.

Contents

FOREWARD: *Connecting Means and Ends in the Study of Place*, HERMAN E. DALY

PART ONE | FOUNDATIONS OF THE ADIRONDACK ECOSYSTEM AND ECONOMY

Introduction: A Dark Spot in a Sea of Lights, WILLIAM F. PORTER

1. *Geology of the Adirondack Mountains: Like an Egg with Its Major Axis to the North*
JAMES MCLELLAND AND BRUCE SELLECK
2. *Water Resources: The Unique Adirondack Aquascape*, CHRISTOPHER P. CIRMO
3. *Soils of the Adirondacks: Out of Site, Out of Mind*, RUSSELL D. BRIGGS
4. *Upland Forests of the Adirondacks: Reflections of Soils and a Record of Disturbance*
CHARLES D. CANHAM
5. *Fish and Wildlife Communities of the Adirondacks*, ROLAND W. KAYS AND ROBERT A. DANIEL S
6. *Wildlife Exploitation in the Adirondacks: From Beavers to Biodiversity*, WILLIAM F. PORTER
7. *Mining in the Adirondacks*, JAMES MCLELLAND AND BRUCE SELLECK
8. *Forestry in the Adirondacks: An Economy Built on a Handful of Species*, WILLIAM F. PORTER
9. *Human Impacts from Afar: Acid Rain and Mercury Deposition in the Adirondacks*
CHARLES T. DRISCOLL, KIMBERLEY M. DRISCOLL, MYRON J. MITCHELL, DUDLEY J. RAYNAL, AND KAREN M. ROY
10. *Recreation and Tourism in the Adirondacks*, CHAD P. DAWSON
11. *Great Camps and Conservation*, CRAIG GILBORN
12. *Development Rates and Patterns in the Adirondacks: Paradise Lost*, PETER BAUER
13. *Wildlife for a Wilderness: Restoring Large Predators in the Adirondacks*, RAINER H. BROCKE

PART TWO | INSTITUTIONS AND MANAGEMENT OF THE ADIRONDACKS

Introduction: The Park in Perspective, JON D. ERICKSON

14. *Cultural History of the Adirondack Park: From Conservation to Environmentalism*, PHILIP G. TERRIE
15. *Legal Structure and Defense of the Adirondack Park*, ROBERT MALMSHEIMER
16. *Public and Private Regulation of the Adirondack Park*, WILLIAM F. PORTER AND ROSS S. WHALEY
17. *The Early Years of the Adirondack Park Agency*, GEORGE D. DAVIS
18. *The Evolution of the Department of Environmental Conservation*, STUART BUCHANAN
19. *A Land Not Saved*, ROBERT GLENNON
20. *Top-Down Regulation and Local Economic Autonomy*, JOHN PENNEY
21. *Lessons from the Commission on the Adirondacks in the Twenty-First Century*, ROSS S. WHALEY
22. *A Perspective from the Forest-Products Industry*, ROGER DZIENGELESKI
23. *Reflections on the Adirondack Park Agency in the Current Era*, RICHARD LEFEBVRE

PART THREE | MANY VOICES, MANY OPINIONS

Introduction: Visions for the Adirondacks and Beyond, ROSS S. WHALEY

24. *Compromise, Continuity, and Crisis in the Adirondack Park: Shortcomings and Opportunities in Environmental Protection*, PHILIP G. TERRIE
25. *Renewing Adirondack Park Mission Through an Educational Forest Preserve: Shortcomings and Opportunities in Wilderness Preservation*, DAVID GIBSON
26. *The Role of the People in Wilderness Preservation: Shortcomings and Opportunities in Governance*, BARBARA MCMARTIN
27. *Public Opinion and Public Representation: Strategies in Bio-Regional Development*
JON D. ERICKSON, GRAHAM L. COX, ANNE M. WOODS, AND WILLIAM F. PORTER
28. *The Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages: Strategies in Local Governance*, DEAN LEFEBVRE
29. *The Adirondack North Country Association: Strategies in Economic Development*
TERRY DEFRANCO MARTINO
30. *The Adirondack Environmental Nongovernmental Organizations: Strategies in Conservation*, GRAHAM L. COX
31. *Envisioning the Future of Wilderness: Public Demands and Private Lands*, ELIZABETH T. HORNDIKE
32. *Toward a New Wilderness Paradigm for Adirondack Park: The View from Bear Mountain*,
RAINER H. BROCKE
33. *Can Such a Noble Endeavor Succeed?: Alaska and the Adirondack Park*, DONALD BEHREND
34. *The Adirondack Park in Global Perspective*, BILL WEBER AND AMY VEDDER

AFTERWARD: *Living Within Limits*, BILL MCKIBBEN

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Running an experiment to evaluate the impact of a large-scale conservation intervention is certainly very challenging. It is often not possible to randomise which areas receive a new conservation project (can you imagine a government randomly allocating where it puts national parks?). There are also issues with achieving adequate replication, and there can be ethical concerns which prevent experimentation. However, given the importance of knowing what works in conservation, more high quality evaluations (which won't always be experiments) are certainly needed. Only by learning from current pra...
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