

Today is history. My name is Leilani Crafts Ulrich. As the first woman Chair of the Adirondack Park Agency - the first chair from Herkimer County, I welcome the first APA Commissioner from St. Lawrence County to sit at table with the first woman APA Executive Director, as this Agency begins deliberation of the largest project ever to come before the APA.

*For my Mother, my daughters-in-law and granddaughters – for girls and women known and unknown, I am delighted to mirror each of our aspirations and to have the privilege of building on the work I have done in the past seven years here at the Agency and now in my appointment as Chairwoman. My thanks to my predecessors for their service and dedication to this agency and for their efforts which paved the way for this day. And my deepest thanks to Gov. Cuomo for his trust and confidence in conferring this historic honor.*

Today, I am inspired by the numerous conversations I have had with so many of you these past number of years. Each chat over coffee, stories over lunch, each meeting, each forum, even an exchange

abroad has provided me a unique framework for the work ahead. I am enthused by the range of passion and perspective always embedded in the Adirondack discussion. Apathy rarely attends a meeting on Adirondack Park issues!

Our work with Common Ground has informed us all that we are better for coming together and for profiling those areas where we agree – and that the most critical dangers to the Adirondacks come from outside our Blueline. Without question we know our driving motivation is centered in our love of place-- the Adirondack Park--and our interests in the environmental protection, economy and communities of this special place.

During the next three months, you will see a singular focus of this board as we deliberate on the ACR project. Following that, 2012 will give us other opportunities to help to write the next chapter of the Adirondack story – where the Adirondack Park Agency not only meets its regulatory duties with even greater efficiency, but works in partnership with the Adirondack Common Ground Alliance and the newly emerging Adirondack Partnership; where the APA plays a

transformational role in convening, listening and encouraging greater, and even more productive dialogue for the good of all who live, work and/or play in this magnificent place; where we collectively turn the page and reach for the true potential of our region - where we can plan, work and win by sharing our mutual and shared strengths.

In these last few days, I've had moments of astonishment as I heard or read the positive words of support in many press articles. Who are they talking about? Then I realized that they weren't just talking about me – they were talking about all of us, all who have partnered, risked and worked for years to build bridges previously unheard of in the Adirondack Park. The expectations before us are not only for me and for the women at this table, in this sitting legislature and currently leading many key entities of the Adirondacks, but for all who have embraced the basic idea of what is possible if we work together for common goals. The affirmation is of us all. The challenge is on us all to, this time, prove those currently optimistic pundits right!

My deepest thanks to you all, especially this remarkable staff and board – it is a privilege to serve with each and every one of you – so, if you're all ready, let's get started!