



NEW
YORK
STATE

Adirondack
Park Agency

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Governor Kathy Hochul

Agency Board Chair Mark Hall

Executive Director Barbara Rice



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From the Chair & Executive Director

The Adirondack Park Agency is proud to present its 2025 annual report which summarizes the hard work and accomplishments of our dedicated staff. The Adirondack Park Agency administers two of the nation’s most effective land use laws – the Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan and the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan. Our staff and board remain steadfast in their long-standing commitment to effectively implement these plans for the benefit of all New Yorkers. This year, under Governor Hochul’s leadership, the Board welcomed a full slate of appointed members. This included the addition of two new members, Jose Almanzar and Rush Holt, and the reappointment of members who were serving on expired terms. We thank the governor for these appointments and for the continued leadership of an experienced board.

The State Land team undertook a substantial revision of the State Land Master Plan which culminated with Governor Hochul’s concurrence in November. This action concluded nearly two years of diligent review and deliberation. These amendments will ensure the State continues to protect the Adirondack Park’s unique natural resources while working to expand access to our globally renowned, forever wild public lands for people of all abilities.

The web team completed a comprehensive redesign of the Agency's website. The updated site reflects modern web design standards, incorporates best management practices, and enhances usability. The launch was completed with minimal disruption to the public and directly advances the Agency’s transparency goals. The Agency strengthened its regional planning

role through expanded outreach to the 101 local governments within the 6-million-acre Adirondack Park. Key efforts included a landmark roundtable held in partnership with the Adirondack Park Local Government Review Board at the Agency's third annual Adirondack Planning Forum. The Forum brought together members of Governor Hochul's cabinet with local elected officials to address the challenges facing Park communities. These efforts advanced Governor Hochul’s affordability and clean water agenda and supported the allocation of \$263 million to Adirondack communities in 2025 for public infrastructure and community development projects.

We are grateful for the dedication and professionalism of our staff and look ahead with confidence as we continue to strengthen the Agency. Restoring staffing levels not seen in more than a decade has enhanced organizational stability and reaffirmed the Agency’s commitment to serving the Adirondack Park and its communities.



Mark Hall
Agency Board Chair



Barbara Rice
Executive Director

Agency Board

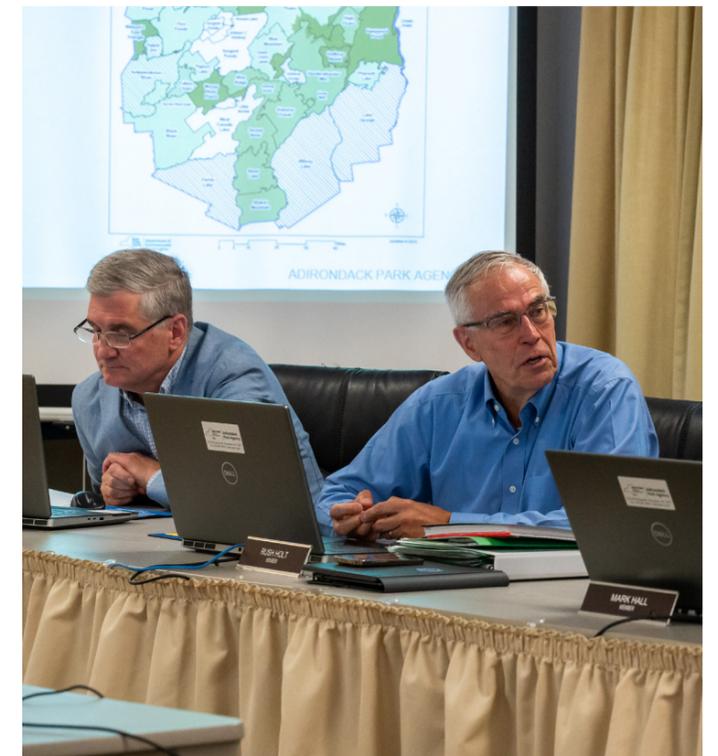
The Adirondack Park Agency is a New York State government agency with an eleven-member Board, five of whom must be residents of the Adirondack Park. The Governor appoints eight members, subject to confirmation by the Senate, and three ex-officio members: The Commissioner of the Department of Economic Development, the Secretary of State, and the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Conservation.

The Board represents a careful balance of local, regional and statewide interests in the Adirondack Park. The Agency Board acts on park policy issues and permit applications during meetings, which are held monthly and open to the public.

Board Member	Seat	County	Term Expires
Mark Hall, Chair*	In Park	St. Lawrence	06/30/26
John Ernst†	Out of Park	New York	06/30/25
Arthur Lussi	In Park	Essex	06/30/25
Benita Law-Diao	Out of Park	Albany	06/30/28
Daniel Wilt	In Park	Hamilton	06/30/27
Jose Almanzar‡	Out of Park	Nassau	06/30/29
Kenneth Lynch	Out of Park	Onondoga	06/30/26
Rush Holt‡	In Park	Clinton	06/30/27
Zoë Smith	In Park	Franklin	06/30/28

* Designated Chair on 9/26/25 † Former Chair, retired from board on 06/30/25 ‡ Appointed to board on 06/30/25

Secretary of State: Walter T. Mosley	Designee: Matthew Tebo
Dept. of Environmental Conservation Commissioner: Amanda Lefton	Designee: Joe Zalewski
Dept. of Economic Development Commissioner: Hope Knight	Designee: Stephen Hunt



Year In Review

January

- Adopted a resolution finding the amendment to the **1986 Mt Van Hoevenberg Unit Management Plan** to be in conformance with the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan.
- Hosted presentation from the **Development Authority of the North Country on the North Country Regional Economic Development Council's NEXT MOVE NY program**. This award-winning strategy works to strengthen workforce opportunities for transitioning Fort Drum soldiers and their families with employment opportunities across the North Country.

February

- Staff provided **comprehensive overview of Eurasian watermilfoil control post-treatment reports** for eight Agency-permitted herbicide treatments.
- Hosted a **Community Spotlight presentation** with the Town of Waverly.

May

- Approved a permit for Eagle Lake Property Owners, Inc. to apply **ProcellaCOR EC in Eagle Lake** (P2025-0065).
- Approved a permit for the Mountain View Association to apply **ProcellaCOR EC in Mountain View Lake** (P2025-0052).
- Approved a permit for Elk Lake Land Inc. to **construct a single-family dwelling and related development** (P2024-0725).
- Hosted a **Community Spotlight presentation** with the Town of Elizabethtown.

June

- Approved a permit for the Chateaugay Lake Foundation to apply **ProcellaCOR EC in Upper Chateaugay Lake** (P2025-0078).
- Deliberated the **proposed 2024-2025 Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan amendments** package.

August

- Authorized joint public comment periods with the NYSDEC for public drafts of the **Lincoln Pond and Lake Luzerne Campground Unit Management Plans**.
- Deliberated the **proposed 2024-2025 Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan amendments** package.

September

- Recommended that the **proposed 2024-2025 Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan amendments** be approved by the Governor (Approved by Gov. Hochul in November).
- Approved a permit authorizing the development of a **5MW solar generation facility** in the Town of Ausable (P2025-0015).

October

- Approved a permit authorizing the **expansion of an existing RV resort** in the Town of Mayfield (P2024-0270).
- Authorized a **public hearing and comment period for a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement** for proposed amendments to the official Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan Map in the Town of Lake Luzerne (MA2025-01).

- Hosted a **Community Spotlight presentation** with the Village of Tupper Lake.

November

- Adopted a resolution finding the proposed **Lincoln Pond and Lake Luzerne Campground Unit Management Plans** to be in conformance with the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan.
- Sent a **proposed weapons range for testing the internal ballistics of cannon barrels** to an adjudicatory hearing to provide comprehensive review (P2021-0276).



Local Government Review Board Exective Director Jerry Delaney at the 2025 Adirondack Planning Forum

Pressured Peatlands

In many ways, peatlands resemble—in miniature—the rolling hills of the American central plains. Across their mossy surface they rise and fall in what are known as hummocks (dry hills) and hollows (wet depressions), giving the impression of an undulating mat of vegetation.

Roughly a dozen *Sphagnum* moss species dominate these areas, with each equipped to handle varying levels of moisture, oxygen, and overall exposure. These mosses are essential to peatlands, as they absorb substantial amounts of water and act as “ecosystem engineers” by controlling the rate that organic matter decays.

In the late 1970s, a group of researchers waded into Bloomingdale Bog and Ray Brook Bog to better understand how these species were distributed between hummocks and hollows. Their surveys found that hummock species had more vertical range, meaning that they were found more frequently throughout the bog.

This was in contrast to the hollow species, which rely more heavily on wet, low oxygen habitats. This suggested that hummock species had evolved structural and physiological adaptations (i.e., thicker cell walls and enhanced water-holding capacity) that make them more tolerant to environmental changes.



A colorful mat of *Sphagnum* mosses in Ray Brook Bog.

But in the nearly fifty years since this study, global climate change has emerged as a formidable threat to peatland ecosystems, particularly in regions like the Adirondack Park. Rising temperatures, altered precipitation patterns, and increased frequency of extreme weather events have the potential to disrupt the delicate balance of these environments, impacting water table depths and, as a result, where *Sphagnum* species can be found. *Sphagnum* mosses are highly sensitive to changes in water levels, and prolonged drought conditions can dry them out and impair their ability to sequester carbon within peatlands.

Which begets the question: How have *Sphagnum* species changed over that time? And can we attribute it to climate change? To find the answer, the Agency’s RASS staff returned to these bogs to assess if and how these *Sphagnum* communities—and the peatlands they support—had changed.

Shifts in *Sphagnum*

To measure changes in *Sphagnum* species at Bloomingdale Bog and Ray Brook Bog, Agency staff used a line-intercept method to determine community composition. When identification in the field was uncertain, specimens were collected and returned to the lab to be examined under a microscope. After completing these surveys, staff found that there was a marked increase in hummock-associated *Sphagnum* species, coupled with a decline in hollow species in both bogs.

Under stable hydrological conditions, transitions from hollow to hummock *Sphagnum* species are not unusual and can occur slowly—often over 50-200 years—in natural successional

dynamics. However, studies have also shown an accelerated rate of change (10 years) can occur when species are faced with environmental stressors, like temperature increases or prolonged periods of dry weather. These shifts



Supervisor, Natural Resource Analysis Dr. Elizabeth Schuyler and Bryologist Tom Phillips survey for *Sphagnum* mosses.

are more pronounced in hollow-dominate species as they are more vulnerable to small changes compared to hummock species, which are more drought-resistant. In the case of both bogs, the shift in species composition was at an accelerated rate compared to natural succession, suggesting a response to environmental changes, including alterations in water table levels and climatic factors over the past nearly half-century.

Furthermore, given that both the Ray Brook and Bloomingdale bogs are ombrotrophic, meaning that they rely solely on precipitation for their water, they are particularly susceptible to the effects of prolonged periods without rain. The observed increase in species associated with drier conditions and the reduction of species favoring wetter microhabitats strongly suggest that longer, punctuated periods of no rain are influencing *Sphagnum* community composition.



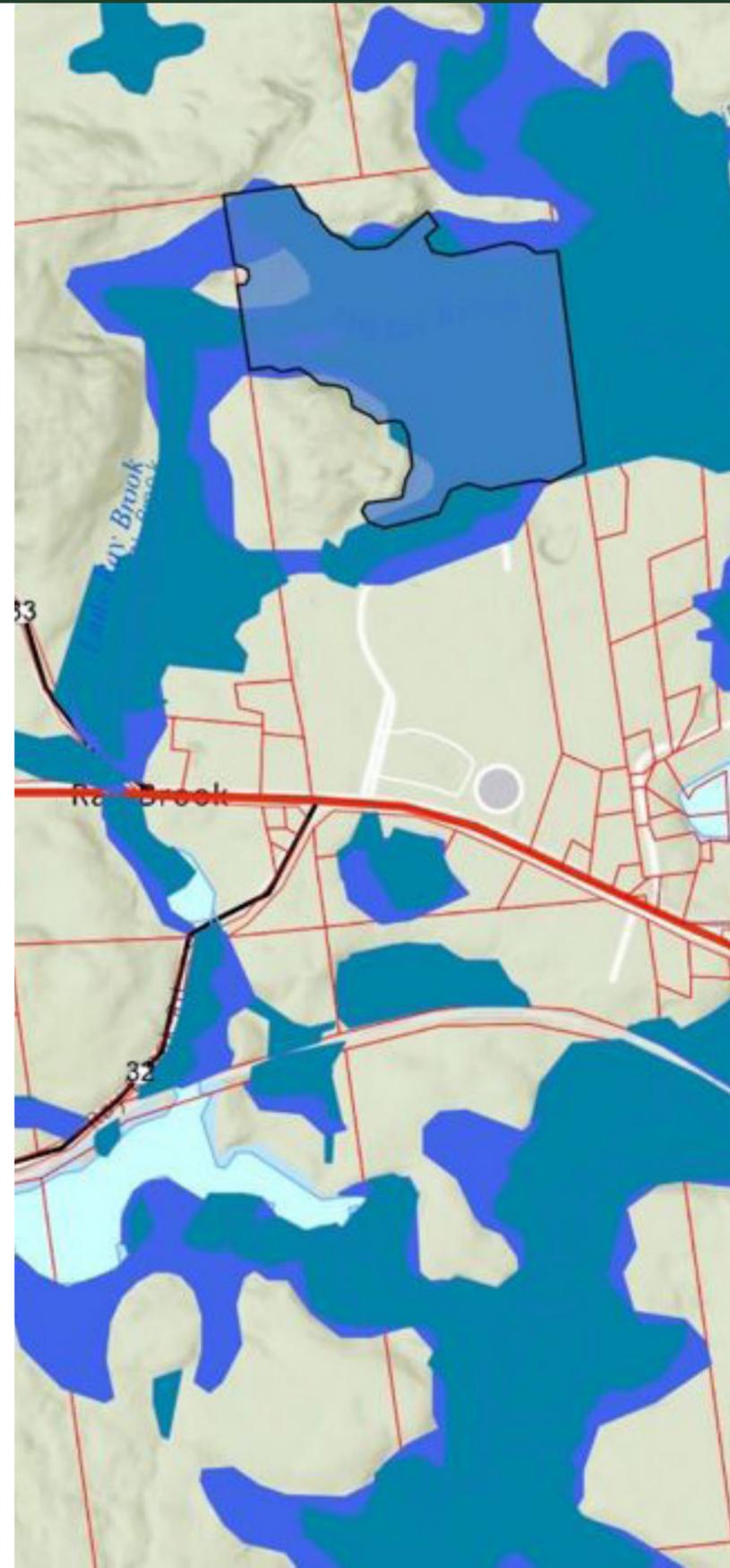
Wetland Biologist 1 Casey Young identifies moss samples under a microscope as a part of the study.

A Bellwether for the Park

This shift in *Sphagnum* species can significantly impact peatland hydrology, carbon dynamics, and biodiversity. The potential acceleration of peatland succession towards more hummock-dominated states warrants continued monitoring and detailed studies to better understand the specific mechanisms creating these changes. Recognizing these shifts is critical for informed conservation and management strategies aimed at preserving peatland wetness, biodiversity, and carbon storage functions amid ongoing environmental change.

However, limited datasets for the region make it difficult to fully characterize these intra-seasonal dry spells or their drivers. Consequently, while regional climate trends point to wetter conditions, the occurrence of prolonged rain-free periods highlights the complexity of these environmental dynamics and underscores the need for more localized, high-frequency monitoring to better capture variability across the Adirondack Park.

Overall, this indicates that the Adirondacks may be more susceptible to the impacts of climate change than previously assumed. Although long-term seasonal and annual precipitation data indicate that the Adirondack region is generally becoming wetter, emerging patterns suggest an increase in the frequency and duration of dry spells. These extended intervals without rainfall may have important ecological implications, particularly for sensitive systems such as wetland species.



Modernizing Wetland Mapping

Over the summer, the APA hired a GIS intern to work across the Resource Analysis and Scientific Services and Planning divisions to advance the Agency's capabilities in wetland data management and field operations. Agency staff conduct over 200 wetland site visits every year as a part of project review, so ensuring that the staff are equipped with the best available technology is key to providing an efficient and accurate service to the public.

The Agency's GIS intern tackled this need by integrating the field data collection process for wetland delineations into ArcGIS Field Maps. This involved developing a phone application complete with layered offline-accessible maps, including land classifications, air photo interpretations, color infrared imagery, and APA wetland basemaps.

Agency staff are now able to use this application to mark points and paths for wetland delineations, which are easily uploaded to the Agency's wetland database and mapping software for project review. As a result, the Agency's delineation services are both more efficient and more protective of wetlands.

Left: A screenshot of the wetland mapping application showing known wetlands in blue.

Increasing Transparency

Social Media

Last year staff increased transparency through the innovative use of technology. This included the creative use of social media channels to raise awareness of agency actions and the production of a series of educational videos.

The video series included educational content regarding APA land use classifications, GIS mapping resources, the jurisdictional inquiry process, public comment opportunities and the Headquarters dashboard. In addition, social media tools supported public outreach efforts to promote the Adirondack Planning Forum, the 2025 annual report and state level-priorities such as grant opportunities for local governments.

Integration of social media tools allowed the Agency to broaden understanding through engaging social media followers on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. By year's end the agency had nearly 8,500 followers.



Website Overhaul

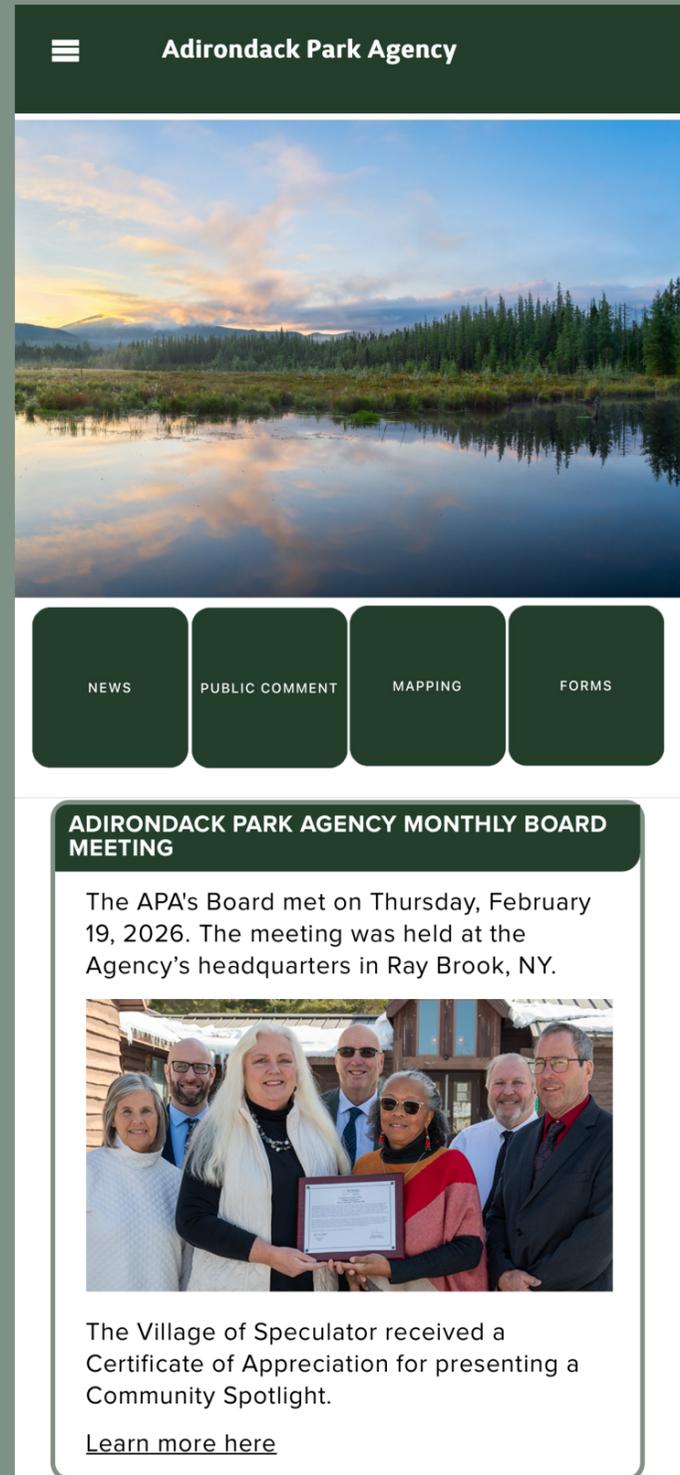
Through outstanding teamwork and collaboration, a major overhaul of the Agency's website was completed in 2025. The goal was to modernize the website to implement best management practices to ensure the site was well-designed and maintained. The existing website was out of alignment with modern website interfaces.

This year-long project involved input from all divisions and was led by an internal working group with web development expertise. Revisions were made based on input from staff, informed by website analytics and guided by current website development best practices. Staff conducted an extensive inventory of existing content to identify outdated and duplicated information, removing data once determined as no longer be relevant. The legacy website was archived for historical records management purposes.

The new website layout and design was implemented to better support the public's need to access information and communicate with the Agency. The site fully aligns with modern website interfaces and adheres to best management practices. The revised site includes a reorganized layout and new user interface tools to better guide people to content. These improvements make it easier for the public and staff to locate and access agency information. More abilities for the public to communicate through the web to staff were also added.

Staff established internal management protocols to ensure information remains current. These procedures also increase accountability for updates, so they are timely and accurate. The site was successfully launched in May with minimal interruptions to the public and supports core goals of our transparency plan. All work was completed inhouse at a substantial cost savings compared to outsourcing.

SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT (YTD COMPARED TO 2024)				
Platform	New Followers	Impressions	Reactions/Likes	Posts
Facebook	933 ▲222%	29,753 ▲270%	4,520 ▲112%	213 ▲188%
Instagram	1,790 ▲1,589%	161,807 ▲227%	3,523 ▲698%	211 ▲604%
LinkedIn	541 ▲52%	48,711 ▲152%	3,293 ▲137%	113 ▲198%



Mobile view of the updated APA website homepage.

Connecting Communities

Under Governor Hochul’s leadership, the Adirondack Park Agency has prioritized outreach to local elected officials to better understand the unique challenges that confront them and to connect them with available state resources. This has included providing information about the Agency, discussing state grant programs beneficial to small communities, and increasing dialogue between communities and the Agency.

Through listening tours across the Park, we know that local leaders and their communities are facing increasingly complex and costly challenges. These include community

revitalization projects, public infrastructure planning, municipal broadband, climate resiliency efforts, and affordable housing. All of these issues are compounded by a climate change-driven increase in major storm events in the Park, which have damaged infrastructure through flooding and threaten to overwhelm local planning capacity.

To address these needs, the Agency furthered its efforts to connect local governments with state resources through direct outreach and a roundtable event at the 2025 Adirondack Planning Forum.



Town of Ausable Supervisor Tim Bresett (center) speaking during the Local Government Roundtable event with New York Secretary of State Walter T. Mosley (right) listening on. The towns of Ausable and Chesterfeild were awarded the first NY Forward grant in the Park.



Over 250 representatives from local governments, nonprofits, state agencies, and more attended the 2025 Adirondack Planning Forum.

Water Win

Over the summer, Governor Hochul announced the completion of a critical \$3.1 million wastewater infrastructure improvement project in the Town of Westport, Essex County. This was supported through grant and interest free financing provided by the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Environmental Facilities Corporation, which together allowed the town to upgrade its wastewater system without impacting local taxpayers.

This was part of Governor Hochul’s comprehensive affordability and clean water agenda to help ensure communities statewide have access to safe and sustainable water systems. This has included allocating a total of \$263 million to Adirondack communities this year.

This project provides a model for how other Adirondack Park towns can leverage state resources to tackle wastewater and septic challenges. The Agency is actively working through its outreach to inform Park communities about these funding sources and to get them connected with the right agencies to access them.

Right: EFC President & CEO Maureen Coleman, Town of Westport Supervisor Ike Tyler, DEC Commissioner Amanda Lefton, and APA Executive Director Barbara Rice at the ribbon cutting event.



A Roundtable Parntership

At the 2025 Adirondack Planning Forum, the Agency convened a roundtable discussion about the unique circumstances and challenges that confront the towns and villages within the Adirondack Park. Organized in partnership with the Local Government Review Board, the roundtable included commissioners from the Department of Environmental Conservation, Department of State, Environmental Facilities Corporation, and the Agency.

Local elected officials attended and engaged with state commissioners on a variety of issues impacting their communities. This also provided an opportunity for state officials to better understand the needs of Park communities, and to connect local leadership with existing programs. This included discussing key questions such as:

- What are the main issues and/or opportunities that your community faces?
- What programs have worked best for you?
- What constructive feedback would you offer to make programs more accessible for the Adirondacks and other rural communities?

The conversation at the roundtable was robust and constructive. Community leaders expressed opportunities for improvements but also highlighted the transformative nature of many existing state programs. Sitting alongside New York Secretary of State Walter T. Mosley, Town of Ausable Supervisor Tim Bressett was one such voice, as he pointed to the value that NY Forward—a new version of the Downtown Revitalization Program for smaller municipalities—is already bringing to his community. Opportunities like this for state and local officials to come together underscore the importance and impact of collaboration.

Traveling the Park

Building on last year’s outreach to local governments, Executive Director Rice continued to travel the Adirondack Park to visit with and listen to local government leaders. In 2025, this included the Towns of Jay, Westport, and Warrensburg, as well as meetings with the Essex County Board of Supervisors, Local Government



Executive Director Barbara Rice speaking with Town of Westport Supervisor Ike Tyler during a ribbon cutting event in Westport.

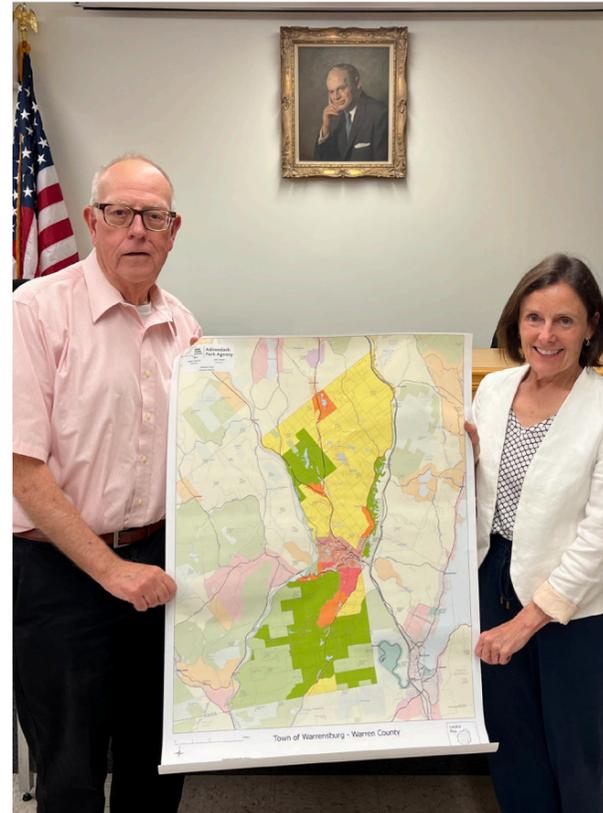
Review Board, and the Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages.

One of the highlights of this year’s visits was a ribbon cutting event in the Town of Westport for the town’s rehabilitated sewer district.

Under Governor Hochul’s leadership, the Department of Environmental Conservation and Environmental Facilities Corporation supported the project with a combination of grants and interest-free financing packaging totaling \$3.1 million.

The resulting improvements not only enhanced the reliability and resiliency of wastewater treatment operations but also achieved two critical outcomes: it improved protections for Lake Champlain’s water quality and it did so while minimizing impacts to local taxpayers.

This is just one way that New York State is working support the communities of the Adirondack Park and the North Country more broadly. State programs such as this are readily available for communities across the region to address many of the challenges that they currently face. Heading into 2026, Executive Director Rice will continue to meet with local leaders to engage in dialogue and guide them toward these critical state programs.



Executive Director Barbara Rice meeting with Warren County Board of Supervisors Chair Kevin Geraghty.



Leaders from state agencies and local government discussing Adirondack Park issues during the 2025 Adirondack Planning Forum.

Headquarters Project Update

The Agency is planning to replace its 1970s-era headquarters building located in Ray Brook, NY. The preferred site for the new headquarters is at 1-3 Main Street in Saranac Lake, NY. This proposal would be a \$40M investment to restore the historic Paul Smith Electric Light and Power building and construct a new energy efficient office building.

Combined, the buildings would create approximately 26,000 square feet of office and meeting space. The adjacent Powerhouse building would be adaptively reused as the Agency’s conference room as well as a meeting space that would be available to the community. Other site improvements would include increased public parking that will be available during evenings and weekends and stormwater improvements to protect the Saranac River. In addition, there will be access enhancements to the Village’s riverwalk, a non-motorized boat launch and the Northern Forest Canoe Trail.

This proposed project is a generational opportunity to integrate the Agency into one of the largest villages in the Adirondack Park and directly support sustainable development that is fully consistent with the APA Act and smart growth strategies.

In 2025 a professional consultation report was completed. This report determined the site was a feasible location for APA Headquarters.

Work included:

- Site Survey
- Site, Utility, and Grading Plan
- Phase One and Two Environmental Assessments
- Geotechnical Exploration Report
- Geotechnical Data Report: Stormwater Report
- Pre-Renovation Asbestos, Lead-Based Paint, and PCB Caulk Survey (Renovation of Historic Building component)

All reports are posted to APA website: www.apa.ny.gov/headquarters-project



Above and Above Right: Draft renderings of the proposed headquarters site at 1-3 Main Street in Saranac Lake.

The APA and OGS completed schematic design work informed by surveying APA divisional staff workspace needs and have begun preparing building designs plans in anticipation of going out to bid for project construction in 2026. In addition, APA and the Village of Saranac Lake agreed to a Term Sheet in October of 2025 and are working to finalize a long-term lease.

Recognitions

- **Michelle Capone and Ben Cruz** for their work to strengthen workforce opportunities for transitioning soldiers and their families across the North Country.
- **Town of Waverly Supervisor Ernest Witkowski and Historian Cory Haynes** for their dedication and hard work on behalf of their community.
- **Sunita Halasz and Jen Kretser** for their work to foster meaningful dialogue about the impacts of climate change on the Adirondack Park and its communities.
- **Town of Elizabethtown Supervisor Cathy Reusser** for her dedication and hard work on behalf of her community.
- **Julia Goren** for her work to steward the Adirondack Rail Trail so that it continues to benefit the Adirondack Park and all who are connected to it.
- **Village of Tupper Lake Mayor Mary Fontana** for her dedication and hard work on behalf of her community.

Thank You, Chair Ernst

After 9 years of service as a board member and four years as chair, John Lyman Ernst retired from the Agency board on June 30th.

The Agency thanks former Chair Ernst for his incredible leadership, which included skillfully guiding the Agency through complex deliberations on long-standing regional planning issues, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic, while directly contributing to the expansion of the New York State Forest Preserve.

Chair Ernst received a citation from Governor Hochul recognizing his service at the June 2025 Agency board meeting. The Agency wishes him all the best in his retirement.



Former APA Chair John Lyman Ernst receiving a Citation in June from Governor Hochul recognizing his service.

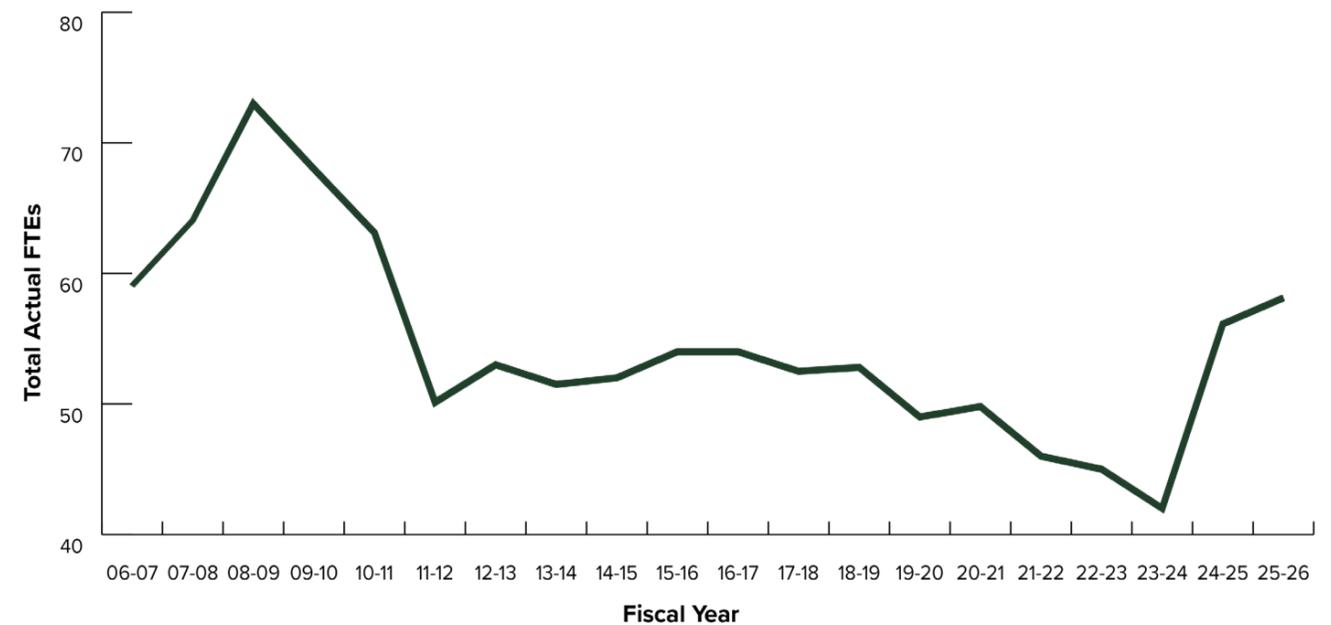
Staffing Updates

Under the leadership of Governor Hochul and with the support of the Division of Budget, the Adirondack Park Agency continues to address staffing needs throughout all divisions. Executive Director Rice and the Agency Board prioritized hiring to ensure the Agency was best positioned to effectively complete its demanding and complex workload.

The Agency grew its staffing level to 56 full-time employees in 2025 before ending the year at 52 staff. In 2025, Adirondack Park Agency staff additions and promotions by division are as follows:

- Administration: 1 new staff
- Planning: 2 new staff
- Regulatory Programs: 3 new staff, 1 promotion
- Legal: 3 new staff, 1 promotion

Agency Actual Full-Time Equivalent (FTEs)
2006-2025



By the Numbers

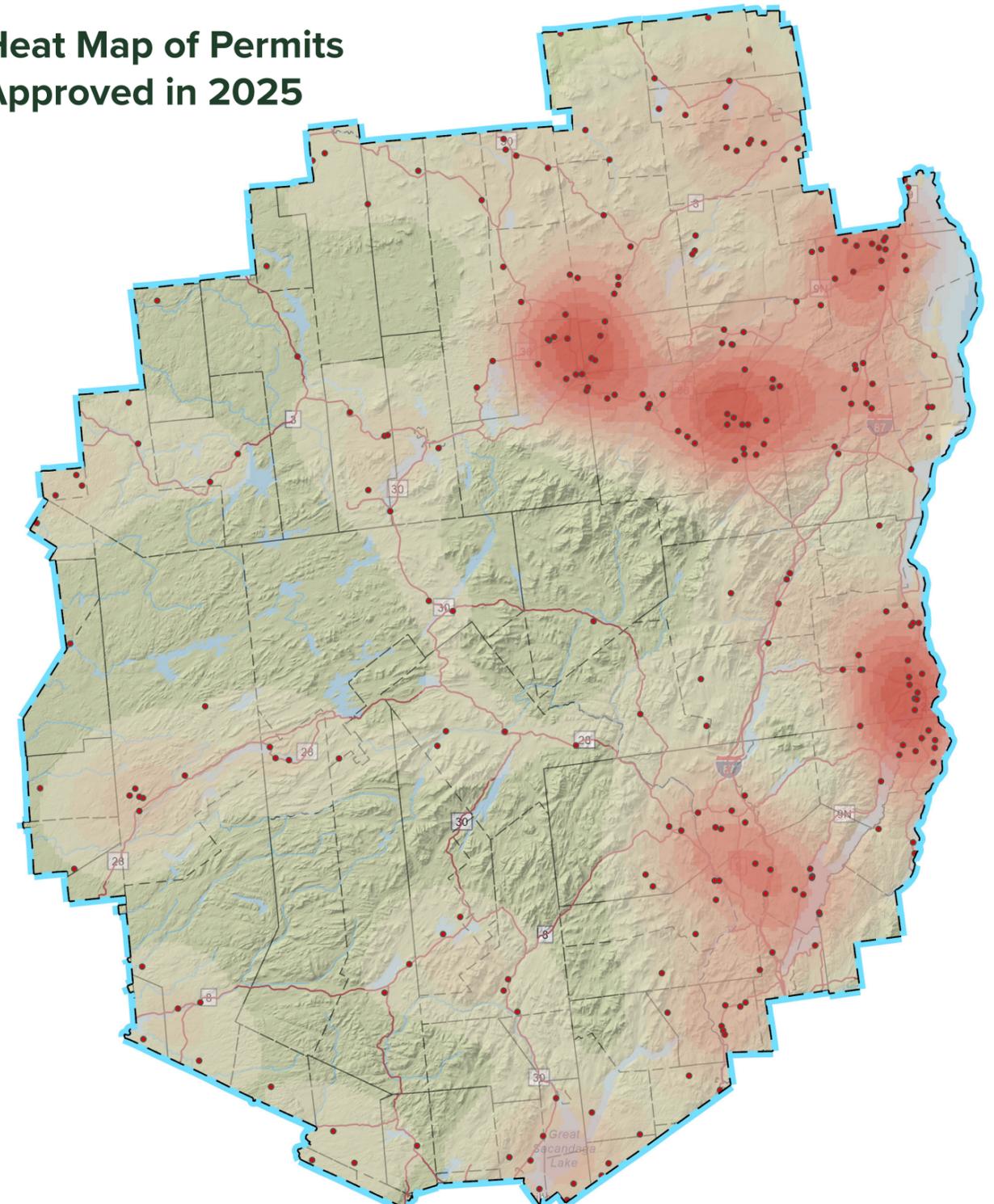
Regulatory Programs

The Regulatory Programs Division implements the statutory and regulatory provisions of the Adirondack Park Agency Act, the Freshwater Wetlands Act, and the Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers System Act. Staff review permit applications for proposed new land use and development and subdivision projects throughout the Adirondack Park, including conducting site visits and coordinating with local governments and other regulating authorities, as well as providing guidance and pre-application assistance to applicants.

PERMITS ISSUED	2024	2025
Minor Projects	93	78
Major Projects	87	76
Variances	4	6
State Agency Orders	1	2
Amendments/ Renewals	35	31
General Permits	63	66
Emergency Authorizations	30	6

MAJOR PROJECT CATEGORY	2024	2025
Subdivision	19	14
Wetlands	22	15
Public Use	2	3
Commerical Use	10	10
Tower/ Telecom	18	18
Timber Harvest	2	1
Solar	2	1
Sand & Gravel / Mineral Extraction	4	8

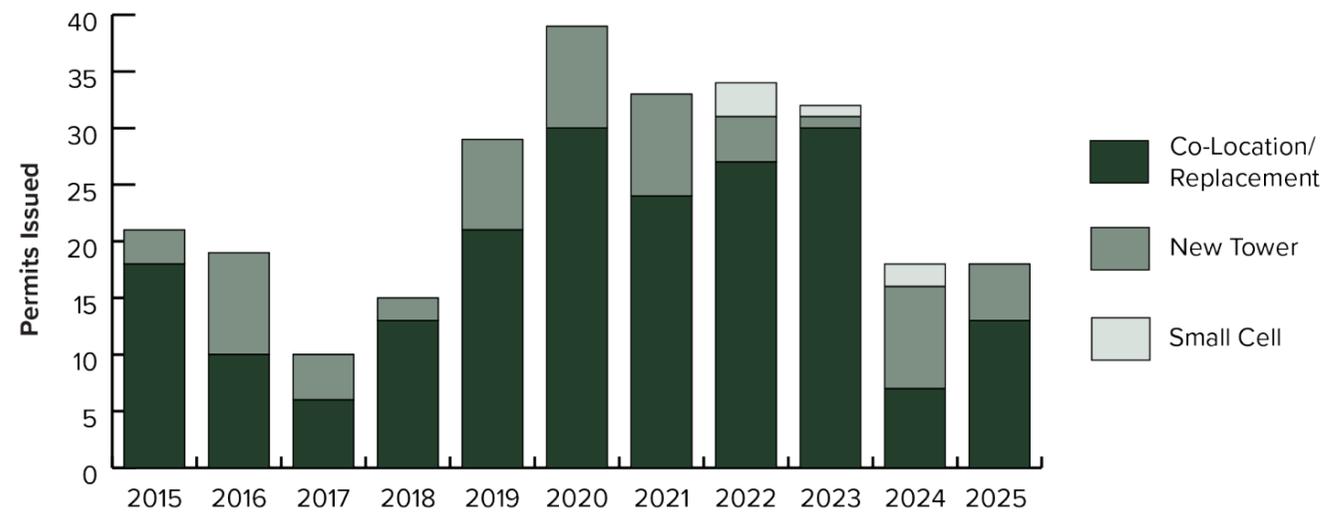
Heat Map of Permits Approved in 2025



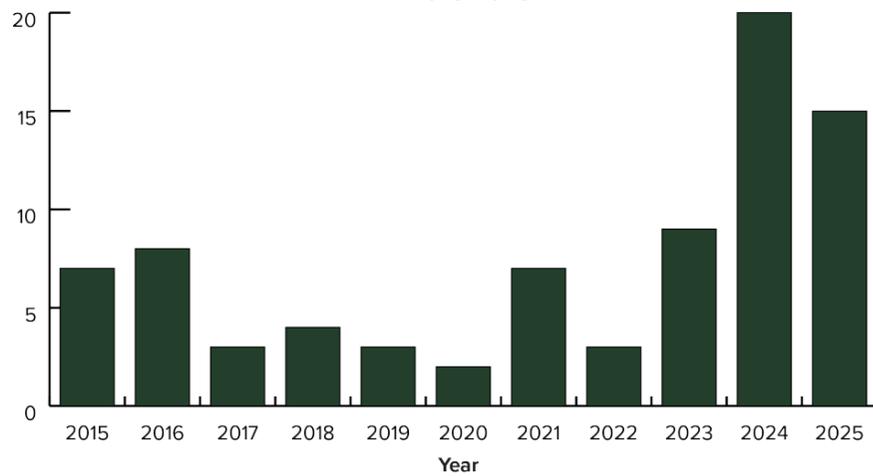
Telecommunications

The Agency is committed to working with all government officials and telecommunication providers to ensure the Adirondack Park has the most comprehensive cellular coverage in compliance with the laws and regulations the Agency is charged with administering. Since 1973, the Agency has successfully approved 608 permits for telecommunication projects inside the Adirondack Park.

**Telecom Permits Issued
2015-2025**

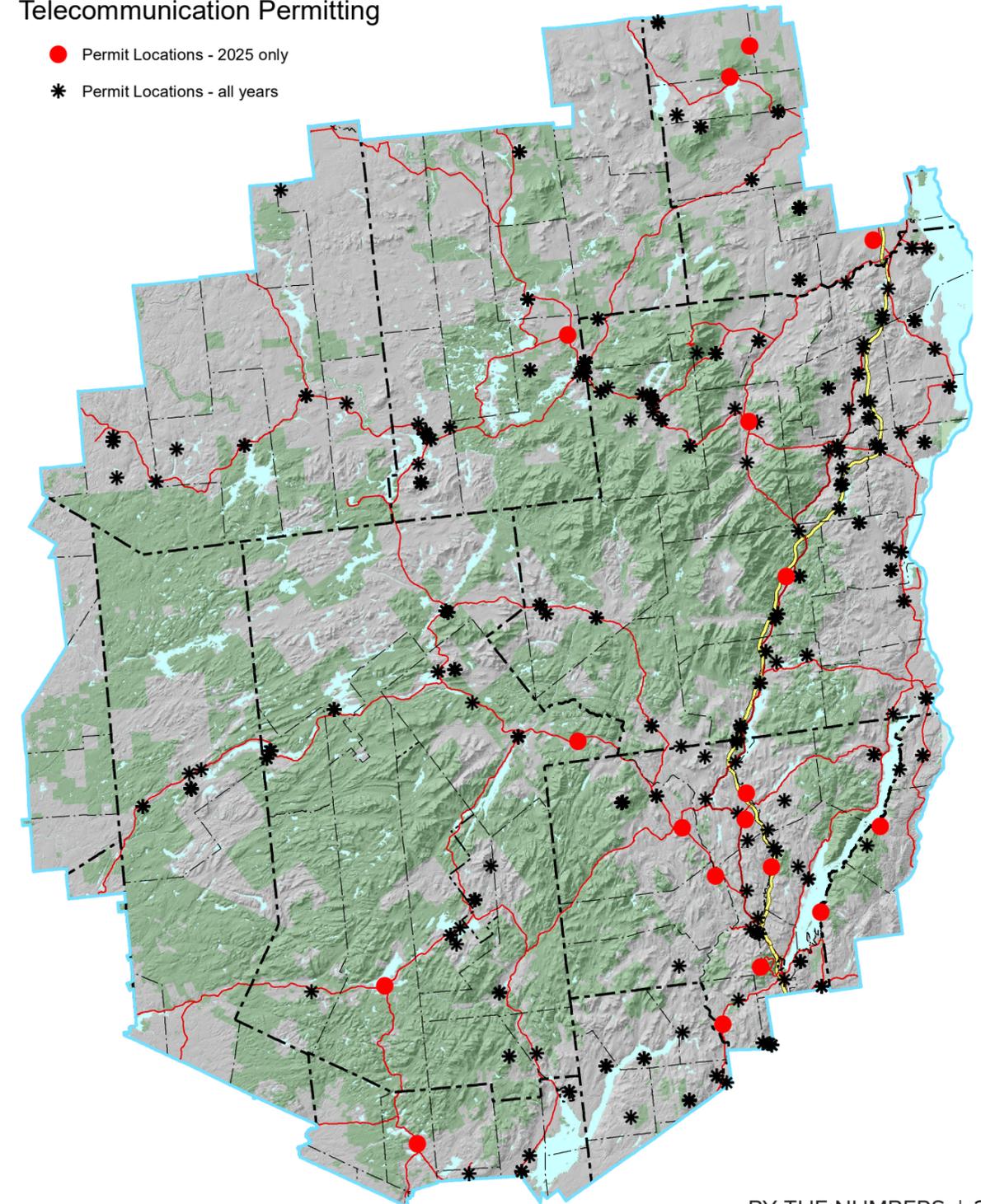


**Compliance Letters Issued
2015-2025**



Telecommunication Permitting

- Permit Locations - 2025 only
- * Permit Locations - all years



Enforcement

Staff also investigated and worked to resolve violations of the laws administered by the Agency in a fair and consistent manner that protects the resources of the Park.

ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY	2023	2024	2025
New Cases Opened	162	166	186
Settlement Agreements Signed	17	30	17
Cases Closed, Voluntary Compliance	19	27	18
Cases Closed, No Violation	46	77	78
Open Cases End of Year	358	323	345

TYPES OF ENFORCEMENT CASES OPENED IN 2025 - TOP 9					
Activity	#	Activity	#	Activity	#
Wetland Project	78	Shoreline Cutting	17	Waste Disposal Area	7
Permit Noncompliance	19	Septic w/in 100 ft of Wetland	8	Septic w/in 100 ft of Waterbody	7
Shoreline Structure	17	25-Acre Clear Cut	8	Wetland Subdivision	6

Resource Analysis & Scientific Services

Engineering

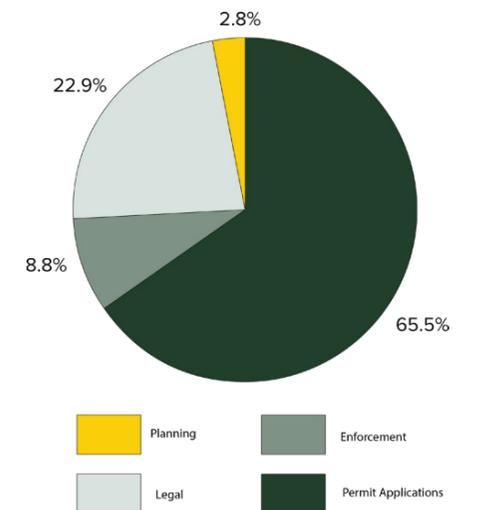
Evaluating existing and proposed development within the Park requires professional engineering services and technical analysis. Engineering staff routinely conduct site visits, evaluate professionally prepared plans and designs, and provide technical comments and design recommendations.

Evaluations include, but are not limited to: on-site wastewater treatment systems, stormwater management controls including erosion and sediment controls, mineral extractions, and shoreline development proposals including shoreline variance proposals.

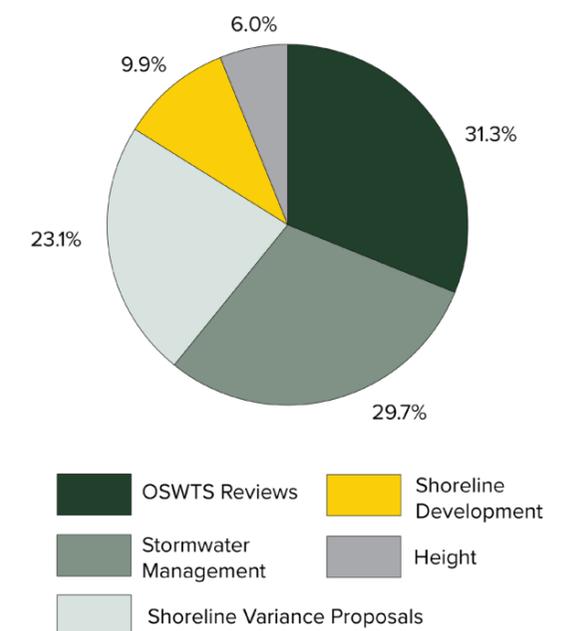
In 2025, 149 total site visits were conducted by engineering staff. Internally, engineering staff also provide written technical recommendations for divisions.

ENGINEERING TECHNICAL EVALUATIONS BY DEVELOPMENT CATEGORY	Total
On-Site Wastewater Treatment System	351
Stormwater Management	333
Shoreline Development	259
Shoreline Variance Proposal	111
Height	67

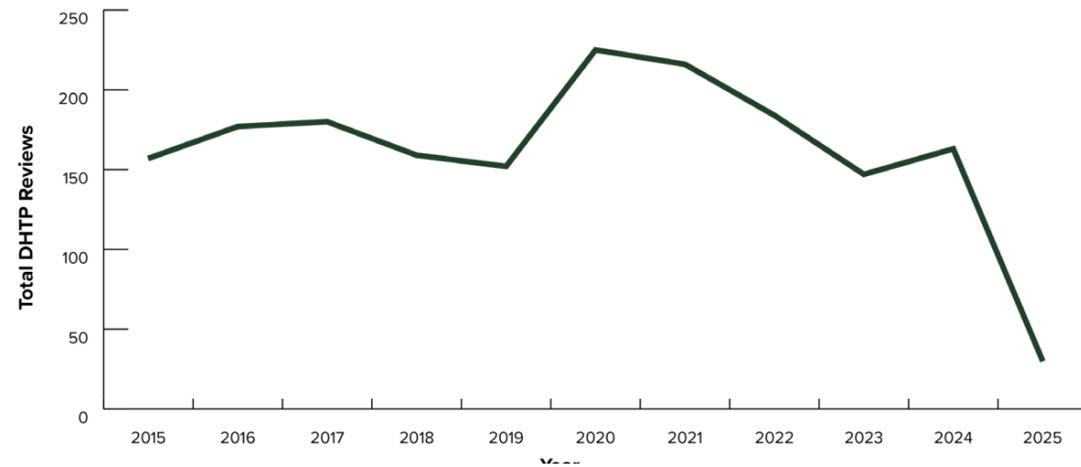
Engineering Technical Evaluations by Division



Engineering Technical Evaluations by Development Category



**Total DHTP Reviews
2015-2025**



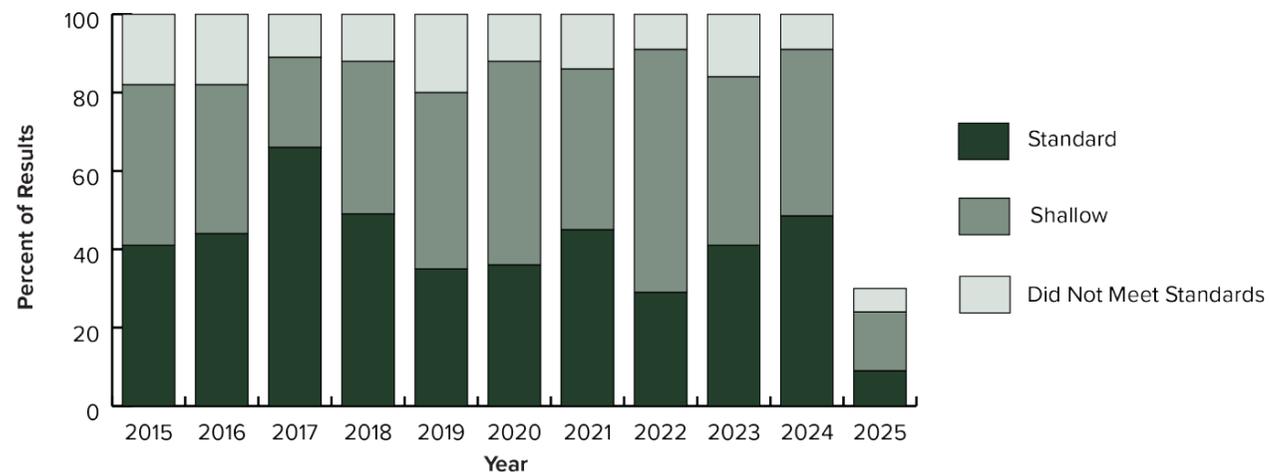
Agency engineers conducting soil analysis to identify areas suitable for environment.

Wetlands

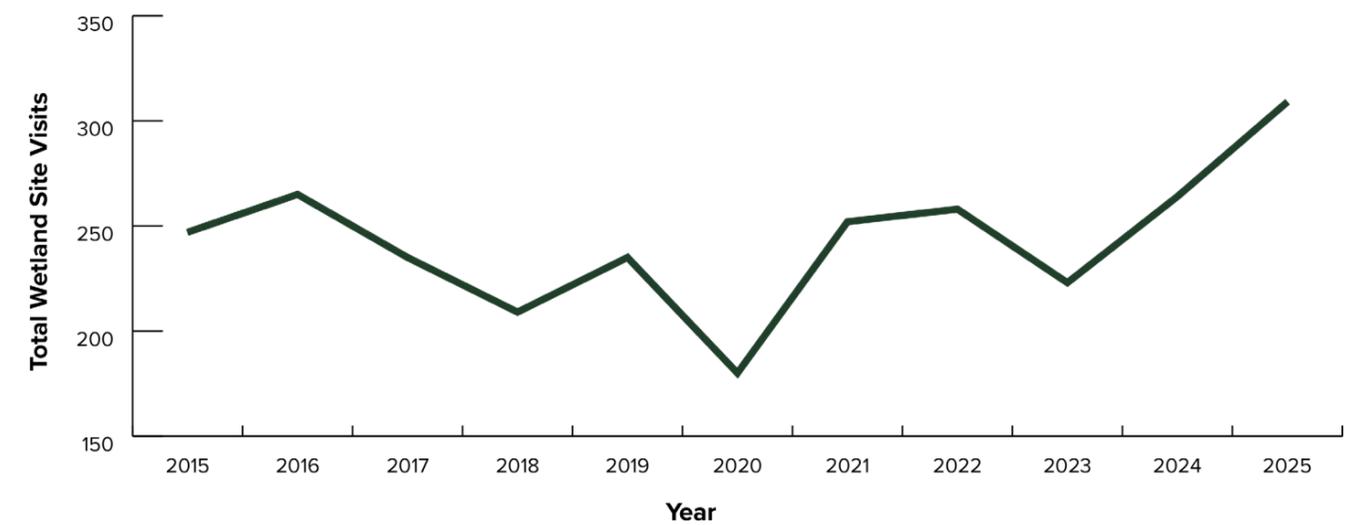
Wetland involvement is a common jurisdictional trigger. The NYS Freshwater Wetlands Act and the APA Act have stringent requirements for regulated activities involving wetlands. The agency’s wetlands protection program includes mapping, delineation, evaluation, mitigation, and impact analysis. The agency’s wetlands program is responsive to public needs and utilizes the best available technology.

WETLAND SITE VISIT STATISTICS	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Requests Received	2	1	25	37	33	38	49	47	35	39	3	0	309
Completed	0	0	0	30	37	40	56	35	48	39	24	0	309

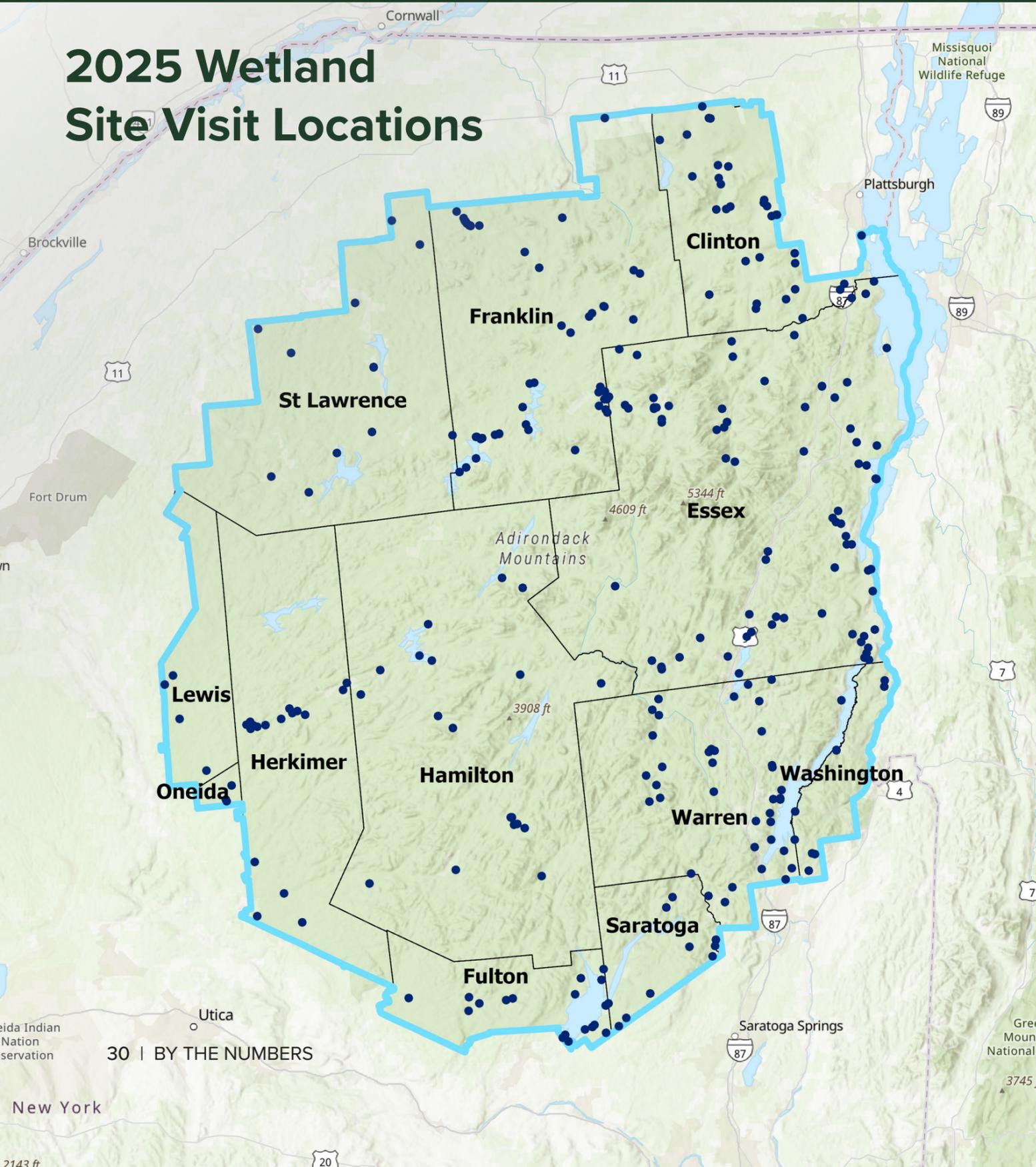
**Test Pit Results by System Type
2015-2025**



**Total Wetland Site Visits
2015-2025**



2025 Wetland Site Visit Locations



Remote Sensing

Spatial imagery interpretations are conducted with high-resolution digital stereo pairs of aerial photographs viewed with advanced hardware and software. This equipment allows staff to respond to requests for wetland determinations promptly and reduces the need for field visits.

REMOTE SENSING STATISTICS

	JIF	Referrals	Project Review	Enforcement	State Land
Total	309	30	63	23	35

WETLAND REVIEWS

	JIF	Enforcement	Project Review
Total	208	68	366



Freshwater Resources

The abundance of freshwater waterbodies is a defining characteristic of the Adirondack Park. The park contains approximately 3,745 lakes and ponds, including 50 of New York lakes greater than 100 acres in size.

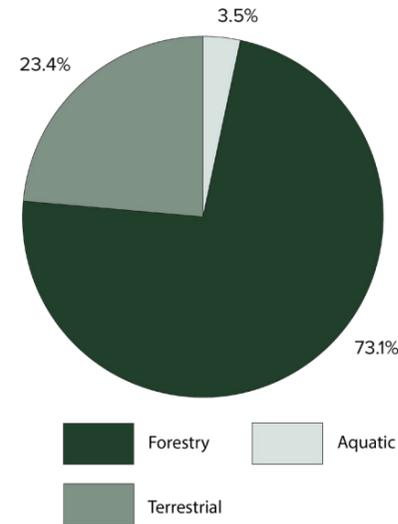
Aquatic invasive species (AIS) can cause both environmental and economic harm to these waterbodies, impairing recreational use and degrading the native habitat of fish and other wildlife. In the Adirondacks, lake and watershed organizations coordinate to prevent the spread of AIS and invest significant resources to address existing infestations.

Forest Resources

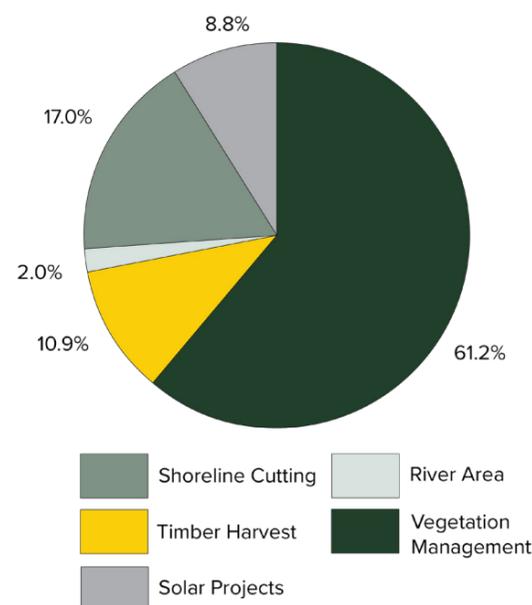
The forests of the Adirondacks are integral to the character of the park. Forests create a living landscape that provides wildlife habitat, biodiversity, purification of water resources, economic benefits, and recreational opportunities. Forests on State lands, in many cases preserved from logging for more than a century, are characterized by steadily maturing stands. Many of the privately-owned forests are managed for timber which results in younger, early succession forests. This age diversity comprises a mosaic of habitats supporting a diverse variety of flora and fauna. Ongoing human disturbance, including invasive pests and pathogens, climate disruption, acidic deposition, and poor forest management, pose a threat of significant impairment to our forests.

In reviewing proposed development, staff seek to minimize and mitigate environmental impacts associated with the removal of vegetation. Staff continue to engage with State agencies, forest health researchers, and APIPP to monitor invasive pest disturbances within the lands and waters of the Adirondack Park. Vigilance and public education regarding these threats are vital as the spread of pests and our response to them impact the health of Adirondack forests.

Reviews by Ecological Category



Forestry Profile of Project Reviews and Site Visits



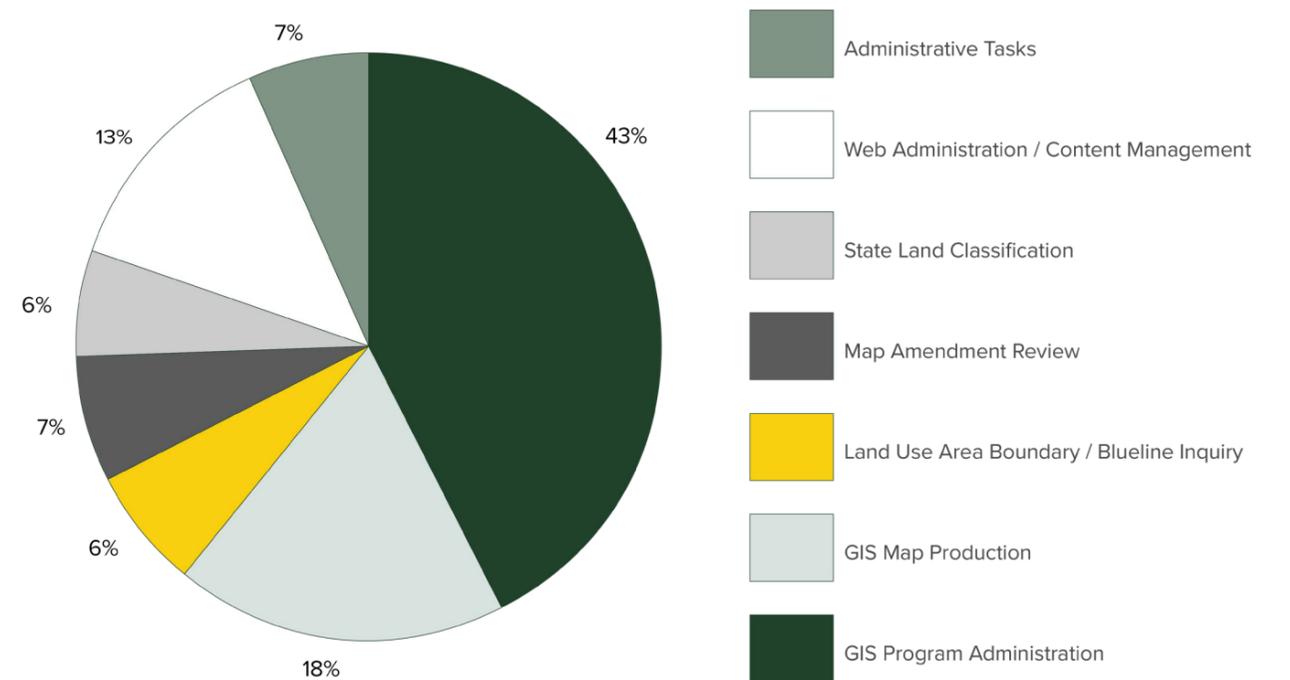
Planning

GIS

Staff administers Section 805 of the Adirondack Park Agency Act to maintain the official Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan (APLUDP) map and state land map, manages the private land map amendment process, and provides map boundary advice to other staff, state agencies, local governments, and landowners. Staff also work with state land staff to map and classify newly acquired state lands or reclassify existing lands as needed.

The Geographic Information Systems (GIS) program provides essential support to other divisions through internal mapping applications such as the APA Look Up System and EditAPA. In addition, staff support the wetland mapping program, and provide advice and technical assistance to other divisions, local governments, and the public with mapping and GIS-related questions and problems.

GIS Team Work Distribution



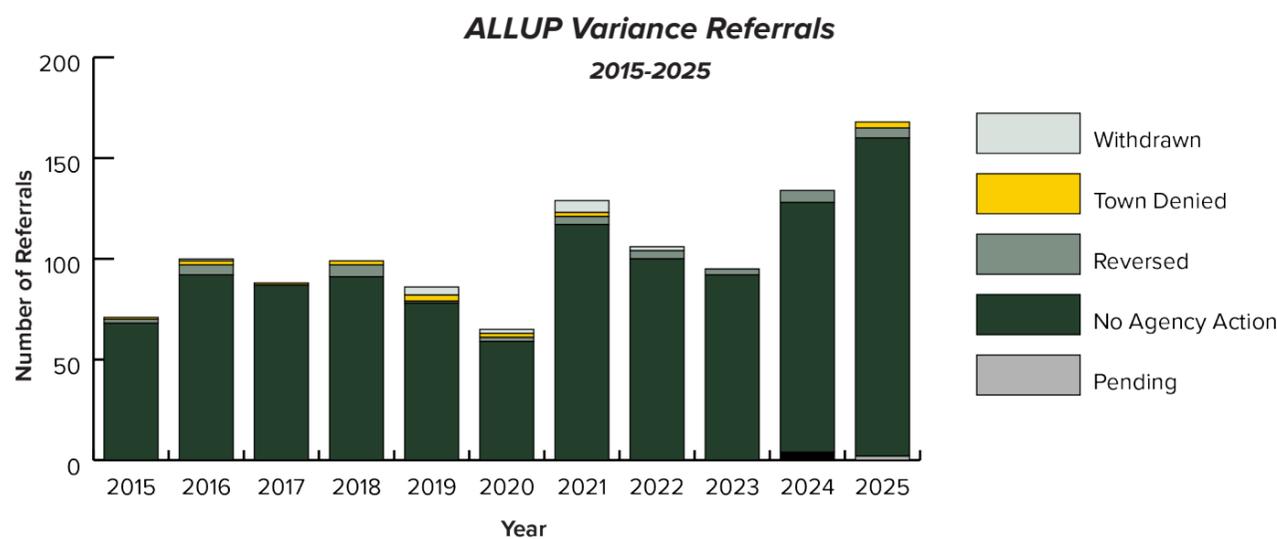
Local Government Services

The Local Government Services (LGS) Program administers Sections 807 and 808 of the Adirondack Park Agency Act and its implementing regulations. Program staff provide oversight of the eighteen Agency-approved Local Land Use Programs (ALLUPs) and review variance referrals and zoning amendments annually from the participating program municipalities. Additionally, staff respond to numerous informational requests from local officials within the Park. The workload is driven by strict statutory deadlines for responses to variance referrals and the need to provide timely responses to inquiries from elected and appointed officials.

The Agency approved 6 amendments to ALLUPs in 2025, all of which were approved pursuant to the Delegation Resolution:

- The Town of Colton proposed to add lighting requirements for projects within the Town.
- The Town of Lake George proposed to re-zone 8 parcels in its Hamlet area; changes to the Town's short term rental regulations; and added/removed specific uses from zoning districts within the Town.
- The Town of Caroga proposed to amend the Town zoning district for 4 parcels in Hamlet.
- The Town of Newcomb proposed to add a site visit requirement and survey or boundary line verification prior to approving projects.

SUMMARY OF PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND REPORTABLE ITEMS	#
ALLUP Amendments Approved by Board/by Del Res	0/6
ALLUP Variances Referred/Reversed	168/5



State Land Planning

State land staff work in partnership with the Department of Environmental Conservation to undertake planning and policy for the 2.6 million acres of state land within the Park. The Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan guides this work, which ranges from classification of state land acquisitions to unit management planning and day to day interpretation of the Plan. In 2025, the team responded to 39 consultations regarding projects on state land, shepherded 10 unit management plans through various stages of review, and completed comprehensive amendments to the Master Plan. Team members also began preparing for the next state land classification package by conducting field work at the 965-acre property along the Oswegatchie River in Town of Clifton in St. Lawrence County, which was acquired by the State in early 2025.



APA planning staff working the the field.





Legal

The Legal Division consists of the Office of Counsel, the Legal Services Unit, and the Jurisdictional Inquiry Unit. The Counsel and Associate Counsel advise all agency divisions and the agency board. Legal Division attorneys review permitting, planning, enforcement, and other documents, assist the Attorney General with litigation, manage adjudicatory hearings, and provide other legal services as necessary.

The Jurisdictional Inquiry Unit provides advice to landowners and potential project sponsors regarding agency jurisdiction, including informal phone advice and written jurisdictional determinations. The Jurisdictional Inquiry Unit also houses the Records Access Officer who responds to all Freedom of Information Law requests to the agency.

JURISDICTIONAL INQUIRY ACTIVITIES	2024	2025
JIFs Received	1,239	1,240
JIFs Responded To	1,194	1,154
<i>Non-Jurisdictional</i>	798	828
<i>Jurisdictional</i>	301	249
<i>Variance</i>	29	34
<i>General Information</i>	49	25
<i>Potential Violation</i>	17	18
Avg. Response Time (Days)	5	6
Telephone Calls	3,055	2,780
Walk-Ins	79	110
Write-Ins/Site Visits	4	4
Other Agency Referrals	383	342
FOIL Requests Received	489	400

About

The Adirondack Park

The Adirondack Park was created in 1892 by the State of New York amid concerns for the water and timber resources of the region. Today the Park is the largest publicly protected area in the contiguous United States, greater in size than Yellowstone, Everglades, Glacier, and Grand Canyon National Park combined.

The boundary of the Park encompasses approximately 6 million acres, nearly half of which belongs to all the people of New York State and is constitutionally protected to remain “forever wild” forest preserve. The remaining half of the Park is private land which includes towns, farms, timber lands, businesses, homes, and camps.

The Adirondack Park boasts over 3,000 lakes, 30,000 miles of rivers and streams, and a wide variety of habitats, including globally unique wetland types and old growth forests. The heart of the Adirondack Park is the Forest Preserve, which was created when Article XIV of the New York State Constitution was signed into law in 1885.

The state of New York owns approximately 44 percent, or roughly 2.6 million acres of land within the Park’s boundaries. The remaining private lands are devoted principally to forestry, agriculture, and open space recreation.

The Adirondack Park is unique in its intricate mixture of public and private lands. About 123,000 people live there year round in its 101 towns and villages. This blend of private and public lands give the Adirondacks a diversity found nowhere else – a diversity of open space and recreational lands, of wildlife and flora, of mountains and meadows, and people of all walks of life.

The Agency

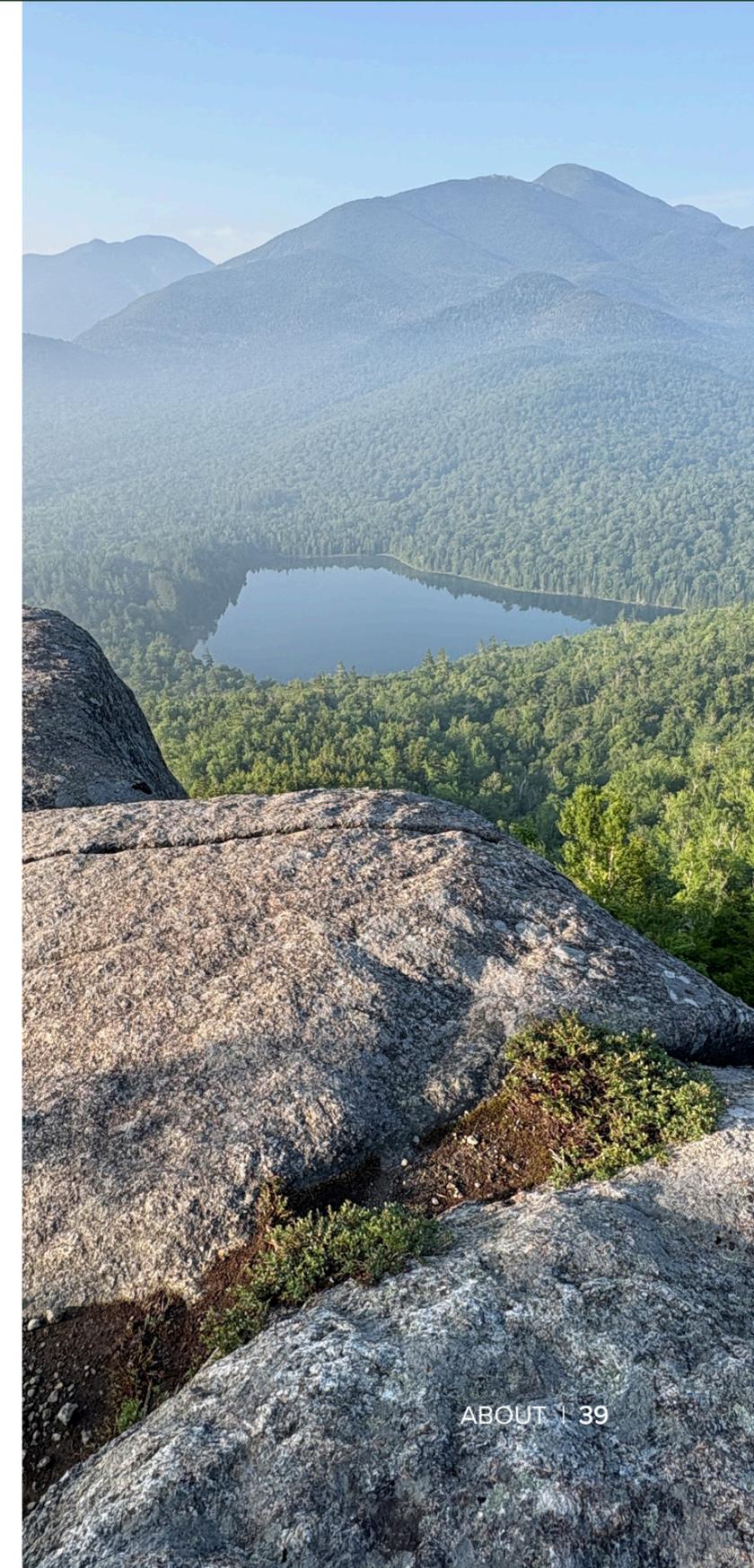
The Adirondack Park Agency (APA) was created in 1971 by the New York State Legislature with the mission to protect the public and private resources within the “Blue Line” of the Adirondack Park. The purpose of the APA Act is “to insure optimum overall conservation, development and use of the unique scenic, aesthetic, wildlife, recreational, open space, historic, ecological and natural resources of the Adirondack Park.”

The Agency administers two regional land use plans: the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan and the Adirondack Park Private Land Use and Development Plan. These documents classify State and private lands according to their characteristics and capacity to sustain use. State lands are classified in one of the following categories: Wilderness, Primitive, Canoe, Wild Forest, Intensive Use, Historic and State Administrative.

The State Land Master Plan establishes policy for the management of these lands and was developed in cooperation with the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) with approval by the Governor.

The Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan applies to private land use and development in the Park. The plan defines Agency jurisdiction and is designed to conserve the Park’s natural resources and open-space character by directing and clustering development to minimize impact.

Private lands are classified into six land use classifications: Hamlet, Moderate Intensity Use, Low Intensity Use, Rural Use, Resource Management and Industrial Use. The Agency has limited jurisdiction in Hamlet areas, extensive jurisdiction in Resource Management areas, and various degrees of jurisdiction within the other land use classifications.





**Adirondack
Park Agency**