



**Adirondack  
Park Agency**

# 2024 Annual Report

**Governor Kathy Hochul**

Chair John Ernst

Executive Director Barbara Rice

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# From the Chair & Executive Director

**T**he Adirondack Park Agency is dedicated to balancing environmental conservation and responsible development within the 6-million-acre Adirondack Park. Nowhere else can you find such a unique combination of remote wild lands and vibrant communities. The Agency Board, management, and staff work passionately every day to protect this incredible New York State asset through a combination of regulatory oversight, environmental stewardship, and land use planning.

In the 2024 annual report, we will explore three areas in which the Agency enhanced its work: science, public engagement, and community outreach. We chose to focus on these important issues because each plays a central role in guiding us toward solutions that address the challenges of today and tomorrow.

The report will highlight how staff developed GIS programs to guide solar development and community housing planning; how we engaged the public to amend the State Land Master Plan; how we worked to listen to and better understand the needs of Park communities; and more. Through each effort, we underscored our commitment to the Park, its communities, and our collective future.

The final section of the report utilizes statistics, graphs and charts to provide a comprehensive picture of the work done over the past year. This includes, but is not limited to permits

issued, ecological assessments conducted, and jurisdictional inquiries received. This information provides a clear summary of the Agency's impact on the Park.

Protecting the public and private resources of the Adirondack Park requires hard work and dedication on the part of board members, management, and staff. Looking ahead, we will continue to focus our efforts on science-based decision making, maximizing public engagement, and supporting the communities of the Park.

Through these efforts we will continue to learn and grow as an Agency. Together we will uphold New York State's great legacy of land preservation and community sustainability inside the Adirondack Park.



**John Ernst**  
*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.

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Seat</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Term</b>
Chair John Ernst	Out of Park	New York	6/30/25
Arthur Lussi	In Park	Essex	6/30/25
Daniel Wilt	In Park	Hamilton	6/30/23
Zoe Smith	In Park	Franklin	6/30/24
Mark Hall	In Park	St. Lawrence	6/30/22
Kenneth Lynch	Out of Park	Onondoga	6/30/22
Benita Law-Diao	Out of Park	Albany	6/30/24

**Department of State Designee:** Matt Tebo

**Department of Environmental Conservation Designee:** Joe Zalewski

**Department of Economic Development Designee:** Bradley Austin

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# Year In Review

## January

- As part of the **2023 State Land Classification Package**, accepted the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, and then authorized the Executive Director to prepare a findings statement and forward the classification recommendations to the Governor for approval.

## February

- Adopted resolutions finding the **Rollins Pond and Golden Beach Unit Management Plan revisions** in conformance with the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan.

## March

- Approved a permit for the Brant Lake Foundation to apply **ProcellaCOR EC in Brant Lake** to control Eurasian watermilfoil (P2023-0037).
- Approved a permit for a **four-lot subdivision for three residential building lots and one vacant lot** (P2021-0213).

## April

- Adopted a resolution finding the **Lake George Beach and Battlefield Park Unit Management Plan amendment** in conformance with the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan.

- Approved a permit for the Horseshoe Pond/Deer River Flow Association to apply **ProcellaCOR EC in Horseshoe Pond and Deer River Flow** (P2023-0038).
- Approved the adoption of a resolution for the **revocation of General Permit 2002G-3AAR and issuance of a General Permit 2024G-1** for Certain Minor Regulated Activities in APA Jurisdictional Wetlands.



## May

- **Denied a Notice of Incomplete Application (NIPA) appeal** from Michael Hopmeier of Unconventional Concepts Inc. following a fifth NIPA issuance (P2021-0276).
- Approved a permit application from USL Marina for an **expansion of the existing marina and new dock system on Fish Creek Pond** (P2022-0218).
- Approved permit for the Town of Caroga to apply **ProcellaCOR EC in East and West Caroga Lakes** (P2024-0040).



## June

- Approved two permits for the Lake George Park Commission to apply **ProcellaCOR EC in Lake George’s Sheep Meadow Bay and Blair’s Bay** (P2023-0017 & P2023-0018).
- Approved a permit for the Town of Willsboro to apply **ProcellaCOR EC in Highlands Forge Lake** (P2024-0083).
- Approved a permit for the Chateauguy Lake Foundation to apply **ProcellaCOR EC in Chateauguy Lake** (P2024-0090).

## July

- Approved a permit for the development of **a 10MW-AC community solar generation facility in Crown Point** (P2024-0046).

## September

- Authorized Agency staff to continue with the **2024 package of proposed amendments to the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan** by initiating coordinated review under the State

Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and proceeding with public hearings and a public comment period.

- Adopted resolutions finding the **Cranberry Lake Campground Unit Management Plan amendment** in conformance with the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan.

## October

- Authorized Agency staff to continue with the **proposed amendments to the Mt Van Hoevenberg Unit Management Plan** allowing for coordinated Public Comment Periods to commence.

## November

- Conditionally authorized the first five-year permit-term for the **modification and expansion of an existing mineral extraction** in the Towns of Johnsburg and Indian Lake (P2021-0245).
- Authorized the **revocation of five general permits** to standardize project review and improve consistency.



## Science and Decision-Making

The Adirondack Park Agency is actively forging a network of relationships with other natural resource agencies and environmental organizations in the Park. Last year, through working with partners and attending regional conferences we heard an overarching theme: the critical importance of collaborative, science-based approaches to addressing environmental challenges.

As a part of this, there was an emphasis on the need for interagency coordination, the integration of innovative technologies, and prioritizing community involvement in tackling issues such as invasive species,

climate adaptation, and ecosystem resilience. Furthermore, there was a clear focus on data-driven decision-making and equitable, sustainable solutions underscoring the collective effort required to manage and protect natural resources in the face of climate change.

To this end, the Agency is working to strengthen partnerships and ensure our work aligns with state-wide efforts to build resilience in natural resources protections. One way that we achieved that in 2024 was by utilizing carbon assessment data and developing a mapping tool for informed project review.



*Dr. Elizabeth Schuyler, Supervisor, Natural Resource Analysis, studies vegetation along the Bloomingdale Bog trail.*

## Forest Conservation and Solar Energy

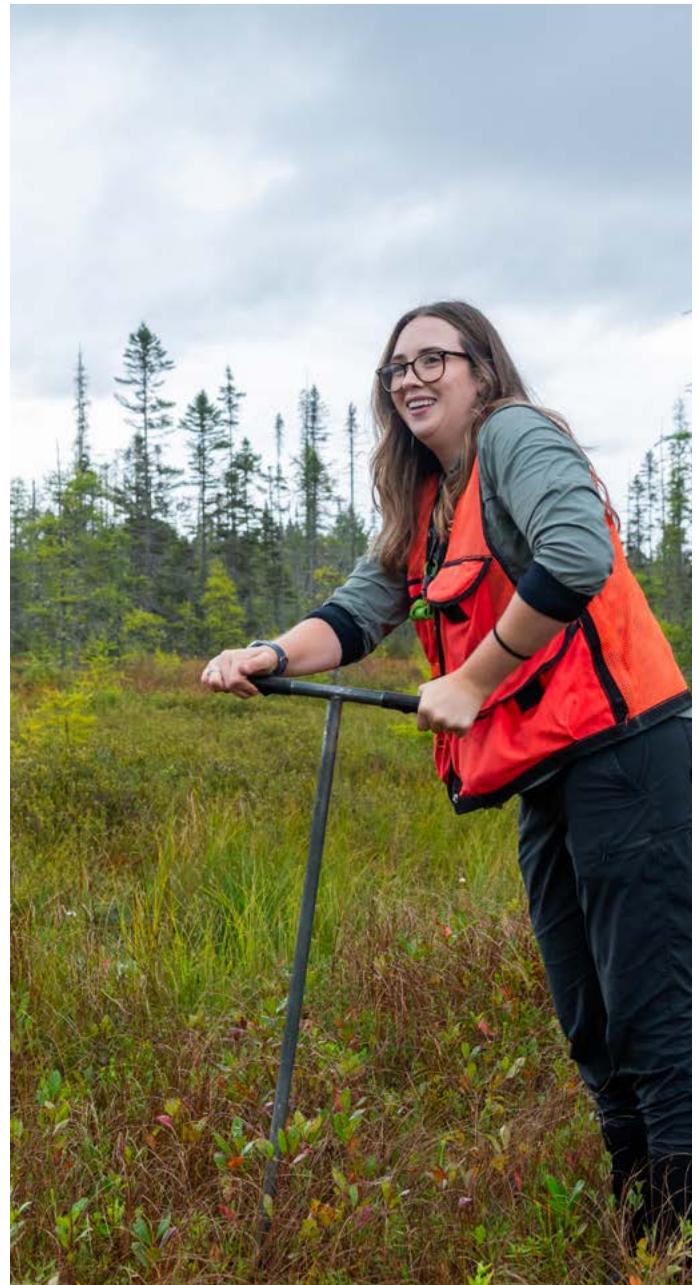
Forests in the Adirondack Park provide numerous benefits, including clean air and water, wildlife habitat, biodiversity, recreation, and resilience to the impacts of climate change. Forested areas often sequester double the amount of carbon they produce, resulting in a carbon sink.

To meet state climate goals, sustainable growth of New York's forests is required. However, statewide carbon sequestration rates have declined over the past 30 years mainly due to deforestation. This shrinking forest carbon sink has not been caused by slower-growing forests, forest pests, or overharvest but rather the conversion from forested land to other land use areas. Almost 75% of New York's forested land occurs on small parcels of private land, which are more vulnerable to deforestation due to changing markets, housing developments, and shifting land use practices.

Within the Adirondack Park, roughly 2.8 million acres, or 46% of forested land, occurs in these areas and contains parcels with the greatest potential of carbon sequestration in the state. Because of this, landowners with forested land cover must be engaged in working towards state climate goals, particularly in the Adirondack Park.

Another key strategy to meet state climate goals involves rapidly expanding solar energy. However, planning the locations for new solar energy projects will need to be strategic. Clearing forests for solar energy removes existing carbon stocks and future sequestration potential, which can be two to four times greater than on non-forested land. The ideal

locations for solar development are on marginal or transitional lands where forests are slow to regenerate or where tree growth is untenable, like brownfields, closed landfills, reclaimed mines, industrial sites, or post-agrogenic lands.



*Wetland Biologist 1 Casey Young sampling for soil cores.*

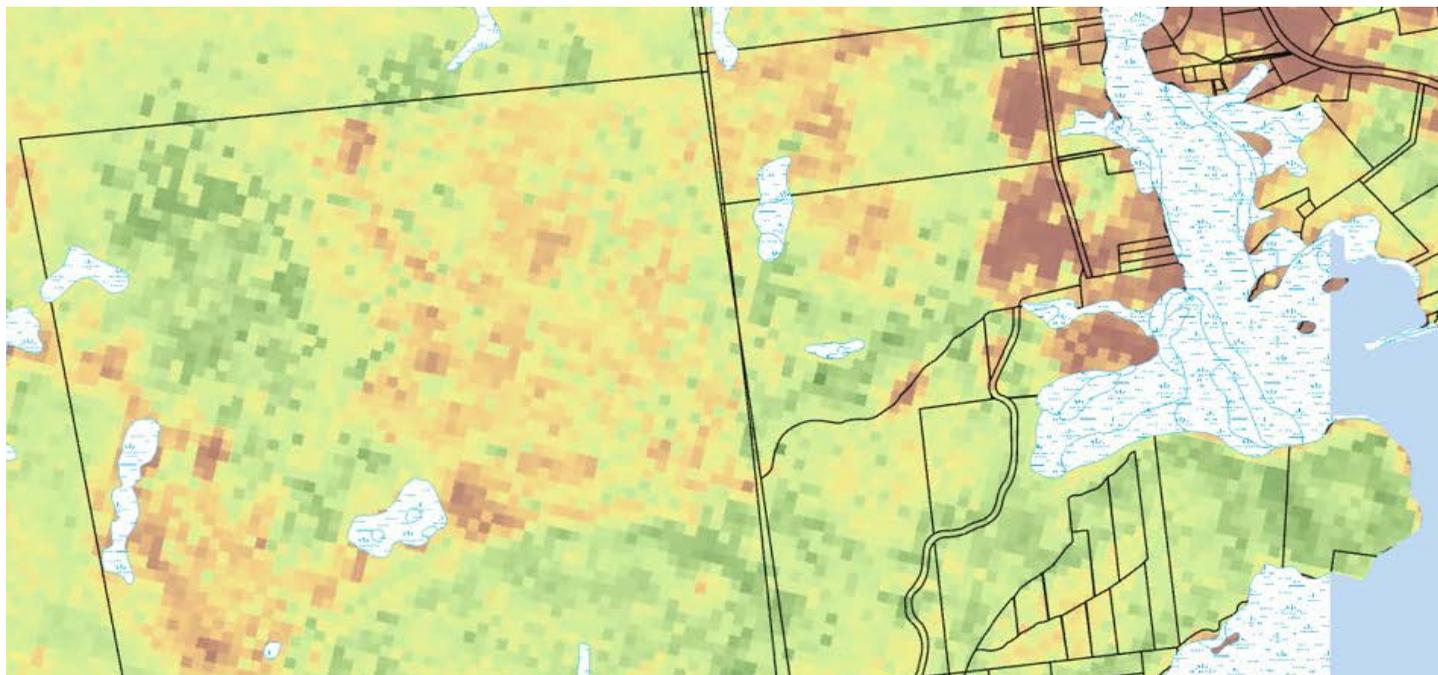
New York State is now challenged with scaling up solar development while also recognizing the instrumental role forests play in stabilizing our climate. Urgency on climate action does not justify a haphazard approach to the commonwealth. Therefore, the Adirondack Park Agency is working to adapt to new environmental challenges while protecting the Forest Preserve and overseeing development proposals of privately owned lands.

### Mapping Forest Carbon

To support this, the Agency's Resource Analysis and Scientific Services division created an ArcGIS map tool to aid staff in identifying areas where solar energy development may initially be suitable by highlighting land cover that has high carbon sequestration or storage value. In doing so, the goal was to use a scientific approach to assess the impacts of forest conversion

in the Adirondack Park. This program is not determinative and does not replace a site visit, but is rather an effective tool in a toolbox of many.

It is also important to note that forests are not static but dynamic and are in constant flux of growing rates which vary based on environmental conditions. Therefore, these maps provide an index for carbon storage and sequestration which can aid in evaluating stand performance at the landscape level. The Agency intends to revise and update the maps using the most accurate data as they become available.



*A hypothetical project area showing high carbon-value forests (light to dark green) and low carbon-value areas (yellow to brown).*



## MAPPING DEEPWATER MARSHES

Over the summer, the Agency hired an intern to support scientific efforts, particularly with surveying deepwater marshes in the Park. The internship focused on six lakes with highly developed shorelines—Lake Flower, Kiwassa Lake, Upper Saranac Lake, Upper and Lower Chateaugay Lakes, and Chazy Lake—within the Adirondack Park, aiming to support regulatory efforts through precise aquatic vegetation data collection. All measurements were surveyed from a watercraft coupled with GIS to document the extent of submerged marshes and the presence of invasive species.

Deep water marshes are critical to water quality, biodiversity, and ecosystem resilience. As such, the data gathered through this internship are essential for the Agency and partners to make informed decisions regarding conservation, land use, and compliance with environmental standards. By mapping these wetlands, the Agency can monitor ecological changes, assist with managing aquatic invasive species, and protect habitat from degradation, ensuring sustainable natural resource management in the Park.

*Left: Aaron Ziemann, Associate Adirondack Park Project Analyst Forest Resources, surveying for deepwater marshes.*

# Public Lands for All

In 2024, the Adirondack Park Agency proposed amendments to the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan. This included incorporating language addressing accessibility, climate change, and visitor use management in the Forest Preserve. The goal of these amendments was to align state land management with current and future issues so that the Park’s state lands continue to be protected and enjoyed for generations.

## What is the State Land Master Plan?

From wilderness protection to trail building to camping opportunities, the Adirondack Park

State Land Master Plan guides decision-making for nearly 2.6 million acres of state land in the Adirondack Park. First established in 1972, the unifying theme of the plan is that the:

*“...protection and preservation of the natural resources must be paramount. Human use and enjoyment of those lands should be permitted and encouraged so long as the resources in their physical and biological context as well as their social or psychological aspects are not degraded.”*

Flowing from this, the master plan guides decision making about how lands and waters under



*Brilliant fall colors as seen from Rattlesnake Knob, part of the Four Peaks Tract.*

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*Megan Phillips, Deputy Director for Planning, and Dylan Walrath, NYSDEC Environmental Program Specialist 1, enjoy the Adirondack Rail Trail in the Saranac Lakes Wild Forest.*



different classifications should be protected, enjoyed, and managed. This is directly reflected in the Unit Management Plans (UMPs) that the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) develops for each area. As such, through this document the APA and DEC collaborate to plan for management of the Park’s state lands.

### The Amendment Process

The process of amending the State Land Master Plan is meticulous and collaborative. It starts with the APA developing preliminary recommendations and consulting the DEC—the agency charged with care and custody of state lands—for their feedback on the proposals. Staff then brings the package of proposals to the APA board and seeks authorization to initiate a coordinated review under the State Environmental Quality Review Act.

Once this is complete, a feedback process starts that includes public hearings both inside and outside the Park. In 2024, the Agency held this comment period from October 3 to December 2 and hosted three public hearings to generate feedback on the following dates and locations:

- October 22, Virtual
- October 23, Wilmington
- October 29, Albany

In total, the Agency received over 1,200 public comments. Following this, revisions will be considered in consultation with DEC before the proposed final package is brought back to the Agency board for public deliberation and potential action. If the board finds the amendments to be in conformance with the State Land Master Plan, then the final plan will be moved to the Governor for her approval.



Agency staff present proposed State Land Master Plan amendments in Wilmington.

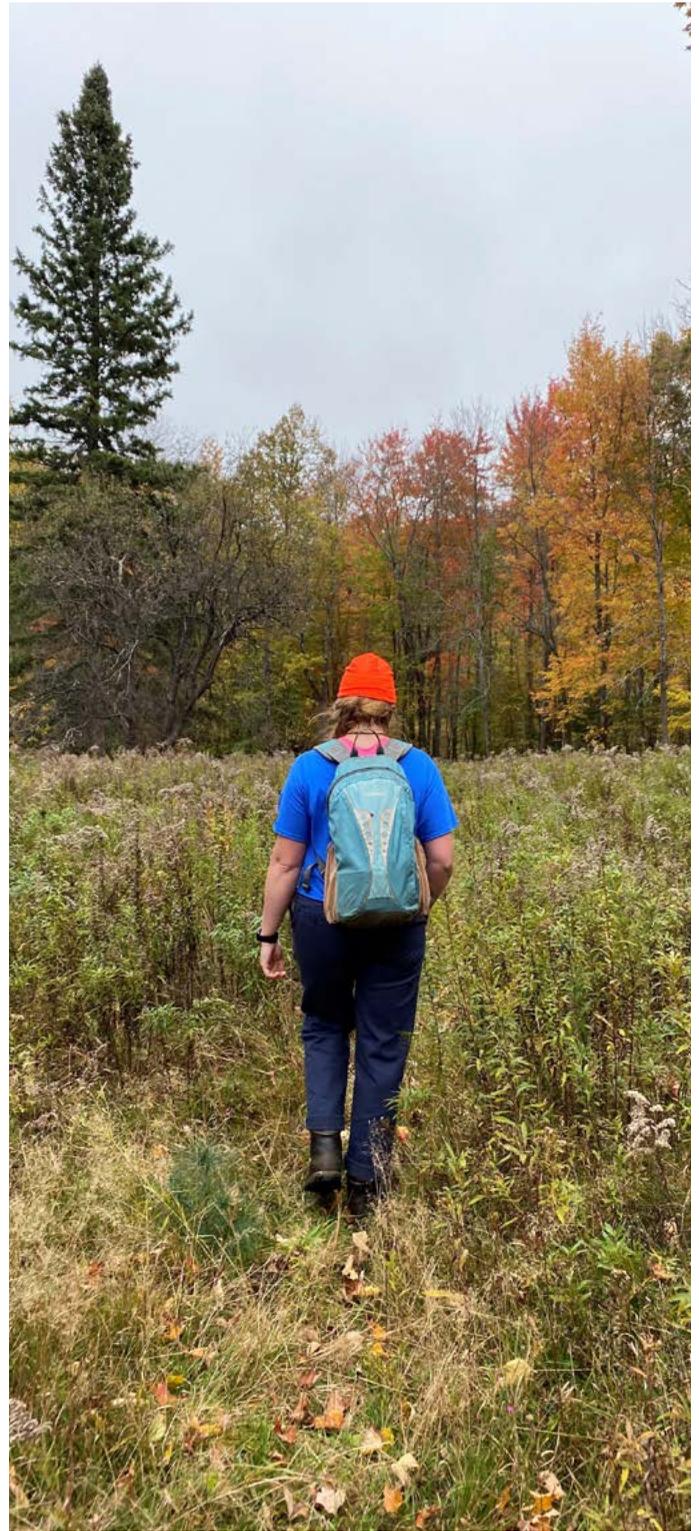
## Classifying Four Peaks

In 2024, the DEC acquired the Four Peaks Tract—a 585-acre parcel bordering the Wilmington Wild Forest in the Towns of Jay and Wilmington—and added it to the Forest Preserve. Identified in the Open Space Conservation Plan, this acquisition helped further New York’s 30x30 initiative, which aims to conserve 30% of the state’s lands and waters by 2030.

Recognizing its high public interest and appeal for recreational use, the Agency immediately began a review process to classify the tract. New state land acquisitions must go through a classification process with the Agency before the DEC can move forward with unit management planning.

Agency staff visited and reviewed the property in summer 2024. It ranges in elevation from approximately 950 feet to 1,950 feet at its highest point. Past field surveys found areas of high ecological diversity on the property, which are in part due to its setting between the Northeast Adirondack Lowlands and the High Peaks. The property also contains approximately 10 acres of APA-jurisdictional palustrine, forest broad-leaved deciduous, and broad-leaved deciduous shrub wetlands.

As such, the Agency is recommending a Wild Forest classification for the parcel, which will be considered alongside with the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan amendments. If approved, DEC, in partnership with the Agency, will develop a proposed unit management plan for public feedback and final adoption.



*Charlotte Staats, Natural Heritage Trust State Land Planner, during a field visit.*

# Listening to Communities

The Adirondack Park has often been referred to as “a park of people and nature”, a nod to its unique composition of public and private lands. Central to this are its 101 towns and villages, which represent a diverse array of rural communities, each with their own distinctive character and history. These are led by municipal leaders, who have the incredibly rewarding—but extremely demanding—job of supporting their citizens and preparing the Park’s towns and villages for the future.

Today, these leaders and their communities are facing increasingly complex and costly challenges, including community revitalization projects, public infrastructure planning,

municipal broadband, climate resiliency efforts, and affordable housing. These 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.

Recognizing their importance to the Adirondack Park, the Agency prioritized outreach to local elected officials in 2024 to better understand the unique challenges that confront them. This included providing information about the Agency, discussing state grant programs beneficial to small communities, and increasing dialogue between communities and the Agency.



*Over 250 stakeholders attended the 2024 Adirondack Park Planning Forum in Saranac Lake.*

*Executive Director Barbara Rice meeting with Town of Long Lake officials during one of numerous Adirondack Park listening tours.*



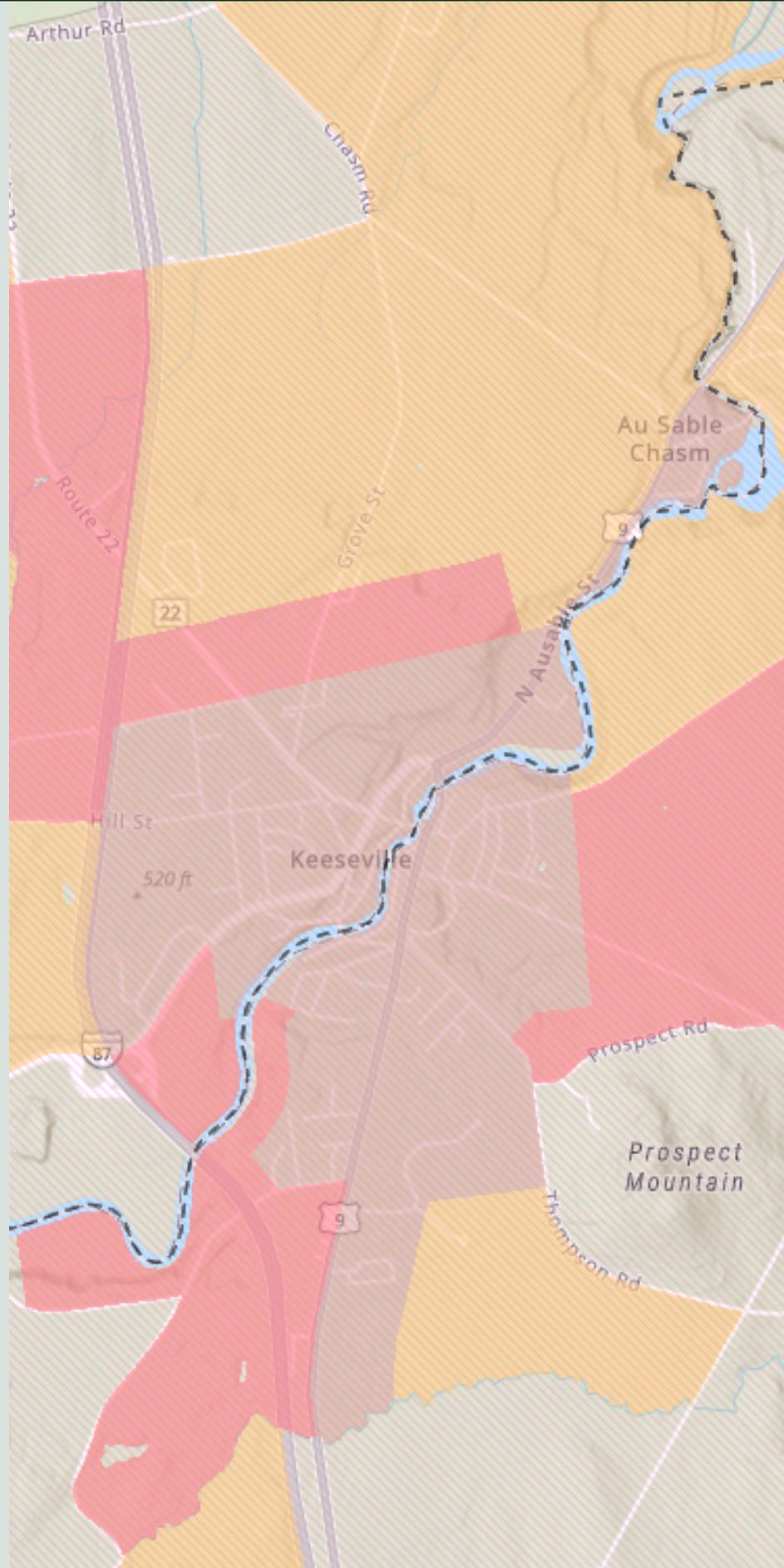
## COMMUNITY HOUSING

Attainable housing is a defining issue for communities in the Adirondack Park. In many areas, housing is often neither affordable nor available, which limits community and economic growth across the region.

The APA Act allows the Agency to authorize a 4x density bonus for housing projects in low and moderate intensity areas that meet specific criteria. Such projects are afforded more building rights specifically to address community housing needs. Historically, this has been an underutilized tool in efforts to address housing in the Park.

To support communities, developers, NGOs, and housing authorities in understanding this provision, the Agency is developing a housing mapper in GIS that shows areas where this density bonus may be possible. By providing this resource, the Agency is supporting the effort to address the housing crisis while maintaining its high environmental standard.

*Right: A draft of the Community Housing map showing areas that qualify with overlaid land classifications in red and orange.*



## Community-by-Community

In 2024, Executive Director Rice and Agency staff met with town supervisors and village mayors from the Town of Ausable in Clinton County; Towns of Elizabethtown, Moriah, North Hudson and Wilmington in Essex County; Towns of Brighton, Santa Clara, Waverly and the Village of Tupper Lake in Franklin County; Towns of Indian Lake and Long Lake in Hamilton County; the Town of Fine in St. Lawrence County and the Towns of Johnsburg and Chester in Warren County.

During these meetings, we listened to community leaders to better understand how the Agency can support them going forward. Through these listening sessions, several consistent themes emerged, including:

- **Community Wastewater:** Many communities have either aging municipal wastewater systems or lack them entirely. Affordable community wastewater systems are needed to support existing residents and to help address the significant need to expand housing opportunities and diversify the commercial basis of hamlets.
- **Flood Recovery:** The increasing frequency of 100- and 500-year storms is forcing communities to significantly draw down emergency funds, putting pressure on local planning and infrastructure. There is a growing need for funding to help small communities recover from the impacts of stormwater flooding.
- **Planning and Technical Assistance:** Many Park communities rely on part-time and volunteer work to undertake complex planning programs. This includes preparing

comprehensive plans, revising older dated local zoning codes and land use ordinances, preparing local zoning plans, and applying for grants. Community leaders expressed a strong need for technical support to assist rural communities in addressing these planning needs, and the preparation and administration of federal and state grant programs.

These are a few of the challenges that Park communities are facing. And though work is still required to develop solutions, we are thankful that numerous state resources already exist to help them.



*Executive Director Barbara Rice during a visit to the Town of Ausable.*

## Finding Solutions

To this end, during each meeting we also provided community leaders with the following: a GIS-produced town-wide tax parcel map with APA zoning to support local planning;

information on the Empire State Development Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) and Department of State NY Forward grant programs to drive community revitalization; an example of a town resolution for Governor Hochul’s Pro-Housing Community Program to help with the housing crisis; and information about emergency certifications to help with storm recovery efforts. This yielded immediate results, including a jump in regional NY Forward applications—from zero in 2023 to six in 2024—and numerous resolutions to be included in the Governor’s pro-housing program.

As we look toward 2025 and beyond, the Agency will continue this community outreach to connect local leaders with state resources and to find collaborative solutions that allow the Park to continue to be “a park of people and nature”.



*APA Executive Director Barbara Rice meeting with Tupper Lake Village Mayor Mary Fontana.*



*Former Deputy Director for Regulatory Programs David Plante and a DOT representative at the Fishing Brook bridge, a site that benefited from the Agency’s emergency projects process.*

# Recognitions

- **Tammara Van Ryn and Brett Wimsatt** for their ongoing efforts to minimize the impact of invasive species on the Adirondack Park’s communities, lands, and waters.
- **Carl Farone, Carrie Tuttle, David Wolf and Mark Borte** for their work to enhance economic opportunities and promote the health and well-being of communities and citizens of the North Country.
- **James McKenna** for fostering economic growth and diversification throughout the North Country.



- **Beth Gilles** for community-focused work as director of the Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board, including establishing a regional water quality program and expanding funding opportunities for planning and implementation efforts.
- **Dr. Colin Beier** for his work on the Climate & Applied Forest Research Institute’s (CAFRI’s) New York State Carbon Assessment Report, which provides a map-based carbon accounting system of New York’s forests.

- **Town of Ausable Supervisor Tim Bresett** for his dedication and hard work to provide on behalf of his community.
- **Leslie Karasin** for her work through the Northern Forest Center’s Community Development Initiatives to attract and retain young people and entrepreneurs to the region.
- **Steve Hurst and Dr. Thomas Detmer** for their work to monitor and conserve brook trout species in the Adirondack Park through research, science, and forward-thinking policies.
- **Dr. Stacy McNulty** for her research into northeastern forest ecosystems and the complex relationship between public and private land management in the Adirondack Park.
- **Jim Stickles and Jennifer Grauer** for their work to monitor and investigate the impacts of parasite-induced diseases on the recolonization of moose in New York.



# Staffing Updates

Under the leadership of Governor Hochul and with the support of the Division of Budget, the Adirondack Park Agency continues to increase staffing across 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. Over the past two fiscal years staffing at the Adirondack Park Agency has increased by more than 30%.

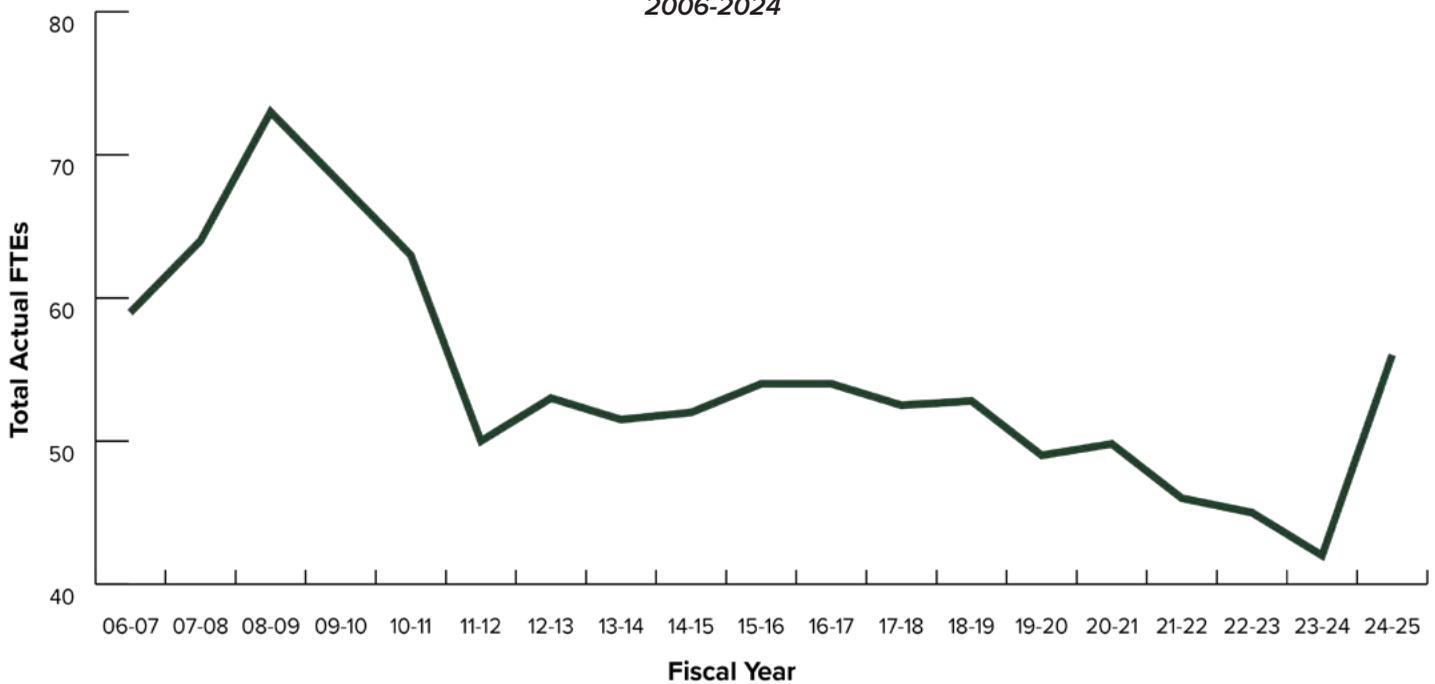
This is in marked contrast to a nearly two decade decline from 74 in 2007 to a historical low of 40 in 2022. This number was under the 54 full-time staffing level approved by Division of Budget and far below the totals of the 1990s and mid-2000s. The Agency is excited to continue this upward trajectory in 2025 with a goal of reaching a new full-time staffing level of 59.

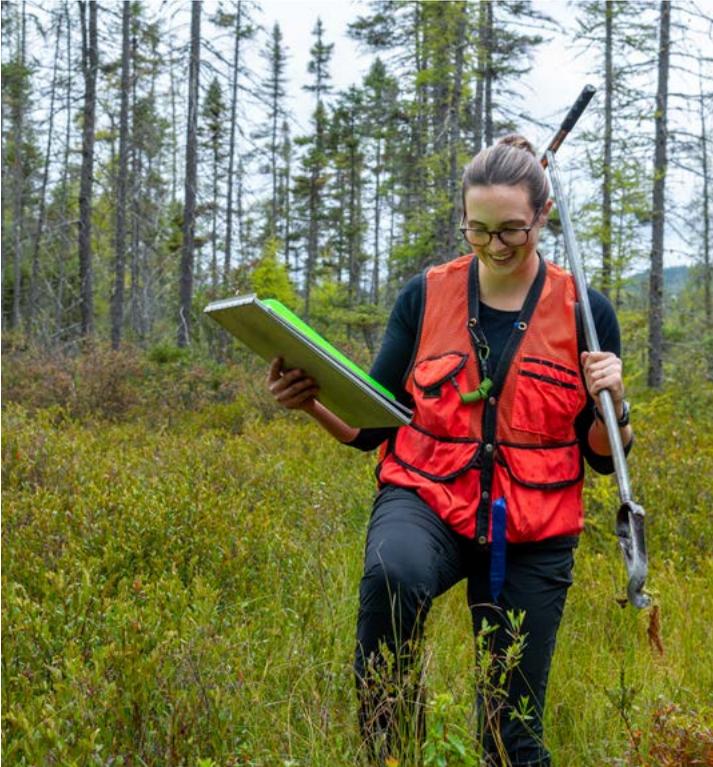
In 2024, Adirondack Park Agency increased staffing by division as follows:

- Administration: 3 new staff, 2 promotions
- Planning: 1 new staff, 1 promotion
- Regulatory Programs: 1 new staff, 4 promotions
- Legal: 1 new staff

**Agency Actual Full-Time Equivalent (FTEs)**

2006-2024





# 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	2023	2024
Minor Projects	76	93
Major Projects	87	87
Variances	9	4
State Agency Orders	0	1
Amendments/ Renewals	35	35
General Permits	81	63
Emergency Authorizations	9	30

MAJOR PROJECT CATEGORY	2023	2024
Subdivision	20	19
Single Family Dwelling	3	1
Wetlands	18	22
Commerical Use	17	10
Tower/ Telecom	41	18
Timber Harvest	0	2
Solar	3	2

## 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	2022	2023	2024
New Cases Opened	142	162	166
Settlement Agreements Signed	17	17	30
Cases Closed, Voluntary Compliance	8	19	27
Cases Closed, No Violation	55	46	77
Open Cases End of Year	345	358	323

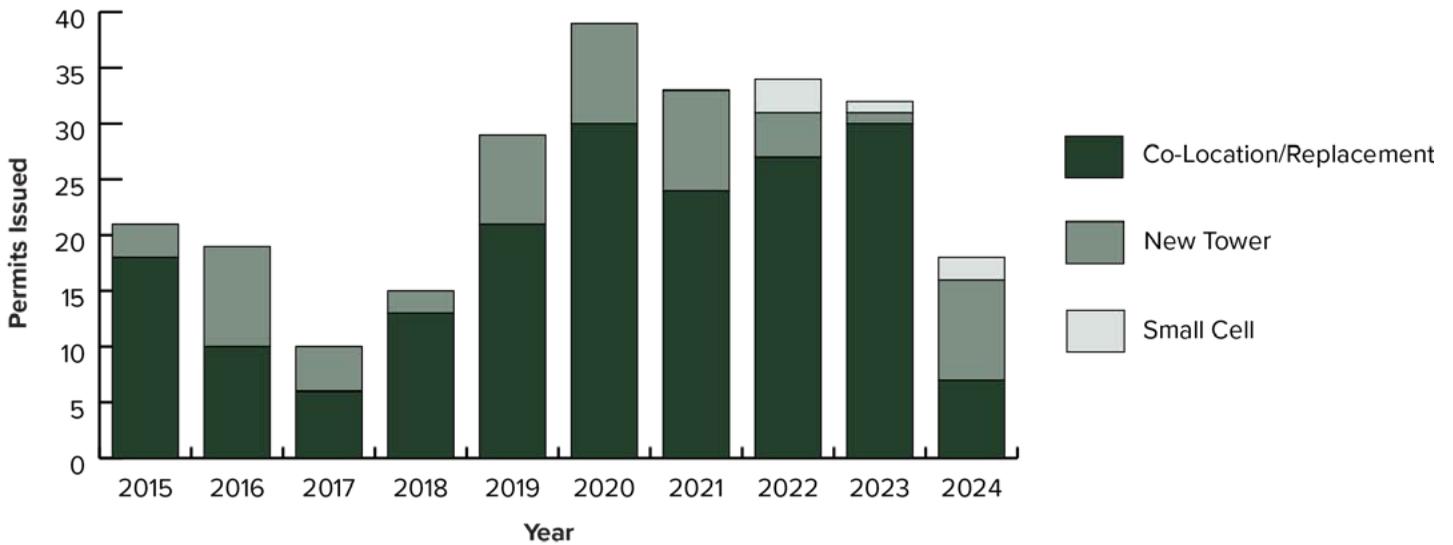
TYPES OF ENFORCEMENT CASES OPENED IN 2024 - TOP 9					
Activity	#	Activity	#	Activity	#
Wetland Project	69	Shoreline Cutting	15	Waste Disposal Area	8
Permit Noncompliance	20	Septic w/in 100 ft of waterbody	9	Rivers Project	6
Shoreline Structure	19	Substandard-Size Lot Subdivision	8	Septic w/in 100 ft of wetland	6

## 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 590 permits for telecommunication projects inside the Adirondack Park.

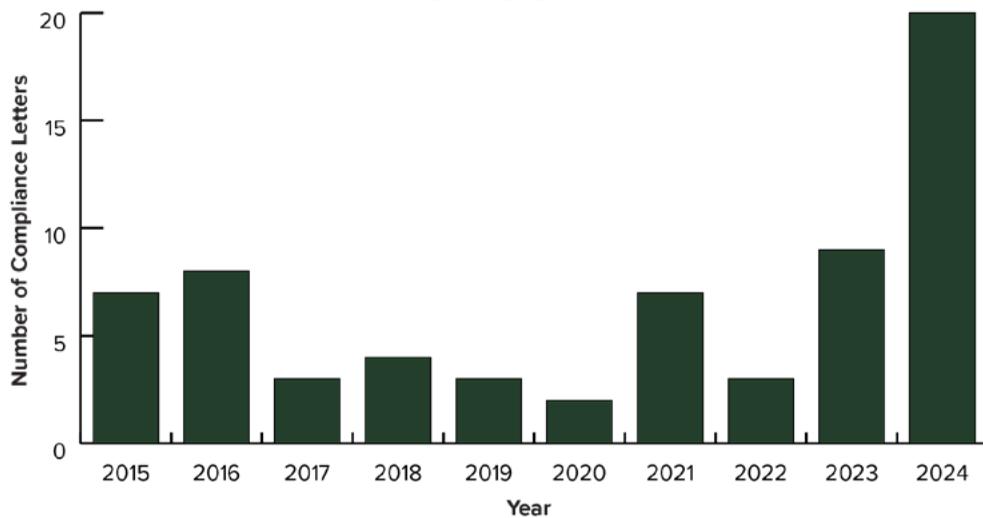
### Telecom Permits Issued

2015-2024



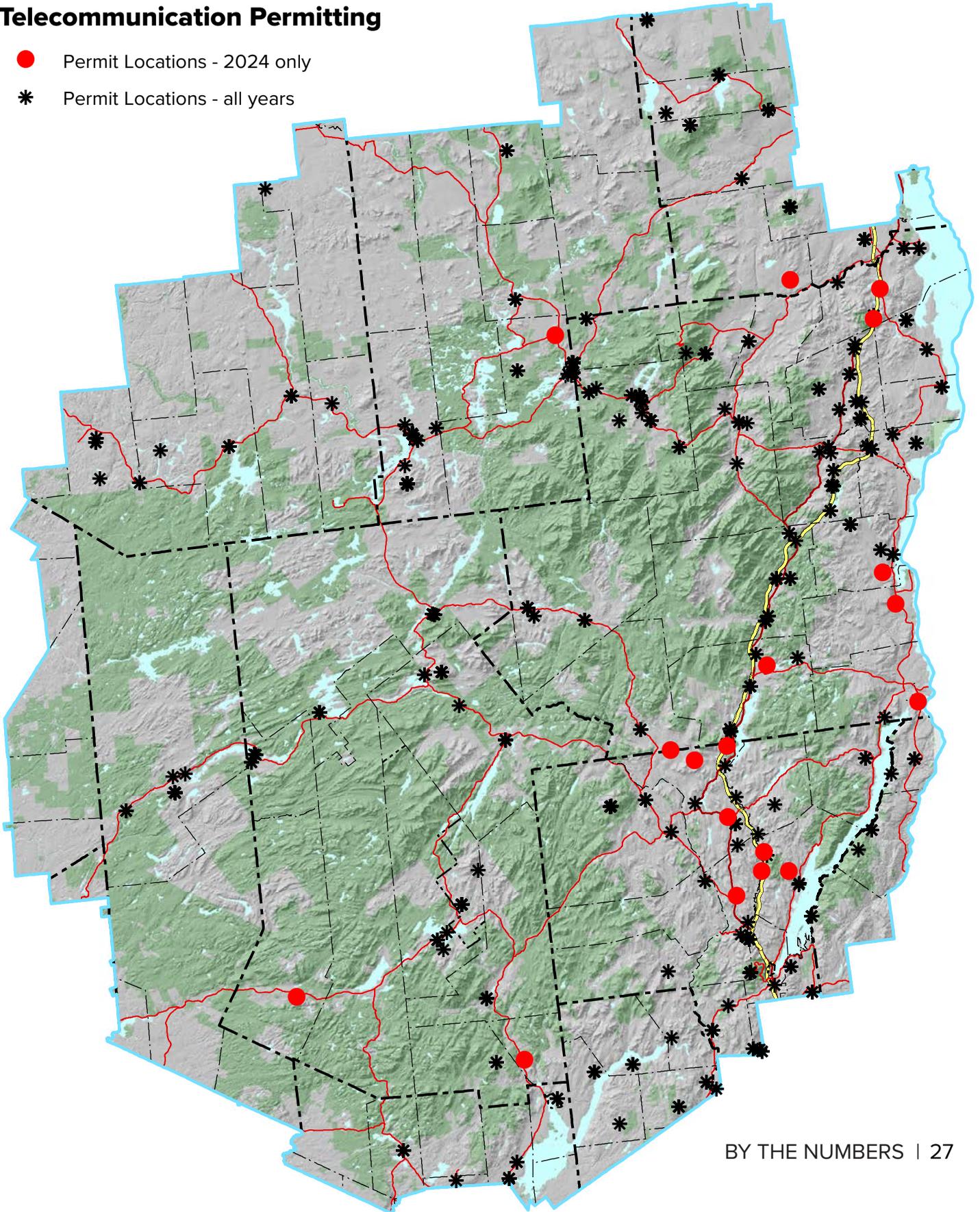
### Compliance Letters Issued

2015-2024



## Telecommunication Permitting

- Permit Locations - 2024 only
- \* Permit Locations - all years



## Resource Analysis & Scientific Services

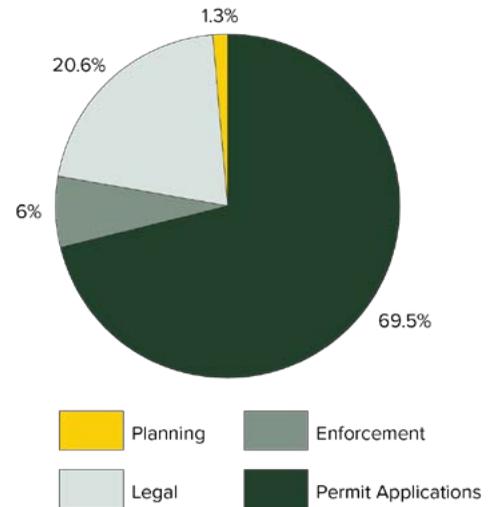
### Engineering

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.

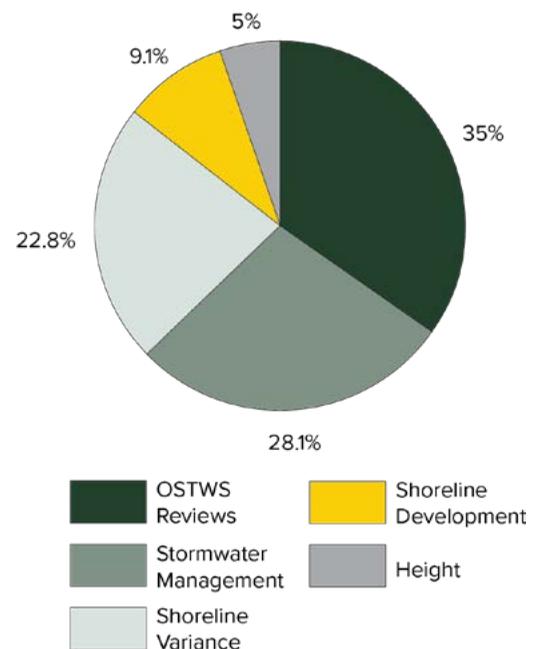
In 2024, 74 total site visits were conducted by engineering staff. Internally, engineering staff also provide written technical recommendations for divisions.

**Engineering Technical Evaluations by Division**



ENGINEERING TECHNICAL EVALUATIONS BY DEVELOPMENT CATEGORY	Total
On-Site Wastewater Treatment System	367
Stormwater Management	295
Shoreline Development	239
Shoreline Variance Proposal	96
Height	53

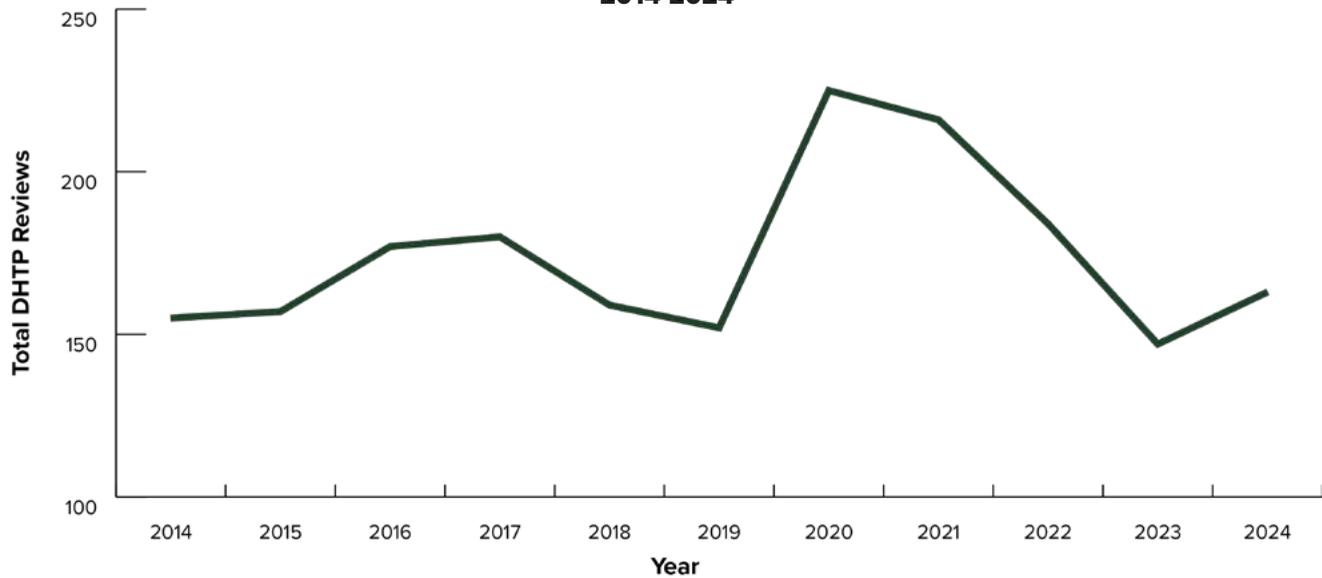
**Engineering Technical Evaluations by Development Category**



Staff that specialize in soil analyses provide an essential service to the public and Agency engineers with soil test pit analysis for On-Site Wastewater Treatment System (OSWTS) design. This work is vital for the efficient review of submitted OSWTS designs and is one of the key factors for identifying areas suitable for development.

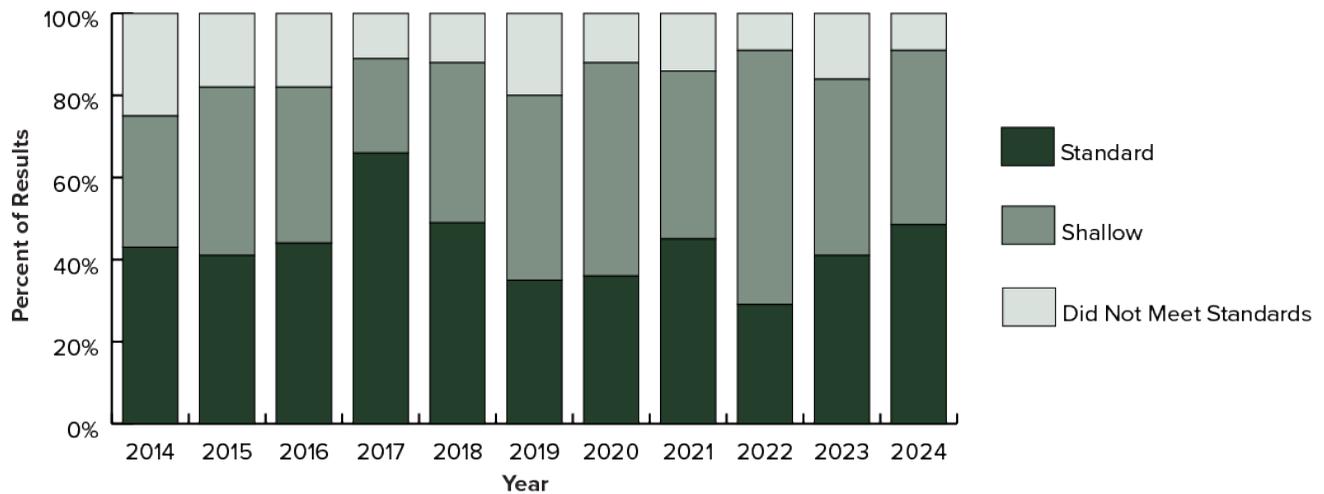
**Total DHTP Reviews**

**2014-2024**



**Test Pit Results by System Type**

**2014-2024**



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<b>DEEP HOLE TEST PIT STATISTICS</b>	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>Jun</b>	<b>Jul</b>	<b>Aug</b>	<b>Sep</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Nov</b>	<b>Dec</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Projects Involving DHTPs</b>	5	5	4	3	6	7	5	12	13	11	13	4	88
<b>DHTPs by APA</b>	3	2	0	1	2	5	0	2	6	1	3	0	25
<b>DHTPs by Consultants</b>	7	8	6	4	6	13	10	28	18	17	21	4	142
<b>Total DHTPs</b>	10	10	6	5	8	18	10	30	24	18	24	0	163
<b>Approved Conventional Systems</b>	9	3	1	4	3	13	2	14	12	5	13	1	80
<b>Approved Shallow Systems</b>	0	6	4	1	5	2	8	16	10	12	5	2	71
<b>Unapproved</b>	1	1	1	0	0	3	0	0	2	1	6	1	16
<b>Shallow Systems (SHGWT)</b>	0	5	4	0	5	2	2	10	10	10	3	0	51
<b>Shallow Systems (Bedrock)</b>	0	1	0	1	0	0	6	6	0	2	2	2	20

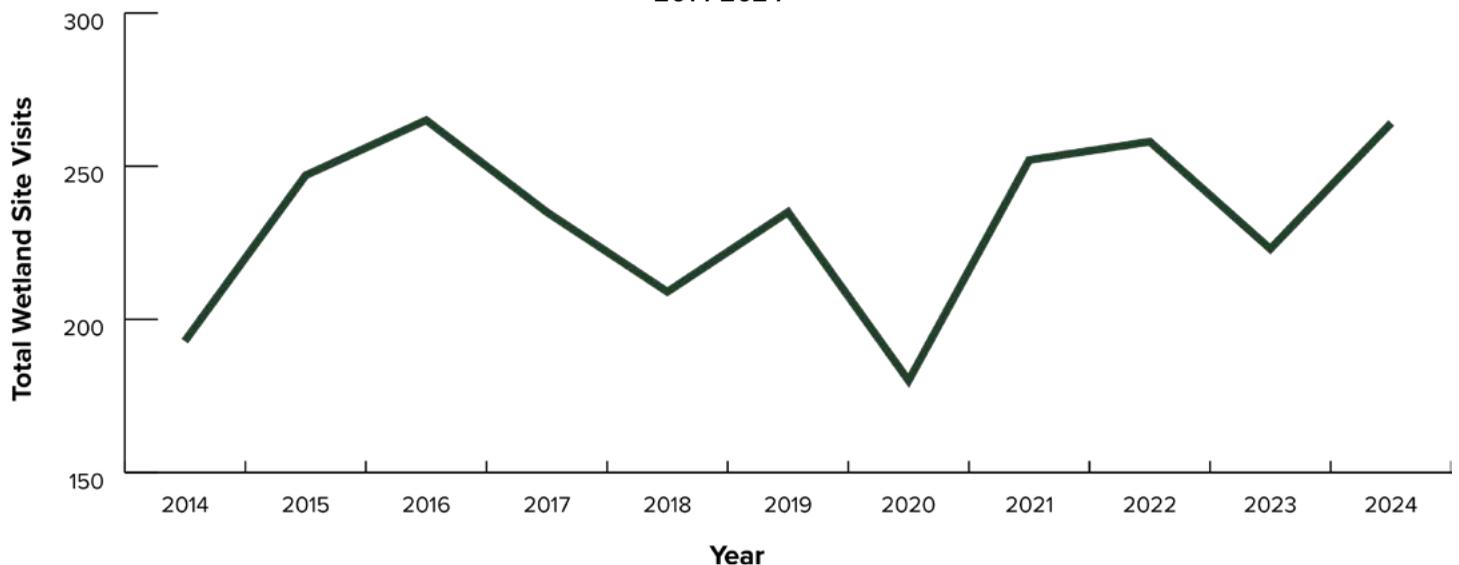
## Wetlands

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	5	9	43	28	38	25	24	32	32	20	8	0	264
Completed	0	0	5	21	41	33	47	31	38	37	11	0	264
Days to Process	N/A	N/A	N/A	52	37	30	26	25	13	9	4	N/A	
Pending	5	14	52	59	56	48	25	26	20	3	0	0	

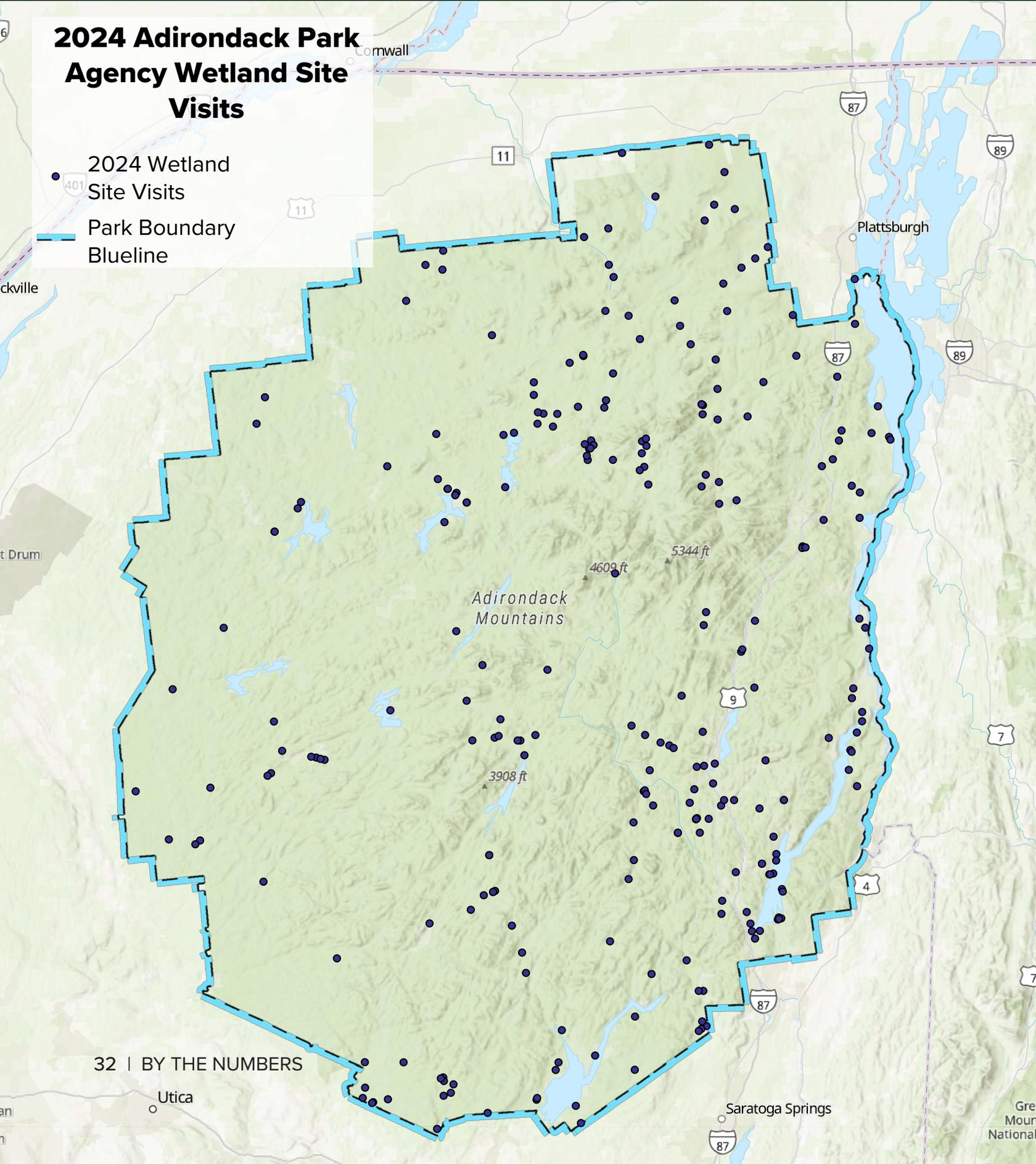
**Total Wetland Site Visits**

2014-2024



# 2024 Adirondack Park Agency Wetland Site Visits

- 2024 Wetland Site Visits
- Park Boundary
- Blue Line



32 | BY THE NUMBERS

## 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	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
JIF	33	34	27	23	29	21	21	25	37	21	22	13	306
Referrals	5	7	4	2	5	4	6	4	4	5	4	1	51
Project Review	9	9	9	11	3	5	5	4	2	2	2	4	65
Enforcement	1	2	0	3	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	1	23
State Land	2	2	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3	2	2	15

TOTAL WETLAND REVIEWS	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
JIF	13	16	21	22	25	17	44	33	35	38	16	8	288
Enforcement	4	3	3	4	2	8	7	6	14	7	5	1	64
Project Review	19	25	27	21	34	42	40	43	43	55	38	37	424

## 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.

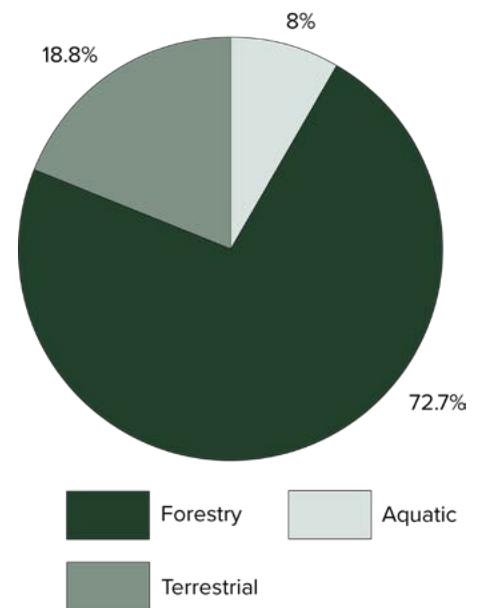
Aquatic invasive species (AIS) can cause both environmental and economic harm to these waterbodies, impairing recreational use and degrading the native habitat of fish and other wildlife. In the Adirondacks, lake and watershed organizations coordinate to prevent the spread of AIS and invest significant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

## Forest Resources

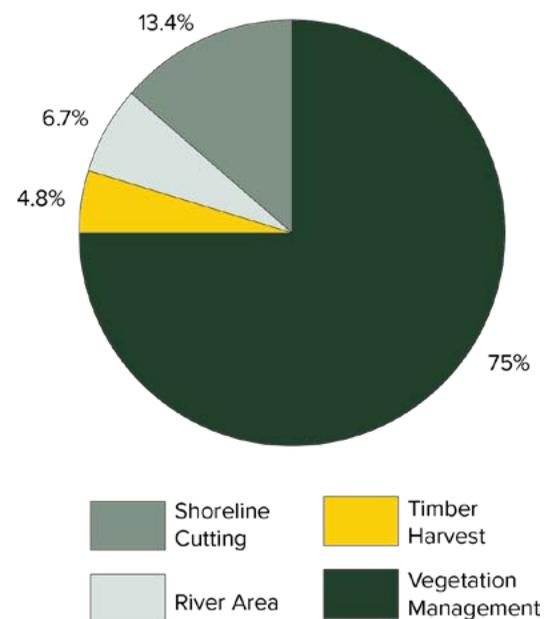
The forests of the Adirondacks are integral to the character of the park. Forests create a living landscape that provides wildlife habitat, biodiversity, purification of water resources, economic benefits, and recreational opportunities. Forests on State lands, in many cases preserved from logging for 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/WEB TASKS SUMMARY	#
GIS Agency Program Administration	104
GIS Map Production	44
Land Use Area Boundary/Blue Line Inquiry	25
Private Land Map Amendments Review	13
State Land Classification/Reclassification Review	4
Web Administration/Content Management	69
Administrative Tasks	33

### 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.

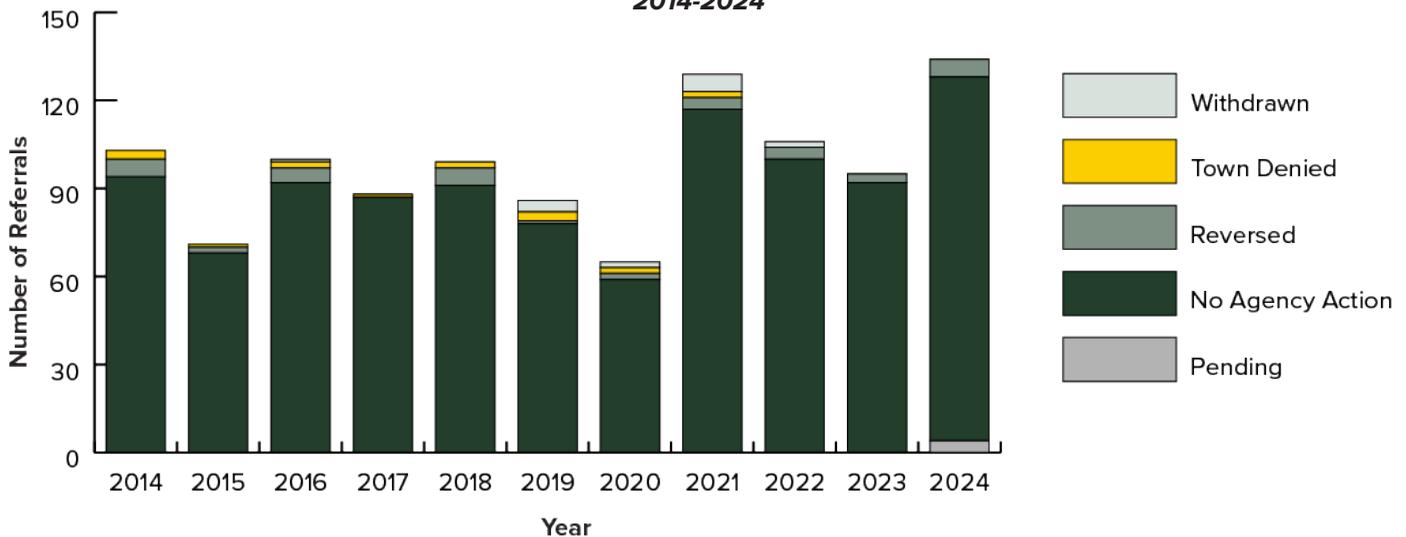
The Agency approved 4 amendments to ALLUPs in 2024, all of which were approved pursuant to the Delegation Resolution:

- The Town of Colton proposed adding “Major Solar Energy System” as a conditional use in several zoning districts.
- The Town of Lake George proposed re-zoning several parcels located in its Hamlet land use area.
- The Town of Queensbury proposed adding “Commercial Boat Sales/Service/Storage” as an allowable use pursuant to a Special Use Permit.
- The Town of Westport proposed numerous amendments to its zoning code.

SUMMARY OF PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND REPORTABLE ITEMS	#
ALLUP Amendments Approved by Board/by Del Res	0/4
ALLUP Variances Referred/Reversed	134/6

### ALLUP Variance Referrals

2014-2024



## 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	2023	2024
JIFs Received	1,158	1,239
JIFs Responded To	1,062	1,194
<i>Non-Jurisdictional</i>	782	798
<i>Jurisdictional</i>	202	301
<i>Variance</i>	29	29
<i>General Information</i>	35	49
<i>Potential Violation</i>	14	17
Avg. Response Time (Days)	7	5
Telephone Calls	3,328	3,055
Walk-Ins	72	79
Write-Ins/Site Visits	7	4
Other Agency Referrals	386	383
FOIL Requests Received	421	489

# 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.

Within the Park, the Agency also administers the State Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers System Act for private lands and the State Freshwater Wetlands Act for both the Park's public and private lands.





**Adirondack  
Park Agency**