

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Elliott Hillback, IRLC President

You may remember that I started my last Report with the words “Aaah, it is Spring”, as it turned out I was a little premature! Therefore, I will start this report very carefully by saying welcome to what appears to be, or may possibly be, summer in the Indian River Lakes Region.

For the IRLC it certainly feels like summer because our activities, programs and results are all accelerating at an amazing rate. I'll highlight a few ongoing and new topics that are particularly interesting and exciting. Our two year effort with Ducks Unlimited and the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) to acquire additional land (particularly wetland) is now fully approved and only waiting for all the paperwork to move through the system. We will add almost 600 unique and important acres to bring our total of conserved land to almost 1,800 acres. Conducting baseline surveys and creating stewardship plans for these properties are the next key steps the Stewardship Committee will be undertaking and volunteers are most welcome. Recently a number of stewardship committee members and some great volunteers laid out and cut two beautiful new trails: the Eagle Marsh Trail which splits off from, and reconnects with, the Butterfield Trail and a new trail that facilitates exploration of the Marc A.F. Baker Preserve, an island in Grass Lake. Our first trailhead information kiosk, beautifully constructed by member/volunteer Dick Edgar, has now been installed on the Butterfield Trail. Many thanks to Dick and all the volunteers who made these new trails possible. (See list on page 2).

Our first-ever group of three summer college interns, part of a program called GLISTEN, are now actively engaged in

conducting their comprehensive water quality studies on four of our lakes and sections of the Indian River (see the article on page 4). Since this initiative was announced two other groups focused on the quality of water and the health of wetlands have contacted us about doing related, but different, studies in our area and sharing the results with us and our GLISTEN partners. We are excited about this significant increase in understanding and managing water quality and related issues since “River” and “Lakes” are in our name.

The Membership/Development committee is actively working with our consultants to conduct a series of interviews and focus groups to better understand the hopes and expectations of IRLC members and others who live in or visit the area we serve. We expect this effort will help us design and implement substantially expanded programs and activities, beginning later this summer, tied to the central themes of our mission: PROTECT, LEARN, ENJOY. The membership/development team is also organizing an expanded Celebration of the Lakes to be held at Camp Wabasso on July 23rd. I hope to see you there, it should be a lot of fun.

As the IRLC evolves we continue to examine and redefine how we understand those three key words that help us translate our mission into action. For example, we initially defined PROTECT mostly in relation to our own actions managing the land we own or where we have conservation easements. But, that now seems like an example of “narrow or limited organizational vision” since we have neither the desire nor the resources to acquire the entire Indian

(continued on page 2)



Our beautiful new information kiosk, which was moved to the trailhead of the Butterfield Lake trails in late June. The rustic shelter was created for us by Dick Edgar.

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IRLC Volunteers Construct 2 New Trails



Many Thanks to our Trail Volunteers:

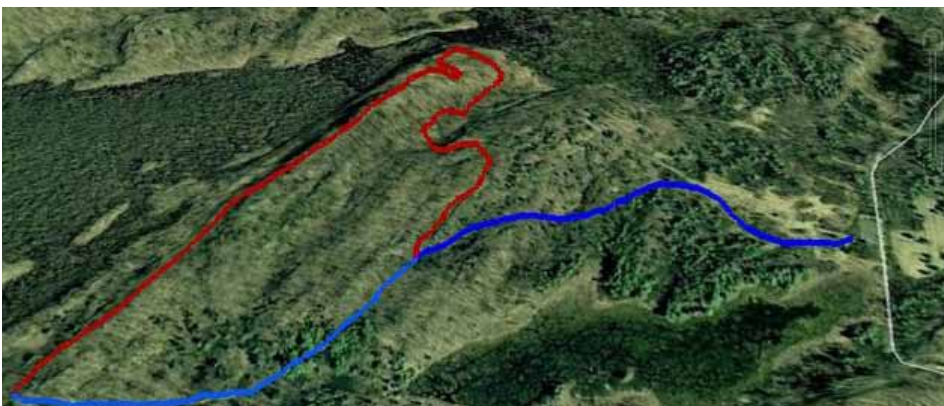
Eagle Marsh Trail

Kathy and Craig Handschuh, Michael Richardson,
Dan Tordy, Dave Brandt, Dick Edgar, Jeff Garvey
Jon Ostrander, Mark Scarlett, Rick Lopez,
Ed Robertson and Andy Robertson

Marc A. F. Baker Preserve

Joe Cullen Sr., Dan Tordy, Bob Wakefield
Ed Robertson, Rich Sauer, Jon Ostrander
Dick Edgar, Mark Scarlett, Rick Lopez, Mike
Bolton, Dani Baker and Cross Island Farms Crew

The Eagle Marsh Trail - shown in red.



The Eagle Marsh Trail, identified with red trail markers, is a loop that begins on the Butterfield Lake Trail at approximately .38 miles from the Main Parking Lot on Burns Road. The Eagle Marsh Trail is roughly .92 miles long and returns to the Butterfield Lake Trail about .27 miles west of where it started. If you return to the Main Parking Lot from that point (rather than go to Butterfield Lake) you will walk a total loop of 1.95 miles. These distances are approximate, taken from Google Earth, rather than measured directly on the ground. So, the actual hike may be somewhat longer.

The trail on the Marc A.F. Baker Preserve on Grass Lake is awaiting final weedwacking and the posting of trail markers. It should be ready for hikers a bit later this summer. The trail is accessible only by water

President's Report (cont.)

River Lakes area we are trying to serve. It seems that the more appropriate and more realistic "bigger vision" is to recognize that while doing a great job protecting the relatively limited pieces of land we do own/manage certainly is important in its own right, it also sets a good example for others of how to combine protection and use. While we are caring for our land we are also building significant expertise and experience that can be translated into teaching, helping and partnering with others so they can care for their land and water in a proactive and positive way. In a similar way we are re-examining our organizational vision related to "LEARN" and "ENJOY". Your thoughts, ideas and goals, whether gathered by our consultant through telephone interviews and focus groups or provided directly to any of our board members, are crucial for us. Your input can really assist us to shape and sharpen key parts of our "organizational vision" and help define our programs and activities so that they better achieve our common goals. We look forward to your involvement and your thoughts. Thank you.

Rossie Lead Mines

An Exploration of Indian River Lakes History

The most recent issue of *Adirondack Life* quoted Marian Lupulesco, geology curator of the New York State Museum in Albany, as estimating that 40% of the mineral specimens in the museum's collection come from St. Lawrence County. In fact, it is the rare museum mineral collection that doesn't feature a specimen from the Rossie vicinity. Fine examples of zircon, scapolite, fluorapatite, feldspars, amphiboles, pyroxenes, calcite and galena have all been found in the area. Of these, the last was the only one exploited for its economic value.

Prior to the discovery of lead, Rossie was home to the Parish Iron Works. The Iron Works were of enough significance that they warranted a presidential visit by James Monroe in 1817. The volume of iron produced, however, never matched the amount of lead extracted along Lead Mine Road.

It is reported that the area's first use of lead began with St. Regis Indians who smelted lead from galena ore in open fires. The first non-native resident to discover lead was Arthur Bacon, an early Rossie settler who is credited with finding the ore in the roots of an overturned tree on what later became the Coal Hill vein.



A woodcut of the Coal Hill Vein as it appeared in early 1836 (from Beck, 1842).

In 1829, nine year old Eliza Jepson discovered a second vein, often called the Jepson vein, while helping her father plant corn on land owned by George Parish, local land-baron and owner of the Parish Iron Works. Parish rewarded her with a calico dress and gave her father, Joel Jepson, 40 acres of land, a team of oxen and a barrel of salt pork.

Six years later Parish decided to capitalize his lead holdings and sold some of his rights to two companies. The Rossie Lead Mining Co. operated on the eastern section of the Coal Hill vein and the Rossie Galena Co. which operated on the western section. At the same time Parish also worked other veins, the Victoria (Jepson), the adjacent Union vein, and the Robinson vein to the west. By January 1837 serious work had begun on all mines.

The ore appears to have been smelted in two locations. The first just south of Lead Mine Rd, the second between Lead Mine Rd and the Rossie-Oxbow Road, adjacent to the Victoria vein. Stone chimneys at both sites remain visible today.

New York State mineralogist Lewis Beck visited the mines and gave this description: *"The vein of galena and decomposed ore was distinctly visible for some distance passing down a precipitous ledge of primitive rock about fifty feet in height. The average width of the vein was two feet and it cut the rock in a nearly perpendicular direction... The galena found in this vein is often crystallized in large cubes, which are not infrequently modified by truncations... For three or four years this mine was worked with great activity and shafts were sunk to the depth of upwards of one hundred and fifty feet."*

In 1840 inefficient mining procedures, mismanagement and the death of Parish led to the termination of mining activities. In 1852, the Great Northern Lead Company began anew using improved equipment and miners brought over from Cornwall, England.



Rossie furnace ca. 1838.

Despite the efficiencies, the mines did not produce the expected profits and in 1854 they were leased to J.B. Morgan and worked by a number of companies including the Rossie and Canada Lead Co., the Mineral Point Lead Mining Co. and finally the Victoria Lead Company.

At their peak the area's mines employed as many as 3,000 laborers, running 24 hours a day for six days a week. All mining appears to have stopped in 1876 but not before 6,000 tons of lead had been removed.

In 1937, the U.S. Steel Corporation, owning mineral rights over a large part of the area, surveyed the old mines, hoping to reopen them once the country recovered from the depression and the demand for lead increased.

In 1950, there appeared to be interest in reopening some of the mines. When diamond drilling determined that there were inadequate reserves, interest quickly dissipated.

The galena found in Rossie is nearly seventy percent lead with some of the crystals weighing as much as 100 pounds. Generally the specimens are large gray cubes with dull surfaces. Associated calcite is commonly found with the galena. Specimens of Rossie galena are exhibited in the collections of the New York State Museum, the American Museum of Natural History, Harvard University and the Canadian Museum of Nature in Ottawa.

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Please contact me: regarding Conservation Easements with information about including IRLC in my will I have included IRLC in my will

If you prefer to keep your newsletter intact, this membership form is also available online at www.IndianRiverLakes.org

Join Us to Celebrate the Lakes!

The IRLC celebrates 13 years of working to preserve and enjoy the Indian River Lakes area on July 23, 2011 with an alfresco dinner, educational exhibits and entertainment.

Please plan to join us for this great opportunity to meet and visit with other fine people who support the conservation of the Indian River Lake's region. Educational exhibits will be on display, including one by our GLISTEN student interns who will be available to discuss their work.

Festivities begin at 4:30 PM at Camp Wabasso on Millsite Lake. A chicken barbecue will begin at 5:00 featuring a variety of fresh homemade salads and a special selection of desserts using fresh, local fruits created by Brian Doxtater. Non-alcoholic beverages will also be provided.

The event will feature a silent auction, with proceeds supporting Conservancy's education and stewardship projects. Auction highlights

will include many beautiful works of local artists and craftsmen and offerings from T.I Adventures, Covered in Chocolate, Porch and Paddle, Save the River, Clayton Island Tours, Riverside Cafe, Reinman's Hardware, Michael Ringer's Studio, Winged Bull Studio, and The Thousand Islands Arts Center.

Tickets for the event are \$30 per person, \$50 per couple and a special family rate of \$70. Space is limited and reservations are a must.

As an all volunteer organization the IRLC needs and appreciates your support for our mission to preserve and protect the natural character of the Indian River Lakes region. We look forward to sharing a beautiful afternoon on the lake with you.

For further information, or to reserve your spot please contact: Elliott Hillback (315) 482-2446 or Shirley Carpenter (315) 482-5250 or email IndianRiverLakes@gmail.com

IRLC Summer Highlights

July 23 2011 Annual Meeting
3:00 pm Camp Wabasso,
Millsite Lake

July 23 Summer Celebration
of the Lakes
4:30 pm Camp Wabasso

July 30 Kids Dragonfly &
Damsel selfy Workshop

check www.IndianRiverLakes.org
for more information and updates.

About the IRLC

Formed in 1998 to conserve critical lands in the Indian River Lakes area of Northern New York, the IRLC is a non-profit land trust with 501(c) (3) tax exempt status operating in a manner consistent with the published standards of the Land Trust Alliance, a national organization

ODE NOTES

Bluets; (almost) always Blue

They're everywhere, they're everywhere... or so it seems! On IRLC trails, the Indian River lakes, river and wetlands, bright little bits of flying blue land on grasses, ferns, lily pads, canoes and us, as we hike or paddle.

These delicate flyers could be any of the 13 species of damselflies, known as Bluets, found in the Indian River Lakes region. New York State has 59 species of damselflies and 25 of these are Bluets, the largest genus in North America. Contrary to popular belief, damselflies (*Zygoptera*) are not female dragonflies. Like dragonflies (*Anisoptera*), they are a sub-order of Odonata.

In general, damselflies are smaller and sligher than dragonflies (Bluets, for example, range in size from 1" to 1.75"), all four wings are the same shape and size, and at rest, "damsels" fold wings over their bodies while "dragons" leave their wings open.

Like all Odonates, the majority of a damselfly's life is spent under water. Eggs deposited on and in aquatic vegetation hatch, the nymph feeds, grows through multiple "instar" stages, and the adult finally emerges the following year. Flight time, depending

on species, ranges from a few weeks to a few months starting in mid-spring and lasting through September.

Damselflies are adapted to a great diversity of still and flowing water habitats such as ponds, lakes, streams, rivers, bogs, and marshes. The Northern Bluet (*Enallagma annexum*), one of the most widespread damselfly species in the world, is considered a specialist, preferring still-water habitats with emergent vegetation. Stream Bluets (*Enallagma exulans*) are found only in flowing waters. One of the most successful damselfly species in North America, the aptly named Familiar Bluet (*Enallagma civile*) is a true generalist, located in still or flowing water and able to tolerate even brackish or saline wetlands.

While Bluets are the most familiar and conspicuous damselflies, they can drive you crazy when attempting to identify them to species level and a loupe used for magnification is a necessity. Not all female Bluets are blue even though the males of the same species may be. And, even when the Bluets are blue, their color patterns can vary within the species or within

a population. There are also a few Bluet species where neither the male nor female are blue such as the Vesper (*Enallagma vesperum*) and Orange Bluets (*Enallagma signatum*). And our favorite non-blue Bluet, the appropriately named Rainbow Bluet (*Enallagma antennatum*).

Rainbow Bluet



Hagen's Bluet



Stream Bluet

Young Entomologists Workshop

Join noted nature photographers and dragonfly experts Vici and Stephen Diehl on July 30th, for a trail walk and Dragon & Damsel Identification Workshop. The five-hour workshop will be limited to 20 individuals, aged 12-18, and is offered free of charge. The group will meet at 9:00 am at the Indian River Lakes Conservancy offices on 43982 Stine Road. Please pre-register by emailing Vici at vicidiehl@gmail.com. Participants are asked to bring a bag lunch, water, camera and a small pack.

A2A: Big Landscape, Critical Ecosystems

by Emily Conger

We live in one of the most unique landscapes in the entire continent of North America: the Algonquin to Adirondacks (A2A) Bioregion, comprised of Algonquin Park, the Adirondack Park and the Frontenac Arch in between, linking Canada's Boreal Forest with the Appalachian Mountains as far south as Georgia. Americans and Canadians living in the area tend to be passionate about it; now scientists are telling us how truly special it is.

A2A is unique because its extraordinarily varied terrain, soil and forest types, and microclimates along with its abundance of wetlands provide an irreplaceable refuge to an exceptional range of rare, endangered and migratory species. It is one of the last areas on the continent with enough natural cover to support the wide range of species needed to maintain the gene pools required for species preservation and climate adaptation.

A2A forms the primary north-south migratory path for wildlife in *all* of Eastern North America. This is critical, because the Great Lakes, the broader sections of the St. Lawrence River and the highly developed Niagara Region make wildlife movement (other than that of birds) almost impossible. In A2A, the Thousand Islands provide "stepping stones" for land animals to cross the river.

Why and how is the A2A Bioregion threatened?

Even though there is protection given to parks and other areas, inappropriate development is causing irreversible loss of habitat and connectivity.

Degradation often occurs because larger habitat areas become fragmented by roads and other development. This restricts the movement of migratory animals, reduces the ability of wildlife to recover in the face of climate impacts and natural disturbances, decreases the accessible gene pool, and cuts animals off from vital foraging and breeding grounds.

Extinction of species can result.

Climate impacts are making many habitats hostile to existing plant and animal species, forcing them to migrate, primarily northward. Preserving rare habitats that contain residual gene pools of otherwise atypical species and providing a pathway for migration is of critical importance to species survival.

How do people benefit from connected habitat?

By protecting the health of the air, water and soils required for healthy, connected wildlife habitat we improve the health of people who live here as well. When we work for one, we work for both.

Farmers benefit because healthy ecosystems retain more pollinators, essential for good crop production. Healthy wetland complexes mitigate drought and ground water depletion and help prevent flooding. Even extreme temperatures are mitigated in healthy ecosystems.

Healthy habitats support a broad range of species, helping keep individual species from getting out of control and becoming what are sometimes called "nuisance" species. And research shows that the incidence of some diseases (like Lyme's disease) is reduced when

ecosystems are intact. Maintaining connected habitat also means that species that we depend upon, such as many of our tree species and the creatures that they feed, will have a better chance of movement in the face of climate impacts

Finally, there is increasing evidence that people who live close to nature remain healthier both physically and emotionally.

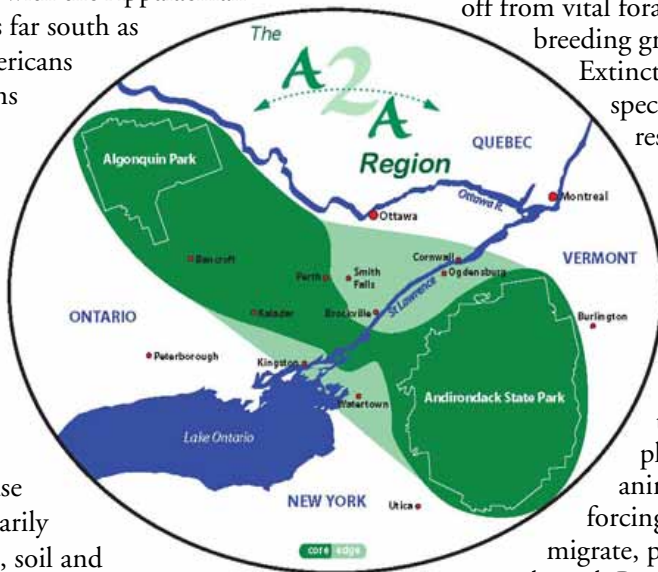
An Umbrella Group to support the A2A Bioregion

The Algonquin to Adirondacks Conservation Association is an international, large-landscape organization that facilitates and supports collaborative efforts with individuals and partnering organizations to study, prioritize, preserve and restore connectivity and enhance biodiversity in the Algonquin to Adirondack Bioregion. A2A works in partnership with landowners, agencies and organizations in ways that respect landowners and contribute to economic and social well-being.

For the sake of everything that lives – fish that must survive in warming waters, plants that are slow to migrate, animals and birds that depend on reliable habitats, insects and microbes that are the tireless maintenance workers for the environment, and people on both sides of the border who need access to nature for the peace and inspiration it provides – for all this A2A is working to ensure that the natural heritage of the region continues to enrich the present and grace the future.

For more information about A2A, visit their website: <http://www.a2alink.org>, or contact Emily Conger at emconger.lostbay@gmail.com.

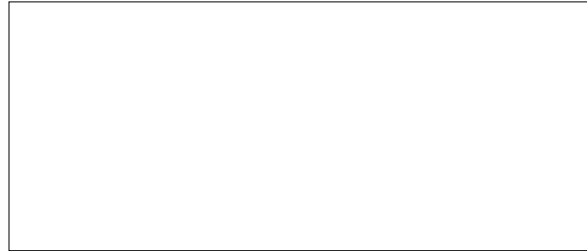
Emily Conger B.Sc., is a retired teacher who has served as a director of A2A since 2001 and the organization's president since 2002.



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Conservancy Names 2011 Scholarship Recipients

by Shirley Carpenter

The IRLC works with the schools in our area to administer a scholarship program that provides funding for students who are planning to further their education in the field of environmental science. The Conservancy is pleased to announce this year's winners:

Ryan Robinson, a 2011 graduate of Alexandria Central School, is the son of Barbara Paye-Lopez, Redwood. Ryan will attend North Country Community College where he will major in environmental science. During his high school years, Ryan played varsity football and tennis and was involved in the Ski and Snowboard Club and the Future Farmers of America. He has participated in many volunteer activities, including helping with highway pickups through the Redwood Neighborhood Association and participating in an outreach project at the thrift store. He is an avid outdoorsman who greatly enjoys fishing and hunting.

Travis Pyland graduated with honors from Faith Christian School in 2006 and immediately began his studies at Jefferson Community College where he graduated in 2009 with an associate's degree in applied science in animal management. Travis earned a second associates degree with a dual concentration in math and science in 2011. His cumulative grade point average is 3.86, and he has been named to the President's List every semester during his years at JCC. He has been a member of Phi Theta Kappa, and the ZEW Club, serving as president during the 2009-10 school year. Travis has volunteered and interned at numerous zoos including The New York Living Museum, the Toronto Zoo, and the Rosamond Gifford Zoo as well as at a local veterinary clinic. Travis plans to attend the Environmental School of Forestry at Syracuse where he will obtain his Bachelor's degree in Wildlife Science.

Funding for these scholarships is provided by conservancy memberships, special donations from individuals, and contributions from lake associations belonging to the conservancy. Annual scholarships are available for local high school graduates, a Jefferson Community College graduate going on to study in the field of environmental science, or a child or grandchild of any IRLC member or lake association member. Several local students have benefited from this program and are now working here in our area at the Thousand Islands Land Trust and also for the Jefferson County Water Quality Coordinating Committee. Conservancy members are planning several fund raising activities this season to benefit the scholarship fund. Anyone wishing to help with the scholarship program may contact Indian River Lakes Conservancy by mail at P.O. Box 27, Redwood, 13679 or by email at IndianRiverLakes@gmail.com.