

SHATAGEE WOODS ADK  
FALL 2009

WELCOME TO OUR NEW CHAPTER CHAIR As the outgoing chapter chair, I would like to introduce our new member and Chapter Co-Chair Karla Gratto. Karla lives at Chazy Lake and teaches science at Chateaugay School. She loves to kayak and hike and was a great hand around the campsite. She is engaging and ready to meet new people. She joined us on two paddling and camping trips and fit right in with everyone. She is delighted to find an enthusiastic and knowledgeable outdoor group. Karla is a colleague and good friend of Jane Kelting, and together they will guide our group as co-chairs. Though new to ADK, Karla is familiar with the area and Jane, our founding member, will be by her side to aid and instruct. I think it will be a great combination.

Karla will bring a fresh approach and focus to our chapter. After serving for six years as chapter chair, I will take over from Ken Humiston as Director and will continue as Conservation Chair. Conservation has been my focus, and I want to thank everyone who has helped me to understand the Domtar Lands as they came to be conserved, to learn of the traditional hikes and paddles in our area that we want to preserve or restore, and to have the experience of exploring other local areas such as the Chateaugay Chasm, the South Inlet, and Bluff Point. I hope as Conservation Chair to continue my enlightenment and service.

THE DOMTAR LANDS known to DEC as the Sable Highlands: This conservation purchase of 105,000 acres has been significant in retaining the character of our area. The Lyon Mt area and a piece attached to Ellenburg Mt were purchased and are part of the Adirondack Forest Preserve. The other lands are conservation easements of two kinds: full and partial. These lands continue to be owned by a logging company, but cannot be divided and developed. Full recreation easements allow the public to use the land and partial recreation easements have sold some of the rights to hunting clubs, and the public is generally excluded from these lands except if the State of NY builds a trail to connect a hiking destination. The public will then be able to cross on the trail except during big game season.

To see the full plan go to HYPERLINK "[http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/regions\\_pdf/sableirmp49b.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/regions_pdf/sableirmp49b.pdf)" [www.dec.ny.gov/docs/regions\\_pdf/sableirmp49b.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/regions_pdf/sableirmp49b.pdf) or Google NY State DEC Sable Highlands Interim management Plan. This document is accompanied by many maps and is fully explanatory.

Cobble Hill hike in Merrill is one that is now open to the public. The public access starts on a dirt road (Domtar logging road) across route 374 Subaru garage in Merrill. Sean Reynolds, NY State Forester for our region, says they do not have designated parking there yet. He advises that hikers pull their cars off the road for now. Do not block the dirt road since the Cobble Hill hunting club also enters here. There is a locked gate with a "No

Trespass” sign. Sean Reynolds says they have not had a chance to remove this sign. Ignore the sign and proceed up the road stay on to the left at the fork. Cobble Hill hunting club has the easement to the right fork. The road to the left proceeds over the Owllyout Creek and on up the hill.

Another piece we explored this summer that is now open to the public in on the Bigelow Rd in Merrill. Drive past the old school by Jane and Bill Kelting’s driveway and continue onto the dirt portion of the road. At the sharp turn to the right on that road, turn left and park at this former Domtar staging area. You may park there and walk the old logging road, or use this as a parking place to go up Panther Hill. This is a welcome change since there is no other place to park past the school house.

Eventually, when there is a Unit Management Plan in this area that is called the Chazy Highlands, we expect there will be a trail from this parking area on the Bigelow Road to panther Hill and then down the Cobble Hill trail and road.

LYON MOUNTAIN now has a new trail built by the ADK professional trail crew and funded by DEC. It is a longer trail with better footing and less steep grades. It is a beautiful hike that eventually connects with the upper section of the old trail. Unfortunately, the trail is wet in places especially after a month of rain. The trail crew is working to improve it.

Another trail that has opened is the Loon Lake Mt trail. As with the Domtar lands the old poster “keep out” signs are still there, so it makes it rather hard to find. Julie and I used the *Adirondack Explorer* directions and found the trail across from a bog, north of the rail underpass on route 26. We could lead this trip next summer.