



For Immediate Release

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Adirondack Wild Presents 2020 Wilderness Award

Adirondack Wild: Friends of the Forest Preserve has presented its 2020 *Paul Schaefer Wilderness Award*, the organization's highest honor, to **Kevin Chlad**, Director of Government Relations for the Adirondack Council with offices in Elizabethtown and in Albany.

"Adirondack Wild has admired Kevin's work for a number of years," said Adirondack Wild's managing partner David Gibson. "We've worked with him as part of a coalition of Adirondack groups and we've noticed how he steers citizen advocacy for the Adirondack Park in very productive directions, just as Paul Schaefer used to do. He puts himself in the shoes of others and lets them take the credit to advance Park goals. That was Paul Schaefer's way of accomplishing great things for the Adirondacks."

"Kevin is passionate about preserving wildness and wild conditions in the Adirondack Park," Gibson added, "yet his passion is tempered with a strategic approach to decision-makers. Some of them may not know a great deal about issues affecting the Adirondack Park or why a piece of legislation is relevant to their constituents. Kevin is patient. He puts them at ease. He gives them the



Kevin Chlad receives the 2020 Paul Schaefer Wilderness Award from Adirondack Wild, Nov. 18, 2020 at the Kelly Adirondack Center of Union College.

information they need about Adirondack legislation to help them appreciate the ways that the Adirondack Park benefits the health of every New Yorker and the millions who visit the Adirondacks from across the globe.”

“I am deeply humbled by this recognition and share this honor with my colleagues at the Adirondack Council, as well as our fellow environmental partners,” Kevin Chlad said. “The clean water and wildlands of the Park hinge upon on our collective efforts.”

In 2016 Chlad organized volunteers from across the state for the Adirondack Park Wilderness Campaign, which resulted in a Wilderness classification for the Boreas Ponds and to the most significant expansion of the High Peaks Wilderness area in decades. His persistence each year also results in more funding for Forest Preserve stewardship, an important part of the state’s Environmental Protection Fund. Kevin played an instrumental role in organizing the 2020 Adirondack Park Environmental Lobby Day to heighten legislators’ consciousness about the Adirondack Park which led, in part, to passage of the *Randy Preston Road Salt Reduction Act of 2020*. That legislation awaits Governor Cuomo’s signature.

“Adirondack legislative coalitions are more effective today thanks to the tireless efforts of Kevin Chlad. For that Paul Schaefer would be celebrating,” reads Adirondack Wild’s award which features an original photograph “*Elk Lake – In the Middle of Everything Wild*” by Adirondack photographer and Adirondack Wild staff member Ken Rimany.



“*Elk Lake – In the Middle of Everything Wild*” by Ken Rimany

Adirondack Wild’s Ken Rimany adds his thanks to Kevin Chlad “not only for all that you continue to do to preserve the wild of the Adirondacks today, but also, as Paul Schaefer would often remind us, for the ‘youth of distant tomorrows’ as well.”

The *Paul Schaefer Wilderness Award* is named for foremost 20th century wilderness champion and Adirondack coalition leader Paul Schaefer (1908-1996). Schaefer founded Adirondack Wild’s forerunner, *Friends of the Forest Preserve* 75 years ago in 1945. Following his death in 1996, Schaefer was named as one of 100 of the nation’s most influential conservation leaders by *Audubon* magazine.

The award presentation took place at the Kelly Adirondack Center of Union College, where Paul and Carolyn Schaefer raised their family beginning in 1934. *Adirondack Wild: Friends of the Forest Preserve* is a not for profit, membership organization devoted to the protection of wild lands through advocacy, science and legal action, found on the web at www.adirondackwild.org.

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*Paul Schaefer in the Adirondacks in 1989.
Photo by Paul Grondahl for the Albany
Times Union*