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## **Adirondack Wild Thanks Governor Hochul for Appointing a Chair of the Adirondack Park Agency**

Ray Brook, NY - The nonprofit park advocate *Adirondack Wild: Friends of the Forest Preserve* today hails the decision by Governor Kathy Hochul to appoint fresh leadership to the board of the NYS Adirondack Park Agency.

“APA’s board, where major policy decisions for the globally significant Adirondack Park reside, has had no leader for two and a half years. In naming John Ernst as APA’s board chair yesterday, Governor Hochul signaled that this leaderless situation could not continue because it imperiled the state agency most responsible for what the governor termed ‘the largest protected area in the continental United States’,” said Adirondack Wild’s managing partner David Gibson.

“We thank her for taking this initiative now,” Gibson continued. “During its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Adirondack Park Agency remains in a very weak position and has been failing in its mission in key respects. However, in naming an APA chair early in her tenure the governor is making her own strong statement about the state’s responsibility for a wild land park of great ecological, recreational and cultural importance to New Yorkers, to the Northeastern United States, and to the world.” Since 1989, the Park has formed a large portion of the internationally designated Champlain-Adirondack Biosphere Reserve.

“John Ernst is a private landowner and employer in the Park who has a long history of careful stewardship of lands and waters, forests and wetlands under his care,” added Adirondack Wild’s Gibson. “Ernst has demonstrated over many years that he also integrates his private ownership interests with the public’s adjacent High Peaks Wilderness Area, the largest designated wilderness in the northeast.”

“As an APA member since 2016 and now its chair, John Ernst clearly cares a great deal about parkwide planning of the Park’s integrated public and private landscapes. We congratulate him on accepting this important appointment and look forward to interacting with him as the APA’s new board leader.”

*Adirondack Wild: Friends of the Forest Preserve* is a not-for-profit, membership advocate acting to safeguard wilderness and to promote wild land values and stewardship. More on the web at [adirondackwild.org](http://adirondackwild.org)