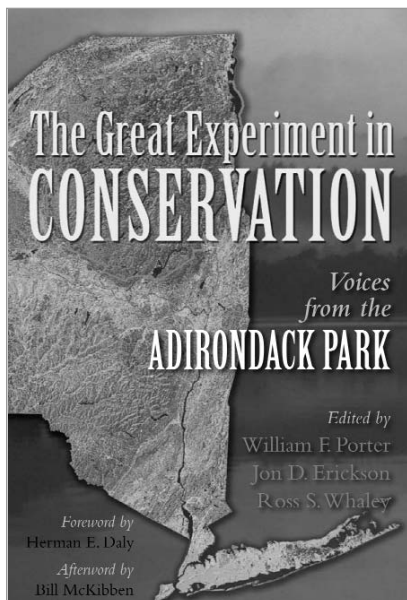


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The Great Experiment in Conservation

Voices from the Adirondack Park

Edited by William F. Porter, Jon D. Erickson, and Ross S. Whaley

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6 x 9, 704 pages, 6 black-and-white illustrations, 13 tables, notes, bibliography, index

"As individual perspectives change, the very rocks that are the Adirondacks are ever evolving. This great ecosystem demonstrates resiliency yet the future is certain to include continued change, both natural and man made. This must-read book successfully captures these insights in a snapshot that will help measure our future actions."—Dan Fitts, Executive Director of the Adirondack Research Consortium, and former Executive Director of the Adirondack Park Agency

"I'd love to see this important book be required reading for every New York State legislator and opinion-maker. Alive with personal voices, it is also packed with vital information and at times justifiably angry at what we human beings have done to the Adirondacks. It reminds us of what we've lost, of what we can still save, and of what a rare treasure this extraordinary region is."—Adam Hochschild, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa*

"Large pieces of the landscape inherently represent the integration of ecology, climatology, geology, economics, psychology, history, archeology, and everything else. But very few books about large landscapes ever get close to actually presenting an integrated picture. This one does. It is a landmark and a must read for anyone concerned with conservation in the broad sense."—Robert Costanza, University of Vermont and co-founder of the International Society for Ecological Economics

"This book presents a thorough and instructive study of the ecologically rich six million acre Adirondack Park and of the human struggles to maintain the integrity of one of the nation's great conservation areas in the face of demands for timber harvesting, recreation, and second home development. The authors achieve a unique combination of regional environmental history and analysis together with describing the search for striking a balance between development and the protection of natural resources. It is an important book for environmentalists, ecologists, planners, policy makers, and citizens who want to pursue sustainable growth in rural areas."—Tom Daniels, University of Pennsylvania and author of *The Environmental Planning Handbook*

The Adirondack region of New York State is, in many respects, America's cauldron of conservation. It was there, more than a century ago, that wanton exploitation of forests first aroused concern about human impact on the environment. It was there that Americans first began to set aside lands proclaimed as "forever wild." The establishment of the Adirondack Park created an immense landscape of 6 million acres composed of a mixture of public and private lands in nearly equal proportion. This unprecedented blend of human communities within wild lands makes the Adirondack Park perhaps one of the greatest case studies in conservation and development in U.S. history.

Representing a remarkable achievement in environmental scholarship and drawn from decades of research, *The Great Experiment in Conservation* captures the wisdom born of the last thirty years of the park's evolution. The editors bring together leading scholars, activists, and practitioners—those who know the Park's origin and the realities of living in a protected area—to narrate this history. Organized into three sections, contributors explore the ecological, cultural, and economic aspects of the region, drawing lessons from successes and failures as they struggle to find the right balance of private interests and public controls. With keen insight and deep passion, the authors reveal the Adirondack Park's rich natural and cultural history in shaping conservation policy, providing vital contributions to the future study of land preservation.

William F. Porter is professor of wildlife ecology and director of the Adirondack Ecological Center at SUNY ESF. **Jon D. Erickson** is associate professor of ecological economics at the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources, faculty of the Environmental Program, and fellow of the Gund Institute for Ecological Economics at the University of Vermont. **Ross S. Whaley** is emeritus president and professor of SUNY ESF. He is former chairman of the Adirondack Park Agency and served on the Governor's Commission for the Adirondacks in the Twenty-First Century.

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William Porter. The Adirondack region of New York State is, in many respects, America's cauldron of conservation. It was there, more than a century ago, that wanton exploitation of forests first aroused concern about human impact on the environment. It was there that Americans first began to set aside lands proclaimed as 'forever wild'. The establishment of the Adirondack Park created an immense landscape of 6 million acres composed of a mixture of public and private lands in nearly equal proportion. This unprecedented blend of human communities within wild lands makes the Adirondack Park a unique experiment in conservation while still struggling to shape its future. "When I went into this project, I talked about the Park as a model for sustainable development for rural wildlands here and elsewhere," Whaley said in an interview with the Explorer. "What I learned in the process of doing the book is that the package in total can not be replicated." Whaley's assessment is startling and sobering. Not all of the thirty-nine essays in *The Great Experiment in Conservation: Voices from the Adirondack Park* cleave to this theme. The book's contributors (there are thirty-six in addition to the editors) present a thoughtful mix of ideas about the Park's natural, cultural, and political history. "Book Review: *The Great Experiment in Conservation - Voices from the Adirondack Park*". *BioScience*. 60 (6): 471-473. doi:10.1525/bio.2010.60.6.13. "Vermont's Book Details New York's Great Adirondack Experiment". *Seven Days*. Retrieved 24 November 2012.