

Adirondack Recreational Trail Advocates (ARTA)

PO Box 1081, Saranac Lake, NY 12983

For Immediate Release: July 27, 2011

New citizens group to hold organizational meeting on August 30

A newly formed citizens group, Adirondack Recreational Trail Advocates (ARTA), will hold an organizational meeting at 7 p.m., Tuesday, August 30, in the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Lake Placid. The cycling, jogging, strolling, snowmobiling and outdoor-loving public is urged to participate.

ARTA is devoted to refuting arguments and removing barriers that have for decades blocked the creation of what could be one of the nation's finest recreational trails, traversing an incomparable landscape of lakes, wetlands, mountains and wild forests.

The meeting will rally support for a 34-mile recreational trail on the old Adirondack railroad line that connects Lake Placid, Ray Brook, Saranac Lake, Lake Clear and Tupper Lake. The world-class recreation way will be a Mecca for bicycling tourists and commuters, for walkers, joggers, nature lovers and athletes in training, for young and old, and for families looking to enjoy an easy, safe outing in a scenic setting, far from the noise, pollution and danger of busy roads. In the winter, with the rails no longer impeding passage and threatening equipment damage, the recreational trail will provide a greatly enhanced snowmobile route and an extended season.

The first part of the meeting will consist of presentations showing how the Adirondack Recreational Trail can be created, how perceived obstacles can be overcome, and how the benefits will greatly outweigh the costs.

Carl Knoch, the northeast trails director for the national Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, will discuss comparable rail conversions that have been a boon to local communities from the standpoint of health, safety, recreational enjoyment and environmental compatibility. Based on widespread experience elsewhere and a recent study by Camoin Associates, the impact of the Adirondack Recreational Trail on our economy and jobs will be highly favorable.

The second part of the meeting will be devoted to questions and answers, followed by a sign-up of those who wish to make this long-cherished dream a reality. Joining ARTA requires no fees or obligations, but members will be asked to send emails and make phone calls to key decision makers, in an expression of what already appears to be overwhelming support for the rail-to-trail proposal.

Members of the ARTA steering committee are Tony Goodwin, founder of the Adirondack Ski Touring Council and executive director of the Adirondack Trail Improvement Society, Jim McCulley, president of the Lake Placid Snowmobile Club, Lee Keet, a local businessman and fourth-generation resident of Saranac Lake, and Dick Beamish, founder of the *Adirondack Explorer* newsmagazine.

#####

For further information:

Dick Beamish, 891-2527; Lee Keet, 261-6608;
Tony Goodwin, 576-9949; Jim McCulley, 523-3606