



**Now the homeowner knows why the rain barrel was always empty!  
Gotta love those wildlife cams.**

# *Clearwater Currents*

The Official Publication of the Clearwater Chapter  
of  
Trout Unlimited  
169 Old Niskayuna Road Latham, NY 12110

Issue No. 10-10

November, 2010



*America's Leading Coldwater Fisheries Conservation  
Organization  
Promoting Habitat for Wild Trout and Salmon*

*During 2009 Trout Unlimited Celebrated Its 50<sup>th</sup> Year Fighting for  
Coldwater Fisheries Conservation*

**Join us** before each meeting at 6:30pm for a tying demonstration. Meetings begin at 7:30pm, the third Monday of each month (except Banquet month, July and August), at the Best Western on Western Avenue, Albany, NY (about a mile east of the end of the Northway).

## **Upcoming Events**

November 15	Chapter General Meeting – John Mordock speaking on <b>Capturing Rogue Trout: Strategies of a Third Generation Fly Fisherman'</b>
March 5, 2011	Chapter Banquet – Start thinking about how you can help in our biggest fundraiser!
March 26, 2011	Chapter Flea Market

## Board of Directors/Staff

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Battenkill	Greg Cuda	587-1189	Banquet	Jessica Galasso	716-913-5550
Board Member	Glenn Kuhles	869-0817	Banquet	Bill Cosgrove	766-2405
Website	Bill Wemple	384-0014	Publicity	Bill Wemple	384-0014

Clearwater Chapter of TU PO Box 9686 Schenectady, NY 12309  
[www.ClearwaterTU.org](http://www.ClearwaterTU.org)

### Fish of the Month 2010

Mark A Brown

The Chapter's Fish of the Month Contest is already in its third year having crowned **Jim Berry** and **Bill Bach** as winners in its first two years. The contest is open to all members (except me!) and their children of the Chapter and is not necessarily based on the biggest fish, but the quality of the fish, story behind it and picture quality all make up a winning entry. Simply send a photograph to me at my email address at [brownie6@nycap.rr.com](mailto:brownie6@nycap.rr.com) or contact me for my mailing address if you have a Polaroid or 35mm shot. As the entries come I'll publish them in the newsletter and select a winner in December when the winner will get a dozen hand tied flies as a prize. No entries were received for the November, 2010 newsletter. **Only one month to go – must be some nice Salmon River steelhead pictures out there that would be big contenders!**

### Chapter Fly Swap

Ron Boutin

Another year of fly swapping is upon us and starts at the Chapter meeting in April. Bring in 13 of the current months category and get 13 back of the same category from other tiers in the Chapter. It's a great way to build your fly boxes and try some new flies. New ideas are always welcome as to what you want swapped so call me at 453-9843 or email me at [rx4fishing@nycap.rr.com](mailto:rx4fishing@nycap.rr.com) if you have further questions or ideas.

Nov Salmon/Steelhead  
Dec Your "Go To" Fly

## [Chapter Monthly Meeting](#)

For the November 15<sup>th</sup> 2010 monthly meeting the Chapter welcomes author and expert angler **John Mordock** to our meeting speaking about his new book, “**Capturing Rogue Trout: Strategies of a Third Generation Fly Fisherman**”.

**John Mordock** has been fly fishing since his youth, schooled by his father, uncle and grandfather. His first real trout adventure was a pack trip into California’s High Sierra with his uncle and cousins. He also fished for trout in Wisconsin and Michigan rivers while canoeing them on weekends and vacations. In the summer, he spent several weeks each year in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area along the Minnesota/Canada border, where he learned to catch fish on streamers and popping bugs.

After completion of his graduate work at the University of Hawaii in 1966, where he surfed waves with many of that sport’s early icons, he moved to Pennsylvania, but didn’t seriously fish any Pocono Mountain streams until after he moved in 1969 to New York’s Shawangunk Mountains, a small mountain range immediately east of the Catskills. John has fished in the Catskills for over 35 years and he relates his experiences on its waters in his guidebook, *A Fly Fisherman’s Guide to Catskill Coldwater Streams and Ponds: Their Histories, Their Fish, and Techniques to Catch Them*, published in 2008, an outgrowth of his chapters on Catskill rivers in his earlier book, *Northeast, Trout, Salmon and Steelhead Streams: Every River Has a Story*.

Over the years, John has subscribed to many outdoor publications and has painfully learned that many angling writers describe experiences that he does not share. They write about catching large trout in waters John has fished and never turned a single fish approaching the sizes of those they claim to catch. In fact, both electro-fishing studies and angler surveys on some of the waters support John’s experiences. Many writers also exaggerated the numbers of trout caught and recommended ways to catch big trout that John hasn’t found particularly effective. As a result, in 2008, he published *Capturing Rogue Trout: Strategies of a Third Generation Fly Fisherman* in an effort to set the record straight about catching trophy trout. His book *Dream Destinations: Every River Has a Story II*, published in 2009, is a similar attempt to present the truth about major rivers that attract scores of fishermen each year, as John has fished most of the Western rivers touted by outdoor writers.. His two most recent books are *Strategies for Solving On-The-Water Challenges: 180 Tips From a Third Generation Angler* and *Fly Fishing Two-Story Lakes and Reservoirs: Capturing Salmon, Trout and Other Sport Fish Throughout the Angling Season*, with the later recently reviewed on “Fly Fish Ohio On Line Magazine.”

While John can’t claim he was a writer before he was a fisherman, he was a writer before he published his first fishing book. In 1975, he published *The Other Children: An Introduction to Exceptionality*, a textbook used in over 200 universities that might be the only textbook ever published by an author outside of academia. He has also published a dozen other books, most recently *Common Phrases and Where They Come From*, now in its second edition, and *Managing for Outcomes*.

John has been a member of the Catskill Mountain Chapter of Trout Unlimited since the early 1970s and feels privileged to have “rubbed shoulders” with a number of fly fishing icons, including **Art Flick, Wes Drake, J. Michael Migel, and Ray Smith**.

Guest fly tier starts at 6:30pm.

Meeting is free and open to the public – at the Best Western Sovereign Hotel – one mile east of the end of the Northway. Meeting starts at 6:30pm with guest tier and about 7:30pm with the guest speaker.

## [Battenkill Cleanup Thank You’s](#)

We have completed the highway cleanups for 2010. Thanks to: **Ed Wnek; Heath Clayson; Stan Duncan; Stu Bartow; and Ed Andrejko. Bill Donato; Bart Chabot and Bill Cosgrove** took care of the lunch. **Bill Cosgrove** had so much help that he grabbed a bag and went out and collected the most trash. We will be back at it in April, 2011.

# Clearwater Chapter Fly Tying and Fly Fishing Classes 2011

## Fly Tying Classes 2011

Beginners Tue. Jan. 11 thru Tue. March 1

Advanced Thu. Jan. 13 Thru Thu. March 3

Cost: \$65 checks made payable to TU Clearwater Chapter.

## Fly Fishing Class 2011

Tue. March 29 Thru Tue. May 10

On the water May 14 or 15 weather permitting.

Cost: \$135 for TU members \$150 for non-members, which includes a one year membership. Checks made payable to TU Clearwater Chapter.

All classes will go from 7-9 pm as usual. The location will be St. Joseph's Parish Center in Scotia.

Any questions, please contact **Rich Bogardus** at 377-1022 or [richari1@yahoo.com](mailto:richari1@yahoo.com)

Send payments to:

**Rich Bogardus**

1123 Helderberg Ave.

Schenectady, NY 12306

## Stream Restoration Class in May 2011

Once again the Chapter has the opportunities to send volunteers to this wonderful class focusing on restoring coldwater streams. Clearwater volunteers have gone before and are a great asset to our stream conservation efforts. If you are interested please call **Roy Lamberton** at 872-2217.



Folks, we are already planning next year's Trout Waters Youth Camp. Now, is the time to plan to find another successful candidate or the first from your chapter. For those from the past, we thank you for your excellent choices. **Kurt Nelson** and the staff have enjoyed the experiences and if you would like to, contact Kurt or talk with him at a NY TU General Council meeting. Attached is the newest brochure. For those chapters that send financial support we are equally indebted with a thank you. I look forward to the experience again in 2011. We recently received an email from this year's student who is proud that he can now cast decently up to 50 feet. This is for someone that never fished before much less fly casting. Kurt can be contacted at [avkurt@mac.com](mailto:avkurt@mac.com) or (607) 372-6330 – For more information check out the camps website at : <http://web.mac.com/avkurt/Site2/TroutWaters.html>

**Ron Urban, Chairman**  
**NY Trout Unlimited Council**

## **DEC biologist wins TU award**

**November 10, 2010 - Mike Lynch**

<http://www.adirondackdailyenterprise.com/page/blogs.detail/display/925/DEC-biologist-wins-TU-award.html>

Rich Preall, a DEC fisheries biologist based in Ray Brook, has been awarded the New York State Council of Trout Unlimited's Professional Resource Award for 2010.

The award, was presented Tuesday to Preall, by Bill Wellman and Dave Corr, both of Trout Unlimited. The award is given annually to a conservation professional in New York State who has made significant contributions to New York's fisheries and their habitat.

Preall, a 26 year member of DEC's staff, was recognized for his outstanding contributions to saving the endangered round whitefish from extinction in New York, and for his equally significant work in preserving and protecting Heritage strain brook trout.

Round whitefish, once present in many Adirondack lakes, had been reduced to a marginal population in only six water bodies when Preall began his efforts. Although not off the danger list, his efforts have established a thriving number in other locations in the Adirondacks. He has also been instrumental in stabilizing the populations of New York's Heritage strain brook trout, New York's official state fish and long a matter of concern to conservationists.

Other notable achievements, such as his work in controlling an infestation of invasive Northern snakeheads, an invasive fish, were also cited in the award.

Preall and his wife Mary Beth reside in Saranac Lake.

A full report regarding Preall's achievements will appear in Saturday's Enterprise.

***Today in the Elmira Star Gazette:***

## **Attorney General-elect Schneiderman staunchly opposes hydraulic fracturing**

<http://bit.ly/aPZ3j4>

The state's Attorney General-elect, however, took one of the strongest stances against hydraulic fracturing of any candidate statewide.

Eric Schneiderman, a Democrat **has said he will sue to stop the controversial drilling process of hydraulic fracturing -- until it is proven safe -- and aggressively go after drillers who break the rules.**

"As Attorney General, I will build on the strong Cuomo environmental record and ensure that the office's environmental bureau remains active and engaged to investigate and protect our water supply,"

Schneiderman said in a statement. **"Neither the state nor the federal government has determined that hydrofracking is a safe practice, and I will sue to make sure that no drilling takes place until those determinations have been made."**

*Ron Urban, NLC  
NY Trout Unlimited*

## Change at the Top of Clearwater TU

At the last Chapter Board of Directors meeting President **Rich Bogardus** tendered his resignation due to employment issues that conflicted with his ability to properly fulfill his duties as President. We thank Rich for his volunteering to take over the President's position in the first place and the leadership he demonstrated in the 5 months that he was President.

In his place **Mike Walchko** volunteered to take over the President's position for the remainder of the 2 year term. Thanks to Mike for stepping forward to take over this crucial position and I urge the rest of Clearwater to support and assist Mike as he executes the position of President of Clearwater TU.

## DEC sheds senior staff

October 23, 2010 - By [MIKE LYNCH, Adirondack Daily Enterprise Outdoors Writer](#)

High-profile biologists, supervisors and fish hatchery staff and are among the 260 state Department of Environmental Conservation employees who recently left the agency after accepting a 2010 early retirement incentive program offered by Gov. David Paterson.

The list includes biologists such as Al Hicks, who worked to reintroduce the moose in the Adirondacks and who first warned of major die-offs of bats; Peter Nye, who worked for decades to bring bald eagles back to the state; and on a local level, Tom Hall, who recently served as the assistant regional director to Betsy Lowe.

"Many of the men and women on that list represent really long-term institutional knowledge," Adirondack Mountain Club Executive Director Neil Woodworth said. "These are 25- to 30-year members of the department."

The 260 are part of the 595 employees who have left the DEC since April 2008 through attrition, a severance program and the early retirement incentive program. The 595 represent 16 percent of the 3,775 staff members DEC had in April 2008. Those numbers don't include the 209 positions Paterson told the DEC to cut by the end of this year.

Woodworth said the DEC will miss people like Hicks, pathologist Ward Stone, real estate specialist John Keating and David Forness, chief of the Bureau of State Land Management, who all worked in Albany.

"Out the door with John Keating goes an incredible amount of knowledge about the state's Adirondack land holdings and Adirondack real estate in general," Woodworth said. "Nobody knew those state forests better than Dave Forness."

Adirondack Council spokesman John Sheehan said Stone and Hicks jumped out at him as big losses.

"(Hicks) was largely responsible for the state's work in helping the moose return to the Adirondacks (by) relocating animals that get into trouble and doing their best to keep them alive in transport and finding suitable habitat," he said.

Sheehan also praised Stone for his work on West Nile virus, avian flu and in detecting pollution in the St. Lawrence River. Stone also came under heavy criticism in the last year, however, after it was learned that he had been living in his Delmar office, but some of his proponents overlooked his alleged misgivings.

"He was also one of the first to help us recognize white nose syndrome in the bats," Sheehan said. Hicks also played a lead role in researching white nose syndrome.

For Jason Kemper, who is chairman of the Conservation Fund Advisory Board, the biggest losses are in the Division Of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources, which had 36 people retire statewide. That includes a turnover of the chief of the Bureau of Wildlife, where Gordon Batcheller has replaced John Major.

Kemper is especially concerned about are those who work at the fish hatcheries. The DEC's website lists seven people who have left fish hatcheries statewide, including Ed Grant, manager of the Adirondack Fish Hatchery in Lake Clear, which raises landlocked salmon and stocks them in Adirondack waterways. Kemper said the lack of staff at those hatcheries is jeopardizing operations for raising fish.

"We're in a really big pickle right now," Kemper said. "We're starting to take eggs for next spring. Unless we can backfill some of those positions, we're not going to have the fish to stock. The department has to make a decision whether they

keep raising those fish or the eggs just sort of don't go."

Kemper said he was frustrated by the loss in DEC fisheries staff because there were across-the-board license fee increases last year and because the Conservation Fund, which funds fisheries staff positions, has a surplus in the millions of dollars. He was unable to provide the exact amount, but it's enough to pay for those lost positions. The only reason the money isn't going to that purpose is because of the governor's mandate to cut positions, he said.

"We sold a huge license fee increase to sportsmen and -women, and they reluctantly accepted it with the promise that there would not be a reduced level of service," Kemper said. "So now we have a huge surplus in the Conservation Fund and no ability, because the state Department of Budget, to backfill any of those positions."

## [Paterson gives his enviro policy advisor top DEC post](#)

By Julia Reischel - 10/29/10



After [firing Pete Grannis](#), the former head of the Department of Environmental Conservation, last week, Governor David Paterson has a new man for the job: Peter Iwanowicz. According to a [press release issued by the governor's office yesterday](#), Iwanowicz has been working as the governor's top advisor on environmental issues since March, and will continue to do both jobs without any increase in pay.

Iwanowicz has some impressive credentials: He was the head of the New York State Office of Climate Change during its attempt to regulate carbon dioxide emissions with other states via the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. He has also led the New York chapter of the American Lung Association.

In making the appointment, Paterson hyped Iwanowicz's cap-and-trade carbon credentials but made no mention of gas drilling, the biggest political hot potato in the DEC's lap this year:

"Peter has been an outstanding public servant and an outstanding caretaker of the environment throughout his professional career," Governor Paterson said. "I credit Peter with successfully negotiating a deal on the E-waste law that was passed during this past session, and his expertise on RGGI has helped New York lead the nation on this critical cap and invest program. I know he will bring that same professionalism to DEC."

# PRESS RELEASE

\* THE ADIRONDACK COUNCIL \* AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION IN NEW YORK \* AUDUBON NEW YORK \* CITIZENS CAMPAIGN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT \* CLEAN NEW YORK \* EARTHJUSTICE \* ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCATES OF NEW YORK \* ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE FUND \* ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ACTION GROUP OF WNY \* HUNTINGTON BREAST CANCER ACTION COALITION \* NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION \* NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL \* NEW YORK PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP \* PACE ENERGY AND CLIMATE CENTER \* PREVENTION IS THE CURE \* SIERRA CLUB-ATLANTIC CHAPTER \*

October 22, 2010

## **GROUPS CRY FOUL OVER FIRING OF DEC COMMISSIONER, CALL ON GOV PATERSON TO REINSTATE GRANNIS IMMEDIATELY**

*Governor Fires NY's Top Environmental Cop for Release of Internal Memo Revealing How Budget Cuts Will Impact Air, Water & Land Protection*

(ALBANY, NY)—State lawmakers, environmental, conservation, and public health organizations today attacked Governor Paterson for the reckless termination of New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Alexander B. "Pete" Grannis. Governor Eliot Spitzer appointed Grannis to lead New York's primary environmental agency in 2007. The groups are calling for Paterson to reinstate Grannis and for the next governor to provide the DEC with resources necessary to responsibly safeguard New York's environment.

Press reports suggest that Pete Grannis was fired in response to the leak of an [internal memo](#) that reveals how the latest round of proposed budget and staff cuts will imperil the DEC's ability to monitor air and water pollution, clean up toxic oil and chemical spills, and keep an eye on out hazardous waste disposal and storage, among dozens of other critical functions. Staff and budget cuts also mean that new businesses moving to New York State must wait years for necessary permits and regulatory approvals, while polluters have little fear of enforcement and often escape regulatory oversight. According to the memo:

--Agency was told to lay off 209 staff, on top of 260 early retirement incentive approvals this year. This leaves the agency with 2,926 staff, a 23 percent reduction from 2007-08.

--The DEC is bearing 10 percent of all state layoffs, although the agency only accounts for 2.5 percent of the total state workforce.

--In the last 2.5 years, the agency has lost 595 employees, 16 percent of its workforce.

--The DEC's non-personal services budget (travel and equipment for inspections, oil clean ups) has been cut in half from 2007-08 to 2010-11.

--In 2007-08, the Spitzer Administration increased staff levels at the DEC and added 108 for a total of 3,775.

"Pete Grannis has been an effective leader as head of the state Environmental Conservation department and has been a big supporter of the Bigger Better Bottle bill and E-waste bills," said Senator Antoine Thompson, Chair of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee.

"The firing of Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Pete Grannis is one more in a long series of examples of the Paterson administration's open hostility to the environment. It is obvious that the performance of Commissioner Grannis was anything but poor. He performed his duty as New York's environmental caretaker with diligence, clarity and fearlessness. Commissioner Grannis stood firm against proposals to cut the DEC to nearly the lowest levels in its history, and he paid for it. Today we honor his courage to stand up for our water, land and air and to be a staunch advocate for his agency," Assemblyman Robert Sweeney, Chair of the Assembly Environmental Conservation Committee.

“Commissioner Pete Grannis was fired for sounding the alarm and because the truth came out about the Department of Environmental Conservation. Budget cuts and staff attrition have pushed the agency to the brink. Instead of rising to the challenge and working to address these serious issues, the Governor's reaction was to fire the one person holding it all together. This wrong-headed move will cost New Yorkers dearly. A functional DEC is essential for the protection of our air and water quality and right now the agency is struggling to meet its responsibilities. We are seeing it locally with a permitting bottleneck further delaying responsible developments. Looking ahead, even if hydrofracking was safe, DEC does not even come remotely close to having the resources to enforce drilling regulations,” said Assemblyman Kevin Cahill, Chair of the Assembly Energy Committee.

“PEF/encon, Division 169 of the Public Employees Federation, representing the 1700 (and rapidly diminishing Professional, Scientific and Technical Staff at NYSDEC), calls on the Governor to reinstate Commissioner Pete Grannis immediately. DEC is in turmoil as it is with drastically reduced staff at a time when there are numerous critically important environmental issues needing to be dealt with that have the potential for serious harm to public health and safety if not handled professionally and competently. We find it abhorrent that a Commissioner was fired without even the pretense of due process and having a chance to present his side of the story. The issues in the memo released to the public are not new to the professional staff--we have been telling the legislature and Governor for years that our staff shortages are resulting in drive-by inspections and triage management. It is almost criminal for the Governor and Legislature to pretend that this agency can fulfill its mission, statutory and regulatory responsibilities,” said Wayne Bayer, PEF/encon Executive Board and Shop Steward.

“Firing Pete Grannis is the Paterson Administration’s final insult to New York’s environment. The Governor has been tearing the Department of Environmental Conservation limb from limb over the last few years and now they’ve cut off its head,” said Rob Moore, Executive Director, Environmental Advocates of New York. “We’re calling on Governor Paterson to reinstate Pete Grannis and we’re calling on the next governor to responsibly provide resources to the agency and protect our shared environment.”

“The Governor’s systematic dismantling of the DEC is reckless—critically endangering human and environmental health. One would think Governor Paterson has lost his mind,” said Susan Lawrence, Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter Chair. “To fire such a dedicated, loyal DEC Commissioner as Pete, who held together this decimated agency, Paterson has clearly lost his heart as well. It will take years to repair the damage Paterson has done to New York's environment.”

“The firing of Pete Grannis is a sad punctuation on the dismal environmental record of the Paterson Administration,” said Adirondack Council Executive Director Brian L. Houseal. “We have seen cuts to staff, slashing of the Environmental Protection Fund, and a proposal to end land protection. The Adirondack Council applauds the efforts of Commissioner Grannis to protect the environment during his tenure and his truthfulness about what additional cuts would do to DEC’s critical functions. We wish Pete the best in the future and hope this administration, which is openly hostile to the environment, does not do any further damage in its final days.”

“The dismissal of Peter Grannis, a multi-decadal environmental statesman, is an act of political timidity and gutlessness reflecting an unwillingness to address the systematic fiscal challenges engulfing the State as well as a disregard for long-term environmental protection and health,” said Jim Tripp, General Counsel, Environmental Defense Fund.

“Commissioner Grannis worked for the people of New York. He served them well by telling the truth about how devastating budget cuts are putting air and water quality at risk. Governor Paterson’s act of firing Pete Grannis betrayed New Yorkers’ strong support for environmental protection and a transparent and accountable government,” said Curtis Fisher, Regional Executive Director, National Wildlife Federation.

“When someone like Pete Grannis, who worked at the DEC in the early 1970’s and championed environmental laws in the State Legislature for thirty years before serving as commissioner, says that the agency is at its weakest point in history and that critical environmental programs are ‘hanging on a thread,’ people ought to listen. Instead, Governor Paterson fired him,” said Laura Haight, NYPIRG’s senior environmental associate. “This is just another example of an Administration more interested in enforcing its ill-informed and heavy handed agenda than looking out for the public’s interests.”

“Pete Grannis has spent his life fighting for clean air,” said Scott T. Santarella, President and CEO of the American Lung Association in New York. “As an assemblyman and as DEC Commissioner, he has led air quality and tobacco control efforts which have helped New Yorkers breathe easier. The Lung Association calls on the state of New York to follow Pete’s legacy by restoring much needed funds to DEC and refocusing its resources on cleaning the air we breathe.”

“The Governor just sent a chilling and frightening message to every government employee—tell the truth and you will get fired. The disproportionate cuts to the DEC will have dramatic ramifications to every New Yorker. Protecting drinking water, air quality, cleaning up toxic waste site and protecting surface waters are necessities not luxury items. Managing a budget deficit isn’t an excuse to endanger the health and welfare of New Yorkers,” said Adrienne Esposito, Executive Director of Citizens Campaign for the Environment.

“Pete Grannis has been a steadfast champion for conservation for decades, and it’s a shame that the Paterson Administration’s assault on the environment has claimed another strong advocate,” said Albert E. Caccese Executive Director of Audubon New York. “This continued dismantling of the DEC by Governor Paterson and Larry Schwartz is leaving the state handicapped to protect its citizens, birds and other wildlife from emerging environmental threats, and it is our hope that the next administration reverses this wrongheaded strategy.”

“Pete Grannis has long been an environmental leader in New York,” said Richard Schrader, New York Legislative Director at the Natural Resources Defense Council. “As the head of the state environmental agency, he helped to create a landmark recycling program for electronics, invested in green jobs, and promoted smart growth in our communities. Commissioner Grannis is right – the dangerously understaffed agency has been badly injured by incessant, disproportionate budget cuts and in turn, so has New York’s environment. These deep cuts are among the many reasons the state cannot move forward on risky endeavors like gas drilling – an issue the next administration will need to confront head-on.”

“The ongoing disproportionate targeting of this agency for cuts and the Commissioner’s firing serve only unscrupulous companies that benefit from lack of oversight at the expense of the public’s health and welfare,” said Kathy Curtis, Policy Director of Clean New York. “Commissioner Grannis should be reinstated immediately and no more cuts should be made to the Agency.”

Prior to his time as DEC Commissioner, Pete Grannis served as a member of the State Assembly for decades representing the Upper East Side of Manhattan.

Earlier this month, conservation and environmental groups called on Governor David Paterson to stop anticipated staff cuts at the DEC. According to published reports, 209 staff layoffs have been ordered by the end of the year. Coupled with staff lost to retirement incentives and budget cuts, the latest round of layoffs will reduce agency staff to the lowest levels since the 1980’s, with serious consequences for the DEC’s ability to respond to environmental hazards, not to mention critical routine functions such as monitoring air and water pollution.

The agency is responsible for providing oversight for air and water quality, open space, forests, wetlands, gas and oil drilling, hazardous waste, hunting and fishing, invasive species eradication, dam safety, and many other programs. The wellbeing of all New Yorkers depends on the DEC to enforce existing environmental laws.

The layoffs are in addition to other budget cuts for non-personal services such as travel and equipment for inspections and testing for chemicals such as pesticides. With resources for these critical activities cut in half since the 2007-08 budget year, the agency can only afford to respond to 150 oil spills rather than the annual average of 350.

The organizations calling on the Governor include The Adirondack Council, American Lung Association in New York, Audubon New York, Citizens Campaign for the Environment, Clean New York, Earthjustice, Environmental Advocates of New York, Environmental Defense Fund, Environmental Justice Action Group of WNY, Huntington Breast Cancer Action Coalition, National Wildlife Federation, Natural Resources Defense Council, New York Public Interest Research Group, Pace Energy & Climate Center, Prevention is the Cure, and Sierra Club – Atlantic Chapter.

**From the Entire Staff at the Clearwater Currents We Wish You and  
Yours a Most Happy Thanksgiving**