

Adirondack Daily Enterprise

Local projects awarded \$1.3M from state REDC

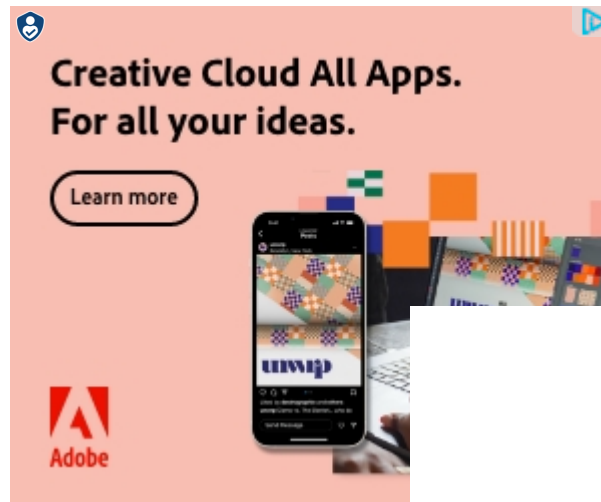
Five projects and events in the Tri-Lakes collectively received more than \$1.3 million in funding in the state's latest round of Regional Economic Development Council Initiative awards.

The \$1,338,126 in awards, announced this past Friday, will help support the 2023 Luge World Cup and the 2023 Empire State Winter Games, as well as fund the third phase of renovations at the Eagle Island Great Camp on Upper Saranac Lake, the construction of a Lake Placid trailhead along the Adirondack Rail Trail and improvements at the Cascade Welcome Center.

A total of \$24.3 million was awarded to 56 projects across the state in this 12th round of REDC awards. The matching grants are funded by the state's Environmental Protection Fund and administered by the state Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. The REDC awards were created in 2011 under former Gov. Andrew Cuomo.

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Eagle Island



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Franklin Eagle Island, Inc. received \$499,994 for renovations at Eagle Island, a Great Camp on Upper Saranac Lake. The camp is a national historic landmark and a youth camp, and the funding will support the continued preservation of buildings and structures there.

This is the third REDC grant Eagle Island has received for the rehabilitation of the Great Camp, according to Eagle Island Executive Director Danielle La Cavalla. When Eagle Island purchased the former Girl Scout camp in 2015, the property had been abandoned for 10 years. La Cavalla said there was a “*ginormous*” list of renovations that needed to be done. Since 2016, they’ve completed about \$2 million in renovations at the property.

“Without the funding, we would not be where we are right now,” La Cavalla said.

Eagle Island now hosts a youth camp, an all-gender day camp, a youth girls' overnight camp, family camps and women's weekends at the island as well as open visitor days. With the renovations, La Cavalla hopes that Eagle Island could expand its camper capacity, make the camp a safer place for campers and staff, and revive the camp's historic architecture, from lattices and railings to stairs and porches.

"There's history in everything," La Cavalla said.

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Lake Placid trailhead

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The Open Space Institute netted \$500,000 in this round of REDC awards to design and construct a trailhead and a parking area on Station Road along the Lake Placid portion of the Adirondack Rail Trail.

The leg of the rail trail from Lake Placid to Saranac Lake is expected to be complete by fall 2023, with the completion of the full 34-mile, multi-use trail from Lake Placid to Tupper Lake slated for 2025.

Preliminary design plans from the Open Space Institute show a 43-space parking lot area, including three EV charging stations and two accessible parking spots, as well as an ADA-compliant toilet, a pavilion with picnic tables, a bike repair station, interpretive signage, a brick paver plaza and green spaces.

"As a much-anticipated new amenity in the region, OSI's role in securing and designing a new trailhead and parking lot is critical to ensure that people can safely navigate a busy intersection to enter and exit the ART when it opens in 2023," Siobhan Gallagher Kent, the director of communications for the OSI, wrote in an email Monday.

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Cascade

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The Adirondack Mountain Club got \$101,925 in funding for planning efforts at the Cascade Welcome Center. Ben Brosseau, the communications director for ADK, said the funds will help ADK plan for a more accessible experience for visitors of the welcome center.

“The money is going to be put towards planning that will help us offer a more accessible and welcoming experience to visitors at Cascade Welcome Center — specifically architectural, landscape and interpretive planning,” Brosseau wrote in an email Monday.

ADK purchased the former Cascade Ski Center this past January and has since reopened the center as an all-season hub for hikers, skiers and recreationists looking for information about the High Peaks. ADK has received several grants for Cascade, including a \$500,000 Northern Border Regional Commission State Economic & Infrastructure Development grant in 2021 for the purchase of the center and a second \$303,960 NBRC grant this past August.

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Winter sports

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The United States Luge Association received \$136,207 in funding for next year’s Luge World Cup. USA Luge is co-hosting the competition with the state Olympic Regional Development Authority.

The Adirondack North Country Sports Council was awarded \$100,000 in funding for the Empire State Winter Games, which will come to this region February 2-5, 2023.

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