



**Testimony Submission from Paul Smith's College (PSC), New York State Joint Legislative Hearing on the 2024-2025 Executive Budget Proposal, Environmental Conservation Committee.**

Dear Chair Krueger, Chair Weinstein, Chair Harckham, Chair Glick, and honored members of the Environmental Conservation Committee:

I am writing on behalf of Paul Smith's College to submit testimony on the 2024 New York State Joint Legislative Hearing on the Governor's Executive Budget Proposal. It is a privilege to contribute recommendations that are critical for shaping policies and initiatives crucial to the protection of New York State's natural environment.

**Our testimony centers on the protection of clean water and the vitality of our forests.**

I am expressing my strong advocacy for the allocation of funds from the 2025 New York State budget to support two critical environmental research initiatives at Paul Smith's College. Your careful consideration of this budget request is vital to the continuation and strengthening of research capacity in the state. By supporting these initiatives, you contribute significantly to the environmental sustainability and resilience of New York State, safeguarding our natural resources for current and future generations.

<b>Paul Smith's College</b>	<b>2024 Final Budget</b>	<b>2025 Executive Proposal</b>	<b>Request</b>
Adirondack Watershed Institute Science Facility	\$0	\$0	\$200,000 for sustained monitoring of NYS clean water
Climate & Applied Forest Research Institute	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$500,000 for applied forest management and decision making

Sustained monitoring of **ecological vital signs** protects the health and integrity of New York State's treasured Adirondack Park. Tracking these indicators leads to informed decision-making, environmental sustainability, and the protection of the health and well-being of people and places in the state of New York. Paul Smith's College specializes in tracking ecological indicators that help understand the condition of the state's forests and freshwater resources.

**Clean Water:** We are seeking financial support from the New York State Environmental Protection Fund to support advancements in technology and training, and compliance requirements for data collection and analysis to protect clean water. An investment of \$200,000 will facilitate professional training, cover monitoring expenses, and acquire essential scientific equipment at the college's Adirondack Watershed Institute. This funding will fortify AWI's capacity to address environmental challenges, including the impacts of road salt, ensuring informed decision-making for the benefit of our waterways and communities.

**Healthy Forests:** We are seeking \$500,000 to support applied forest management research at Paul Smith's College through the expansion of the EPF line for the Climate & Applied Forestry Research Institute (CAFRI) from \$1 million to \$1.5 million. Leveraged with commitments from many of the state's largest private forestry companies, this investment will fund critical gaps in technology, data, and field inventories which help landowners prioritize decisions about New York State's private forests. This funding will help strengthen scientific collaboration between forest research institutions within the state and expand the scope of New York's forest research partnerships regionally, nationally, and internationally. The result will be cooperative research that will drive the digitization and modernization of forest management and operations, leading to increased productivity and profitability, as well as ensuring climate benefits from New York's working forests.

Thank you for your time and commitment to ensuring a sustainable and thriving environment for all New Yorkers. We appreciate your consideration of our request and look forward to actively participating in the collaborative efforts to support to environmental conservation.

Sincerely,



Dan Kelting, Ph.D.  
President, Paul Smith's College

**Paul Smith's College**, situated in the heart of the Adirondack Park, contains a 14,000-acre campus, one of the largest in the country, serving approximately 700 students annually. Specializing in environmental science, culinary and hospitality, and climate change education, the college is home to a leading forestry program, central to its history and mission for 165 years. As one of two forestry schools in New York offering Society of American Foresters-accredited bachelor's degrees, Paul Smith's uniquely integrates hands-on forest management into rigorous professional training, positioning itself as a leader in sustainable, climate-smart forestry.

The college's Adirondack Watershed Institute has been at the forefront of clean water protection for decades, focusing on research initiatives such as safeguarding waterways from road salt contamination. AWI addresses climate change, invasive species, harmful algal blooms, and upland development through science, stewardship, and educational programs. Operating the largest aquatic invasive species spread prevention program in NYS and maintaining the only certified environmental lab within the Adirondacks, AWI enhances Paul Smith's College's capacity to inform clean water and climate resilience policies.