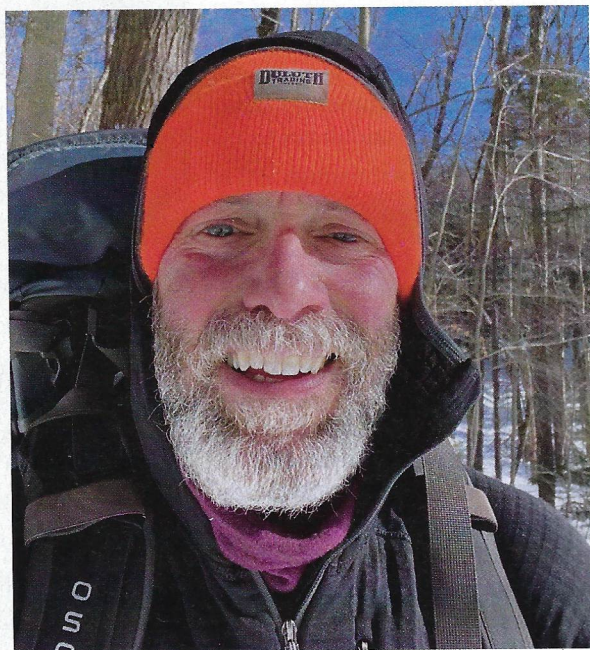


Keith Micoli



FROM A YOUNG AGE, Keith Micoli had an affinity for the outdoors. He was active in Boy Scouts, attending the Massawepie Scout Camp in the early 1980s. Back then, Keith recalls, many Adirondack lakes and ponds were still sterile from acid rain.

After attending college in Florida and Alabama, Keith returned to New York to join the New York University (NYU) School of Medicine in 2008. He never imagined that in those thirty-odd years he was gone, the Adirondacks would make such a strong ecological recovery, to become a place where trout are abundant and bald eagles are sighted regularly.

Before tackling the Adirondacks, Keith led hikes and camping trips in the Catskills as part of leadership development and team building. He and his wife, Thea, started making weekend trips in the Adirondacks. They fell in love with the wilderness and relative solitude.

Keith first hiked the Northville-Placid Trail (NPT) in 2015. He calls it a “life-changing” trip that lasted ten days in total. It was the first time he’d taken a trip that lasted longer than two days.

Keith thru-hiked the NPT again in 2016, this time with Thea. He’d conveniently omitted stories of mud and blowdowns, instead focusing on the amazing scenery and solitude the NPT provides to all who hike it.

A year later, Keith began bringing students to the NPT as part of NYU’s Women’s Intensive Leadership Development Program (WILD), initially hiking the NPT from Piseco to Lake Placid, and completing the section from Northville to Piseco as part of their training hikes.

He guesses there are not many people who’ve spent more nights on the NPT from 2015 to 2023. His leadership experience and love of the NPT have prepared him well for his next adventure: serving as chair of Adirondack Mountain Club’s NPT Chapter.

When you know how hard it is to carry a chainsaw, oil, gas, plus your regular gear seven miles on a trail, you appreciate the place a lot more...

—Keith Micoli

Keith first got involved with the NPT Chapter in January 2019, when he and a group attempted a winter thru-hike, organized by Diana Niland. While injuries and brutal conditions ultimately forced the group to turn around at West Canada Creek, the trip served as a catalyst for Keith’s involvement with the NPT Chapter.

Keith has always been one to volunteer, participating in several trips to help maintain the NPT. It was on those trips he got to know Carla Denn, the outgoing chair of the NPT Chapter. When the vice chair seat became open in January 2022, Keith happily stepped up to fill the role. Less than one year later, he was voted the chapter chair.

As we celebrate the NPT’s centennial, I asked Keith what the future holds. He said he’s looking to balance his desire to see more people out enjoying the trail, which he calls “a favorite of [his] for almost a decade,” while making sure the trail isn’t spoiled by overuse. He continues, “Even a small contribution to trail maintenance can have a big impact, both to oneself, and to everyone who spends time on trails throughout the New York State Forest Preserve.”

Keith adds, “When you know how hard it is to carry a chainsaw, oil, gas, plus your regular gear seven miles on a trail, you appreciate the place a lot more ... Making the trail a little easier for the next person to come along is just something that makes me feel good, and it makes me happy when I see evidence of someone else’s work out there too.” ▲

—David Lynch