

Catskill Advisory Group, Meeting #1 Summary

November 19, 2020

Attendees, DEC staff: Peter Frank, Mikaela Hameline, Sara Hart, Bill Rudge, Jeff Rider, Katie Petronis, Kelly Turturro, Laura DiBetta,

Attendees, CAG members: Lisa Lyons, Adrienne Larys, Jeff Senterman, Cathy Pedler, Michelle Yost, Mel Mendez, Joshua Howard, Matthew Shook, Ramsay Adams, Warren Hart, Markly Wilson, Katherine Nadeau, Adam Bosch, David Kukle, Ross Levi, Melissa Abramson.

Welcome and introductions:

- Remarks from Katie Petronis, Deputy Commissioner for Natural Resources and Peter Frank, Forest Preserve and Conservation Easement Bureau Chief

Review WebEx tools; ground rules; housekeeping.

Review CAG's mission, charge, and goals:

- PowerPoint Presentation with an introduction to some of the issues:
 - Between 2007-17, visitor use in the Catskills increased 60%, even faster since 2017, and the numbers are highest in 2020 due to COVID.
- Discussion of roles and resources available to the Group.
- Six goals were identified.

Group discussion of primary issues and considerations, including:

- Water-based recreation
- Weekday visitation
- General increase in visitation
- Parking
- Trailhead impacts
- Importance of education and communications
- Diversity of recreational experience – shifts in visitor interests; importance of inclusivity in visitor experience
- Need for data to help understand visitor interests and experience goals

Meeting dates/times/format: group responded to several polls to determine what works for most members

Introduction to S.O.A.R. exercise: Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results.