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 Turturo, Laura DiBetta,


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.