



**MINUTES OF THE PARK ECOLOGY COMMITTEE MEETING
April 19, 2012**

Committee members in attendance included Agency Chairwoman Leilani Ulrich, Arthur Lussi, Cecil Wray, Designees Jen McCormick Department of Economic Development, and Robert Stegemann Department of Environmental Conservation. Members Frank Mezzano, William Thomas, Sherman Craig, Richard Booth and Designee Dierdre Scozzafava, Department of State joined the Committee. Also participating in the meeting was Executive Director Fred Monroe of the Local Government Review Board. Staff included Executive Director Terry Martino, Associate Counsel Sarah Reynolds, and Supervisor Natural Resource Analysis Daniel Spada.

The Committee meeting convened at approximately 2:30 p.m.

RASS Supervisor's Report (D. Spada)

Mr. Spada briefly reviewed the activity report for the RASS Division that was included in the mailing packet sent to the Board. He then introduced Karen Roy and her team from Adirondack Lakes Survey Corporation (ALSC).

The Adirondack Long Term Monitoring Program: Recent Trends and the Latest Data (Karen Roy, DEC, ALSC)

Ms. Roy and her ALSC colleagues Jed Dukett, Nate Houck, and Sue Capone presented a brief history of the Adirondack Lakes Survey Corporation, program highlights of stream and lake water chemistry and fisheries resurveys, and concluded with a demonstration of data results that are now available on the web. Following the presentation, a tour of the ALSC lab located in the basement of the Ray Brook DEC building was given to Agency Commissioners and staff.

A good share of the ALSC team's time is spent in the field, collecting data and recording and sharing the results with funding agencies such as EPA, NYSERDA, and DEC, as well as the public. The recorded data is also on the ALSC webpage and is utilized by many user groups. Due to the volume of long-term research that has been conducted in the Park, thresholds have been developed that are widely used globally to determine the health or quality of watersheds and water bodies and the atmospheric determinants that contribute to or detract from their well being. Ms. Roy noted the important role that GIS services and mapping data have played in the overall collection strategies that have been developed by the ALSC team. Much of the mapping technology and information produced by Agency staff has been crucial to the success of the program.

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Agency Chair Ulrich asked what the Agency could do to assist in the endeavors of ALSC. Ms. Roy responded that it is necessary to continue supporting the work through resolutions and letters of support so that collection and monitoring can continue to build a foundation of scientific data. It is important to continue to advocate for establishing baseline data collection that can be used to address environmental issues such as climate change. The support and advocacy is crucial to sustaining funding to maintain research activities which can influence policy and decision making.

Member Booth asked how confident scientists can be in the long-term health of water bodies in the Park. Ms. Roy responded that the confidence lies in the continuity of the record of environmental change. Mr. Booth then asked how useful the information is in looking at the environment globally. Ms. Roy responded that long-term monitoring is ever-evolving and technology is ever-changing which can enhance data collection and recording to produce results that can influence policy and change both on a local as well as a global scale.

Designee Stegemann asked if a correlation has been made in past policy decisions and response compared to the data collected. Ms. Roy responded that NYSERDA has sponsored a science and policy review assessment to evaluate program efficiencies. She added this is a work in progress.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:15 p.m.