

Mapping the Future of the Adirondack Park - Results

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Surprising Alignment on Workshop Ranking

Whenever we present and debate the endstates, we ask the participants to rank order them on desirability and attainability. The table¹ below summarizes the 515 rankings, which have stayed consistent since the first CGA event. The main message is that C (The Sustainable Life) is most desirable, by a wide margin, across all workshops. B (Usable Park) is second. D (Adirondack County) is also viewed as desirable. A (Wild Park) only speaks to the Forest Preserve, which is fully compatible with C and B.

In addition, C (The Sustainable Life) is first in attainability, although B (Usable Park) is a close second. E (Post Big-Government Solutions) is often viewed as highly attainable because it most closely matches current conditions. D (Adirondack County) is widely regarded as most difficult to pull off. F (Adirondack Forest) is viewed as the failure scenario, what we get if we don't address these issues.

The fact that there has been such strong agreement across such diverse groups is an important result. There is a real common ground! Secondly, the fact that the two most desirable endstates are also viewed as most attainable is also an extremely positive result.

	CGA 2011	Paul Smiths (F)	Chestertown(F)	AATV Presentation	Keene Valley(H)	Old Forge (F)	New York City(H)	Paul Smiths Class(H)	Lake Placid(F)	Whallonsburg(H)	Adk Community Trust(H)	Clifton-Fine(H)	Saranac Lake (H)	Blue Mountain Lake(F)	Long Lake Young People (H)	All Rankings	
Desirability	1	C 84	C 87	C 85	C 85	C 87	C 90	C 82	C 85	C 84	C 93	C 90	C 91	C 90	C 89	C 98	C 87
	2	D 57	D 65	B 70	B 83	B 66	B 77	B 73	A 67	B 69	B 65	B 66	B 81	B 66	B 82	D 64	B 64
	3	B 56	B 59	D 54	D 55	D 53	D 52	A 63	B 45	D 58	D 50	D 61	D 44	D 56	A 50	B 44	D 54
	4	E 44	E 47	E 54	E 45	A 51	E 47	D 52	D 41	A 48	A 50	A 58	E 38	A 48	D 48	A 44	A 45
	5	A 39	A 40	A 35	F 18	E 38	A 32	E 28	E 32	E 23	E 30	E 19	A 26	E 26	E 24	E 32	E 37
	6	F 19	F 2	F 1	A 14	F 5	F 2	F 3	F 31	F 18	F 11	F 6	F 21	F 13	F 7	F 18	F 13
Attainability	1	C 74	C 82	E 77	C 92	B 66	B 78	E 73	C 61	B 82	C 71	C 73	B 70	B 81	B 74	E 73	C 69
	2	E 71	B 61	B 76	B 68	C 59	C 77	C 60	B 55	C 71	B 57	B 66	C 65	C 59	C 69	F 68	B 67
	3	B 64	E 58	C 70	E 40	E 59	E 61	F 52	A 55	E 62	E 57	A 45	E 52	E 50	E 64	B 60	E 63
	4	D 34	A 39	A 32	D 38	A 54	A 31	B 51	E 52	A 38	F 45	E 44	A 51	A 44	A 39	C 48	A 38
	5	F 32	D 33	F 32	F 32	F 36	D 30	A 40	F 40	F 33	A 40	F 37	F 38	F 34	F 28	D 26	F 35
	6	A 26	F 27	D 14	A 29	D 27	F 22	D 24	D 38	D 13	D 30	D 34	D 24	D 31	D 25	A 25	D 27
N=	119	33	31	13	29	35	24	43	36	21	23	27	27	34	20	515	

Events Selected Most Often in Scenario Development

Another workshop task is to select the events that must happen (or must not happen) for each endstate. This results in a list of common events (table on next page) that are needed by most of the scenarios. This is a good start at a to-do list of implementation tasks. Some of the events are positive, but others are negative where we need to figure out how to get around them or prevent them. A few are mixed in workshop voting and discussions and require clarification.

¹ The number in the ranking table is the normalized score that determines the ranking position and indicates degree of agreement. If everyone ranked an endstate first, it would score 100, if everyone ranked one last it would get 0.

Economic Development

Retirees

★ Government

Regulation

Tourism

Positive Common Events

+A-	+B-	+C-	+D-	+E-	+F-	#Vs	Cer%	Year	Title
	5	5	4	4		3	21	52%	5 Main Street Revitalization Grants Improve Hamlet and Village Attractiveness
3	1	5	1	4	5		19	35%	15 Biomass Energy Is a Major Source of New Jobs in the Park
1		2	5	5	5		18	44%	10 Counties Set Up Shared "Back Office" Operations for Towns ★
5	1	1	3	2	1	3	17	53%	15 New Stricter Water Quality Regulations Implemented
	2	4	2	3	5	1	17	11%	5 Major Promotion Campaign for Jobs, Entrepreneurs and Net-Workers
4	3	2	4	2	1		16	-5%	10 Constitutional Amendment Enables Land Swaps to Consolidate the Forest Preserve
2	3	3	3	5			16	83%	5 More Citizen-Sponsored Initiatives in the Park
1		1	5	4	5		16	35%	10 Towns Merge Highway Departments ★
4	3		5	1	3		16	-10%	10 Governor Issues an Exec Order for State Agencies to Treat the Park as a Single Region ★
3	1	3	3	3	2	1	16	61%	5 Boomers Retire to Their Vacation Homes
1	4	4	2	4		1	16	52%	10 Broadband Brings More Mid-Career Families into the Park
2	1	4	5	1	3		16	39%	10 Ecotourism and Agritourism are Fast Growing Sectors
4	1	1	1		4	5	16	-29%	10 Assessed Value of State Land Increased by Addition of Value for Ecosystem Service
1		2	4	4	5		16	68%	5 Smaller School Districts Sharing Admin Functions ★
	4	4	3	3		1	15	62%	10 State Economic Policies Better Support Smaller Scale Business and Agriculture
	5	3	2	5			15	43%	10 More Community-Based Retirement Facilities Open
1	1	4	2	2	4	1	15	9%	5 Amendment Creates Community Land Bank to Facilitate Small Projects
1	1	4			4	5	15	49%	5 Global Foundries Project Brings Large Numbers of New Visitors and Residents
2	5	3	4		1		15	-3%	10 Park-Wide Recreation Plan Published and Adopted
2	2	4	2	2		3	15	43%	5 Broadband Operational in Most of Hamilton County

Environmental Stress

Poverty

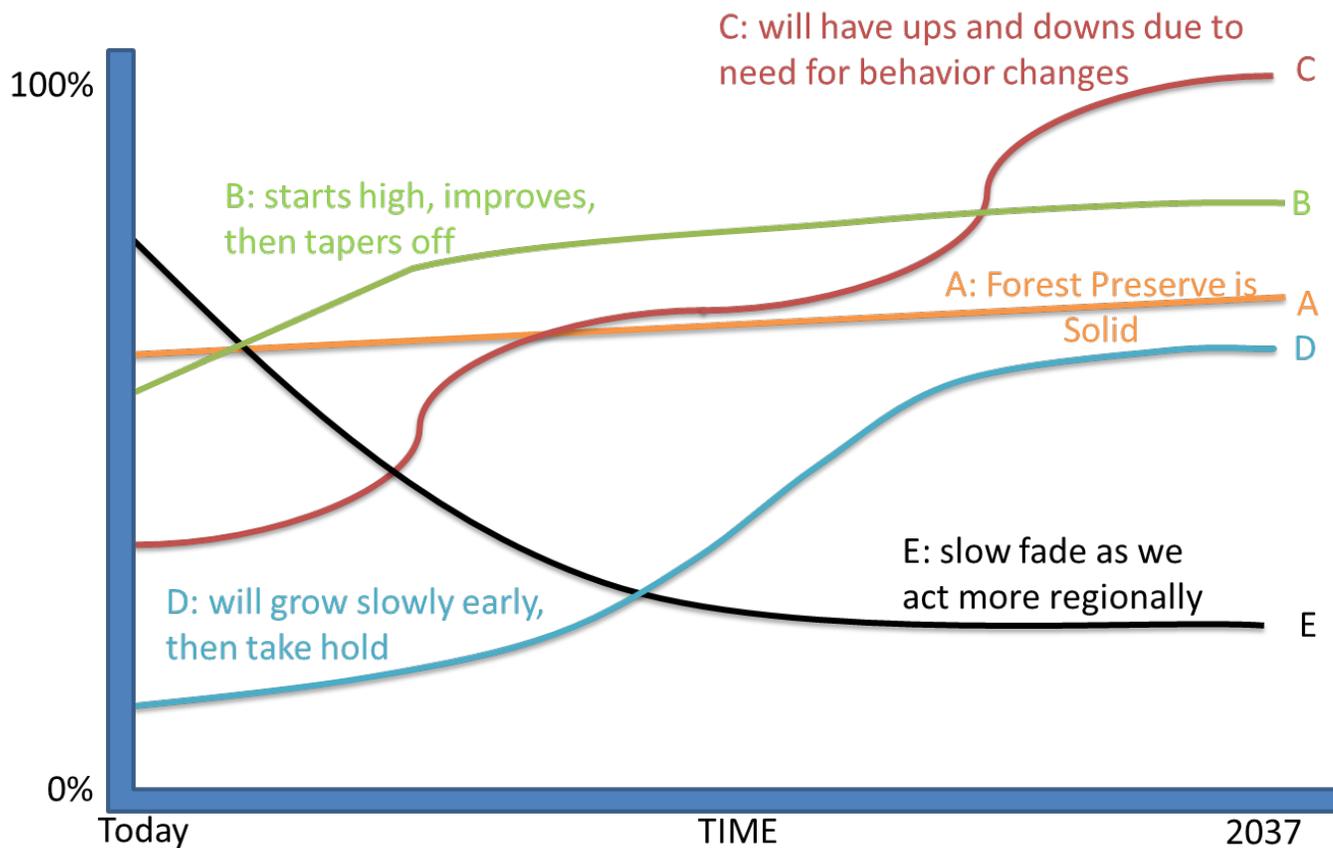
Negative Common Events

+A-	+B-	+C-	+D-	+E-	+F-	#Vs	Cer%	Year	Title		
1		5	4	4	3	1	5	23	-29%	10 Private Sector Shrinkage in the Park's Interior is Leading to a Decline in Visitors	
		4	5	3	1	2	5	20	47%	10 Number of Poor in the Park Grow as Government and Private Jobs Disappear	
	2	3	5	5	1	4		20	40%	10 3 Key Invasive Species Become Pervasive in the Park	
	4	4	3	2	1	5		19	-35%	10 Rampant Disregard for APA and DEC Rules	
1	1	5	4	2	1	5		19	74%	10 Regular Severe Weather Events Stress The Park	
		3	1	2	3	2	2	5	18	65%	10 Many ADK Towns Implement Paid EMTs for Daytime Shifts
1	2	3	2	3	1	2	4	18	-72%	15 Largely Empty Interior Zones Declared ADK State Park	
	2	4	4	2	1	1	4	18	-8%	15 Feral Swine Go Hog Wild in the Adirondacks	
1		5	4	3	1	4		18	39%	10 Three Consecutive "No Snow" Winters Close Many Winter Recreation Businesses	
1	1	4	3	2		4		15	-1%	15 Many Native Species Begin to Disappear from Park	

Mixed Common Events

+A-	+B-	+C-	+D-	+E-	+F-	#Vs	Cer%	Year	Title		
	4	1	1	1	3	4	1	5	21	-3%	5 Many Government Owned Recreational Assets are Privatized
3		3	3	2	2	4		17	-21%	5 Congress Eliminates Mortgage Interest Deduction on Second Homes	
4		1		1	1	4	4	15	0%	15 State Starts New Round of Forest Preserve Acquisitions	

The tables on this page show how the different scenario teams chose these events. These are the ones that were chosen most often. The grey columns indicate the team did not want the event to happen for their scenario. The white column indicates that this event was on the critical path for that scenario. The column marked Cer% shows the net result of highly likely/highly unlikely voting. 100% indicates everyone thought it was highly likely. -100% means everyone voted highly unlikely. Zero means that the vote was evenly divided.



How Might the Scenarios Unfold Over Time?

The conceptual diagram above shows implementation stages for the scenarios A through E. The horizontal axis is time and the vertical axis is percent of full implementation of the endstate. Today we start off doing E, but we expect it to fade over time. A, i.e., the Forest Preserve, is doing well and will slowly get better if we control invasives and anticipate new species immigration due to warming climate. We are also doing a lot of B but we will invest in upgrades and diversification of our recreational and visitor assets. C is hard, despite its high attainability ranking. To really apply it to most places and people in the Park will require a lot of behavior and infrastructure change. So, it will not be a straight line, but we will set the goal of reaching 100%. D is hard and we are far from the endstate. But it will make progress.

Summaries of the Six Endstates Describing the Park in 2037

2037 A: Wild Park -- This is the Adirondack Park envisioned by its founders: open, green, wet, with incredible vistas and deeply silent. Article 14 remains its foundation and the courts have continued to protect it. APA and DEC are clear that preserving this wild experience is their mission, with economic and even ecosystem health secondary. It is not about balance. They have recommitted to limiting human structures, motorized, noisy vehicles, large developments, and any encroachment on the Forest Preserve. Land use regulation for the Forest Preserve is designed around a hands-off approach that maximizes old growth forest and natural processes. The Forest Preserve is larger and more contiguous. Private land use regulation is tighter with fewer exceptions for developers. The Park is a major research center for impacts of climate change, acid rain and invasive species. The citizens of New York State and those in its government entrusted with this treasure, take the long view and won't exploit it for short term gain. The Park's communities suffer from the same problems as those faced by other northern forest regions: poor infrastructure, difficult transportation, abandonment by extraction industries, and an aging population. But, the Park is not the problem.

2037 B: A Usable Park -- The economy and the environment beneficially re-enforce each other in a region invigorated by growth in recreational tourism and active retirees settling in its communities, all living and playing in harmony with nature. The wild areas have become more wild and the developed places in and around hamlets more developed. An integrated recreation plan spreads out different types of uses geographically, physically and seasonally. It is still easy for

silence seekers to avoid motors, but there is an extensive inter-hamlet multi-use trail system. Hunting, mountain biking and horseback riding areas are well separated from other uses. Some lakes are reserved for canoes and kayaks, while others allow jetskis and water skiing. Professional promotion and branding programs have attracted visitors, retirees and new residents nationally and internationally. There is a major increase in visitor-oriented “product” in the Park, i.e. things and services people pay for. Places to eat, sleep, shop. Adirondack-branded recreational equipment, some made here, some not, is a Park industry cluster. Government employment has dropped by half, but tourism-related jobs and services like health care for retired people have grown sufficiently to fill the gap.

2037 C: The Sustainable Life -- The Park is a model of sustainable, low carbon footprint rural lifestyle. The region is more self-sufficient with strong local energy (e.g. biomass heat) and local food industries. These provide local jobs by replacing imports to the region and limiting the money that flows out. Widespread broadband Internet service enables more people to work from home and/or start small businesses. Land use regulation encourages clustering in hamlets, where there is more walking, biking and local stores. Active management of the forest, even the Forest Preserve, helps it to adapt to climate change and invasive species. A sense of community is important here, living close to the land respectfully, not separately; living better without big growth. The old divisions between natives and newcomers faded as the values they shared became more apparent. Young people especially find the lifestyle attractive. Government has helped with more flexible regulation and support for diverse, small-scale agriculture and renewable energy generation.

2037 D: Adirondack County -- The Blue Line becomes a County line and State Agencies align regions to it, enabling more efficient government. This was driven by taxpayer outrage at the obvious overlaps, fragmentation and duplication of layers of government. More than money, it was also about giving residents a Park-wide identity and a louder voice in Albany. The people of the Park now think of themselves as a group and have stopped fighting town vs. town. Residents take responsibility for sorting out their own affairs internally. There is more regional cooperation in the arts, sports, education and economic development. Government downsized through privatization of campgrounds, golf courses, ski resorts, nursing homes, road maintenance, etc. Pooling of purchasing drew lower cost bids from suppliers. Online government delivers many services electronically that used to require office visits. Data-centric government uses IT to allocate services delivery. One result is standardization and simplification of processes and policies across the county (permits, signs, taxes, etc.). The Forest Preserve has been consolidated and rationalized through numerous land swaps.

2037 E: Post “Big Government” Solutions -- The Park is so big and diverse that one size does not fit all. Bottoms-up, pragmatic initiatives and can-do attitudes prevail, not top-down grand solutions. Local governments make a variety of different bets on economic development tailored to their localities. Edge towns build on successes like Global Foundries. Other towns capitalize on recreational assets or nearby educational institutions. Most leverage the Park as an asset. Hallmarks of successful towns are private investment in housing, retail and office space, and citizen-led initiatives to combat invasives and expand local recreational facilities. Some towns partner on specific projects but there is also competition among towns for employers, public school students and dwindling government resources. More towns have professional planners. The gap widens between the areas with better infrastructure like broadband and health care versus those without. Many towns succeed in some fashion, but some fail and disappear.

2037: F: The Adirondack State Forest -- External threats such as climate change, invasive species, health care and pension costs have overwhelmed the Park. Government employment has been drastically cut. Sure these are national and global problems, largely out of our control, but we were not immune to their effects. Some areas continue to do well, but the economy of the interior the Park has imploded. Poverty has deepened while tourism has declined. To stop the downward spiral, 50% of the Forest Preserve is reclassified State Forest under a multiple use regime, while the rest (the part that had been classified Wilderness) remains protected by Article XIV. This adds jobs and towns share in the income from these activities but receive no payment in lieu of taxes on this State land. It is a lot like the Green Mountain National Forest in Vermont, with a wildland preserve in the middle of it. Next generation urban residents, not motivated by a romantic idea of wilderness, allied with residents of the Park’s interior, voted for passage of the amendment, despite a desperate campaign by aging environmentalists. These voters looked at the loosely organized “Park” to the north and wondered how it ever got so big and cost so much for the benefit of so few.

A document on implementation priorities is in the works and will be published to the website when ready.