



KAREN FELDMAN
Acting Chair

TERRY MARTINO
Executive Director

DRAFT MINUTES Park Ecology Committee KDR:ap February 14, 2019

MINUTES OF THE PARK ECOLOGY COMMITTEE MEETING

February 14, 2019

The Committee meeting convened at approximately 2:50 p.m.

Park Ecology Committee Members Present:

John Ernst, Chair, Dan Wilt, Bradley Austin (ESD), Robert Stegemann (DEC), Art Lussi

Other Members and Designees Present:

Karen Feldman, Acting Chair, Dr. Chad Dawson, Lynn Mahoney (DOS), William Thomas

Local Government Review Board:

Gerald Delaney, Executive Director

Agency Staff Present:

Terry Martino, Kathy Regan, Paul VanCott, Rick Weber, Milt Adams, Keith McKeever, Christian Blue, Shaun LaLonde, Aaron Ziemann, Mary O'Dell, Emily Tyner, and Ariel Lynch

Approval of December 2018 Draft Minutes

The December draft minutes were approved on a motion by Art Lussi and seconded by Brad Austin

RASS Program Report (Kathy Regan)

Kathy Regan began by reminding the Board of Local Government Day. She also highlighted the various conferences, meetings, and classes the RASS staff have attended in the past month. Ms. Regan also announced to the Board the approaching retirement of Mark Rooks.

Climate Change in the Adirondacks: Predictions, Evidence, and Monitoring for Changes that Can Impact Local Communities and Ecosystems (Celia Evans, PhD, LeAnn Sporn, PhD and Curt Stager, PhD Paul Smith's College)

Dr. Evans began the presentation by reviewing the big picture of climate change in the Northeast and specifically the Adirondacks. She said the Adirondacks are on the edge of the boreal biome and we will see climate changes sooner. She gave examples of mean annual temperature and precipitation and how temperatures have been all over the place. She also explained how altered timing of seasons will affect our communities' tourism economy and agriculture. Dr. Evans finished her presentation by giving examples of fellow professionals' work with long-term monitoring of the Adirondack ecosystems.

Dr. Sporn gave a presentation on climate change and human health, emphasizing the rise of tick-borne diseases in the Adirondacks. She explained that climate change is driving the spread of ticks in the Adirondacks. She showed graphs of the increase in the incidences of tick-borne disease in the North Country and in the state of New York. She said there has been a six-fold higher incidence in Essex County than state wide. Dr. Sporn also stated that 2018 data showed that 64 % of ticks collected and tested for human pathogens carried Lyme disease, 9% carried *Babesia macrotia* (babesiosis), and 11 % carried *Anaplasma phagocytophylum*. Some ticks carried all three pathogens.

Dr. Stager began his presentation with evidence of long-term monitoring that shows evidence of climate change. In reference to climate change, he said "yes it is happening, yes it is here now." He presented a chart showing the warming trend over the years for Lake Placid, noting that the local rate is faster than the global rate. He also showed charts of Lake Champlain Ice-out dates. Historically the lake froze over more often than it currently does. Dr. Stager reviewed some of the serious issues affecting the Adirondacks including, potential loss of cold water fish (trout), changes to the USDA hardiness zones, and more extreme storms. Dr. Stager finished his presentation by showing some temperature and precipitation projections using different climate models.

After a brief questions and answer period, Dr. Evans, Dr. Sporn, and Dr. Stager were presented a certificate of appreciation from Acting Chair Feldman, Mr. Ernst, Ms. Martino, and Ms. Regan.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Acting Chair Feldman adjourned the Ecology Committee meeting from the floor at 4:10 p.m.

