

Adirondack Mountain Club, Inc. Conservation Committee Resolution

- WHEREAS, the State has regularly acknowledged that the Adirondacks receive 10 to 12 million visitors a year;
- WHEREAS, despite this, the State has not made proportional or even significant investments to build the necessary infrastructure to support these numbers, leading to an artificially high rate of degradation to the Forest Preserve;
- WHEREAS, the State has further neglected to provide sufficient resources to build sustainable and hardened trails in order to lessen human impact and mitigate the effects of erosion on trails in the Adirondack High Peaks Wilderness;
- WHEREAS, the State has also neglected to right-size the forest ranger force in order to educate the public about how best to protect the resource and responsibly enjoy the Forest Preserve;
- Whereas, the State has not provided sufficient funding for educational outreach or has yet implemented the recommendations of the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics,ⁱ
- WHEREAS, ADK recognizes that limits on the total number of recreational users in a certain area is an important control measure to be considered by DEC, when, where, and if high use is causing significant damage to front country and backcountry resources;
- WHEREAS, these measures should only be employed if there are reasonable grounds to believe that they will prevent or limit degradation of the resource;
- WHEREAS, the DEC does not currently collect and maintain comprehensive objective user data to help assess thresholds for capacity and to inform where investments should be made to mitigate high use and whether efforts to spread users out throughout the park are successful;
- THEREFORE, it is the position of the Adirondack Mountain Club, that before the state seeks to impose restraints on the freedom of the public to use and enjoy the Forest Preserve, such as a permit system, it must first make the appropriate investments to mitigate the effects on the resource by educating the public, increasing the Forest Ranger Force, building sustainable trails, facilitate the spread of use throughout the forest preserve, and make determinations of high use based on the ongoing collection of objective data.

Conservation Committee: approved 5-9-20

Exec. Committee approved: 5-21-20

BOD approved: 7-11-20

ⁱ <https://www.adk.org/leave-no-trace-recommendations-for-mitigating-high-use-impacts/>

https://www.adirondackcouncil.org/vs-uploads/pdf/1580687255_LNT_Recs%20_2020.pdf