



Public Meeting High Peaks Visitor Use Management Project

May 2023

Welcome!

Susan Hayman, Ross Strategic (Otak Team)

Josh Clague, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

Meeting Purpose

- Provide foundational information to increase public understanding of the project goals and timeline, and build a shared understanding of how the Visitor Use Management (VUM) Framework will be applied in the High Peaks area.
- Share perspectives about current and desired future conditions for the High Peaks area regarding amounts and types of visitor use, the quality and character of visitor experiences, and public safety considerations.

Meeting Overview

Time	Topic/Speakers
5:30 pm	Gathering—Susan Hayman, Facilitator; Josh Clague, NYS DEC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and purpose for the meeting • Meeting overview, introductions
5:45 pm	Foundational Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project overview—Josh Clague • Visitor use management framework overview—Abbie Larkin, Otak • Q&A
6:30 pm	Break
6:45 pm	Public Perspectives—Discussion Groups
8:10 pm	Reflections
8:25 pm	Closing—Susan, Josh
8:30 pm	Adjourn

For Tonight

1. Assume good intent from others
2. Be respectful and kind when speaking
3. Actively participate and share your perspectives
4. Actively listen -- make space for others to be heard
5. Follow guidance from the facilitator



Foundational Information

Josh Clague, NYS DEC
Abbie Larkin, Otak

Background

"Human use and enjoyment of those lands should be permitted and encouraged, so long as the resources in their physical and biological context as well as their social or psychological aspects are not degraded."

- APSLMP

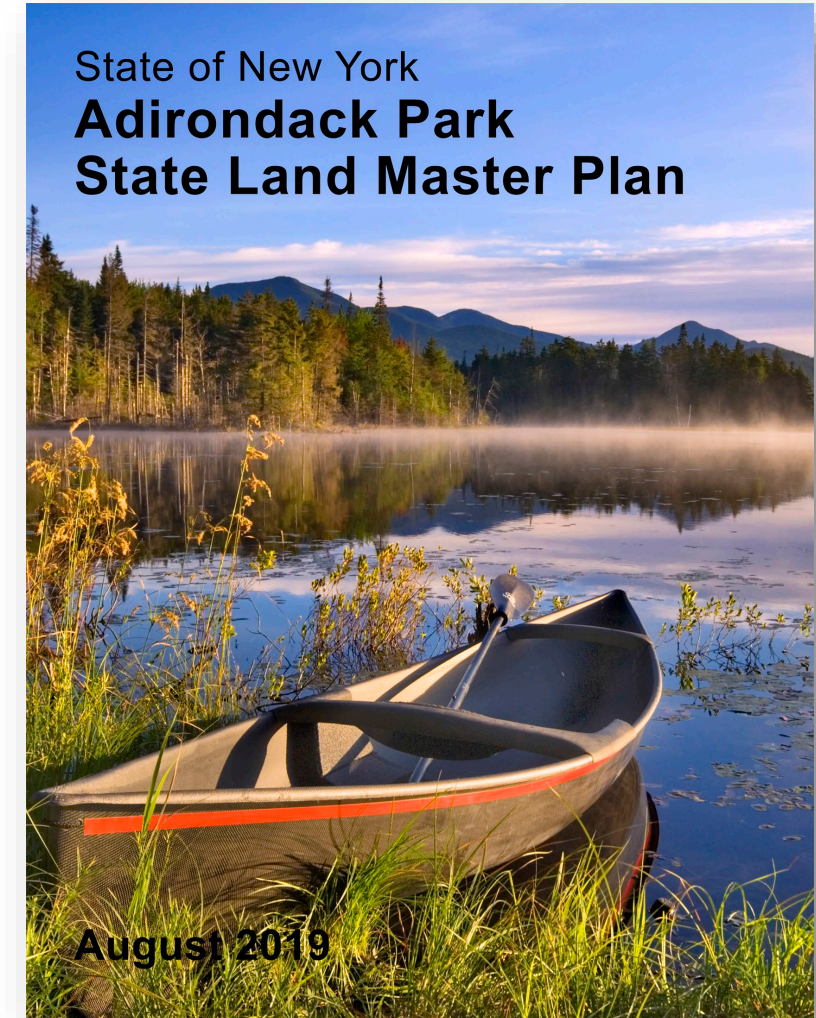


Background

UMPs must include:

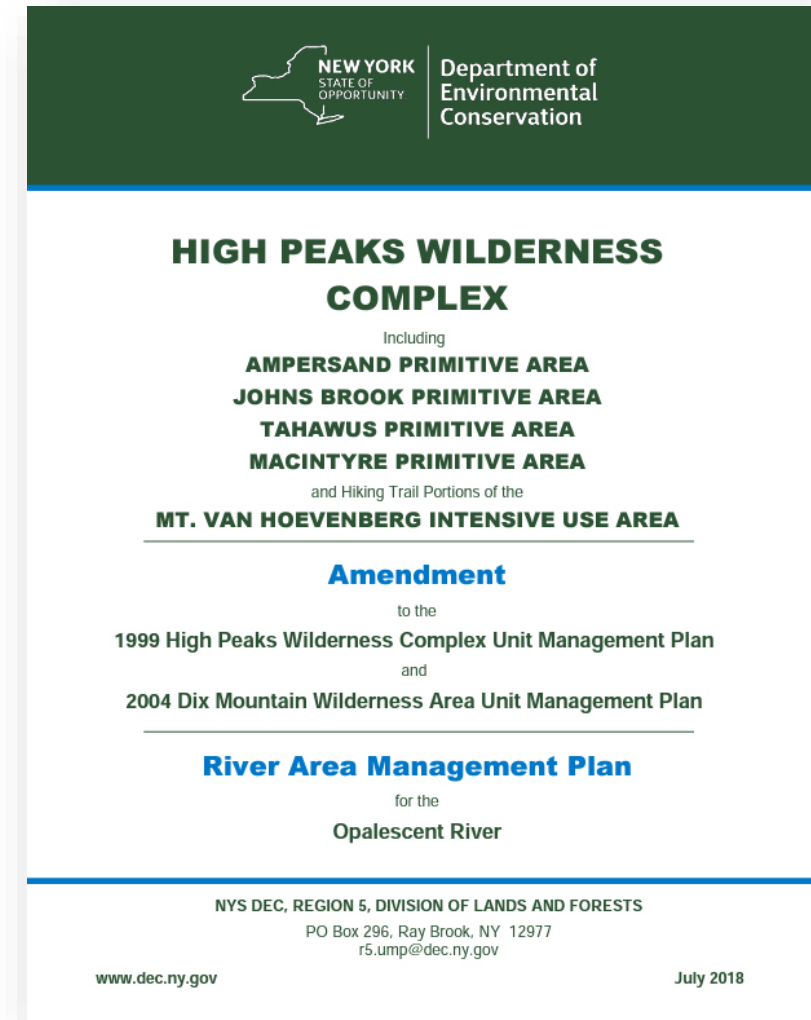
“...an assessment of physical, biological, and social carrying capacity...with particular attention to portions (of land) ...threatened by overuse in light of its resource limitations and its classification under the master plan.”

- APSLMP



Background

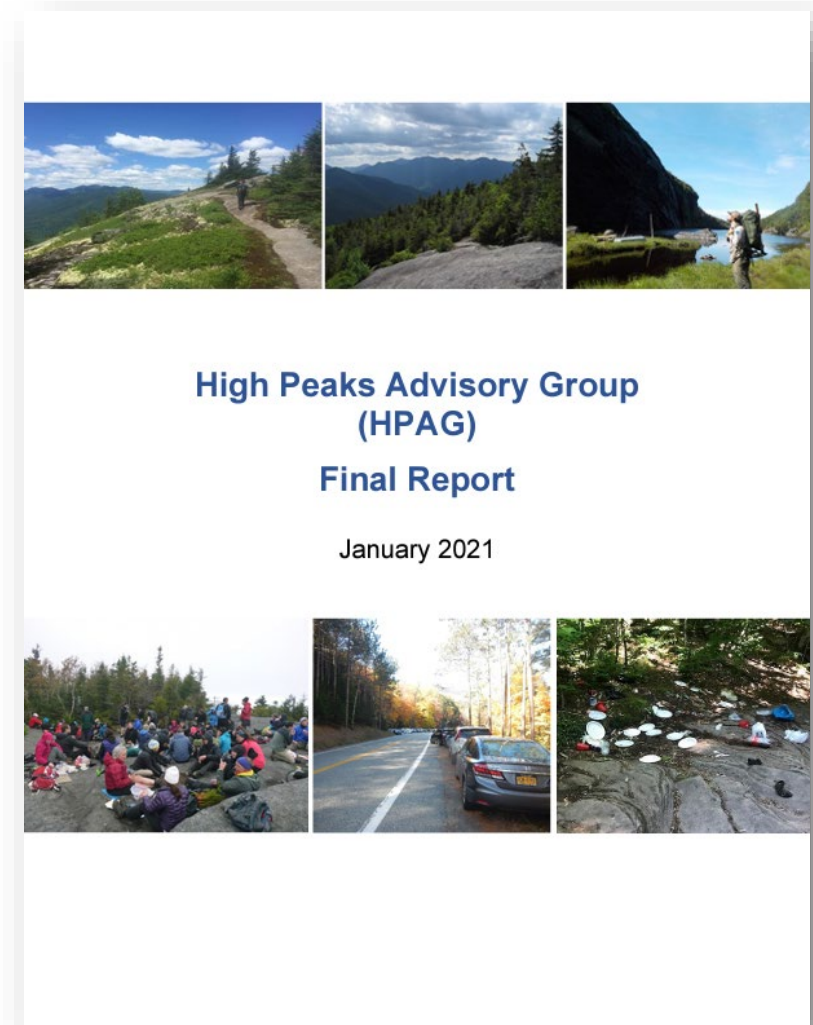
1. *The identification of acceptable conditions as defined by measurable indicators;*
 2. *An analysis of the relationship between existing conditions and those desired;*
 3. *Determinations of the necessary management actions needed to achieve desired conditions; and*
 4. *A monitoring program to see if objectives are being met.*
- High Peaks Wilderness UMP Amendment, 2018



Background

"...the use of adaptive management and the adoption of the... Visitor Use Management Framework (VUMF) as the guiding tool"

- High Peaks Advisory Group Report, 2021



Background

- 2022 State Budget included line for "comprehensive planning"
- Catskill Advisory Group Final Report
- DEC Commissioner announced VUM projects in both ADKs and Catskills
- Request for Proposal (RFP)
- Contract award to Otak

Project Purpose

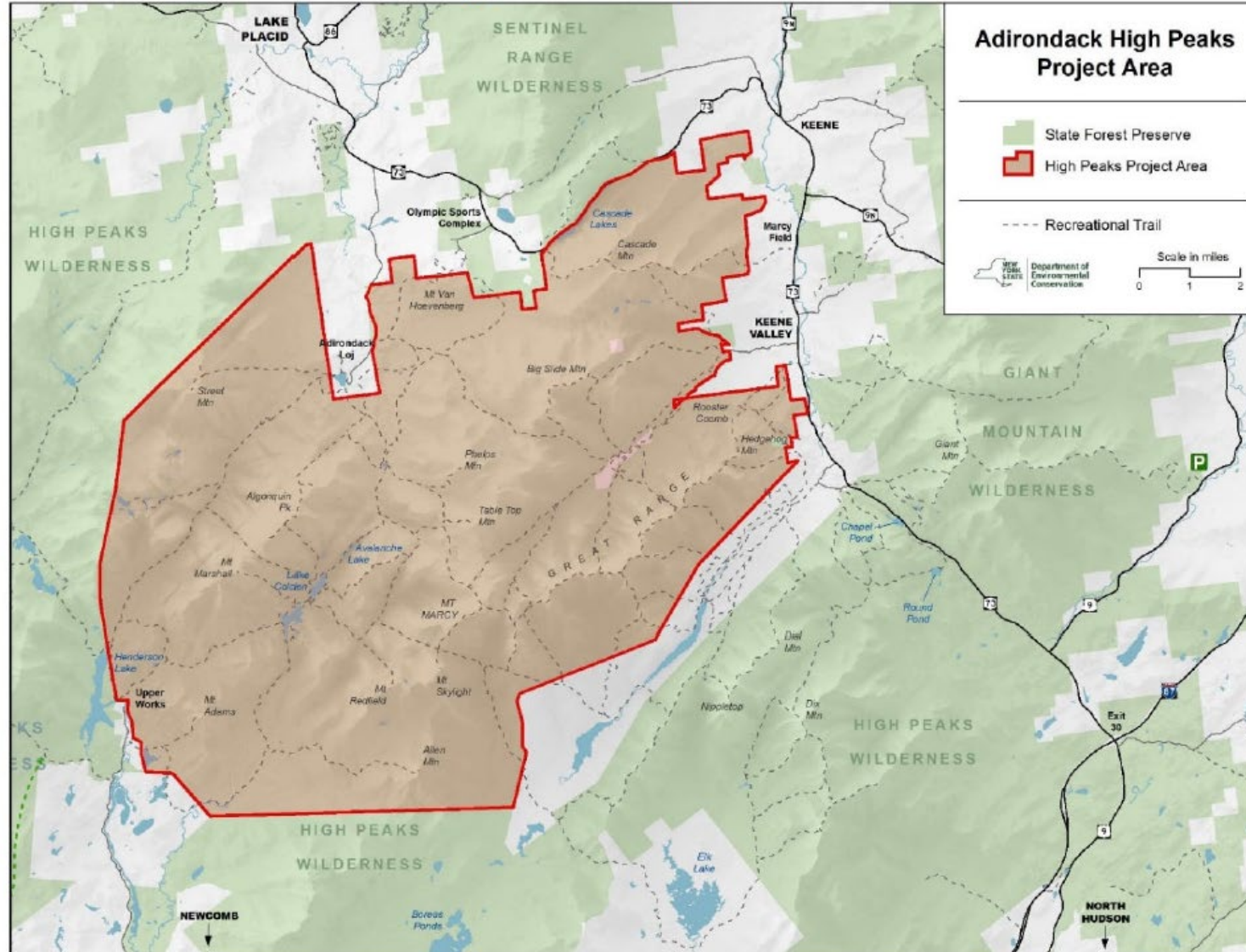
Implement the VUMF and conduct a visitor use management planning process, with a focus on experiential, social, and public safety elements of visitor use management and visitor capacities, to promote sustainable visitor use.

Other Data Collection Efforts

- **Physical condition monitoring for trails and tent sites (DEC)**
- **Ecological Scorecard (DEC partnership with SUNY ESF)**
- **Visitor experience survey related to AMR parking reservation (DEC partnership with SUNY ESF)**

High Peaks Study Area

Figure 1 – Central Adirondack High Peaks Project Area



State Project Team

- Forestry / land management (Regional)
- Forest Rangers (Regional)
- Forest Preserve program administration (Albany)
- Adventure NY / Outdoor Recreation program (Albany)
- Adirondack Park Agency

State Project Team Workshop #1

FEBRUARY 2023

State Project Team Workshop #2

MAY 2023

Spring
2023

Public Meeting #1

MAY 2023

Stakeholder Engagement
ONGOING

Summer
2023

Data Collection
MARCH–AUGUST 2023

State Project Team Workshop #3

OCTOBER 2023

Fall/Winter
2023

Data Analysis
SEPTEMBER 2023–MAY 2024

State Project Team Workshop #4

MAY 2024

Spring
2024

Public Meeting #2

MARCH 2024

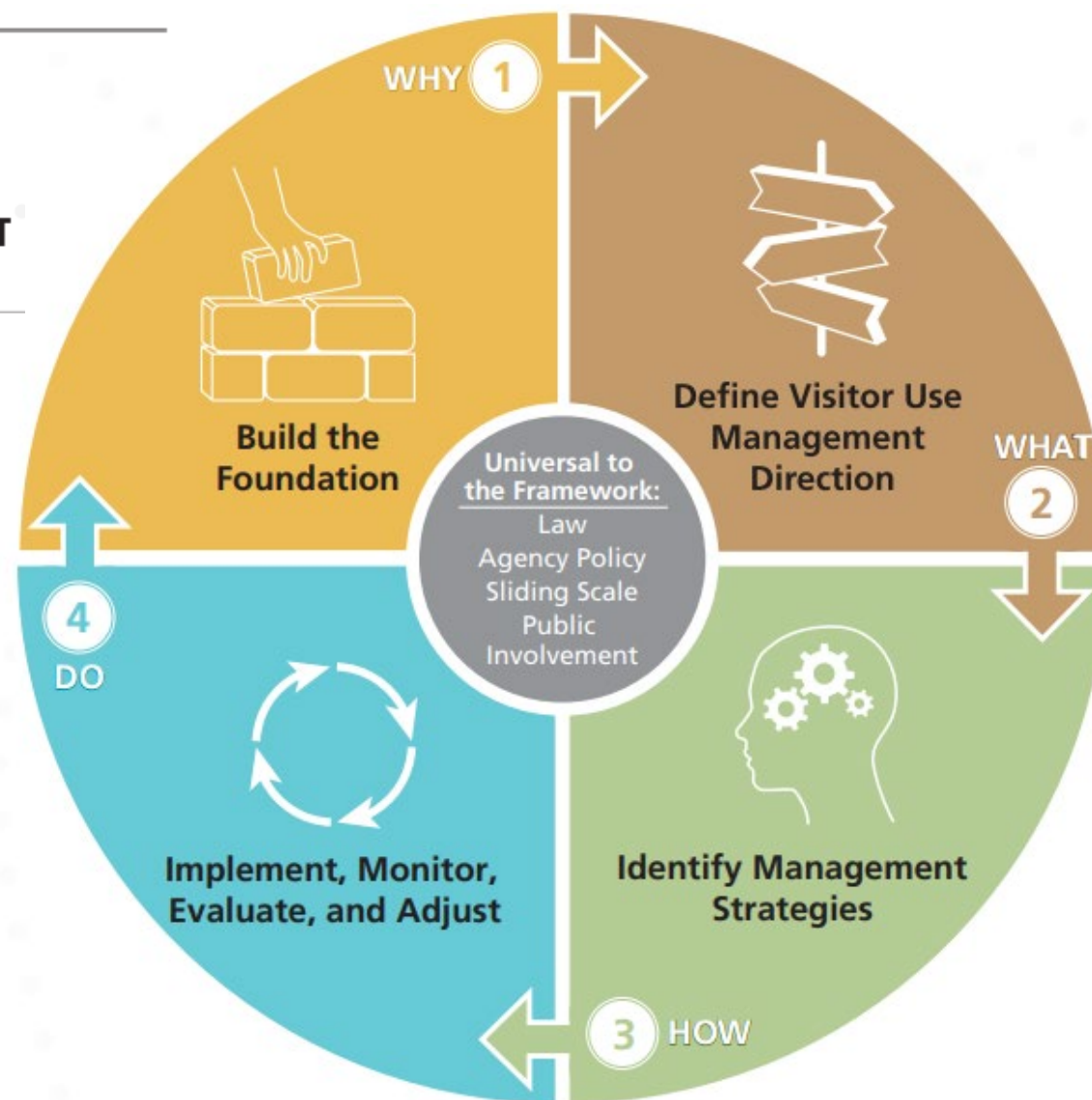
Summer
2024

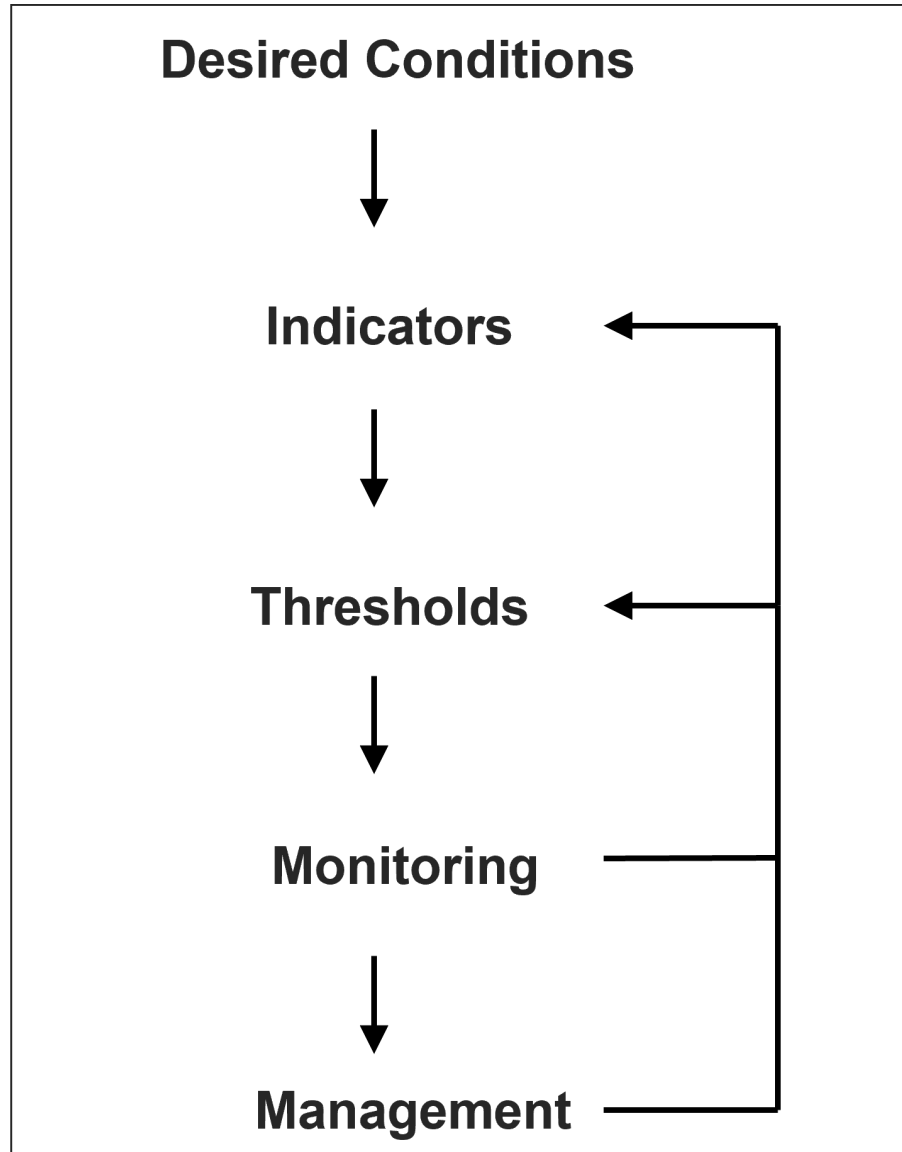
Public Comment
SUMMER–FALL 2024

Fall
2024

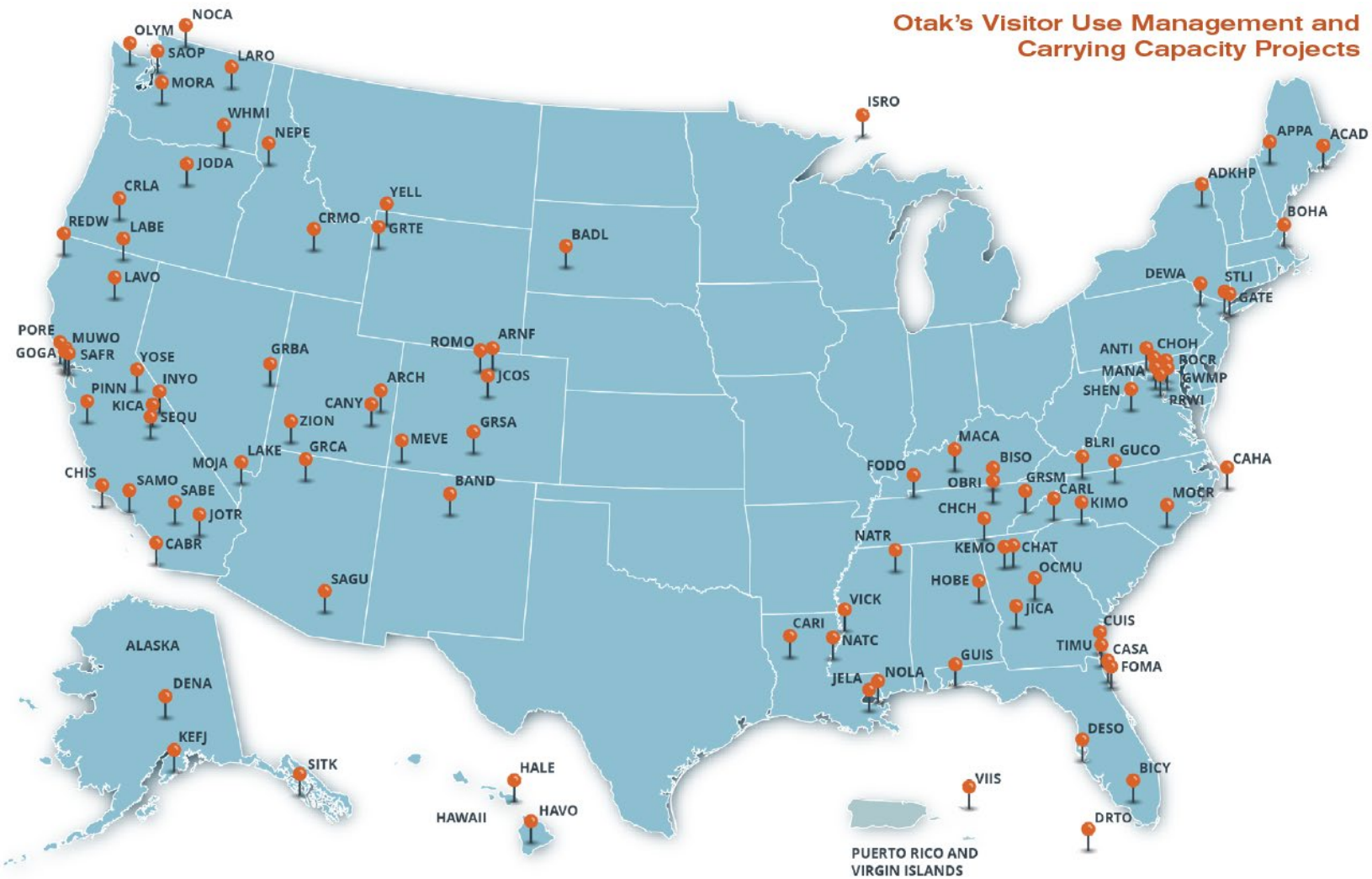
Report & Monitoring Plan

Overview of the Visitor Use Management Framework





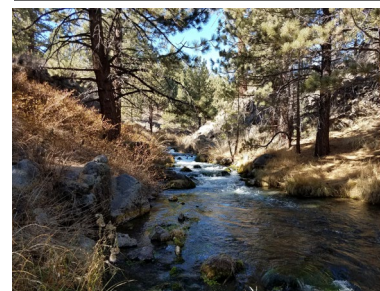
**Otak's Visitor Use Management
and Carrying Capacity Projects**



ACADIA NATIONAL PARK



SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK



INYO NATIONAL FOREST



ARCHES NATIONAL PARK



MOUNT RAINIER NATIONAL PARK



ZION NATIONAL PARK

Questions?

Public Perspectives

Facilitated Discussion Groups

Discussion Group Process

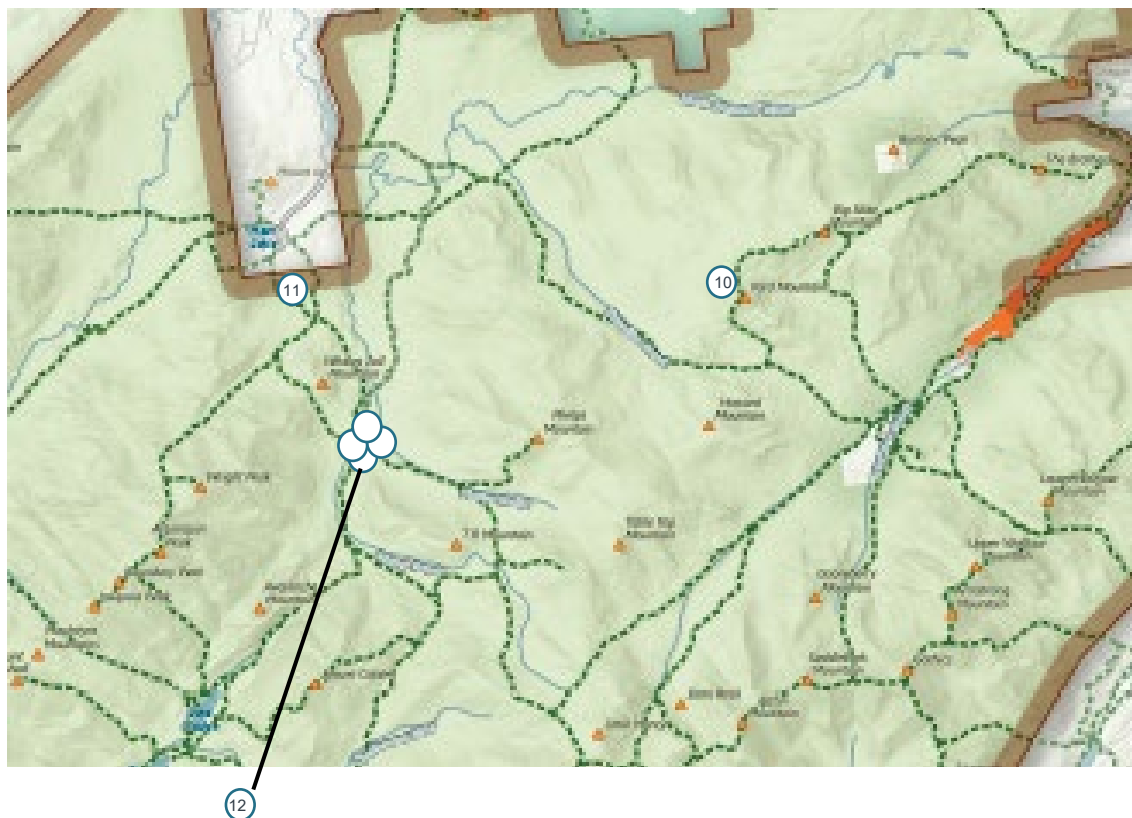
Two Rounds: Current Conditions, Desired Future Conditions

1. Self-select a discussion group (distribute from same organization)
2. Consider prompts in handout--reflect on those of greatest importance to you
3. Place numbered stickers where you'd like to add a comment
4. Add your **Group #** to your worksheet, add **sticker number** and **brief corresponding comments**
5. Facilitator reconvenes group to share comments and discuss
6. Hand in your worksheet to your facilitator before returning to the plenary seating



Discussion Group Process (cont'd)

Two Rounds: Current Conditions, Desired Future Conditions



GROUP: A

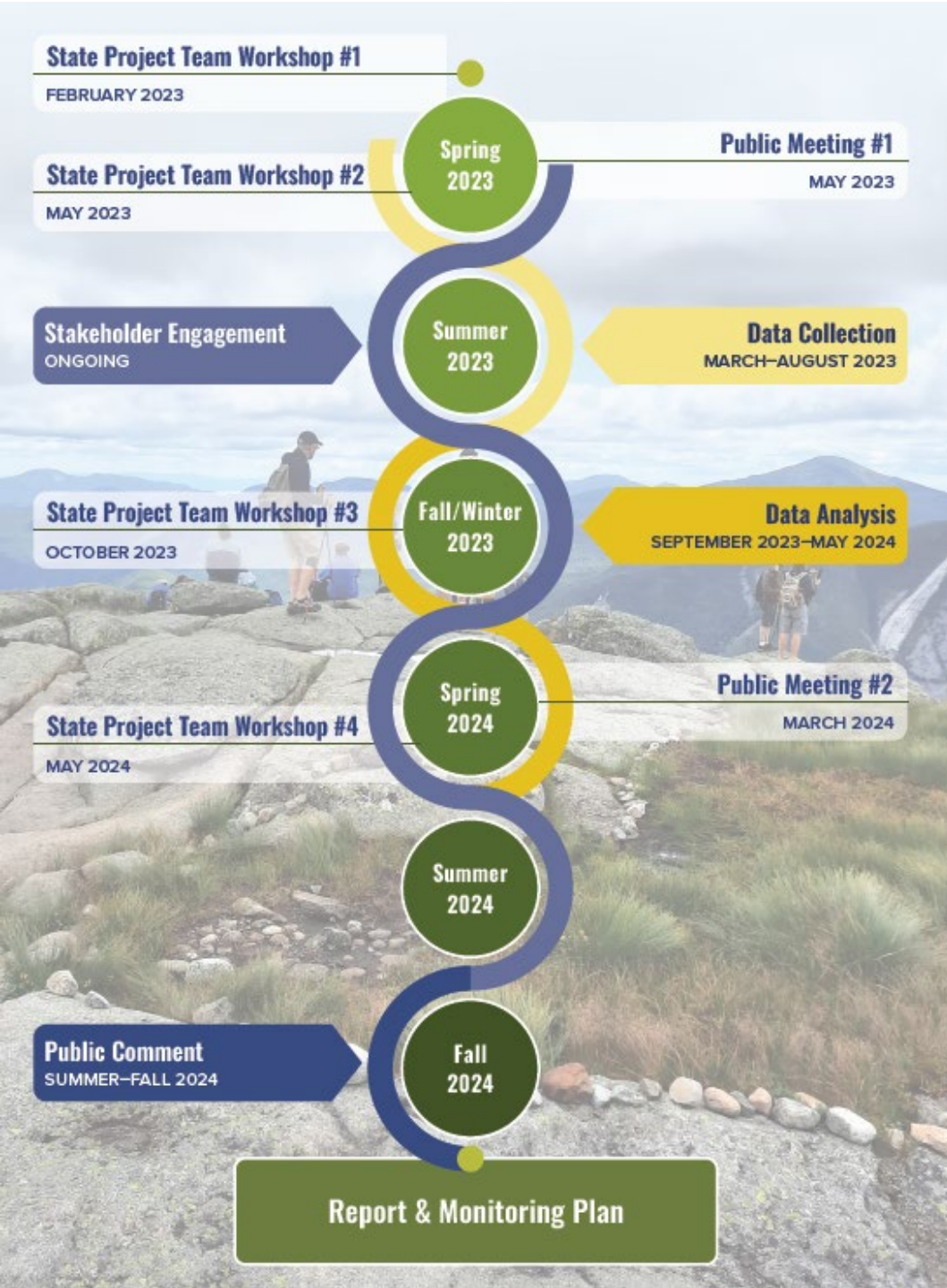
Number	Comments
10	This is my comment about sticker #10...
11	This is my comment about sticker #11...
12	This is my comment about sticker #12...
	ETC.

Reflections

Next Steps

Next Steps

- Meeting synthesis
- Website updates as information becomes available
- Summer data collection



More Thoughts to Share?

Comments are welcome throughout the process and may be submitted in the following ways:

1. By email to: vum-facilitators@rossstrategic.com
2. Through the project website at: <https://www.highpeaksvum.com/>
3. No internet access? Send written comments to:

[Josh Clague](#)

[625 Broadway, 5th Floor](#)

[Albany, NY 12233-4254](#)

Closing Remarks

Susan Hayman

Josh Clague

Thank you for participating!

For more information, visit our project website: <https://www.highpeaksvum.com/>

