

Workgroup 9: Ray Curran

Stability of agriculture and forest industries

Vision Excerpts

Over the next 25 years, an understanding of the interdependence of our environment and our economy spreads through our communities. Our mixture of public and private lands is the defining feature of the Park; it drives our diverse sustainable economy and increases our self-reliance. We use balanced, slightly more flexible, regulation to preserve our unique landscape while enhancing the health of our communities.

The local parts of the strategy increase spending within the Park on local food, energy, forest products and other regionally produced goods, so we send less of our wealth outside the Park. By increasing the use of biomass from private forests, we reinforce the self-reliance that has traditionally been part of this region's character, lowering our use of fossil fuels.

The State and environmental NGOs purchase additional forest and farm easements and use transferable development rights to keep our land productive and preserve open space. . . . We manage the forest using science-based stewardship that helps to protect it against threats of climate change and invasive species.

Our core vision is of interdependent yet self-reliant communities that:

- *Grow a portion of our food*, integrating farming and animal husbandry into the community through budget friendly CSA(Community Supported Agriculture) arrangements and greatly expanded local processing and distribution that connects farming areas to communities throughout the Park
- *Protect waters and forests* from degradation and overuse by working cooperatively with NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the Park Agency (APA)

Grow the Local Economy in Traditional and Modern Ways

A better economy with more opportunity is the only way to address the twin threats of growing poverty and depopulation. Our goal is to cultivate a large number of small businesses rather than a few big employers, who can leave suddenly and devastate a community, as has happened repeatedly here in the last 50 years. We can do this without compromising our environmental protection.

The source of our strength is a diverse economy based on these pillars:

- *A diversified agricultural sector* that processes and distributes more of its production locally
- *A revived forest products industry* that supplies feedstock to a growing biomass heating and supplies the needs of wood products markets
- *Attraction of private investment* for start-ups, tourism infrastructure, renewable energy and other local business growth

The next twenty five years will be a period of painful change in global and American society. An aging population, accelerating climate change, environmental disasters -- the list goes on. Our response is to protect our Adirondack resources; the value of the Park's ecosystem services (clean air, clean water, and open space) inexorably rises for both humans and the environment. Our forest's high biodiversity helps keep out invasive species and disease carrying pests.

Over more than 125 years, the Adirondack Park has become the largest and most important of the US Northern Forests. Its ecological diversity and large forested areas play a major role in the tracking and scientific understanding of the

effects of climate change. Our strong research community gives us new information to protect the forest and inform policy. Adapting to climate change brings hard choices with regard to the Forest Preserve, including ways to expeditiously control damaging invasive species. We have better science and more options now to keep the Park's forest lands and waters more resilient and resistant to nuisance species, while also providing welcoming habitat for desirable southern species moving northward.

Investment will be directed toward modernizing traditional sectors such as timber and agriculture while growing new sectors in high-tech manufacturing and the online economy.

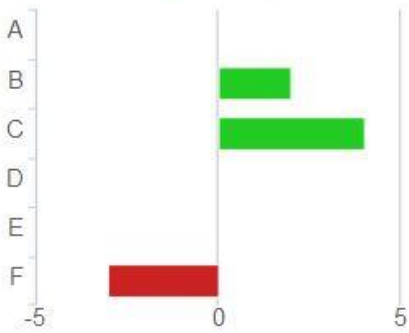
Events

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Agritourism, Local Food, are Fast Growing Markets

People are increasingly interested in enjoying locally produced food and even vacationing on a working farms. Vegetables, grass fed meat and dairy products, maple products, even hops and grapes are grown. Regional wines, beers and alcohol products are growing as well. More farms in Champlain and St. Lawrence valleys are offering visitors a place to stay with meals produced locally. In the meantime, the Greek yogurt boom is providing a market for lots of Grade 3 milk from large operations.

Influenced Scenarios



Likelihood



Evidence

Mace Chasm Road Agri Tourism Destination

Several farms near Keeseville are cooperating to create a new food-and-beer tourism hub.

Read the news story here. (disclosure - many of these farmers are friends of ours)

Smaller NYS Dairies Finding Success with Robot Milkers

Champlain Valley Young Farmers Gaining Velocity

Sugarhouse Creamery Revives Upper Jay Farm

Federal Money Helps Small Daires go Organic

Lake Placid Schools Begin Local Food Effort

Proposal to Cap Farm Assessments to 2% Increse

Old Forge Farmer's Market Thriving

Adk Coast Wine Trail Approved

Asgaard Farm and DaCy Meadow offer farm stay vacations

Regional Grape Harvest Growing

Paul Smiths College offers upscale dining

Rolling Hills Farm resort sale completed

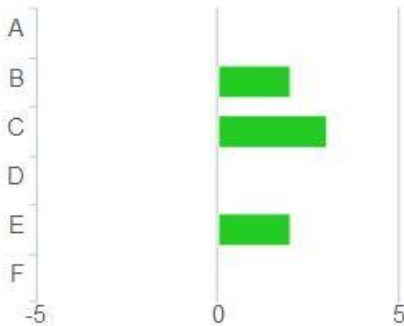
2013 : Agriculture

0 Comments

Craft Beers and Microbrewers Popping Up

Small micro brewers are introducing craft beers in a couple of towns. The one in Lake Placid has been around for a while. It appears that this could be a nice sized new business in quite a few places. Craft brew pubs can be good draws for tourists.

Influenced Scenarios



Likelihood



Evidence

\$5m Brew Pub and Distillery in LG Announced

Lake George will see a new \$5m project - a brew pub and distillery.

[Read the news item here.](#)

Lake Placid Beer Now Ships to 9 States

AuSable Brewing Company building in Keeseville

Saranac Lake Gets Its Own Brewer

Paradox Brewery Opens in Schroon Lake

Lake George Micro Brewer Gets Big Distribution Deal

Tax Cut for Small Brewers

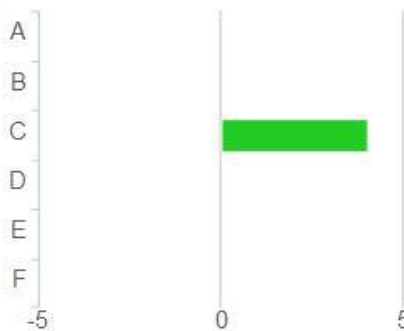
2022 : Agriculture

1 Comments

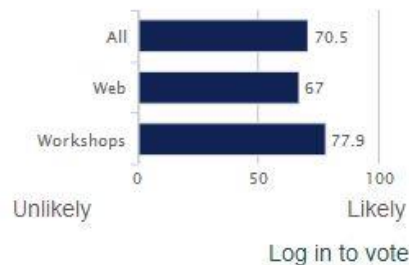
CSA Subscriptions Have Tripled in 10 Years

Community Supported Agriculture has become a hugely popular way for families to buy food from farms they know. The CSA model provides capital to farmers to begin the season and customers share in the bounty or failure of the farm that year. This shift of risk to customers, and lowering of upfront costs to farmers, has meant lower prices to customers and better incomes for farmers.

Influenced Scenarios



Likelihood



Evidence

CSA Farms embrace and build community

Farms like Fledging Crow, and Essex Farm add a community dimension to their farm styles. These farms hold volunteer days and festivals. You are joining much more of the farm experience and farm community.

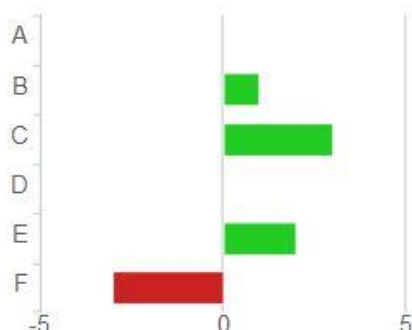
Community supported agriculture (CSA) farms are doing well

[Log in to add evidence](#)

Food Desert Label Lifted from Park Towns

New food distribution networks and an overall increase in visitor amenities in Park towns have significantly improved the availability of fresh food in core Adirondack towns.

Influenced Scenarios



Likelihood



Evidence

▼ Beverage Distribution Co in St Armand Expanding by 50%

The expansion allows the distributor to expand the product lines they sell in the region.

Read the news item about the APA approval of the project here.

▶ New Price Chopper coming to Warrensburg

▶ Web Portal for the local food crowd

▶ New food distribution via buying groups in the Park

▶ New CSA Farm in Warren County

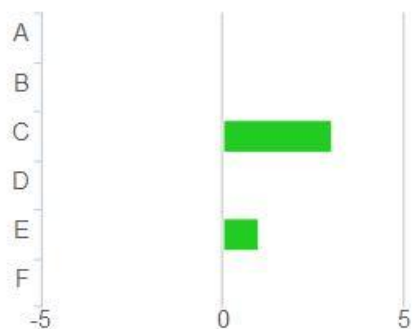
▶ USDSA Certified mobile chicken processing unit operational

▶ APA offers study to attract food vendors to Indian Lake

Land Trusts Start Young Farmer Programs in Region

The Land Trusts in region (ALT, OSI, etc.) start programs to support young farmers and to preserve farmlands. There are large number of young people who want to do farming but they can't afford to buy land within the Park.

Influenced Scenarios



Likelihood



Evidence

▼ Open Space Institute purchases farm easement on farm

The re-start of Mace Chasm Farm in Keeseville has been supported by sale of conservation easement to the Open Space Institute. The OSI program started with a \$1.2m gift from the Klipper Fund and a \$500k matching gift from OSI's own resources. OSI is also developing a lease-to-own program.

Read more about it here.

▶ Agrarian Trust Program for Land Access for Next Gen Farmers

Log in to add evidence

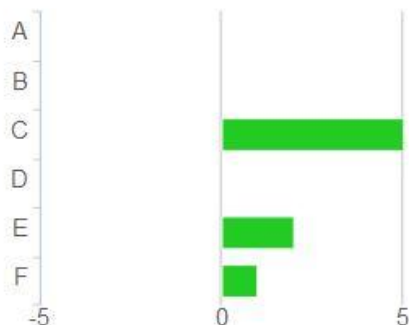
2022 : Agriculture

1 Comments

Regional Growing Season Extended Significantly

Tapping into geothermal energy sources, use of high tunnels and other season extenders are very widespread. Also, hardier crop varieties have been developed. Low-cost green houses are used by some, sometimes heated by waste heat from electricity generation or as part of a centralized thermal heat generation scheme. Many of these approaches come from farmers in Quebec that have been working these issues for a long time. Warmer climate is also a factor. Some of these projects aim for availability of produce throughout the full year, which opens up major institutional markets like the schools.

Influenced Scenarios



Likelihood



Evidence

Rivermede Farm Solar Thermal Demo Project Funded

The farm in Keene Valley will use solar thermal to heat soil beds in existing greenhouses that are expected to produce all year.

This is one of 8 demonstration projects from the regional sustainability plan done a year ago that you can read here.

Turn to page 78 of the 2013 REDC grant booklet here for more details

New North Country Food Grant Includes Season Extenders

Log in to add evidence

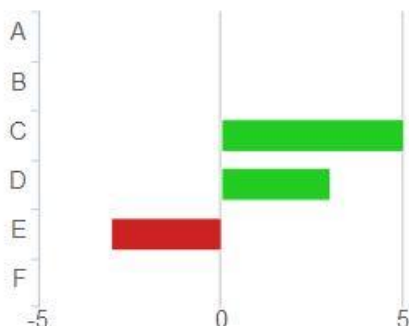
2017 : Agriculture

1 Comments

Regional Services Improve Economics of Local Food

Regional meat processing plants have opened in Champlain and St. Lawrence regions. Other operations for processing, marketing and distribution of food products are operating within the region and include distribution to targeted urban centers like Albany, Saratoga, etc. Overall, these improve the scale and economics of local food production and solve a number of difficult problems that individual farmers cannot address alone.

Influenced Scenarios



Likelihood



Evidence

Robots Coming to Farm Work

Ticonderoga USDA Meat Processor to Double in Size

Small Scale USDA meat processor opens in Ticonderoga

New Study on Distribution for Small Crops

Small farms face difficulty in distribution and are alone unable to serve large single customers. This new project will seek various ways to solve these problems.

Read news story about it here.

Ti Slaughterhouse to Open by End of 2013

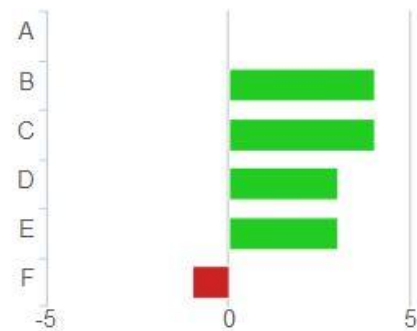
Mobile USDA Certified Chicken Processing Unit Operating

North Country food hub to open in Canton

NYS Policies Better Support Smaller Businesses and Farms

The movement toward smaller-scale farming and net-based virtual companies with few employees is being supported by State economic policies that for so long have only focused on the big corporations. The process Governor Cuomo put forth in the 2011 Regional Economic Council push started the trend by making grants available for many small investments rather than only going for a couple of big ones. Microenterprise Assistance Programs have popped up all over the Park, often helping self-employed people get small businesses started.

Influenced Scenarios



Likelihood



Evidence

Proposal to Cap Farm Assessments to 2% Increases

The proposed new law would cap increases in farmland tax assessments at 2% per year.

You can read about the new law here.

\$2.4m Tourism Transformation Loan Fund set up

New "PrideofNY" Site connects Consumers to Local Food Sources

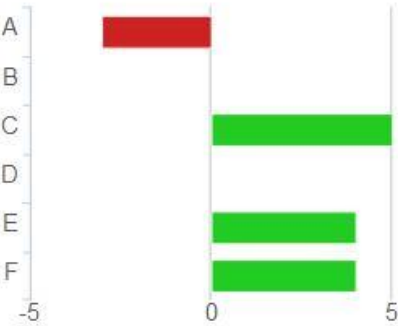
Seven Tupper Lake businesses get microgrants

Log in to add evidence

Biomass Energy Is a Major Source of New Jobs in the Region

The biomass push extends beyond the Park. New pellet fueled heating systems and fuel supply contracts are marketed to places as far as Albany, Watertown and Utica. Wood pellet heating systems are becoming a mainstream alternative, especially for larger buildings. All kinds of jobs are generated from wood harvesting to distribution to installation of systems and operation of larger scale plants in schools, prisons, etc. within the Park.

Influenced Scenarios



Likelihood



- ▶ Watervliet Arsenal wills get biomass co-generation plant
- ▶ 5 Institutional Biomass Heat Projects in Hamilton/Essex/Franklin Get 1.4m
- ▶ ReEnergy converts Watertown coal plant to biomass
- ▶ Pellet plant in Malone get energy efficiency grant
- ▶ North Country School coverts to biomass
- ▶ AuSable Valley Middle/High School and Keeseville Elementary switch
- ▶ Petrova School converts to biomass heat
- ▶ Liquid fuels from biomass growing
- ▶ Willow plantations for ReEnergy get \$470,000

Evidence

Old Forge to build district biomass heating project

Update: This project failed to come together when it's biggest heat user decided to use propane instead.

This project will connect a number of Old Forge businesses. A similar project at the nearby Rome/Griffiss tech park will do the same thing there.

The news story is here.

- ▶ Biomass Heat Savings around 50%
- ▶ Curran Renewables Wins NYSERDA Grant for New Delivery Systems
- ▶ Local Wood Pellet Shortage Develops
- ▶ \$3m for Wood Biomass Heat Research
- ▶ Tupper Lake district heating design project funded
- ▶ Wood Pellets for Thermal Heat Do Not Use Whole Tree Harvesting
- ▶ EPA Proposals for Next Gen Wood Stoves
- ▶ Renewable Heat NY Aims for Big Biomass Boost
- ▶ Residential Biomass 'Model Neighborhood' Project Funded
- ▶ The ADK Museum pellet boiler project funded
- ▶ Federal Biomass Thermal Bill in Process

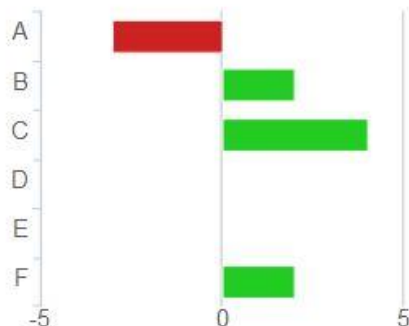
2027 : The Forest

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Advanced Forest Management Helps with Climate Adaptation

The northern forest is under tremendous stress from the effects of climate change. The most advanced thinking about forest management is focused on helping the flora and fauna adapt to the changes and to strengthen the overall ecosystem and keep it healthy as it changes. The new consensus is that active forest management is good from a human and a biocentric point of view. You can't just sit there and watch the forest fall apart.

Influenced Scenarios



Likelihood



Evidence

▼ Marcy Dam to be Dismantled

The dam was badly damaged by floods from Irene. It will be slowly dismantled rather than replaced. Perhaps not 'advanced' this is a new sort of thinking. The former pond, now a mud flat, will regrow as it wishes over time.

[Read the news story here.](#)

[Log in to add evidence](#)

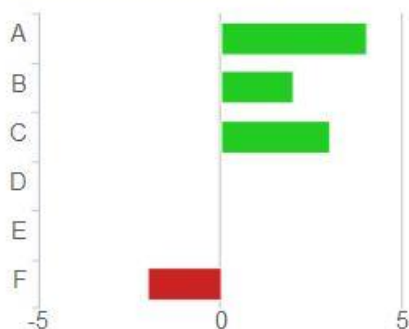
2027 : The Forest

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Carbon Sequestering Payments Flow to Forest Landowners

Funds from cap-and-trade systems or carbon taxes begin to flow to ADK forest land owners. The State as well as private land owners receive the new cash flows. Specific amounts are dependent upon surveys made by certified foresters who design forest management programs to maximize growth, thus maximizing carbon consumption.

Influenced Scenarios



Likelihood



Evidence

▼ Older Trees Grow Faster Than Younger Trees

New experiments suggest older trees are better at carbon absorption than younger trees, contrary to prior science. More needs to be learned. This could be good news for the Forest Preserve.

[Read the popular press about it here.](#)

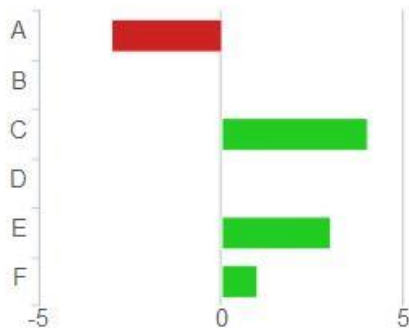
► Carbon offset prices have collapsed

[Log in to add evidence](#)

New NYS Easement Purchases Keep Landscapes Working

Many more farm land and industrial timberland owners sell all development rights to NYS, but stay in production, preserving the working landscape and jobs.

Influenced Scenarios



Likelihood



Evidence

\$20.5m Coming for Farmland Easements

NYS is making \$20.5m available for farm conservation easements. This is a state-wide program.

[Read the news story here.](#)

\$300k Grants Coming for Conservation Easements

Large Timber Easement Sold to New TIMO

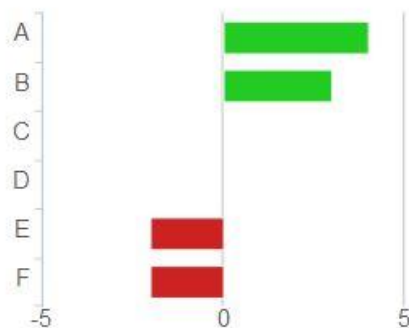
1300 acres easement picked up by OSI in Keeseville

[Log in to add evidence](#)

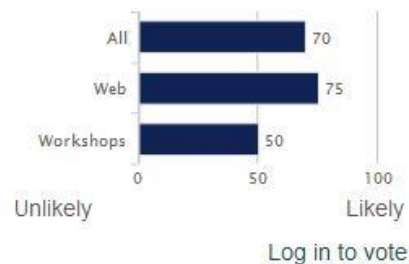
New Round of Forest Preserve Purchases Competed

After a period in which the State made very few acquisitions, the pendulum has swung again toward enlarging the Forest Preserve. The Finch land, Follensby Pond and several smaller transactions are done. Taken together, these were the largest Forest Preserve acquisitions in 100 years. General opinion is that these are the last of the big purchases by the State.

Influenced Scenarios



Likelihood



Evidence

Second Portion of Finch Sale to Transfer to NYS

This transaction will be small - about 8500 acres spread over 14 parcels.

The specific tracts are cited in the article [here](#).

Cuomo Signs APA Plan for Finch Lands

Essex Chain of Lakes Opened to Public

NYS closes on the first part of the Finch lands