

ELEMENTS OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE ASSESSMENT

New Hampshire has conducted zero monitoring of the ecological impacts of the growing congestion on the summit in over half a century. A credible, comprehensive Environmental and Climate Assessment will show that carrying capacity for visitors is well below current visitation levels. It will inform the public and policy makers about the existential threat climate change poses to the survival of the alpine ecosystems. Without a comprehensive Assessment, a new Master Plan will be written in ignorance and will inflict further damage to alpine tundra ecosystem integrity. Such a Master Plan conveys an attitude that “we’ll compromise ecosystem integrity before we reduce revenue.”

An independent, comprehensive Environmental and Climate Assessment must examine Mount Washington from base to summit, and not merely the 60-acre State Park. Essential elements of the Assessment include:

Alpine Ecology:

- The Status of alpine flora and fauna, and changes since the 1970 Master Plan inventory;
- A Map of contaminated and degraded sites and sources;
- Current, and necessary additional, data on Air Pollution, Water quality and Soil contamination;

Climate Change:

- Build on Mt. Washington Observatory and AMC Climate records and research;
- Assess potential impacts of climate change under varying climate model scenarios and determine conditions alpine communities require to flourish on the summit;

- Determine the Carbon Footprint of all visitors and buildings on summit, and identify ways to dramatically reduce visitor and building carbon emissions, in order to meet important societal climate targets by 2050;

Carrying Capacity:

- Determine acceptable levels of summit visitors, both daily and annual;

Composition of Assessment Team:

- Engage independent ecologists and climate scientists. All data, monitoring, and pertinent information gathered by State agencies should be made available to the Assessment Team. State agencies lack the resources and are subject to political pressure;
- Exclude environmental consultants, that place their client's interest ahead of the health of Mount Washington. Consultants hired by Northern Pass, should not be involved;

Funding the Assessment:

The State and private interests responsible for current degradation and congestion should pay for the assessment, but have no influence over its methodology or report.