

Chapter 4 - Vision and Goals

The vision and goals of Minnewaska State Park Preserve have remained consistent from the previous 1993 master plan. While approximately eight thousand acres have been acquired since 1993, the vision and goals described below for the Preserve continue to uphold the preservation, recreation and environmental education values of the Preserve and Agency.

Agency Mission Statement

The mission of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation is to provide safe and enjoyable recreational and interpretive opportunities for all New York State residents and visitors and to be responsible stewards of our valuable natural, historic and cultural resources.

Park Preserve Vision

Minnewaska State Park Preserve will continue to be a place for visitors to enjoy, appreciate and learn about the Preserve's natural, cultural, and physical resources, and participate in the recreational opportunities that the Preserve offers.

Overall Park Preserve Goal

To preserve and protect the natural, cultural and physical resources of Minnewaska State Park Preserve while making available to the public compatible recreational and educational opportunities.

Natural Resource Goals

Overall Goal

To protect, preserve and interpret the significant natural resources throughout Minnewaska State Park Preserve.

Goals

- Continue to protect, manage and maintain areas important as habitat for rare, threatened, endangered or protected plant and animal species and community types.
- Identify areas with environmental sensitivity, such as wetlands, and direct intensive development away from such areas.
- Maintain, restore and/or enhance the natural environment to improve the quality of natural resources and support biodiversity of plant and animal species.
- Encourage the propagation of species of plants and animals that are native and indigenous to the area.
- Control the impacts of invasive species on the biodiversity of plants and animals.
- Protect and maintain the quality of water resources both on and associated with the Preserve.
- Provide opportunities for research and study of the Preserve's important natural resources.
- Maintain up-to-date inventories of biological resources.

Recreation Goals

Overall Goal

Provide recreational opportunities compatible with the character of the Preserve and its resources.

Goals

- Provide year-round facilities and programs for the public.
- Integrate a sustainable year-round trail system for a diversity of trail users that is compatible with the resources of the Preserve.
- Implement programs and facilities that are consistent with regional and local needs and demands as well as those identified within the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, and other federal, state, regional and local plans and programs.
- Develop programs to interpret the natural, cultural and physical resources and educate the public of their importance.
- Continue to evaluate carrying capacities and provide access for appropriate recreational opportunities such as:
 - o Swimming
 - o Climbing
 - o Hiking
 - o Biking
 - o Nature viewing
 - o Picnicking

Open Space Protection Goals

Overall Goal

To protect open space within and adjacent to the Preserve through acquisition, designation, coordination with existing partners and creation of additional partnerships.

Goals

- Research connectivity to nearby parks and other open spaces.
- Create a buffer zone to development that surrounds the Preserve using open space protection strategies such as conservation easements and/or acquisition of land from willing sellers.
- Evaluate, classify and designate recent and future acquisitions according to the Parkland Classification System and the Park Preservation Law (Article 20 of the Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Law) as appropriate in order to preserve open space.

Cultural Resource Goals

Overall Goal

To identify, preserve, protect, and interpret the elements of Minnewaska State Park Preserve that are significant to the history, archeology and culture of the local community, region, state and nation.

Goals

- Identify, protect and study archeologically significant resources within the Preserve.
- Minimize or avoid disturbances within archeologically sensitive areas.
- Preserve and interpret key resources from the Resort Era.
- Preserve and interpret key resources from the Prehistoric Era.
- Develop programs and activities that interpret the history and culture of the area and the Preserve.

Scenic Resource Goals

Overall Goal

To enhance, preserve and protect various scenic resources within Minnewaska State Park Preserve.

Goals

- Design and locate all activities, structures and infrastructure to minimize impacts and to fit into the Preserve's setting.
- Provide greater opportunities to view landscapes and other natural features.
- Enhance significant historical vista points.
- Identify key scenic resources for potential acquisition for viewshed protection.

Access Goals

Overall Goal

Provide appropriate access to the Preserve and its natural, recreational and cultural resources in a manner that ensures the safety and security of Preserve patrons and its resources.

Goals

- Provide and maintain access for emergency response and rescue operations.
- Provide and maintain appropriate public access to areas designated for public use.
- Provide access to the Preserve resources for persons with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG).

Education and Interpretation Goals

Overall Goal

To provide an increased level of education and interpretation for Preserve visitors that supports Agency initiatives.

Goals

- Orient public education and interpretation programs to the appreciation and conservation of the Preserve's natural, cultural, scenic and physical resources.
- Design interpretive programs that focus on the Resort Era.
- Provide interpretive programs designed for the general public and for organized groups.
- Design programs that are compatible with the protection of Preserve resources.
- Provide a year-round interpretive program.
- Develop partnerships with other providers that can offer interpretive programs designed for Preserve visitors and groups.
- Provide a facility that serves as a centralized location for education and interpretive programming.

Operation and Maintenance Goals

Overall Goal

To provide a continued high level of service to patrons and employees in a safe clean manner that protects the natural, cultural and recreational resources of the Preserve.

Goals

- Provide a more efficient communications system for Preserve staff.
- Replace high maintenance items with more sustainable, low maintenance items.
- Provide adequate funding for operational needs.
- Provide adequate staffing consistent with the needs of the Preserve.
- Maintain existing and explore new partnerships for maintenance and operation of Preserve facilities.

Facility Development and Capital Investment Goals

Overall Goal

To provide quality facilities consistent with standard Preserve design aesthetics while being fiscally and environmentally responsible in their development.

Goals

- Provide a new Preserve office facility that meets the needs of Preserve administration functions and staff.
- Provide an upgraded maintenance facility that fits the functions and needs of the Preserve and uses existing structural resources.
- Provide improved public restroom facilities in appropriate locations making use of existing resources when possible.
- Pave key parking lots.
- Provide safe and reliable potable water supplies for patrons and Preserve uses.
- Provide a safe design for the Awosting parking lot and entrance area.
- Provide key maintenance resources.

Communication and Partnership Goals

Overall Goal

To facilitate the flow of information to Preserve users and surrounding communities and partners, and allow for the creation of partnership opportunities.

Goals

- Assist in the formation of a Friends of Minnewaska State Park Preserve group.
- Conduct outreach efforts in the surrounding communities to bolster relationships and volunteerism.
- Coordinate with local and state agencies in the conservation and protection of the natural, cultural and recreational resources of the preserve.
- Provide opportunities for input regarding Preserve management and development from the public.

- Provide opportunities for the creation of new partnership opportunities.
- Promote regional tourism.
- Continue and enhance partnerships with existing land management organizations, including:
 - o Department of Environmental Conservation
 - o Shawangunk Ridge Biodiversity Partnership
 - o The Nature Conservancy
 - o Mohonk Preserve
 - o Open Space Institute

Inventory, Monitoring and Research Goals

Overall Goal

To encourage new and continue ongoing studies and data analysis to enhance and protect the Preserve.

Goals

- Continue cooperative research and data collection partnerships such as those currently ongoing on fire management and deer management.
- Monitor the impact of recreation on natural resource preservation goals.
- Provide a coordinated approach to inventory, monitoring and research that facilitates data exchange.
- Continue research and provide opportunities for future studies.
- Promote research that complements the other goals for the Preserve.
- Develop and implement a monitoring program that measures conditions and changes within the Preserve.
- Assure that all monitoring and research programs are compatible with the protection of the Preserve resources.

Sustainability Goals

Overall Goal

To protect the natural systems of the Preserve and the region through the implementation of sustainable and environmentally sensitive management and operation actions.

Goals

- Use green technology in construction and renovation of facilities.
- Employ green building designs for new structures.
- Replace Preserve vehicles and maintenance equipment with those that are more efficient and/or do not use fossil fuels.
- Reduce energy consumption.
- Improve solid waste management and recycling programs in Preserve operations.
- Enforce the carry-in/carry-out policy and encourage Preserve patrons to participate in solid waste reduction and recycling while using Preserve facilities.
- Improve and expand sustainable Preserve operation practices.

