NEW YORK STATE

Department of Environmental Conservation

DIVISION OF LANDS & FORESTS

Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower Historic Area

Proposed Final Unit Management Plan

Final Environmental Impact Statement

Town of Keene

Essex County

ANDREW M. CUOMO	JOE MARTENS
Governor	*Commissioner*

Date of acceptance of FEIS:

Lead Agency:

New York State Departement of Environmental Conservation
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233

For Further Information Contact:

Josh Clague
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
625 Broadway, 5th Floor
Albany, NY 12233
Phone: (518) 473-9518
lfadk@gw.dec.state.ny.us

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Executive Summary

This Unit Management Plan (UMP) represents the culmination of a long, dynamic, and at times, controversial planning process surrounding the fire observation tower atop Hurricane Mountain. An historic structure dating back to 1919, the tower, and many others like it throughout the state, played a critical role in helping the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and its predecessors fulfill their mission to protect the state's natural resources.

The tower was formally discontinued for use by DEC for its intended purpose in 1979. Even before being closed, the tower had been identified in the 1972 Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (SLMP) as a non-conforming structure in a wilderness setting. In 2010, because of a growing recognition of the tower's significance under the State Historic Preservation Act (SHPA), and in response to numerous public comments received by DEC and the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) in support of the structure, the SLMP was amended and the land around the tower was reclassified to create the Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower Historic Area, thereby allowing the tower to remain in its original location.

While the SLMP now allows for the mere existence of the Hurricane Mountain fire tower, this UMP takes the next step of proposing the maintenance of the tower in a manner that complies with SHPA and allows for safe public access of the structure while maximizing its interpretive and educational potential. The tower already attracts thousands of visitors to the peak of Hurricane Mountain every year, and allowing the public to fully access the cab of the tower would represent a new level of historic interpretation of the structure.

This plan also proposes to address a significant public safety concern for the eastern High Peaks region through the installation of a radio repeater on the Hurricane Mountain fire tower. A signal "shadow" exists throughout the valleys of the area, and the use of a permanent repeater on the summit of Hurricane Mountain would all but eliminate that shadow, providing Forest Rangers and Environmental Conservation Officers with a strong signal for emergency management purposes.

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Acknowledgements

Plan Contributors:

Josh Clague	Lead Author and Natural Resources Planner, DEC Division of Lands and Forests
Daniel Levy	Forester, DEC Division of Lands and Forests—Region 5
Rob Daley	Supervising Forester, DEC Division of Lands and Forests—Region 5
Carole Fraser	ADA Coordinator, DEC Division of Lands and Forests
John Strief	Forest Ranger Captain, DEC Division of Forest Protection—Region 5
Tom Martin	Natural Resources Supervisor, DEC Region 5 Administration
Kris Alberga	Regional Forester, DEC Division of Lands and Forests—Region 5
Harry Spetla	Communications Equipment Specialist, DEC Division of Operations—Region 5
Chuck Vandrei	Historic Preservation Officer, DEC Division of Lands and Forests
Sandra Garlick	Senior Attorney, DEC Office of General Counsel
Ken Hamm	Associate Attorney, DEC Office of General Counsel
Kathy Regan	Natural Resources Planner, Adirondack Park Agency

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Preface

The Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower Historic Area Unit Management Plan has been developed pursuant to, and is consistent with, relevant provisions of the New York State Constitution, the Environmental Conservation Law (ECL), the Executive Law, the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan, Department of Environmental Conservation (Department) rules and regulations, Department policies and procedures and the State Environmental Quality and Review Act. This UMP also complies with the State Historic Preservation Act (SHPA), found at Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation Law (PRHPL), Article 14 and implementing regulations at 9NYCRR Parts 426-428.

The state land which is the subject of this Unit Management Plan (UMP) is Forest Preserve land protected by Article XIV, Section 1 of the New York State Constitution. This Constitutional provision, which became effective on January 1, 1895 provides in relevant part:

> "*The lands of the state, now owned or hereafter acquired, constituting the Forest Preserve as now fixed by law, shall be forever kept as wild forest lands. They shall not be leased, sold or exchanged, or be taken by any corporation, public or private, nor shall the timber thereon be sold, removed or destroyed.*"

ECL §§3-0301(1)(d) and 9-0105(1) provide the Department with jurisdiction to manage Forest Preserve lands, including the Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower Historic Area.

The Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (SLMP) was initially adopted in 1972 by the Adirondack Park Agency (APA), with advice from and in consultation with the Department, pursuant to Executive Law §807, now re-codified as Executive Law §816. It is the SLMP that classifies the lands subject to this UMP as the Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower Historic Area, and it is the SLMP that provides the overall framework for the development and management of all state lands in the Adirondack Park**,** including the Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower Historic Area. Furthermore, the Department is obligated under SHPA to fully explore all feasible and prudent alternatives that would avoid or mitigate impacts to historic resources within the unit.

In 1983, legislation was enacted at ECL § 9-0109(4) which authorized the maintenance of historic structures owned by the State prior to June 21, 1983 and located in the Adirondack and Catskill parks, provided three criteria are satisfied. First, the Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation must find that such structures and improvements are listed or are eligible to be listed on the State Register of History Places pursuant to PRHP § 14.07. Second, the Commissioner of Environmental Conservation must find that such structures and improvements can be maintained for public enjoyment and understanding of the Forest Preserve or for DEC activities necessary in protecting Forest Preserve lands in the parks in a manner that will not disturb the existing degree of wild forest character of land on which the pre-existing structures or improvements are located or the wild forest character of land adjacent thereto. Third, such maintenance must be in accordance with reasonable regulation of the Forest Preserve in the Adirondack and Catskill parks consistent with Article XIV of the State Constitution.

Executive Law §816 requires the Department to develop, in consultation with the APA, individual UMPs for each unit of land under the Department's jurisdiction. The UMPs must conform to the guidelines and criteria set forth in the SLMP. Thus, UMPs implement and apply the SLMP's general guidelines for particular areas of land within the Adirondack Park. Executive Law 816(1) provides in part that "(u)ntil

amended, the master plan for management of state lands and the individual management plans shall guide the development and management of state lands in the Adirondack Park."

State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) Act

The State Environmental Quality Review Act requires that all agencies determine whether the actions they undertake may have a significant impact on the environment. The intent of the legislation is to avoid or minimize adverse impact on the resource. The guidelines established in the SLMP for developing unit management plans express these same concerns. Any management actions proposed for the Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower Historic Area must take into consideration environmental factors to ensure that such actions do not degrade that environment. The overall intent of this UMP is to identify mitigating measures to avoid or minimize adverse environmental impacts to the natural resources of the State within the unit. Any reconstruction within the confines of this unit will take environmental factors into account to ensure that such development does not degrade the resource.

In addition to environmental considerations, SEQR also takes into account historic resources. The preferred alternative in this UMP proposes the preservation of the fire tower as an historic resource; however, there is a long history of policy, guidance, and management proposals that have identified the tower for removal. While a recent amendment to the SLMP has reversed this direction, the importance of the tower remains significant to a variety of stakeholders. For this reason, and in order to fully vet a range of management alternatives in light of these recent policy changes, the Department has issued a Positive Declaration and prepared this document as an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

State Historic Preservation Act (SHPA)

The State Historic Preservation Act (SHPA) of 1980 declares it to be the policy of the State to promote the protection, enhancement, use, reuse and conservation of historic resources. Similarly, the New York State Public Buildings Law Article 4-B declares it to be the policy of the State for State agencies to act as good stewards of historic properties under their jurisdiction and to hold those properties in trust for future generations.

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and SHPA established the National and State Registers of Historic Places, which are the official lists of buildings, structures, districts, objects, and sites significant in the history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture of New York and the nation. The Commissioner of the Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) makes the determination whether a property meets the criteria for listing found in 9 NYCRR §427.3. The same eligibility criteria are used for both the State and National Registers.

In consultation with the OPRHP, State agencies are required to consider potential impacts to historic properties listed or eligible for listing in the National and/or State Register for Historic Places early in the planning process and prior to undertaking, approving, permitting or funding of any project. State agencies must fully explore all feasible and prudent alternatives that avoid or mitigate adverse impacts to historic properties (9 NYCRR Part §428.1).

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Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower Historic Area

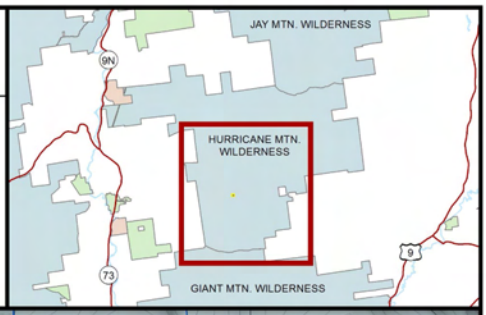
February 2012

N
W E
S

0 0.25 0.5 1 Mile

jdc

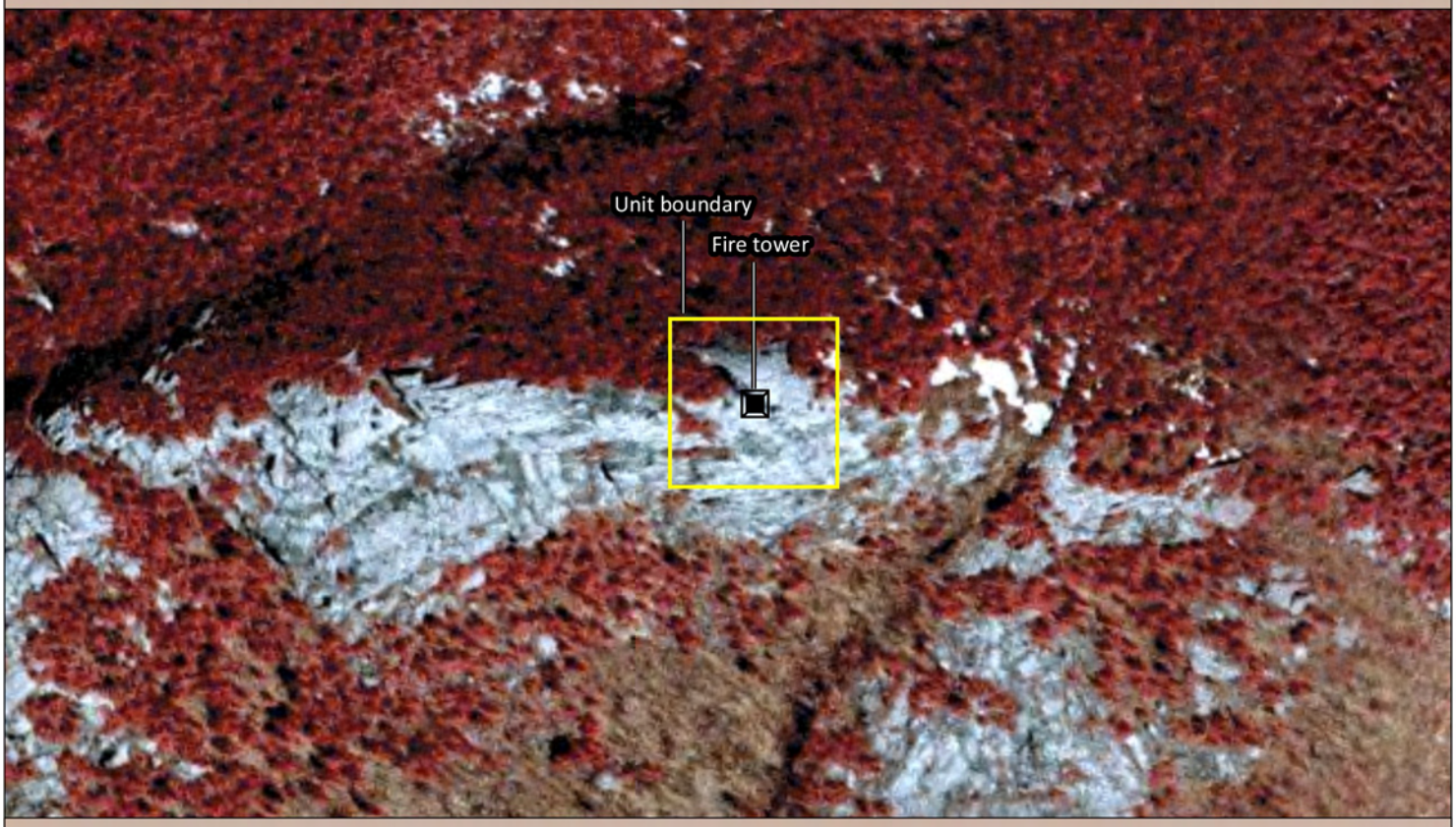
Public motor vehicle road
Recreational trail
Approved trail re-route
Elevation contour (50 ft.)
Parking area



O'Toole Rd.
Gulf Brook Trail
Soda Range Trail
Lost Pond
Gulf Brook
North Hurricane Trail
HURRICANE
MOUNTAIN
WILDERNESS
Dart Brook
Jackson Brook
Elizabethtown Trail
Hurricane Mtn. Ln.
Falls Brook
HURRICANE MOUNTAIN
FIRE TOWER
HISTORIC AREA
Hurricane Trail
9N
The Branch
GIANT MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS
3000
2500
3500
2000
1500

Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower Historic Area

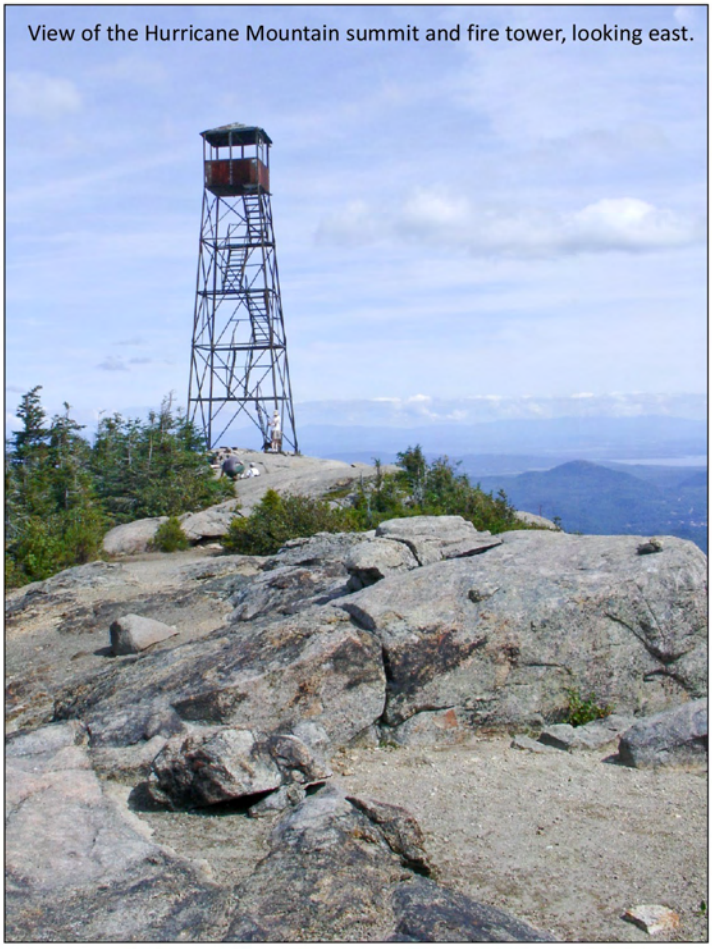
Area Detail



Orthoimagery taken Spring 2003.

0 50 100 200 Feet

N W E S



View of the Hurricane Mountain summit and fire tower, looking east.

Close-up of the fire tower

I. Introduction

Planning Area and Resource Overview

The Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower Historic Area (HMFTHA) is a 0.5-acre, square parcel that sits at the peak of Hurricane Mountain in the Town of Keene, Essex County. As the name suggests, the primary feature within the area is a fire observation tower used by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC, the Department) and its predecessor agency, the Conservation Department, for fire observation throughout most of the 20th century. The fire tower is a 35-foot tall Aermotor LS-40, a common model and by far the most used by the Department throughout the state.

Today, the fire tower is no longer used for fire observation purposes. While still standing, the tower has not been maintained for over 30 years and is no longer safe for public use. To discourage climbing of the structure, the two lowest sections of stairs have been removed. Despite being closed to the public, the presence of the fire tower has made the unit one of the most popular recreational destinations in the area. As such, the value of the tower has shifted away from fire detection and more toward one of recreational, historical, and educational significance.

The summit of Hurricane Mountain sits at 3,694 feet, and the land within the HMFTHA is nearly free of vegetation. The spruce-fir rocky summit plant community that does exist is found mainly along the northern boundary of the unit. As such, the near-bald summit of Hurricane Mountain offers stunning 360-degree views of the surrounding landscape. Similarly, the summit and the fire tower are visible from the nearby hamlets of Keene and Elizabethtown, as well as neighboring mountain tops, most of which are owned by the state and accessible by the public.

The HMFTHA is only accessible by foot trails, which enter the unit from three different locations: 1) from the north, beginning at the Crow Clearing trailhead, along the Gulf Brook Trail and North Hurricane Trail; 2) from the east, beginning at the Elizabethtown trailhead, along the Elizabethtown Trail; and 3) from the south, beginning at the Hurricane 9N trailhead, along the Hurricane Trail.

History of the Fire Tower

Over several years during the early 1900s, wildfires burned across nearly one million acres of Adirondack forestland. In 1908, one fire in particular started on East Hill in Keene and burned most of the land surrounding what is now the HMFTHA.

One result of this devastation was the creation of a state-wide fire detection system in 1909. In 1910, the first public fire observation stations under the state system were established on eight Adirondack peaks—including Hurricane—with many more peaks added over the next several years. Wooden towers were built on many of the summits, and although such a structure was permitted by the then landowner of Hurricane Mountain, the lack of vegetation at the summit precluded the need for one.

Extreme weather took a toll on these early wooden towers, and in 1916 the Conservation Department began to replace them with the more durable steel structures that still stand today. Hurricane Mountain received its first—and only— fire tower in 1919.

In 1921, an Osborne Fire Finder—a topographic map with sighting apertures—was installed in the Hurricane fire tower, improving the ability to accurately locate fires.

In 1928 the State purchased Hurricane Mountain and some of the surrounding land from the Champlain Realty Company. That same year, an observer's cabin was built along the Elizabethtown trail approximately 1.2 miles from the trailhead. The cabin was removed in the 1980's.

Beginning in the 1930s, Conservation Department aircraft patrols were added as a method of fire detection. Fire towers continued to play an important role; however, and Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) laborers were employed to construct and maintain several fire observation sites during that same decade.

In the 1970s, private contractors took over aerial detection of forest fires for the State. In 1971 DEC closed 62 of its 103 operating fire towers. The Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower remained in operation until 1979, at which point it was closed for direct fire observation. Radio communications existed on the tower until 1982.

Historic Designation of Forest Preserve Fire Towers

In recognition of the fire towers' role in the conservation legacy of New York State, the Department sponsored the nomination of several fire towers within the Adirondack and Catskill Parks to the National Register of Historic Places (NHRP) and State Register of Historic Places.

In 2001, ten fire towers—Arab, Poke-O-Moonshine, Azure, Kane Mountain, Blue Mountain, Snowy, and Hadley in the Adirondack Park as well as Balsam Lake Mountain, Mount Tremper and Red Hill in the Catskill Park— were listed. Hunter Mountain, also in the Catskills, had been previously listed in 1997. Subsequently, Wakely Mountain (2003), St. Regis Mountain (2005) and Hurricane Mountain (2007) were added. More specifically, the Hurricane Mountain fire tower was listed on the State Register of Historic Places on August 1, 2006 and on the National Register of Historic Places on January 29, 2007 (see Appendix I).

II. Public Use

The primary use of the HMFTHA is passive, day-use recreation such as hiking and picnicking. The presence of the fire tower and the amazing views offered on Hurricane Mountain encourage visitors to linger, and the lack of vegetation at the summit allows for easy access to most of the unit for this purpose.

Because of the remote location of the HMFTHA, public use of the unit is un-monitored and difficult to measure. There is currently no regular staff or volunteer presence at the summit of Hurricane Mountain, and there are no other mechanisms in place within the unit for tracking the number of visitors.

The best indicator of use can be found in the registers for the three trailheads that provide access to the unit. While these trailheads are located well outside the unit near the outer boundaries of the Hurricane Mountain Wilderness, the summit of Hurricane Mountain provides the best views in the area, and is likely the destination of a majority of the users that pass through the southern portion of the Wilderness.

Trail register data has been collected from the two major trailheads providing access to HMFTHA—Hurricane 9N and Crow Clearing—for at least the last twelve years. The Elizabethtown trailhead at the end of Hurricane Road is less used, and data has been collected from that register since 2005. The table below shows the number of trailhead registrations for the three trailheads since 2000.

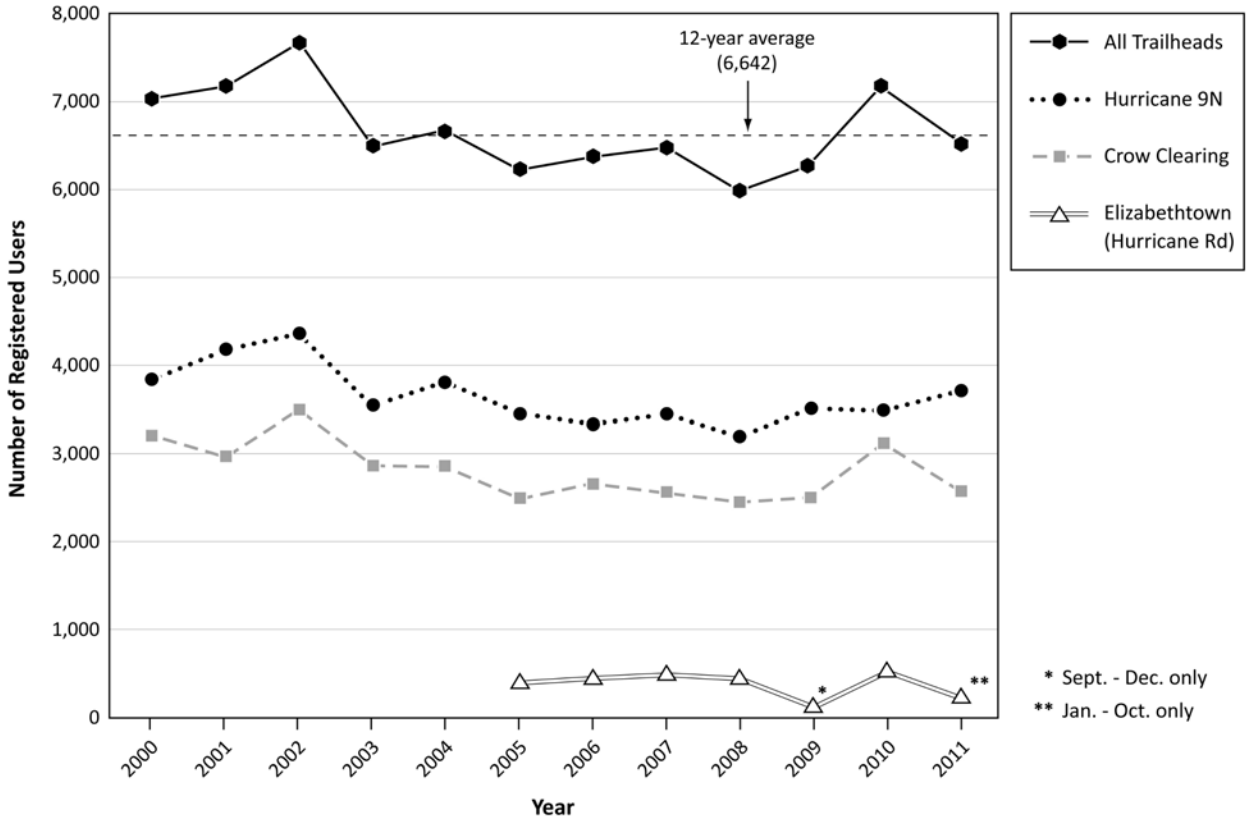
Number of Trailhead Registrations for the Trails Accessing the HMFTHA, 2000-2011

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Trailhead												
Hurricane 9N	3,843	4,242	4,338	3,655	3,842	3,414	3,340	3,435	3,180	3,613	3,489	3,753
Crow Clearing	3,214	2,977	3,368	2,897	2,899	2,542	2,691	2,620	2,400	2,535	3,137	2,656
Elizabethtown (Hurricane Rd)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	334	366	416	406	118*	556	238**
Total	7,057	7,219	7,706	6,552	6,741	5,847	6,031	6,471	5,986	6,266	7,182	6,647

*Total for September – December only
**Total for January – October only

Over the entire twelve year period summarized in the above table, the Hurricane 9N trailhead was consistently the most used, while the Elizabethtown trailhead was by far the least used. Although there has been fluctuation in the numbers of users from year to year, there was an overall downward trend from 2000 to 2008. Between 2009 and 2011, that trend showed a reversal. The average annual number of registrations over the entire 12-year period was 6,642. This information is summarized in the figure on the following page.

Registrations for Trailheads Accessing HMFTHA, 2000-2011



Capacity to Withstand Use

As shown by the trailhead registrations, the HMFTHA likely experiences a high level of public use. The layout of the unit—an historical structure and mountain summit near the convergence of three hiking trails—encourages high visitation by its very design. The physical and biological characteristics of the unit are such that the area has been able to withstand the public use it has experienced since the fire tower was first placed on Hurricane Mountain. The bare rocky summit makes it challenging to contain people to a limited area, but at the same time the harder surfaces can withstand the regular walking and climbing they receive. The spruce-fir rocky summit plant community at the north side of the unit lies on a steep north face that is generally avoided by the public, as the better views and more comfortable sitting can be found on the bare stone.

When considering the social carrying capacity of the HMFTHA, there are several good examples of other fire towers across the Adirondacks that suggest the unit can withstand at least as much use as it has received in recent years. Fire towers on the peaks of Snowy, Blue, Azure, Poke-O-Moonshine, Hadley, Adams, Wakely, and Vanderwhacker have all been restored or stabilized for public use. In some instances those towers receive many more visitors per year than Hurricane, and the summits near those towers did not see a noticeable increase in use after the stabilization of the structures.

III. Policy and Management Considerations

Policy, Guidance and Planning History of the Area

In the last forty years, numerous guidance, policy and planning decisions have been directed towards or referenced the fire tower on Hurricane Mountain. In many instances, these decisions have been directly related to and dependent upon previous decisions or policies. The following timeline provides a brief synopsis of the policy, guidance, and planning documents that have led to the need for this Unit Management Plan.

Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan – 1972

The Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower Historic Area (HMFTHA) is completely surrounded by the 14,000-acre Hurricane Mountain Wilderness Area. Prior to December 2010, both the Wilderness and Historic Areas existed as a single land management unit: the Hurricane Mountain Primitive Area. The classification scheme that originally designated these areas as Wilderness, Primitive and Historic comes from the original 1972 Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (SLMP), which defined Primitive Areas as:

> 1. Essentially wilderness in character but, (a) which contains structures, improvements, or uses that are inconsistent with wilderness, as defined, and whose removal, though a long term objective, cannot be provided for by December 31, 1975, and/or, (b) which contains, or is contiguous to, private lands that are of a size and influence to prevent wilderness designation; or
>
> 2. Of a size and character not meeting wilderness standards, but where the fragility of the resource or other factors require wilderness management.

Hurricane Mountain fell in the first category, which the SLMP went on to describe as "…where the goal is clearly upgrading to wilderness at some future time when the non-conforming uses can be removed …" Furthermore, the Area Description for the Hurricane Mountain Primitive Area in the original SLMP specifically read:

> The fire tower on Hurricane Mountain is an essential communication link to the Department of Environmental Conservation at present. Should it be replaced by other means of fire patrol and communications in the future its removal would make wilderness classification possible.

Slight modifications to this language occurred in the 1979 revision of the SLMP; however no substantive changes affecting fire towers would come until the 2010 SLMP amendment (see page 7).

The State Historic Preservation Act (SHPA) and Original Fire Tower Letter of Resolution between OPRHP and DEC – 1994

As previously noted SHPA and SEQR require public agencies to avoid or mitigate impacts to Historic Resources to the fullest extent practicable. SHPA also requires agencies to consult with the OPRHP

before taking actions that might affect an historic property to determine ways to avoid or mitigate impacts to that historic resource, and reconcile conflicts between agency policy and programs.

By 1994, the fire tower on Hurricane Mountain was eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. At the same time, the removal of several fire towers, including Hurricane, was still necessary to bring certain areas of state land into compliance with the SLMP. In order to reconcile the respective requirements of the SLMP and SHPA, officials from DEC and OPRHP engaged in a consultation process regarding 35 fire towers under DEC's jurisdiction pursuant to 9NYCRR 428.8.

The result of this consultation was a Letter of Resolution (LOR, see Appendix B), signed by both agencies, listing which of the 35 fire towers would be retained, and which of them could be removed or transferred by DEC without further consultation with OPRHP. Notwithstanding SHPA's requirement to preserve historic resources, the Hurricane Mountain fire tower was placed on the "remove" list because of the SLMP's call for its removal.

Fire Tower Study for the Adirondack Park – February 2010

The first time a fire tower was addressed in a UMP as a structure not conforming with the SLMP was in the 2006 UMP for the Saint Regis Canoe Area. While the UMP did include an analysis of alternatives regarding the future of the fire tower on Saint Regis Mountain, it did not propose the immediate removal of the tower. Instead, the preferred alternative was to "…develop a comprehensive Adirondack fire tower management plan…" that would "…address all State owned fire towers in the Adirondack Park" due to the high public interest in fire towers.

The APA resolution for the Saint Regis Canoe Area UMP stated that the removal of the Saint Regis fire tower "…should occur within three years from the adoption of this Unit Management Plan or other alternatives based on recommendations identified in the proposed study of fire towers in the Adirondack Park (should be considered)…"

In February 2010 the Department released the Fire Tower Study for the Adirondack Park. The study contained a detailed inventory of all remaining fire towers in the Park, both public and private, along with their individual histories. The study also examined management and policy constraints surrounding the towers, and recommended the removal of the Hurricane Mountain fire tower in order to bring the Hurricane Mountain Primitive Area into compliance with the SLMP.

Hurricane Mountain Primitive Area Unit Management Plan – August 2010

In February 2010, in conjunction with the release of the Fire Tower Study for the Adirondack Park, a Draft Unit Management Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Hurricane Mountain Primitive Area was released for a 45-day public review and comment period. A public meeting for the UMP was held at the Keene Central School in Keene Valley.

The most significant management proposal in the Draft UMP was the removal of the fire tower on Hurricane Mountain. Various alternatives were analyzed regarding the tower's fate, including a recommendation that the APA formally propose a reclassification of the land around the tower to Wild Forest or Historic, thereby making the tower a conforming structure. Notwithstanding potential reclassifications, the existing SLMP clearly called for the fire tower's removal once it was no longer used

for communication purposes, so the preferred alternative selected by DEC was to have the structure removed.

As described in the plan, the fire tower was "…clearly the highest profile issue in this UMP…", and the number and type of public comments received on the Draft UMP reflect this statement. Some of the comments were in favor of removing the fire tower, primarily because it would bring the area into compliance with the SLMP after many years of non-compliance. The majority of the comments, however, expressed opposition to the tower's removal. The most common reasons for the opposition involved the fire tower's recreational, cultural, educational, and historic value. Some comments encouraged the department not only to leave the tower standing, but also to stabilize it so that the public could safely use it. It was suggested that a local volunteer organization take on that role.

Despite the nature of the public comments, the proposal to remove the Hurricane Mountain fire tower was considered essential if the UMP was to be found in compliance with the SLMP. In May 2010, the Department submitted a Proposed Final UMP to the APA for their compliance determination. At their June 2010 meeting, the APA Commissioners found the UMP to be in compliance with the SLMP, but included the following recommendation in their resolution (see Appendix D for full resolution):

> **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** the Agency recommends the Department of Environmental Conservation not remove the Hurricane Mountain fire tower until the Agency has completed its review and action regarding the status of the fire tower and the possibility of any related changes to State land classification…

In August 2010, then DEC Commissioner Pete Grannis approved the Final UMP/EIS, the final step in formally adopting the plan.

Amendment to the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan – December 2010

By April 2010, both the Hurricane Mountain and Saint Regis Mountain fire towers were simultaneously proposed for removal—through the UMP process—in order to bring the Hurricane Mountain Primitive Area and Saint Regis Canoe Area into compliance with the SLMP. Overwhelming public support for the fire towers was heard by both DEC and APA during their respective UMP public comment periods.

In response to this public support, the APA Commissioners, at their April 2010 meeting, directed Agency staff to explore alternatives that might lead to minor revisions to the SLMP specific to classifications of the lands surrounding the two fire towers. In response, APA staff developed a draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS), in which the preferred alternative was to "Reclassify 0.5 acres around the base of the fire towers on St. Regis and Hurricane Mountains to Historic Area classification under the State Land Master Plan."

The DSEIS was released for public review in July of 2010, and three public hearings were held during the 30-day comment period. Similar to the UMP public comment period earlier in the year, the majority of the comments received expressed support for retention of the fire towers in their existing locations.

A final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FSEIS) was prepared which retained the preferred alternative to reclassify the lands surrounding the towers to Historic. At their October 2010 monthly meeting, the APA board unanimously approved the reclassification recommendations found in the FSEIS (the full APA resolution can be found in Appendix E). In December of that same year, then

Governor Paterson approved the land reclassifications, thereby creating the Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower Historic Area and the Saint Regis Mountain Fire Tower Historic Area.

Draft Revised Fire Tower Letter of Resolution between OPRHP and DEC – 2014

When the original Letter of Resolution (LOR) was signed in 1994, public interest in fire towers was minimal. The structures were generally seen as defunct assets, and the consultation process between DEC and OPRHP concluded that some of the towers would eventually be removed so long as that disposal was done properly from an historic preservation standpoint.

Today, there is a strong public interest in fire towers generally, and many individual towers have associated volunteer or "friends" organizations that have "adopted" them. Additionally, this UMP proposes that the Hurricane Mountain fire tower be opened and maintained for public use. The original LOR, however, does not provide any guidance on how to perform this maintenance in compliance with SHPA. Also, the 1994 LOR contains outdated information, specifically in terms of towers to be removed.

In conjunction with the release of this UMP, DEC and OPRHP have issued a Draft Revised Fire Tower Letter of Resolution (see Appendix C) which expands upon the 1994 LOR by providing the appropriate guidelines ("Fire Tower Checklist") related to tower maintenance for public use. Additionally, a new list has been generated that includes fire towers throughout all of New York in which the state as an interest. This updated list no longer recommends the removal of any fire towers, but includes the status of ownership and the national/state historic register listing for each tower.

As noted previously, ECL § 9-0109(4) authorizes the maintenance of historic structures in the Adirondack Park owned by the State prior to June 21, 1983 if three criteria are satisfied. First, the Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower was listed on the State Register of Historic Places on August 1, 2006 and on the National Register of Historic Places on January 29, 2007. Second, the Commissioner of Environmental Conservation must issue a Statement of Findings concluding that the fire tower can be maintained for public enjoyment and understanding of the Forest Preserve in a manner that will not disturb the existing degree of wild forest character of land on which the fire tower is located or the wild forest character of land adjacent to the fire tower. Third, the Commissioner's Statement of Findings must also find that maintenance of the fire tower will be in accordance with reasonable regulation of the Forest Preserve in the Adirondack Park consistent with Article XIV of the State Constitution. A draft Statement of Findings can be found in Appendix I.

Other Policies, Guidance, and Management Considerations Relevant to the Management of HMFTHA

Administrative Use of Motor Vehicles & Aircraft in the Forest Preserve (CP-17)

CP-17 is a Commissioner Policy that requires the department to maintain records for all administrative use of motor vehicles on roads closed to the public as well as aircraft on Forest Preserve lands in both the Adirondack and Catskill Parks.

The intent of the policy is to minimize such use, and specific provisions are provided for lands in the Adirondack Park classified as Wilderness, Primitive, Canoe, and Wild Forest, and in Wild, Scenic and Recreational River Areas. For Historic Areas, however, the policy states that "…such use in these areas

will not be subject to the compulsory review and the mandatory recordkeeping and reporting standards set forth below."

Due to the remote location of the HMFTHA, a helicopter may be necessary to deliver materials for maintenance of the fire tower should they be needed. While CP-17 would not require the tracking of such motorized use because of the area's Historic Area classification, it has been the Department's practice to track administrative motor vehicle/aircraft use in other Historic Areas on which it has day-to-day management responsibilities (Camp Santanoni). Also, given the close proximity of the HMFTHA to the Hurricane Mountain Wilderness, any potential helicopter use would have the same impact on the Wilderness as it would on the Historic Area, and should be documented accordingly. A discussion of potentially significant environmental impacts and associated mitigation measures is found in Section IV.

Volunteer Stewardship Agreements (VSA) (CP-58)

CP-58 is a Commissioner's Policy that enables DEC to enter into agreements with individuals or organizations allowing them to do volunteer work for the Department.

If maintenance of any kind is performed on the Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower, the Department will likely seek assistance from an existing volunteer organization that has expressed an interest in performing such work. If the tower can be stabilized to the point where it can accommodate safe public access, volunteers could also play a critical long-term role by maintaining a regular presence on Hurricane Mountain for the purpose of education and interpretation.

DEC staff oversight would be required during any maintenance activity on the fire tower, and the Department would likely incur at least some of the costs of materials and transportation. A general outline of the costs associated with rehabilitating a fire tower can be found in Appendix A.

"Mountaintop Policy" and Use of Radio Repeaters

The formal title of this 1980 Lands and Forests policy is "Preservation of Mountaintops within the Adirondack and Catskill Parks under the jurisdiction of the Department of Environmental Conservation". The full policy can be found in Appendix H.

The purpose of the policy is to keep to a minimum the number of Forest Preserve peaks that contain structures, towers, or other communication facilities. This is achieved by: 1) prohibiting the addition of such structures to mountaintops that do not currently contain them, 2) consolidating existing structures where feasible, 3) evaluating existing structures regularly for purpose and function and if appropriate, proposing their removal through a UMP, and 4) when necessary for health and safety, add new facilities or appurtenances to existing structures or towers only.

Forest Rangers and Environmental Conservation Officers (ECOs) who patrol in the Eastern High Peaks region have indicated that for many years there has been a radio signal "shadow" in many of the valleys of the area. The two nearest radio repeaters available for emergency management purposes are on Whiteface Mountain to the north and Belfry Mountain to the east.

The Eastern High Peaks receive some of the highest recreational use in the Adirondack Park, and accordingly the area consistently requires a higher number of rescues by emergency services personnel. When a rescue occurs in or near an area that does not receive a good signal, a temporary base station

with a repeater must be established in order to provide good radio coverage for search and rescue teams.

Because of this gap in coverage, and according to the provisions of the Mountaintop Policy, the fire tower on Hurricane Mountain has been identified by the Department's radio communications staff as an ideal location for the placement of a permanent radio repeater. This would all but eliminate the signal shadow in the area, thereby eliminating the need for a temporary base station during rescues in the region.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Unlike most UMPs, which cover a diverse array of management objectives, this plan has been developed for the specific purpose of addressing the future management of the fire tower on Hurricane Mountain. During the planning process, DEC considered accessibility options for both within the unit and the trails leading to it, despite their remote location.

The purpose of the tower today is to provide an historical interpretation of the experience of the former DEC staff who climbed the tower many times per day. The fire tower is 35 feet in height with no electrical power within the unit to provide alternate means of scaling the tower. In addition, the trails to the tower contain environmental barriers that are severe and so numerous that they cannot be modified to meet the intent and objectives of an accessible hiking opportunity.

As interpretive materials related to the fire tower are developed, they will be delivered in a manner that is accessible to people of all abilities. This may include web based materials, wheelchair accessible kiosks at the trailheads, and written educational materials.

Use of Aircraft and Motorized Equipment in the Adirondack Sub-Alpine Forest Bird Conservation Area

The New York State Bird Conservation Area (BCA) Program was established in 1997 to safeguard and enhance bird populations and their habitats on State lands and waters. Specifically, the Adirondack Sub-Alpine Forest BCA was designated to facilitate the protection of the Bicknell's thrush (a species of Special Concern), the Blackpoll warbler, and the Swainson's thrush, as well as their habitat, which consists of dense, subalpine coniferous forests on mountain summits over 2,800 feet in elevation.

Bicknell's thrush nesting locations have been confirmed on Hurricane Mountain in the past. The Peregrine Falcon, a Federally Endangered Species, is known to nest in the area as well. Future recreational use of the HMFTHA and the trails that lead to it, however, is not expected to vary greatly from past use, and therefore is not likely to impact these species. Similarly, most maintenance activities that may occur on the tower would not be different, in terms of impact, from the recreational use in the unit.

This UMP does not propose any vegetation management or other physical alterations that could affect Bicknell's thrush or Peregrine falcon habitat; however if the use of aircraft or motorized equipment should be needed for maintenance of the fire tower, it should not occur between April 1 and August 1 in order to avoid the combined Bicknell's thrush and Peregrine falcon nesting periods.

IV. Management Recommendations

Compared to other state land management units in the Adirondack Park, the HMFTHA is extremely small and limited in the type of recreational experience it provides. Additionally, the Hurricane Mountain fire tower is the centerpiece of the unit, both physically and in regards to public use. For these reasons, all of the management needs addressed in this UMP are directly related to the tower, and in some instances, to one-another.

In this section, these potential management options are discussed in the context of the following objectives:

Management Objectives

- Manage the area in compliance with Article XIV, Section 1 of the New York State Constitution, the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (SLMP), the State Historic Preservation Act (SHPA), Environmental Conservation Law §9-109 (4) and the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR).
- Maximize the interpretive and educational potential of the fire tower as an historic resource.
- Leverage the Department's staff and fiscal resources to the fullest extent possible.
- Establish a radio communication link for the Department in the vicinity of Hurricane Mountain.

Alternatives Analysis

Because of the interrelated nature of the management actions proposed for the HMFTHA, and pursuant to SHPA and SEQR, the Department considered various alternative management scenarios for the future of the unit. These alternatives are presented below.

- ***Alternative 1 – "No Action"***

  This alternative proposes no action, which would leave the future of the fire tower in doubt. The tower would remain unused as a fire observation platform or radio communication link, would have no proposed utility for Forest Preserve management since the wood steps have been removed, and would increasingly become a safety concern. The un-maintained structure would fall into disrepair and eventually become a public safety hazard. While this alternative would require very little of the Department's resources in the short term, it does not meet any of the Department's other management objectives for the area, particularly meeting SHPA's mandate to act as a steward of the fire tower as a historic resource. Therefore, this alternative is not supported by this plan.

- ***Alternative 2 – "Tower Removal"***

  This alternative proposes to have the fire tower dismantled and removed from Hurricane Mountain. The Department would identify another location, possibly on the Forest Preserve, on which it could still serve an educational purpose, but be more accessible by the public and the Department (or its volunteers). If the tower were no longer in the HMFTHA, the unit would most probably become part of the Hurricane Mountain Wilderness. In the 2010 Hurricane Mountain Primitive Area UMP, this scenario was the Department's preferred alternative because at the time the SLMP had identified the tower as a non-conforming structure. Today,

however, this alternative would not meet any of the Department's management objectives for the area, nor is it required by the SLMP. For these reasons, it is not supported by this UMP.

- ***Alternative 3 – "Minimal Maintenance"***

  This alternative would retain the tower in its current state to preserve its historical value, but limit maintenance of the structure to only those activities that ensure its structural integrity. This would not include work to make the stairs and cab safe for public access, it would not include any on-site interpretation of the fire tower, and would not include the installation of a radio repeater. While this alternative would not be inconsistent with the Guidelines for Management and Use of Historic Areas found in the SLMP, and would require very little of the Department's staff and fiscal resources, it does nothing to improve the historic interpretation of the area or the use of the fire tower as an educational tool. Additionally, it does not address the need for a communication link in the area. Therefore, this alternative is not supported by this plan.

- ***Alternative 4 – "Public Access Only"***

  In this alternative, the tower would be maintained in a manner that would accommodate full public use of the structure. The stairs and cab would be made safe for public access, and the appropriate interpretive materials would be included in and/or near the tower. The cab of the tower would be opened exclusively for public use, and a radio repeater would not be allowed. Under a Volunteer Stewardship Agreement, the Department would engage with a local volunteer organization to perform much of the maintenance, as well as to retain a presence on Hurricane Mountain to educate the public and monitor use during the busiest months of the year. This alternative meets most of the Department's management objectives, but because it does not include the use of a permanent radio repeater, it is not supported by this plan.

  The only potentially significant environmental impact associated with this alternative was identified in the discussion about Bird Conservation Areas in Section III. As noted there, if a helicopter is necessary for the delivery of materials, it would not be allowed between April 1 and August 1 to avoid any impacts to the Bicknell's thrush and Peregrine falcon during their respective nesting periods.

- ***Alternative 5 – "Communications Only"***

  This alternative would be similar to Alternative 3 in terms of minimally maintaining the tower in order to keep it safely standing and to preserve its historical value. The general public would not be permitted to access the tower, but the structure would be maintained to the extent that it could accommodate a permanent radio repeater. This alternative would meet many of the Department's management objectives, but because it does not include public access to the fire tower, it is not seen as maximizing the interpretive and educational potential of the structure, and therefore is not supported by this plan.

- ***Alternative 6 – "Public Access and Communications" – PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE***

  This alternative would combine aspects of Alternatives 4 and 5 to fully meet the Department's management objectives for the unit. The tower would be maintained for full public access, including the stairs and cab, and written interpretive materials would be strategically placed within the unit so as to be informative but not intrusive. The Department would enter into an agreement with a volunteer organization to be present during higher-use periods for the

purpose of educating the public and monitoring use of the unit. Volunteers would also be sought to assist with opening the tower for public use as well as the long-term maintenance of the tower. A permanent radio repeater would also be installed in the cab of the tower in a way that would be compatible with the public use of the structure.

As with Alternative 4, the only potentially significant environmental impact associated with this alternative was identified in the discussion about Bird Conservation Areas in Section III. As noted there, if a helicopter is necessary for the delivery of materials, it would not be allowed between April 1 and August 1 to avoid any impacts to the Bicknell's thrush and Peregrine falcon during their respective nesting periods.

Proposed Management Actions

The "Public Access and Communications" option was selected as the preferred alternative because it meets all of the Department's management objectives for the Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower Historic Area. The following management actions expand upon the concepts outlined in the preferred alternative:

- Open and maintain the fire tower for public use according to the process and specifications outlined in the Fire Tower Rehabilitation Checklist, found in Appendix C. Work with a volunteer organization to assist in this process through a Volunteer Stewardship Agreement.
- Develop interpretive materials related to the fire tower as an historic resource. This includes appropriately located interpretive signs in and around the tower, as well as information and interpretive materials to be located at the trailhead kiosks that provide access to the unit and on the Department's public website.
- Permit the long-term volunteer maintenance and interpretation of the fire tower through a Volunteer Stewardship Agreement. This includes the establishment of a Tower Steward position to maintain a presence on the mountain during periods of peak use.
- Monitor the fire tower, the summit of Hurricane Mountain, and the three trails that provide access to the unit for overuse. As mentioned in Section II, it is not anticipated that maintenance of the fire tower will result in visitor use beyond current levels. If impacts of overuse are detected, BMPs should be employed, including the installation of water bars, stepping stones, and/or dry tread, and the re-routing of trails.
- Install a radio repeater system on/in the tower:
    - In the cab, install a Daniels Electronic Ltd. repeater (or equivalent) with a transmission power of four to eight watts.
    - Include a protective enclosure around the repeater, which would take up approximately 5.5 square feet, or 11% of the cab's 49 sq. ft. area. The rest of the cab would remain open for public use.
    - Include in the protective enclosure two to four Deka L-16 batteries (or equivalent).
    - Mount a low-profile omnidirectional antenna on a bracket located on a corner of the cab roof. A typical antenna would be between five and six feet long and extend approximately four feet above the peak of the roof.
    - Mount four BP Solar 275 75-watt solar photovoltaic panels (or equivalent), each measuring 46.8 inches by 20.9 inches by 1.5 inches on the tower structure below the cab.
    - Connect the repeater system to the ground with a grounding wire and rod.

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Appendix A – APA Staff Memo on Fire Tower Rehabilitation Costs

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Jim Connolly

FROM: Kevin Prickett

DATE: May 6, 2010

RE: Fire Tower Rehabilitation Costs

It the interest of finding out more about the cost of rehabilitating a fire tower, I talked today with Tom Martin, NYS DEC Regional Forester regarding the costs. The following are notes from our conversation.

Tom expected the cost for necessary materials, delivery of materials via helicopter and engineering study was $50,000. This estimate did not include labor. There have been cases, such as Azure Mt. fire tower were this was done with less capitol, but required significant devotion by a friends group, the Student Conservation Association and DEC staff.

Tom made it clear that the rehabilitation of a fire tower cannot be done without tax dollars. Because DEC has the custody and control of Forest Preserve lands, it has the obligation to be involved. Usually, the first step in the process is to have an engineer examine the structure. The basis for costs estimation begins with the results of that analysis. Tom expected private engineer costs, with site visit and report, would be close to $10,000. Tom provided me with a fire tower rehabilitation checklist (attached). This list addresses both the necessary safety features and the aesthetic steps to restore the tower's appearance.

Tom provided some specific costs and resources necessary for restoration from previous efforts.

- Poke-O-Moonshine rehabilitation: required the replacement of eight cross braces on the second and third levels. The total material cost for the task was $5,000. One bolt, washer and nut was a total of eight dollars. These prices are from ten years ago.

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Jim Connolly
May 6, 2010
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- Helicopter transportation: Flight time is $1,500 per hour. Usually 2 to 3 days of trips are required. Each trip transports 600-800 pounds of material, ranging from concrete and water to replace footings, wood for steps and cap viewing platforms to tools to accomplish maintenance. Additional costs are incurred because the helicopter has come from Albany.
- Comfort with working in a high elevations: From replacing the cab roof to painting the structure, working comfortably and safely well above the ground is necessary to restoring a fire tower.

Appendix B – 1994 Fire Tower Letter of Resolution

LETTER OF RESOLUTION
BETWEEN
THE OFFICE OF PARKS, RECREATION, AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
AND
THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Whereas, the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has completed an assessment of thirty-five fire towers under DEC jurisdiction which are either eligible for inclusion in the State and National Registers of Historic Places (NRE), or have been designated as a National Historic Landmark (NHL) (see attachment 1),

And whereas the DEC determined that the removal of eight fire towers and the transfer of four fire towers is an undertaking which will have an impact on those properties and has consulted with the office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) pursuant to the New York State Historic Preservation Act (PRHPL §14.09) ;

Now, therefore, the DEC and the OPRHP agree that the undertaking shall be implemented in accordance with the following stipulations, in order to take into account the impact of the undertaking on historic properties.

Stipulations

The DEC will ensure the following stipulations are carried out:

The disposition of subject fire towers under DEC jurisdiction will be conducted according to attachment 1.

DEC shall make its best efforts to ensure that the instrument of conveyance for the transfer of fire towers to another public, or private entity shall include a protective covenant to ensure that the historical or architectural aspects of the fire towers will be preserved and maintained.

The OPRHP shall not object to the disposition of the subject fire towers by the DEC if such dispositions are carried out consistent with this agreement.

NEW YORK STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

BY: _____ DATE: 13 Dec. '94

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

BY: _____ DATE: 5/12/94

Attachment 1

Fire towers eligible for inclusion in the State and National Registers of Historic Places or designated as a National Historic Landmark to be removed or transferred.

FIRE TOWER	STATUS	DISPOSITION
Adams	NRE	Remove
Azure	NHL	Remove
Beacon	NRE	Remove
Hurricane	NRE	Remove
Loon Lake	NHL	Remove
Lyon	NRE	Remove
Palmer Hill	NRE	Remove
Poke-O-Moonshine	NHL	Remove
Spruce	NRE	Transfer
Stillwater	NRE	Transfer
Stissing	NRE	Transfer
Swede	NRE	Transfer

Fire towers eligible for inclusion in the State and National Registers of Historic Places or designated as a National Historic Landmark to be retained.

FIRE TOWER	STATUS	DISPOSITION
Arab	NHL	Retain
Balsam	NRE	Retain
Berry Hill	NRE	Retain
Blue	NHL	Retain
Clove	NRE	Retain
Colfax	NRE	Retain
Hunter	NRE	Retain
Kane	NHL	Retain
Ninham	NRE	Retain
Pillsbury	NHL	Retain
Red Hill	NRE	Retain
Rock Rift	NRE	Retain
Rondaxe	NHL	Retain
Snowy	NHL	Retain
Sterling	NRE	Retain
St. Regis	NHL	Retain
Tremper	NRE	Retain
Utsayantha	NRE	Retain
Vanderwhacker	NHL	Retain
Wakely	NHL	Retain
Woodhull	NHL	Retain
Owls Head	NRE	Retain

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Appendix C – 2014 Fire Tower Letter of Resolution

DRAFT LETTER OF RESOLUTION
REGARDING
FIRE OBSERVATION TOWERS
UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

BETWEEN THE

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
AND THE
OFFICE OF PARKS, RECREATION AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

WHEREAS, the Department of Environmental Conservation (Department) has care, custody and control of the Forest Preserve, state reforestation areas and various other classes of public lands and holds easement rights relating to public recreational use on certain private lands, and;

WHEREAS, certain fire observation towers (fire towers) which are listed in or eligible for listing in the State and National Registers of Historic Places in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act or the State Historic Preservation Act, are situated on these lands, and;

WHEREAS, the New York State Historic Preservation Act and the Public Building Law mandate that state agencies act as stewards of historic properties under their jurisdiction, and;

WHEREAS, the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan defines certain structures as non-conforming in certain land classifications, and;

WHEREAS, the Department and the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (Office), in 1994, executed a Letter of Resolution that created a mechanism for resolving conflicts between the forgoing and that this goal has been achieved, and;

WHEREAS, in response to public interest in fire towers as recreational and historic resources to be appreciated and enjoyed, the Department has undertaken an effort to re-open many of these fire towers, and;

WHEREAS, the Department, in consultation with the Office, desires to undertake this work in a manner that takes into account their historical significance.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Department shall ensure that the following STIPULATIONS, agreed to by both parties as indicated by appended signatures, shall be implemented in compliance with the State Historic Preservation Act of 1980 and 9 NYCRR 428.

OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

- Modification, amendment, or termination of this agreement as necessary shall be accomplished by the signatories in the same manner as the original agreement.

- Disputes regarding compliance with the terms of this agreement shall be resolved through application of the consultation process established in Article 14 PRHPL and 9 NYCRR Part 428.

STIPULATIONS:

- The terms of this agreement shall apply to the fire towers listed in Attachment 1.

- Maintenance undertaken in accordance with the Fire Tower Maintenance Checklist which is made a part of this agreement as Attachment 2 shall require no further consultation under the State Historic Preservation Act.

- For actions above and beyond those listed in Attachment 2, the Department shall consult with the office in accordance with Article 14 PRHPL and 9 NYCRR Part 428.

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

By: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

By: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Attachment 1 – List of Fire Towers

OWNERSHIP / STATUS	NAME	REGISTER STATUS	REG	TOWN	COUNTY
STATE OWNED / LISTED OR ELIGIBLE					
PHOENICIA WILD FOREST	MOUNT TREMPER	LISTED	3	SHANDAKEN	ULSTER
BALSAM LAKE MOUNTAIN WILD FOREST	BALSAM LAKE MOUNTAIN	LISTED	3	NEW PALTZ	ULSTER
SUNDOWN WILD FOREST	RED HILL	LISTED	3	NEW PALTZ	ULSTER
HUNTER-WEST KILL MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS	HUNTER MOUNTAIN	LISTED	4	STAMFORD	GREENE
TAYLOR POND WILD FOREST	POKE-O-MOONSHINE MOUNTAIN	LISTED	5	CHESTERFIELD	ESSEX
SAINT REGIS MOUNTAIN FIRE TOWER HISTORIC AREA	ST. REGIS MOUNTAIN	LISTED	5	SANTA CLARA	FRANKLIN
HURRICANE MOUNTAIN FIRE TOWER HISTORIC AREA	HURRICANE MOUNTAIN	LISTED	5	ELIZABETHTOWN	ESSEX
BLUE MOUNTAIN WILD FOREST	BLUE MOUNTAIN	LISTED	5	INDIAN LAKE	HAMILTON
SARGENT PONDS WILD FOREST	OWLS HEAD MOUNTAIN	LISTED	5	LONG LAKE	HAMILTON
BLUE RIDGE WILDERNESS	WAKELY MOUNTAIN	LISTED	5	LAKE PLEASANT	HAMILTON
HAMMOND POND WILD FOREST	BELFRY MOUNTAIN	LISTED, NHL	5	MORIAH	ESSEX
VANDERWHACKER MOUNTAIN WILD FOREST	VANDRWHACKER MOUNTAIN	LISTED, NHL	5	MINERVA	ESSEX
WILCOX LAKE WILD FOREST	HADLEY MOUNTAIN	LISTED	5	HADLEY	SARATOGA
DEBAR MTN. WILD FOREST	LOON LAKE MOUNTAIN	LISTED	5	FRANKLIN	FRANKLIN
DEBAR MTN. WILD FOREST	AZURE MOUNTAIN	LISTED	5	WAVERLY	FRANKLIN
JESSUP RIVER WILD FOREST	SNOWY MOUNTAIN	LISTED	5	INDIAN LAKE	HAMILTON
JESSUP RIVER WILD FOREST	PILLSBURY MOUNTAIN	LISTED	5	ARIETTA	HAMILTON
SHAKER MOUNTAIN WILD FOREST	KANE MOUNTAIN	LISTED	5	CAROGA	FULTON
HORSESHOE LAKE WILD FOREST	MOUNT ARAB	LISTED	6	PIERCEFIELD	ST. LAWRENCE
BLACK RIVER WILD FOREST	WOODHULL MOUNTAIN	LISTED	6	WEBB	HERKIMER
FULTON CHAIN WILD FOREST	RONDAXE (AKA BALD) MOUNTAIN	LISTED	6	WEBB	HERKIMER
MCDONOUGH STATE FOREST	BERRY HILL	ELIGIBLE	7	MCDONOUGH	CHENANGO
STATE EASEMENTS / LISTED OR ELIGIBLE					
OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY	MOUNT ADAMS	LISTED	5	NEWCOMB	ESSEX
LYME ADIRONDACK TIMBERLANDS LLC	STILLWATER MOUNTAIN	ELIGIBLE	6	WEBB	HERKIMER
STATE OWNED / UNEVALUATED					
OVERLOOK MOUNTAIN WILD FOREST	OVERLOOK MOUNTAIN		3	WOODSTOCK	ULSTER
NIMHAM MOUNTAIN MUA	NIMHAM MOUNTAIN		3	NEW PALTZ	PUTNAM
ROOSA GAP STATE FOREST	ROOSA GAP MOUNTAIN		3	MAMAKATING	SULLIVAN
GRAHAM MOUNTAIN STATE FOREST	GRAHAM MOUNTAIN		3	HOPE	ORANGE
BEEBE HILL STATE FOREST	BEEBE HILL (AKA L&F)		4	AUSTERLITZ	COLUMBIA
LEONARD HILL STATE FOREST	LEONARD HILL		4	BROOME	SCHOHARIE
PRIVATE PROPERTY	COLFAX MOUNTAIN		5	JACKSON	WASHINGTON
CHAZY HIGHLANDS WILD FOREST	LYON MOUNTAIN		5	SARANAC	CLINTON
SUGAR HILL STATE FOREST	SUGAR HILL		8	ORANGE	SCHUYLER

STATE OWNED / INELIGIBLE

LAKE GEORGE WILD FOREST	BLACK MOUNTAIN		5	DRESDEN	WASHINGTON
GORE MOUNTAIN INTENSIVE USE AREA	GORE MOUNTAIN		5	JOHNSBURG	WARREN

OWNED BY OTHERS

PRIVATE	STISSING MOUNTAIN		3	PINE PLAINS	DUTCHESS
PRIVATE	CLOVE MOUNTAIN		3	UNION VALE	DUTCHESS
OPRHP LANDS	MOUNT BEACON	LISTED	3	FISHKILL	DUTCHESS
OPRHP LANDS	STERLING MOUNTAIN	ELIGIB LE	3	WARWICK	ORANGE
NYC LANDS	ROCK RIFT FIRE		3	TOMPKINS	DELAWARE
OPRHP LANDS	DICKINSON HILL		4	GRAFTON	RENSSELAER
PRIVATE	MOUNT UTSAYANTHA		4	STAMFORD	DELAWARE
PRIVATE	CATHEAD MOUNTAIN		5	BENSON	HAMILTON
PRIVATE	PALMER HILL		5	BLACK BROOK	CLINTON
SARATOGA COUNTY	SPRUCE MOUNTAIN		5	CORINTH	SARATOGA
PRIVATE	SWEDE MOUNTAIN		5	HAGUE	WARREN
WANAKENA RANGER SCHOOL	TOOLEY POND MTN (FORMER)		6	FINE	ST LAWRENCE
PRIVATE	PAGE POND MOUNTAIN		7	SANFORD	FROOME

Attachment 2 – Fire Tower Maintenance Checklist

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Guidelines for Historic Fire Tower Maintenance

The Department's goal in maintaining historic fire towers is to provide a safe, enjoyable recreational and educational experience to the visiting public through access to an historic structure that, insofar as practicable, retains the appearance and character of an in-service fire observation tower. These Guidelines are intended to provide Department staff and volunteer partners with the information and direction necessary to achieve this goal. The following discusses the details of the areas where experience has shown that repair or replacement of materials is necessary. Replacement of materials is assumed to be in-kind in order to maintain integrity of appearance and function. Questions regarding the implementation of these guidelines should be referred to the Regional Forester who will resolve them in consultation with appropriate Department staff.

The following list represents a compilation of typical repairs, recommendations and observations made from past fire tower inspections. The use of this list is not a substitution for an inspection by a licensed engineer, but serves as a guideline for what to expect when looking to rehabilitate a fire tower.

1. Inspect existing base pads and anchors. Concrete should be inspected for cracks and spalling – metal anchors for corrosion. Cracked anchor pads should be removed to inspect and clean the anchor within. Clean and paint anchor assemblies. Cast new concrete base pads with a loop of #3 reinforcing steel to same size and shape as the original. The pads will serve to protect the integrity of the original anchor bolts.

2. Inspect all structural members of the tower. Replace obviously bent, broken, and/or severely corroded members as recommended and specified by the Engineer. Drill new members only as required to fasten as original. Replace all end fasteners in new members with A325 Type I galvanized high strength bolts and washers. Replace interior fasteners with Grade 5 hardware or better.

3. Inspect for missing, corroded or loose bolts. Depending on the age of the tower it may be necessary to replace many of the bolts and washers. All structural bolts shall be A325 Type I galvanized high strength bolts except for diagonal bracing midpoints which may be Grade 5 bolts.

4. Inspect all wooden members of the cabin, stairs, and platforms. Replace obviously weak, worn, or broken planks with pressure treated lumber.

5. Inspect/replacement the hardware (ends only) that attaches the steel angle supporting the cabin floor decking to the tower frame.

6. Inspect existing handrail top to bottom at all levels. Replace lost or damaged rails and securely fasten loose members at all locations.

7. Galvanized welded wire fence at all platform landings and handrails should be installed where missing or replaced as necessary. Fasten securely on all sides at even intervals. Avoid sharp burrs and exposed ends of fence fabric and tie wires.

8. Replacement/repair of roof and other missing cabin components. Use Grade 5 or better bolts and washers in all locations unless noted otherwise.

9. Replacement/repair of windows and window frames in cabin.

10. Install a 42" safety rail w/ mid-rail, chain, and clasp at entrance to cabin. Chain off opening between rail and wall when occupied.

11. Mount signs (posted occupancy limit, interpretive, etc, if applicable) with clamps to structure or on posts independent of structure. Confirm that existing signs are no installed in a deleterious manner. No unnecessary/unauthorized drilling of tower members. For standard cabins (7 ft x 7 ft) the maximum occupancy is 8 persons. The landings should be limited to an occupancy of 4 persons.

12. Clear footprint of the tower of all leaves, branches, and debris and grade to drain. Anchors should be high and dry and monitored at regular intervals to insure that water does not pond at the corners. Some locations may require careful chipping of the natural rock to create a path for passive drainage.

13. Inspect existing base pads and anchors. Concrete should be inspected for cracks and spalling – metal anchors for corrosion. Cracked anchor pads should be removed to inspect and clean the anchor within. Clean and paint anchor assemblies. Cast new concrete base pads with a loop of #3 reinforcing steel to same size and shape as the original. The pads will serve to protect the integrity of the original anchor bolts.

14. Routine painting is recommended to preserve the appearance and integrity of structure. When required, paint all exposed structural steel with an appropriate coating (MC Urethane). Corroded or peeling areas should be prepared beforehand by power tool cleaning and primed.

15. Painting of the floor treads and landings with a slip resistant paint should be considered for safety.

16. All structural repairs should be made by qualified individuals. Removal/replacement of structural members and bolts needs to be done in a manner that will not jeopardize the towers integrity nor the installer's health and safety. The installation of A325 bolts need to be properly torqued.

17. Proper direction and supervision should be provided to any volunteer groups or other individuals assisting with the rehabilitation.

18. A visual inspection of the tower should be performed on an annual basis in perpetuity. This inspection should check the general condition of all components for deterioration, damage, missing or loose fasteners, base drainage, and coating performance. Any significant changes in expected use or otherwise questionable findings should be reported to the Engineer for further investigation.

Appendix D – APA Resolution on Hurricane Mountain Primitive Area Unit Management Plan

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY
THE ADIRONDACK PARK AGENCY
WITH RESPECT TO HURRICANE MOUNTAIN PRIMITIVE AREA
UNIT MANAGEMENT PLAN

JUNE 10, 2010

WHEREAS, Section 816 of the Adirondack Park Agency Act directs the Department of Environmental Conservation to develop, in consultation with the Adirondack Park Agency, individual management plans for units of land classified in the Master Plan for Management of State Lands and requires such management plans to conform to the general guidelines and criteria of the Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, in addition to such guidelines and criteria, the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (Master Plan) prescribes the contents of unit management plans and provides that the Adirondack Park Agency will determine whether a proposed individual unit management plan complies with such general guidelines and criteria; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Environmental Conservation has prepared a unit management plan for the Hurricane Mountain Primitive Area in the Towns of Keene, Elizabethtown, Jay and Lewis, Essex County, and includes proposed management actions for the Hurricane Mountain Primitive Area dated May, 2010; and

WHEREAS, the Department has filed a SEQR Negative Declaration and published a notice in the Environmental Notice Bulletin on May 20, 2010; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Environmental Conservation is the lead agency, and the Adirondack Park Agency is an involved agency whose staff have been consulted in the preparation of the proposed plan; and

WHEREAS, the Agency is requested to determine whether the final Hurricane Mountain Primitive Area Unit Management Plan, dated May, 2010, is consistent with the standards and guidelines of the Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Adirondack Park Agency has reviewed the proposed Hurricane Mountain Primitive Area Unit Management Plan; and

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Hurricane Mountain Unit Management Plan Resolution
June 2010
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WHEREAS, the Plan recognizes the need to improve public use and enjoyment of the area, avoid user conflicts and prevent overuse of the area according to the guidelines and criteria of the Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Plan's objectives include providing reasonable public access where appropriate in order to provide visitors with recreational opportunities while minimizing resource impacts; and

WHEREAS, the Plan proposes the formal adoption and rerouting of the Hurricane Crag Trail and to reroute degraded portions of other trails to minimize resource impacts; and

WHEREAS, the Plan proposes the development of adequate year round parking; and

WHEREAS, the Plan proposes the promulgation of a new regulation to limit the maximum group size to 15 for day users and 8 for overnight users as has been adopted in other neighboring Wilderness and Primitive units; and

WHEREAS, the Plan identifies the need to restrict trail construction and maintenance within the Subalpine Forest Bird Conservation Area (lands greater than 2,800 feet in elevation) by not scheduling trail construction between May 15 and August 1 of each year and by prohibiting work with the use of motorized equipment and aircraft during that same time period; and

WHEREAS, the Plan proposes to relocate primitive tent sites that are not in compliance with the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Plan has as objectives to inventory, map and monitor soil erosion problems caused by recreational use; and

WHEREAS, the Plan proposes DEC will develop Limits of Acceptable Change indicators for riparian areas, monitor the location and extent of key invasive plant species, train Department staff to identify and document the extent of invasive plants, and work with the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program to effectively manage and eradicate invasive plants; and

WHEREAS, the Plan identifies a management priority of increasing the understanding of the occurrence and distribution of wildlife species and their habitat as well as to monitor and inventory wildlife populations and their habitat; and

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WHEREAS, the Master Plan and unit management plan identify the fire tower on the summit of Hurricane Mountain as a non-conforming structure and direct it be removed at such time as it no longer serves an essential communication or fire surveillance purpose in order to enable the Hurricane Mountain Primitive Area to be reclassified as Wilderness; and

WHEREAS, Article 9-0109(4)(a) of the Environmental Conservation Law allows for the maintenance of structures listed on the state register of historic places by OPRHP and in such cases where the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Conservation finds that such structures can be maintained for the public enjoyment and understanding of the Forest Preserve in a way which will not disturb the wild forest character of either the adjacent land or the land on which the structure is located; and

WHEREAS, the Hurricane Mountain fire tower is listed on the State and National Register of Historic Places; and

WHEREAS, on May 14, 2010, the Adirondack Park Agency approved the release of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement and the initiation of consultation with OPRHP for alternative classification proposals under the Master Plan involving the Hurricane Mountain fire tower; and

WHEREAS, in formulating the alternatives, the Agency in consultation with DEC and OPRHP shall evaluate cost considerations, programmatic need, public safety and other factors including whether the structure could or should be relocated to an area where wilderness guidelines under the Master Plan do not apply.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Hurricane Mountain fire tower does not currently meet the criteria of an essential use for the Department of Environmental Conservation and the unit plan recommends its removal consistent with the Master Plan guidelines and criteria; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that pursuant to Section 816 of the Adirondack Park Agency Act, the Adirondack Park Agency finds the Hurricane Mountain Primitive Area Unit Management Plan, dated May, 2010, conforms with the general guidelines and criteria of the Master Plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Agency recommends the Department of Environmental Conservation not remove the Hurricane Mountain fire tower until the Agency has completed its review and action regarding the status of the fire tower and the possibility of any related changes to State land classification; and

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BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Adirondack Park Agency authorizes its Executive Director to advise the Commissioner of Environmental Conservation of the Agency's determination in this matter.

AYES: R. Booth, A. Lussi, F. Mezzano, C. Stiles, L. Ulrich, F. W. Valentino, C. Wray, J. Fayle (DED), E. Lowe (DEC), R. Morgiewicz (DOS)

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: W. Thomas

Appendix E – APA Resolution on 2010 SLMP Amendment

RESOLUTION
WITH RESPECT TO THE
RECLASSIFICATION OF LANDS ASSOCIATED WITH THE FIRE TOWERS ON HURRICANE AND ST. REGIS MOUNTAINS
AND RECLASSIFICATION OF
THE HURRICANE MOUNTAIN PRIMITIVE AREA TO WILDERNESS
OCTOBER 14, 2010

WHEREAS, the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan adopted pursuant to Section 816 of the Adirondack Park Agency Act (Executive Law, Article 27) provides guidelines for classifying State lands within the Adirondack Park; and

WHEREAS, the St. Regis Mountain and Hurricane Mountain fire towers are listed on both the State and Federal Register of Historic Places; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of New York State, as established by the NYS Historic Preservation Act, to promote the use, re-use and conservation of listed historic properties for the education and enrichment of the public; and

WHEREAS, the NYS Historic Preservation Act requires agencies to explore and give due consideration to feasible and prudent alternatives which avoid or mitigate adverse impact on such properties; and

WHEREAS, the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation has been consulted pursuant to 9 NYCRR Part 428.1 and via letters dated April 10, 2010, and July 8, 2010, and indicated a preference for consideration of reclassification of land around the fire towers in accordance with guidelines and criteria of the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the action involves three State Land reclassification proposals which includes one-half acre on the summit of St. Regis Mountain, one-half acre on the summit of Hurricane Mountain, each proposed for reclassification to Historic, and 13,948 acres of the Hurricane Mountain Primitive Area proposed for reclassification to Wilderness; and

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WHEREAS, the Agency authorized staff to proceed with public hearings on the proposed classification and reclassification alternatives at its April, 2010 meeting; and

WHEREAS, the Adirondack Park Agency and the Department of Environmental Conservation have consulted on the proposed reclassification of the lands associated with the St. Regis Mountain and Hurricane Mountain fire towers, and the Hurricane Mountain Primitive Area, in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding regarding the implementation of the State Land Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, Agency staff have considered the guidelines and criteria of the State Land Master Plan and the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement regarding amendments to the Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the primary guideline for Historic classification under the Master Plan is "to preserve the quality and character of the historic resources to the greatest extent feasible"; and

WHEREAS, the reclassification action will also achieve the long-standing goal of creating the Hurricane Mountain Wilderness Area; and

WHEREAS, the Adirondack Park Agency held three public hearings in Albany, Keene and Paul Smiths, between August 9 and August 11, 2010, including a public comment period through August 25, 2010; and

WHEREAS, a Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement has been completed and filed pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act and 6 NYCRR Part 617 and 9 NYCRR Part 586 with respect to the proposed reclassifications and amendments to the State Land Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the reclassifications and amendments are consistent with the guidelines of the State Land Master Plan and the Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement - Guidelines for Amending the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan, filed in 1979; and

WHEREAS, the Agency recognizes the fiscal constraints which currently exist within State government and the future disposition of the towers will be addressed by the Department and outlined in a Unit Management Plan; and

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WHEREAS, the St. Regis Mountain and Hurricane Mountain fire towers have remained unused for over a decade, and there has been no structural assessment or estimate of the cost of rehabilitation; and

WHEREAS, the cost of rehabilitation of the fire towers may be borne by community fund-raising efforts; and

WHEREAS, the action enables maintenance and potential restoration of the St. Regis Mountain and Hurricane Mountain fire towers consistent with their Historic Register status, but does not require, obligate or anticipate expenditure of State funds for restoration;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Adirondack Park Agency recommends that the reclassifications to Historic for the lands associated with the St. Regis Mountain and Hurricane Mountain fire towers, and the reclassification of the Hurricane Mountain Primitive Area to the Hurricane Mountain Wilderness Area, as described in the attached proposed revisions to the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan and maps, be approved by the Governor; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Agency Chairman is authorized to forward these reclassification recommendations to the Governor for his approval.

AYES: R. Booth, A. Lussi, F. Mezzano, C. Stiles, w. Thomas, L. Ulrich, J. Fayle (DED), E. Lowe (DEC), R. Morgiewicz (DOS)

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: F. W. Valentino, C. Wray

JEC:lhb
Att.

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Appendix F – Historic Areas: Guidelines for Management and Use (SLMP)

Definition

Historic areas are locations of buildings, structures or sites owned by the state (other than the Adirondack Forest Preserve itself) that are significant in the history, architecture, archeology or culture of the Adirondack Park, the state or the nation; that fall into one of the following categories;

-- state historic sites;

-- properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places;

-- properties recommended for nomination by the Committee on Registers of the New York State Board For Historic Preservation; and that are of a scale, character and location appropriate for designation as an historic area under this master plan and the state has committed resources to manage such areas primarily for historic objectives.

Guidelines for Management and Use

Basic guidelines

1. The primary management guidelines for historic areas will be to preserve the quality and character of the historic resources, that is, to the greatest extent feasible, in a setting and on a scale in harmony with the relatively wild and undeveloped character of the Adirondack Park.

2. All historic areas will be designed, managed and interpreted so as to blend with the Adirondack environment and have the minimum adverse impact possible on surrounding state lands and nearby private holdings.

3. Construction and development activities in historic areas will:

-- avoid material alteration of wetlands;

-- minimize extensive topographical alterations;

-- limit vegetative clearing; and,

-- preserve the scenic, natural and open space resources of the historic area.

4. Each historic area will be designed, managed and interpreted in conformity with a special historic area unit management plan for the area, filed with and approved by the Agency after public hearing as being consistent with this master plan. Special unit management plans will be prepared in consultation with the Agency for the two existing historic areas as soon as possible. No new structures or improvements at existing or proposed historic areas will be constructed prior to the approval of such special unit management plans. Such structures and improvements will conform to this master plan and special historic area unit management plans.

Designation of Historic Areas

Two historic areas, Crown Point and John Brown's Farm, result from the application of the above criteria and are delineated on the map forming part of this master plan.

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Appendix G – Adirondack Sub-Alpine Forest Bird Conservation Area Management Summary

Site Name: Adirondack Sub-alpine Forest Bird Conservation Area

State Ownership and Managing Agency: Department of Environmental Conservation

Location: Adirondack Mountain summits above 2,800 feet in Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton and Warren counties. Surveyed and confirmed nesting locations for Bicknell's thrush (Atwood and Rimmer, et al. 1996) include: Mount Marcy, Algonquin Peak, Blue Mountain, Cascade Mountain, Giant Mountain, Kilburn Mountain, Hurricane Mountain, Lower Wolfjaw Mountain, Lyon Mountain, Mount Haystack, Phelps Mountain, Porter Mountain, Rocky Ridge Peak, Santanoni Peak, Snowy Mountain, Vanderwhacker Mountain, Wakely Mountain, Whiteface Mountain, Wright Peak.

Size of Area: Approximately 69,000 acres

DEC Region: 5

General Site Information: Adirondack Mountain summits over 2,800 feet in elevation, more specifically, those with dense subalpine coniferous forests favored by Bicknell's thrush. Bicknell's thrush prefers dense thickets of stunted or young growth of balsam fir and red spruce. Found less frequently in other young or stunted conifers, and heavy second growth of fir, cherry and birch.

Vision Statement: Continue to maintain the wilderness quality of the area, while facilitating recreational opportunities in a manner consistent with conservation of the unique bird species present.

Key BCA Criteria: Diverse species concentration site; individual species concentration site; species at risk site (ECL §11-2001, 3.f, g, and h). Peaks over 2,800 feet with dense subalpine thickets provide habitat for a distinctive bird community, which includes Bicknell's thrush (special concern), blackpoll warbler and Swainson's thrush.

Critical Habitat Types: Dense subalpine coniferous thickets. To a lesser degree, young or stunted and heavy second growth of cherry or birch.

Operation and Management Considerations:

- *Identify habitat management activities needed to maintain site as a BCA.*
  None identified for certain, although human access and acid rain could be impacting.

- *Identify seasonal sensitivities; adjust routine operations accordingly.*
  The BCA is comprised of lands that are within the Adirondack High Peaks Wilderness Area, and other lands within the broader Adirondack Forest Preserve. The Adirondack High Peaks Wilderness Area portion is subject to relatively stringent regulations and use limitations. Portions of the BCA that are not within the High Peaks Wilderness Area may have less stringent use limitations.

  Access to wilderness areas is completely limited to foot trails and non-motorized access, including horse trails. Access in wild forest and intensive use areas may include motorized forms of access. Examples include a road up Blue Mountain to transmitters, and a road up Whiteface. The road up Blue Mountain is used largely for administrative access to the transmitter towers. Whenever possible, routine maintenance on these towers or the access road should be scheduled outside the nesting season for Bicknell's thrush (May through July). The road up Whiteface sees considerable use by the public.

  Trail and road maintenance activities have the potential to disturb nesting activities of high altitude birds (in particular, Bicknell's thrush). Whenever possible, routine maintenance should be planned so that it can be completed outside of the normal nesting season. Should maintenance be needed during the nesting season, the use of non-motorized equipment would help to minimize the impacts.

- *Identify state activities or operations which may pose a threat to the critical habitat types identified above; recommend alternatives to existing and future operations which may pose threats to those habitats.*
  Ensure that bird conservation concerns are addressed in the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan, individual unit management plans, and other planning efforts. For those areas where plans have already been completed, incorporate concerns for subalpine bird communities at the earliest opportunity.

  On May 18, 2000, Emergency Regulations were adopted for the High Peaks Wilderness Area, which comprises part of the BCA. These regulations prohibit camping above 4,000 feet; limit camping between 3,500 and 4,000 feet to designated areas; prohibit campfires above 4,000 feet, and require the leashing of pets above 4,000 feet.

- *Identify any existing or potential use impacts; recommend new management strategies to address those impacts.*
  There has been little research on what effect normal use of hiking trails has on nesting birds. Recreational use in some areas of the BCA is relatively high. More research is needed on whether there is a significant impact to bird populations from the current level of human visitation. The Adirondack High Peaks Wilderness portions of the BCA are remote locations and access is largely limited to foot trails. Motorized vehicles are not normally allowed. Those areas of the BCA outside of the High Peaks Wilderness Area allow the use of motorized vehicles and have fewer restrictions on other uses. The Unit Management Planning process for these areas should assess the effects of current levels of recreational use, and the need for new trails (including placement, timing, and construction method) on subalpine bird species (in particular, Bicknell's thrush).

Consideration should be given to prohibiting motorized vehicle access to subalpine forests above 2,800 feet.

Education, Outreach, and Research Considerations:

- *Assess current access; recommend enhanced access, if feasible.*
  Recreational use in some areas of the BCA is relatively high. Further study or research would help to assess impacts of recreational activities on nesting high altitude species. The need for protective measures will be discussed and incorporated as part of the planning process for the Adirondack Forest Preserve and Wilderness Areas that form the BCA, or at the earliest opportunity.

- *Determine education and outreach needs; recommend strategies and materials.*
  There is a need to identify to the public the distinctive bird community present in subalpine forests over 2,800 feet. The potential impacts of human intrusion need to be portrayed to the public, and a "please stay on the trails" approach may be beneficial. Continue partnerships with the National Audubon Society, High Peaks Audubon Society, Adirondack Mountain Club and other groups involved in education and conservation of birds of the Adirondack High Peaks.

- *Identify research needs; prioritize and recommend specific projects or studies.*
  Acid rain deposition may be having an impact on nesting success of songbirds at high elevations by causing die-offs of high altitude conifer forests, and killing snails and other sources of calcium needed for egg production. More research is needed on this. The curtailment of sulphur dioxide emissions and the reduction of acid rain is currently a significant New York State initiative.

  A detailed inventory and standardized monitoring of special concern species is needed for the area. In particular, all peaks above 2,800 feet should be surveyed for Bicknell's thrush.

  The impact of the current levels of human use on nesting success needs to be assessed.

Contacts:
DEC Region 5 Wildlife Manager, 518-897-1291

DEC Region 5 Forester, 518-897-1276

Sources:
Atwood, J. L., C. C. Rimmer, K. P. McFarland, S. H. Tsai, and L. R. Nagy. 1996. *Distribution of Bicknell's thrush in New England and New York.* Wilson Bulletin 108(4):650-661.

Bull, John L. 1998. *Bull's Birds of New York State*. Comstock Publishing Associates, Ithaca, NY.

NYSDEC Division of Lands and Forests. 1999. *High Peaks Wilderness Complex Unit Management Plan*. NYSDEC, Albany, NY.

Rimmer, C. C., Atwood, J., and L. R. Nagy. 1993. *Bicknell's Thrush - a Northeastern Songbird in Trouble?* Vermont Institute of Natural Science, Woodstock, VT.

State of New York Endangered Species Working Group. 1996. *Species Dossier for Bicknell's Thrush.* New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

Wells, J. V. 1998. *Important Bird Areas in New York State.* National Audubon Society, Albany, NY.

Date BCA Designated: 11/16/01

Date MGS Prepared: 12/6/01

Appendix H – Mountaintop Policy

MEMORANDUM FROM

PETER LANAHAN, JR., First Deputy Commissioner

New York State
Department of Environmental Conservation

TO: Executive Staff, Division Directors and Regional Directors

RE: Preservation of Mountaintops within the Adirondack and Catskill Parks and under the jurisdiction of the Department of Environmental Conservation

The attached policy supersedes the previous policy on the same subject issued by the Division of Lands and Forests on May 10, 1979. The major difference between the attached policy and the previous one, is the additional language in paragraph 8 and the reference to a similar policy adopted by the Adirondack Park Agency. Please be guided by this policy in the consideration of use of mountaintops under this Department's jurisdiction within the Adirondack and Catskill Parks.

M. Peter Lanahan, Jr.
First Deputy Commissioner

Attachment

POLICY STATEMENT

Preservation of Mountaintops within the Adirondack and Catskill Parks and under the jurisdiction of the Department of Environmental Conservation.

Background

The responsibility for the care, custody and control of the lands now owned or hereafter acquired by the State and which constitute the Forest Preserve rests with the Department of Environmental Conservation. The Division of Lands and Forests is the program unit within the Department which administers that responsibility.

The construction and maintenance of some communications and other mountaintop sited facilities or towers are necessary for the Department and other governmental agencies to carry out the duties and functions of protecting the Forest Preserve and insuring public safety.

Many suitable and desirable sites for communications and other purposes such as the construction and maintenance of transmission and relay towers with necessary appurtenances are located on mountaintops within the Forest Preserve in the Adirondack and Catskill Parks. Several of these sites are now being utilized by the Department for the operation of Fire Control, Law Enforcement, Flood Control and Fish and Wildlife radio systems. Some sites are shared and utilized by county mutual aid radio networks and other municipal and state communications systems. However, it is also desirable to preserve mountaintops in a natural condition unencumbered by manmade facilities.

The Forest Preserve is protected by Article XIV of the New York State Constitution which mandates that these lands "shall be forever kept as wild forest lands. They shall not be leased, sold or exchanged, or be taken by any corporation, public or private, nor shall the timber thereon be sold, removed or destroyed."

Statutory authority to erect and maintain communication facilities and to grant temporary revocable permits for such purposes to other governmental agencies is given to the Department of Environmental Conservation through Section 3-0301(1.)(d.) of the Environmental Conservation Law, which charges the Department with the care, custody and control of the Forest Preserve; Section 9-0105(15.) which empowers the Department to make rules and regulations and issue permits for the temporary use of the Forest Preserve and Section 9-0303(2.) which provides that no building shall be erected, used or maintained upon state lands except under permits from the Department.

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While the Department recognizes the need for effective communications structures and facilities to serve the needs of the people of the State, it also recognizes that the presence of these and other facilities on the mountaintops within the Adirondack and Catskill Parks degrades the aesthetic qualities which are important and integral parts of the Parks. Further, the Adirondack Park Agency, in recognition that the hills and mountaintops of the Adirondack Park are among that region's most distinctive and precious resources, and that consolidation of towers and tower facilities with existing towers and tower facilities will result in materially less cumulative environmental impact, adopted as policy that new communication towers and other tower facilities be consolidated with existing towers.

In order to prevent further degradation of these aesthetic qualities and to allow for continuation of the present communications systems and for the improvement and expansion of these systems as future needs may dictate, the following policy is adopted.

Policy

1. No mountaintop under the jurisdiction of the Department of Environmental Conservation within the Adirondack and Catskill Parks which does not have existing structures, towers or other facilities may be used as a site for structures, towers or other facilities for communications or any other purpose.

2. On mountaintops under the jurisdiction of the Department of Environmental Conservation within the Adirondack and Catskill Parks where structures, towers, or other facilities presently exist and have appurtenant service routes, new facilities may be added if: (a.) Such new facilities are consolidated with existing structures, towers or other facilities and (b.) Such new facilities, in the case of governmental agencies other than the Department, are permitted in accordance with a temporary revocable permit as required by Section 9-0105(15.) as noted above.

3. Existing structures, towers and other facilities located on such mountaintops will be evaluated on a periodic basis to determine if they continue to serve a departmental purpose or function. If it is determined that such structures, towers and other facilities do not serve a departmental purpose or function, then, they shall be proposed and scheduled for removal through the unit management planning process of the Department.

-3-

4. As technology develops and it becomes feasible to consolidate communication and other electronic facilities in one structure or tower without interference, such structure and towers will be consolidated for the purpose of reducing the numbers of each at any one site or on any one mountaintop.

5. Where no electrical power is available at existing and utilized mountaintop sites, such power as needed will be provided by solar or other means of on-site generation within the provisions of No. 2 above.

6. New communications facilities added at existing and utilized mountaintop sites within the provisions of No. 2 above will not interfere, electronically or otherwise, with the existing site communications systems.

7. Any existing or new facilities added or consolidated in accordance with the provisions of Nos. 2, 4, 5 and 6 above may be maintained on an annual or periodic basis or removed within the conditions of a temporary revocable permit as required by said Section 9-0105(15.)

8. Any temporary revocable permits issued within the provisions of Nos. 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 above shall be limited to governmental agencies only and for the purposes of public health, welfare and safety or for the protection of the Forest Preserve. Such permits shall include conditions relating to facility design and the commitment of the permittee to the maintenance of the facilities and the appurtenances thereto, including access routes or roadways. Consideration for the issuance of such permits to non-governmental agencies will not be given unless the Department determines that: (1.) A clear public need exists and public benefit will be served and (2.) A substantial adverse visual impact will result from the placement of the needed facilities on an open, privately owned mountaintop.

November 6, 1980
Norman J. VanValkenburgh

Appendix I – ECL §9-0109 Statement of Findings

DRAFT STATEMENT OF FINDINGS

In the Matter of the Preservation of the Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower in the Town of Keene, Essex County Pursuant to Environmental Conservation Law §9-0109

WHEREAS, in 1928, the People of the State of New York, acting through the Conservation Department, acquired the lands in the Town of Keene, Essex County comprising the summit of Hurricane Mountain, including a fire observation tower thereon; and

WHEREAS, upon acquisition, such lands, structures and improvements were incorporated into the Forest Preserve and became subject to the "forever wild" mandate and other provisions of Article XIV, §1 of the State Constitution; and

WHEREAS, the summit of Hurricane Mountain and the fire observation tower thereon were acquired by the State of New York prior to June 21, 1983, which is the effective date of ECL §9-0109; and

WHEREAS, ECL §9-0109(4) provides that structures and improvements on lands acquired by the State prior to such effective date may be maintained provided that: (a) the Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation finds that such structures and improvements are listed on the state register of historic places pursuant to subdivision one of §14.07 of the Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Law; (b) the Commissioner of Environmental Conservation finds that such structures and improvements can be maintained for public enjoyment and understanding of the Forest Preserve or for departmental activities necessary in protecting Forest Preserve lands in the Adirondack Park and that such maintenance will not disturb the existing degree of wild forest character of land on which the preexisting structures or improvements are located or the wild forest character of land adjacent thereto provided the Commissioner of the Department; and (c) such maintenance will be in accordance with reasonable regulation of the Forest Preserve in the Adirondack Park consistent with Article XIV of the New York State Constitution;

WHEREAS, the Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower was listed on the State Register of Historic Places on August 1, 2006 and on the National Register of Historic Places on January 29, 2007; and

WHEREAS, maintenance of the fire tower will enhance public enjoyment and understanding of the Forest Preserve by enabling the public to better appreciate the size and vastness of the Forest Preserve, the type and density of its forest cover, and the ruggedness of its terrain; and

WHEREAS, maintenance of the fire tower will occur without removing or destroying any timber or other vegetative growth and without taking any other administrative action which will adversely impact the wild forest nature of adjacent Forest Preserve land or the Forest Preserve land on which the fire tower is located.

NOW THEREFORE, I hereby make the following FINDINGS pursuant to ECL §9-0109(4):

1. The Hurricane Mountain fire observation tower was erected in 1919, and is an excellent example of a model of fire tower that was once commonly found throughout New York State. In addition to its historic value, this structure is valuable from a cultural and educational standpoint, as it reflects the protection of New York's natural resources by the statewide fire detection program throughout much of the 20th century;

2. I also find that the Hurricane Mountain fire observation tower is listed on the State Register of Historic Places pursuant to §14.07 of the Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Law;

3. I further find that the Hurricane Mountain fire observation tower can be maintained for public enjoyment and understanding of the Forest Preserve or for departmental activities necessary in protecting Forest Preserve lands in the Adirondack Park in a manner that will not disturb the existing degree of wild forest character of the land on which the Hurricane Mountain fire observation tower is located or the wild forest character of land adjacent thereto;

4. In addition, I find that such maintenance can occur in accordance with reasonable regulation of the Forest Preserve in the Adirondack Park consistent with Article XIV, §1 of the State Constitution;

5. These findings are supported by the Final Unit Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement for the Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower Historic Area;

6. For these reasons, I find the requirements of ECL §9-0109(4) have been met.

7. I also find that the adoption of a Unit Management Plan ("UMP") for the Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower Historic Area can ensure that maintenance of the Hurricane Mountain fire tower will comply with applicable provisions of State law, including but not limited to, Article XIV, §1 of the New York State Constitution, the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan, ECL §9-0109(4) and Department rules and regulations.

_____

Joseph J. Martens
Commissioner
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

_____

Date

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NEW YORK STATE

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau • Peebles Island, PO Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189
518-237-8643
www.nysparks.com

Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor

Rose Harvey
Commissioner

21 February 2013

Charles E. Vandrei
Agency Historic Preservation Officer
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Division of Lands and Forests
Historic Preservation Unit
625 Broadway
Albany, New York 12233

Re: Statement of Findings
Hurricane Mt. Fire Observation Station
Keane, Essex County

Dear Mr. Vandrei:

I am writing to inform you that the Hurricane Mountain Fire Observation Station was listed on the State Register of Historic Places on 1 August 2006 and on the National Register of Historic Places on 29 January 2007. Please feel free to call me at 518.237.8643 x 3261 if you have any questions.

Sincerely

Kathleen LaFrank

Kathleen LaFrank
National Register Coordinator
New York State Historic Preservation Office

An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Agency

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Appendix J – National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

(Page 1 of 21)

NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

1. Name of Property

historic name Hurricane Mountain Fire Observation Station

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number Hurricane Mountain Summit ☐ not for publication

city or town Keene ☐ vicinity

state New York code NY county Essex code 031 zip code 12942

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I certify that this ☐ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [x] meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally [x] statewide ☐ locally. ☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.

Phillip Cantelo, SHPO 8/1/06

Commissioner/SHPO
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

☐ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other, (explain:)

(Page 2 of 21)

Hurricane Mountain Fire Observation Station
Name of Property

Essex County, New York
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.) Contributing	Noncontributing	
[ ] private	[ ] building(s)			
[ ] public-local	[ ] district	0		buildings
[x] public-State	[ ] site	1 (observer's cabin)		sites
[ ] public-Federal	[x] structure	3 (tower, trails)		structures
[ ] public-Federal	[x] structure	3 (tower, trails)		structures
	[ ] object			objects
		4	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Fire Observation Stations of the NYS Forest Preserve

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)
GOVERNMENT/fire observation station	NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)	Materials (Enter categories from instructions)	
NO STYLE/Utilitarian (fire tower)	foundation	
	walls	
	roof	
	other	Metal/steel (tower)

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

(Page 3 of 21)

Hurricane Mountain Fire Observation Station
Name of Property

Essex County, New York
County and State

8 Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

[x] A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

[ ] B Property is associated with the lives of persons

[ ] B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

[x] C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

[ ] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria considerations
(mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

[ ] A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

[ ] B removed from its original location.

[ ] C a birthplace or grave.

[ ] D a cemetery.

[ ] E a reconstructed building, object or structure.

[ ] F a commemorative property.

[ ] G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Engineering
Recreation
Conservation
Architecture

Period of Significance
1919 - 1956

Significant Dates
1919; 1928; 1935

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
AerMotor Company (manufacturer)

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):
[ ] preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
[ ] previously listed in the National Register
[ ] previously determined eligible by the National Register
[ ] designated a National Historic Landmark
[ ] recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
[ ] recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data
[x] State Historic Preservation Office
[x] Other State agency NYSDEC, Albany, NY
[ ] Federal agency
[ ] Local government
[ ] University
[x] Other Adirondack Research Library
Name of repository: NYSDEC 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233
Adirondack Research Library, 30 Roland Pl, Schenectady, NY

(Page 4 of 21)

Hurricane Mountain Fire Observation Station — Name of Property

Essex County, New York — County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one acre

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	18	605886	4898467	3	18	602046	4895926
2	18	603045	4898546	4			
2	18	603045	4898546	4			

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
See attached map

Boundary Justification
Boundary includes a 500/sf area surrounding the tower, a 15' buffer from the center line on either side of the 2 trails and related features such as culverts, swales, support and retaining walls, leading from the base of the mountain to the tower's site.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Steven C. Engelhart, Executive Director (ed. By L. Garofalini, NYSOPRHP, Box 189 Waterford, NY 518-237-8643)

organization Adirondack Architectural Heritage date 2/18/05

street & number 1790 Main St., Civic Center, Suite 37 telephone 518-834-9328

city or town Keeseville state NY zip code 12944

Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets
Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner
(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC)

street & number 625 Broadway. telephone 518-402-9428

city or town Albany state NY zip code 12233

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this from to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

NPS Form 10-900-a

OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Hurricane Mountain Fire Observation Station
Essex County, New York

Section number 7 Page 1

Narrative Description

The Hurricane Mountain Fire Observation Station is located in the Adirondack Forest Preserve on the 3,694' summit of Hurricane Mountain in the town of Keene, Essex County, New York. The summit is a mostly open rock face and has a commanding 360° view of the High Peaks, Jay Range, Champlain Valley, and Green Mountains (in Vermont). The boundary for the nominated property is drawn to include a 500 foot square area surrounding the steel frame lookout tower erected in 1919, two trails leading up to the summit, and the ruins of the observer's cabin along one of the trails.

Contributing Resources: 4 (tower, 2 trails, 1 site)
Non-Contributing Resources: 0

The thirty-five foot tower, with a nine-foot high cab, was fabricated by the Aermotor Company. This tower is typical of the "Heavier Type" tower, with integral staircase, built by the Conservation Commission between 1917 and 1950. The structure consists of a square steel and glass "cab", with a hip roof, enclosing the observation platform atop a riveted and bolted frame of angular steel. Steel stair risers, supporting wood stair treads, divided into five flights and four landings provide access to the cab from the ground. The four tower legs are anchored by standard coupling plates atop concrete footings, placed on the exposed bedrock, and these plates are anchored into the bedrock by two ¾ inch steel threaded rods that pass through the concrete footings.

The summit and fire tower are accessed by one of three trails. From New York State 9N to the south, the trail is 2.6 miles long and has an elevation change of 2000'. The trail historically used by rangers and observers approaches the mountain from the east and is 2.7 miles long and has an elevation change of 1700'. The Observer's Cabin, once located on this trail, where it crosses Falls Brook, was removed in July 1985, as was a lean-to. All that remains of the cabin site are some foundation (stone) rubble and miscellaneous pieces of wood. Another trail, the North Trail, from the O'Toole Road, is 3 miles long and has a 1600' elevation change; however, because a portion of this trail is privately owned, it is not included in the nominated boundaries.

The tower is largely intact and retains most of its original integrity. The treads from the lower two sections of stairs have been removed, as has one (steel) stringer from the first/lowest flight of stairs, and the wood from the lowest landing. The tower cab no longer has its windows, and a section of its roof (west side) has been torn off. The steel structure has some rust but, otherwise, all of its fabric is extant.

☐ See continuation sheet

The **Hurricane Mountain Fire Observation Station** is a component in the multiple property submission, **Fire Observation Stations of the NYS Forest Preserve**. It was identified as a historic resource in an unpublished inventory prepared by New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) in 1991. Subsequently, with assistance from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP), Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau, the Hurricane Mountain Fire Observation Station was identified as meeting the criteria for listing on the State/National Register of Historic Places. Additional contextual information for the Snowy Mountain Fire Observation Station can be found in **Sections E: 1A *Recreation and Conservation in the Adirondacks and Catskills before the Forest Preserve, 1830-1885*; E: 1D *Rethinking Forest Fire Protection, 1909-1915*; E: 1F *Conservation as a Social Service: Managing Recreation and Resource Protection with Fire Observation Stations, 1915-1930*; E: 2A *Prototypical Observation Towers, 1870 - c1917*; E: 2B *Temporary Fire Observation Stations, 1909-1916;* E:2C *Standardized Fire Observation Stations, 1916-1932;* E:2E *Decommissioning and Abandonment of the Fire Observation System 1951-1991*; E:2F *Adoption and Preservation of the Fire Observation Stations, 1992-2000*** of the Multiple Property Documentation Form. Additional associated property type information can be found in **Section F:1 *Steel Towers*; F:2 *Observer Cabins and Outbuildings*;** and **F:3 *Trail and Road Features*** of the Multiple Property Documentation Form.

Statement of Significance

The Hurricane Mountain Fire Observation Station is significant under National Register Criteria A and C for its association with the New York State Forest Preserve and as a representative example of an early 20th century fire observation tower.

The summit of Hurricane Mountain (3,694') was used as a station during the Verplanck Colvin survey in June of 1876. A wooden pole survey tower was erected at this time. In the rock on the north side of the current fire observation tower are several wrought iron eyes that Colvin used to anchor the survey tower.

☐ See continuation sheet

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NPS Form 10-900-a

OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Hurricane Mountain Fire Observation Station
Essex County, New York

Section number 8 Page 2

The Grand Theodolite being carried up Hurricane Mountain. Colvin's sketch makes it hard to believe that it weighed 300 pounds. (Seventh Report)

☐ See continuation sheet

During the early 1900s, fires occurred in Keene Valley, west of Hurricane Mountain. One fire in 1903 swept north from North Hudson and burned the peak of Noonmark. The fire threatened St. Huberts, Keene Valley and Keene. To protect St. Huberts, 250 men dug a trench around the hamlet. (Pilcher 1987:88.) The Forest Fish and Game Commission responded by establishing a lookout station on the bald summit of Hurricane Mountain in April 1910. The observer watched for wisps of smoke in the Giant Mountain wilderness to the south and the Keene Valley to the west. State workers strung 2 ½ miles of telephone wire to the summit. The total cost for the station was $216.64. (*Forest Fish and Game Commission Report 1910*:26.) The first observer, Joseph Denton, reported three fires in 1910. The next year, observer Matthew Ryan reported 22 fires. (*Conservation Commission Report 1911:* 41)

For the first decade after the Hurricane Mountain Observation Station was established, it did not have a wooden observation tower like most of the other observation stations, because on Hurricane, the observer had a clear view in all directions. This has been verified by Hurricane's last observer, Doug Richards, who said that when his father was a young boy he used to go up with Archie Hayes, the observer from 1915 to 1919, and as there was no tower, they sat on the cliffs and watched for smoke. When he saw smoke, Archie would call the ranger. The telephone was in a wooden box and the line lay right on the rocks.

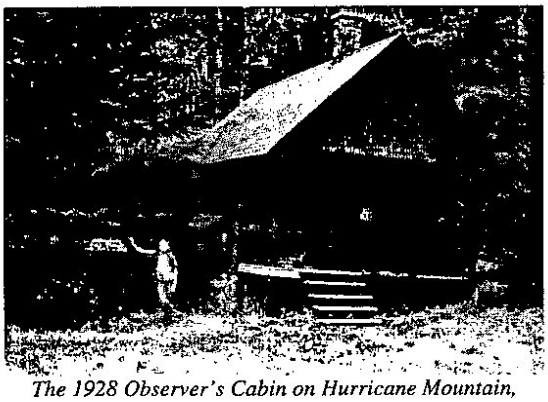
S. P. Morgan, resident manager of Champlain Realty Company in Plattsburgh, in a letter dated April 27, 1917 to Dist. Forest Ranger A. I. Vosburgh, stated, "I am not sure whether our company owns the summit of Hurricane Mountain, but if we do, you are certainly very welcome to construct an observation station on our land for use in your fire service, and use such timber as suggested by you for the construction of same, and should there be not enough of such timber to build a suitable station you are permitted to use other timber for its construction assuming that you will use good judgment in so doing." This might indicate that there wasn't a log tower on the mountain and the company was giving them permission to build one.

In 1919, the state built the present steel tower to give the observer a better view and protection from the weather. The tower is an Aermotor Model 40 steel tower, which stands just under 40' in height. The tower was one of 13 new steel towers erected that year in the state and was one of the heavier-type towers, equipped with steel stairs. The other 12 towers erected that year were: Twaddle Point, Bald Mountain, Tooley Pond Mountain, Beaver Lake Mountain, Moose River Mountain, Stillwater Mountain, Boreas Mountain, Mt. Morris, Whiteface Mountain, Owl's Head Mountain, Crane Mountain, and High Point Mountain (Of this group, only the towers at Hurricane and Owl's Head remain on their sites and under state ownership; the towers on Bald, Beaver Lake, Moose River, Boreas, Whiteface, and High Point have been removed; the towers on Twadddle Point and Stillwater remain in place but under private ownership; the Tooley Pond tower was moved off-site and is now owned by the Wanakena Ranger School; the Whiteface tower was also moved off-site and is now part of the Adirondack Museum in Blue Mountain

☐ See continuation sheet

Lake. http://www.telenet.net/~ranger/). Practically all the labor in erecting these towers was performed by members of the ranger force. The average cost, including purchase, of erecting a tower was about $530, not including ranger labor. An Osborne Fire Finder, a type of panoramic map for use with an alidade, was installed in the cab in 1921.

Several Observer's Cabins were built on Hurricane Mountain. The first, a simple log structure, was erected in 1916 and used for one year. In 1917, a new cabin was built. The Conservation Report of 1928 stated that state workers built a new standard size cabin on Hurricane Mountain (see photo below). This cabin was 12'x16' and was roofed and sided with asphalt shingles. This cabin was demolished In July 1985.



The 1928 Observer's Cabin on Hurricane Mountain, As it appeared in 1977. Photo courtesy Bob Eshler.

In 1935, the Conservation Department rangers or Civilian Conservation Corps employees constructed new trails, from the north and south, to the fire tower. (*Conservation Department Report 1935*:119). However, the trail from the north is not included within the nominated boundaries because a portion of it is now privately owned.

The state officially closed the tower in 1973 because the NYSDEC was using air surveillance. In 1987, the NYSDEC declared the fire tower surplus property. In December 1995, NYSDEC Region 5 Director of Natural Resources, Thomas Wahl, recommended the fire tower be dismantled and removed due to its inaccessibility and remote location. He estimated it would cost $5,400 to use a state helicopter to remove the tower from the mountain. For a variety of reasons, nothing was done to remove the tower throughout

☐ See continuation sheet

the 1980s and 1990s. In 2001, NYSDEC again announced plans to remove the tower and to reassemble it at the Washington County Fairgrounds. In response to this announcement, a large number of people protested and wrote letters advocating for its preservation. This campaign was organized by the Friends of Hurricane Mountain, who collected more than 3,000 signatures on a petition, and Adirondack Architectural Heritage, the regional historic preservation organization. The matter of its removal was tabled and is to be dealt with when a unit management plan for the Hurricane Mountain Primitive Area is developed.

Hurricane Mountain Observers

Joseph Denton (1910)
Matthew Ryan (1911-15)
Archie Hayes (1915-19)
Milo Bronson (1919)
John Denton (1920-22)
Adam McDougal (1922-23)
William H. Potter (1924)
Kelly McDougal (1924-28)
Michael Connors (1929)
Ed "Spike" Farrell (1929-30)
Harry Denton (1931-32)
Adam McDougal (1933-35)
Harry Denton (1936-42)
George Rhone (1942)
David Passino (1942-44)
Emmett Fuller (1944-48)
Henry "Hank" B. McCoy (1949-51)
Raymond S. Cross (Aug.-Oct., 1951)
R. E. Pooler Sr., (1952)
Charles Van Fleet (1952-53)
Henry "Hank" B. McCoy (1954)
Pank Defendorff (July-Aug., 1955)
George Davis (Sept., 1955-58)
Earl Sprague (1959-65)
Robert F. Sweatt (May-June, 1966)
Ed Estes (June-Oct., 1966)
Doug Richards (1970-82)

Forest Rangers who supervised the tower

Morgan O'Donnell (1911-15)
Leonard C. Palmer (1917-19)
John Longware (1920-50)
Case P. Phinney (1951-73)
Richard "Dick" Olcott (1958-86)

☐ See continuation sheet

Bibliography

(For a general bibliography, see the Multiple Property Documentation Form cover document *for Fire Observation Stations of the New York State Forest Preserve.)*

Colvin, Verplanck *State of New York. Seventh Annual Report on the Progress of the Topographical Survey of the Adirondack Regin of New York to the Year 1879. Weed, Parsons & Co., Albany, NY 1880.*

Pilcher, Edith *Up the Lake Road, The First Hundred Years of the Adirondack Mountain Reserve*, 1987.

Reports:

Conservation Commission Report 1911. Albany, NY. 1912, p.41

Conservation Commission Report 1919. Albany, NY. J.B. Lyon Co. 1919

Conservation Commission Report 1921. Albany, NY. J.B. Lyon Co. 1920, p.109.

Conservation Department Report 1928. Albany, NY. J.B. Lyon Co. 1929, p.112.

Conservation Commission Report 1935. Albany, NY. J.B. Lyon Co. 1936, p.119.

Forest Fish and Game Commission Report 1910, Albany, NY. The Argus Co., 1911, pg.26.

Web Site

http://www.telenet.net/~ranger/ The Fire Towers of New York

☐ See continuation sheet

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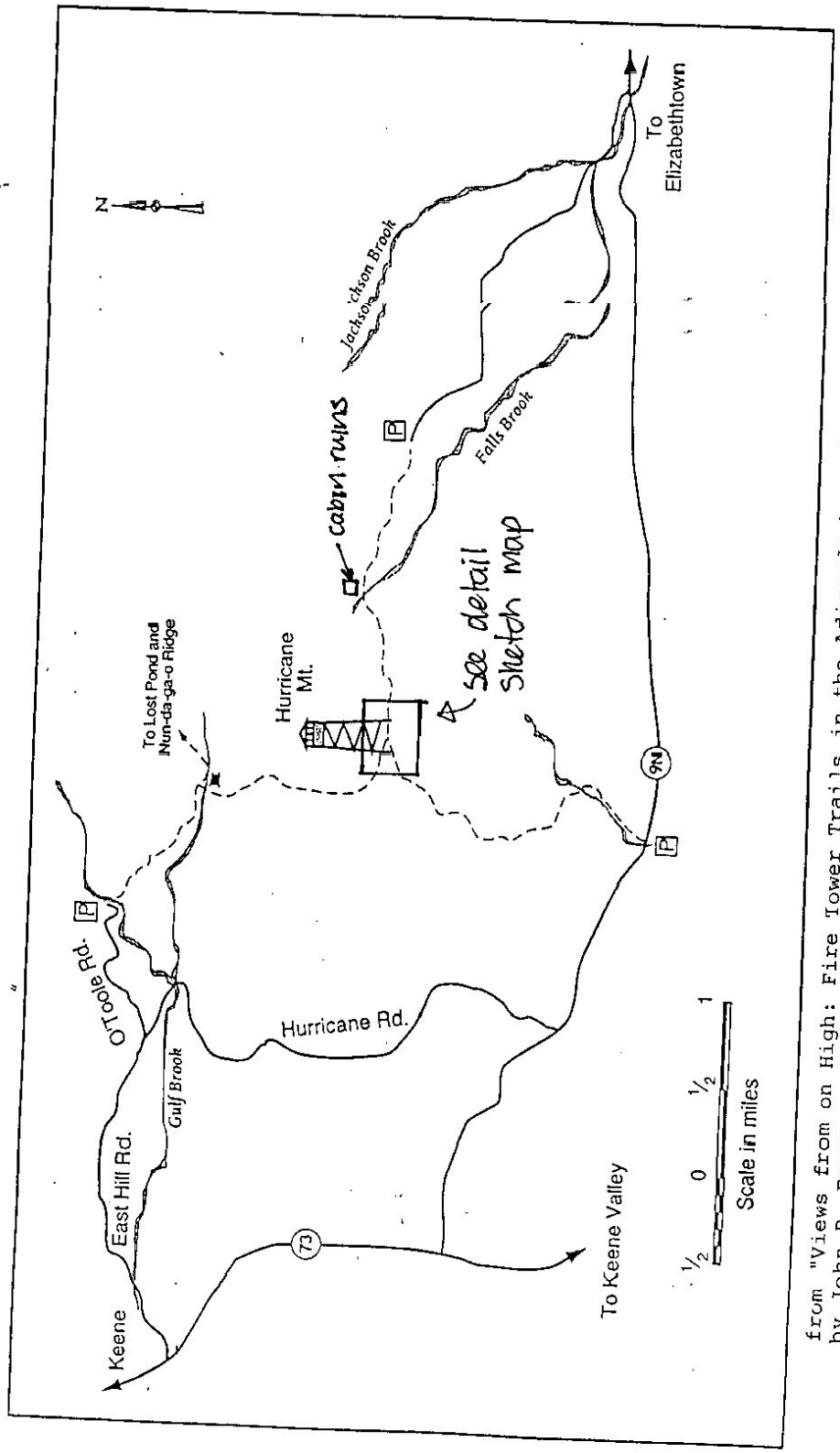

from "Views from on High: Fire Tower Trails in the Adirondacks and Catskills"
by John P. Freeman. Adirondack Mountain Club. 2001

Hurricane Mountain Fire Observation Station
Keene, Essex County, NY

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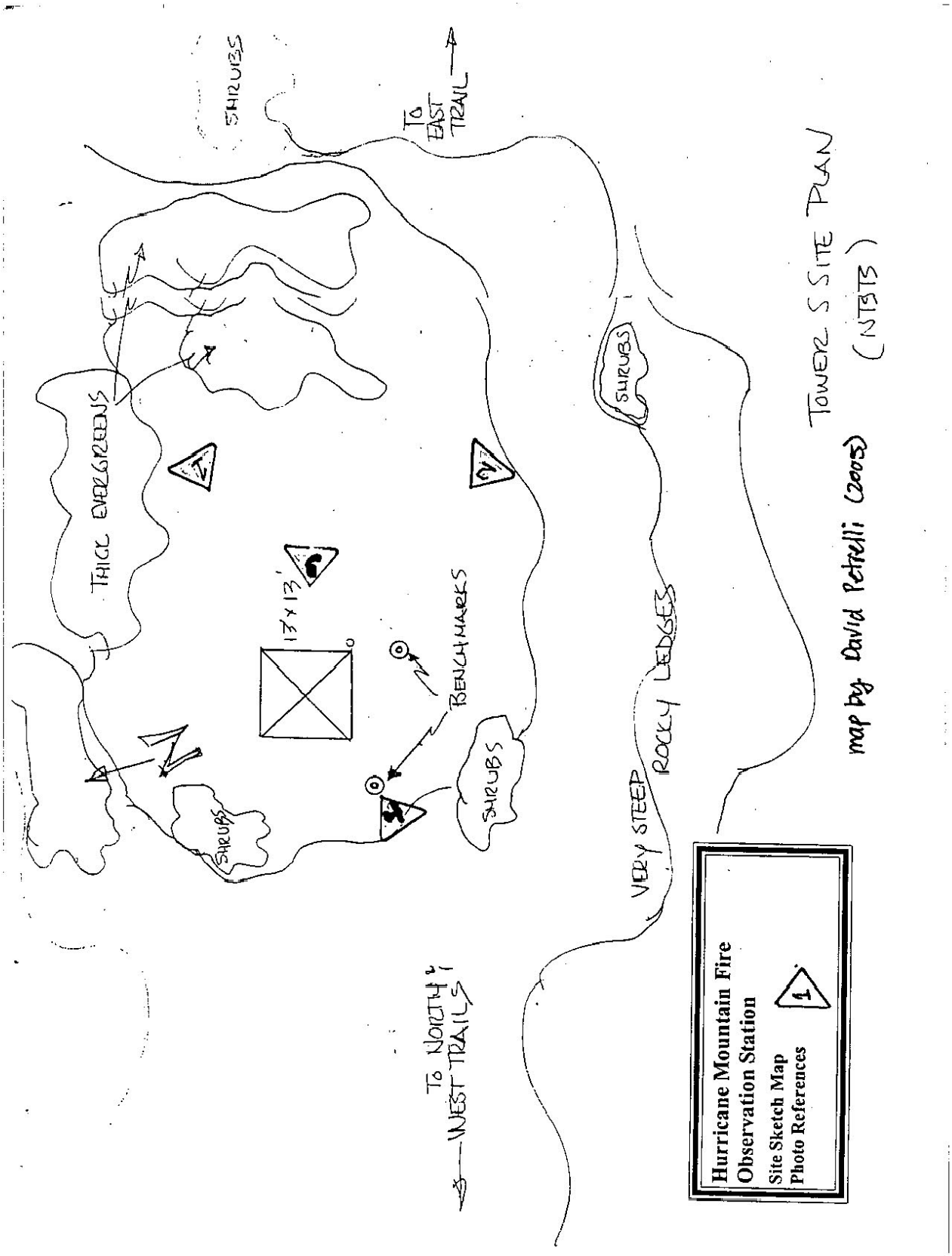
SHRUBS
TO EAST TRAIL
THICK EVERGREENS
13' x 13'
BENCHMARKS
SHRUBS
SHRUBS
SHRUBS
VERY STEEP
ROCKY LEDGES
TO NORTH & WEST TRAILS
TOWER SITE PLAN
(NTS)
map by David Petrelli (2005)
Hurricane Mountain Fire Observation Station
Site Sketch Map
Photo References
1

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NPS Form 10-900-a

OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Hurricane Mountain Fire Observation Station
Essex County, New York

Section number **Photo Key** Page **1**

Photos by: David Petrelli, 1008 CR 25, Malone, NY 12953
Negatives with owner
Photos by: David Petrelli, 1008 CR 25, Malone, NY 12953
Negatives with owner
Date of Photos: 2005

1. Firetower; view looking west
2. Firetower; view looking northwest
3. Firetower cab; view looking northwest
4. Firetower cab; view looking east
5. Observer's Cabin ruins

☐ See continuation sheet

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New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Division of Lands & Forests
Bureau of Public Lands, 5th Floor
625 Broadway, Albany, New York 12233-4255
Phone: (518) 402-9428 • **FAX:** (518) 402-9028
Website: www.dec.state.ny.us

Denise M. Sheehan
Acting
Commissioner

Ms. Ruth Pierpont
Chief, Historic Preservation Field Services
Office of Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation
Peebles Island State Park
PO Box 189
Waterford, New York 12188-0189

June 22, 2006

RE: Hurricane Mountain Firct Tower
Elizabethtown (T), Essex County

Dear ~~Ms. Pierpont~~ Ruth:

The purpose of this letter is to indicate that the Department of Environmental Conservation endorses the nomination of the Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower to the National Register of Historic Places.

Should you or your staff have any questions or require further information, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Charles L. Vandrei
Agency Historic Preservation Officer

(Page 16 of 21)

Adirondack Architectural Heritage

Civic Center, Suite 37
1790 Main Street
Keeseville, NY 12944

518-834-9328
518-834-9225 (fax)
aarch1@aol.com (email)
www.aarch.org (website)

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Program Director

Bonnie DeGolyer
Administrative Assistant

A non-profit organization

October 20, 2003

Kristofer A. Alberga, Senior Forester
NYSDEC
Route 86, PO Box 296
Route 86, PO Box 296
Ray Brook, NY 12977

Re: Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower and the
Giant Mountain Wilderness Area Unit Management Plan

Dear Mr. Alberga,

I am writing to express our support for the retention and preservation of the fire observation tower on Hurricane Mountain.

Adirondack Architectural Heritage (AARCH) is the nonprofit, historic preservation organization for the Adirondack Park with a mission to promote better public understanding, appreciation, and stewardship of the region's architecture, historic sites, and communities. With a membership of more than 1000, AARCH fulfills its mission through educational programs and publications, by providing technical assistance, through advocacy, and by restoring and managing historic sites through partnership arrangements. AARCH has encouraged the preservation of fire observation towers in the region for many years, beginning with our involvement with the Blue Mountain Fire Tower Restoration Committee nearly ten years ago. In 2000, we successfully nominated ten New York State fire towers to the National Register of Historic Places and made it possible for other towers in the region to be added to the Register. Currently we are actively involved in the preservation of four regional fire towers – on Poke-O-Moonshine Mountain, Mt. Arab, Bald Mountain, and Azure Mountain – through our sponsorship of the *Friends of Poke-O-Moonshine, Friends of Mt. Arab, Friends of Bald Mountain, and Azure Mountain Friends.*

The fire observation station on Hurricane Mountain is an historic site with great historic and engineering significance. It was made by the Aeromotor Corporation of Chicago and was erected by the state in 1919. The station was one of more than fifty in the region that were developed during the early 20th century to detect and protect the forested land of the Adirondacks. This detection and protection system, which included state forest rangers, fire observers, other state personnel, local fire departments, and thousands of other individuals, was an innovative and effective means of protecting the region's great natural resources. The observers played an important role in detecting and fighting forest fires and were often effective conservation educators for the public who hiked to these mountaintops. Twelve state fire observation stations have already been placed on the National Register of Historic Places and, with a few exceptions, all others, including the tower on Hurricane Mountain, have been determined to be eligible for the National Register.

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The fire tower on Hurricane Mountain can continue to have an important public recreation and education value. Like the preserved fire towers on Poke-O-Moonshine, Goodnow, Blue, Hadley, Cathedral Rocks, Snowy, Mt. Arab, Kane, and others, a restored Hurricane Mountain fire tower can be used to interpret the natural and cultural history of the Forest Preserve to visitors to the mountain. The retention and cultural history of the Forest Preserve to visitors to the mountain. The retention and preservation of this fire tower also has broad public support and we are convinced that there is sufficient public interest in preserving and maintaining this station and in using it for public educational purposes, that this undertaking is feasible and practical.

The retention and preservation of the tower could also be accomplished within the framework of the State Land Master Plan, if the immediate area around the tower were reclassified as Historic. This is an effective, legal mechanism for preserving historic sites within the Adirondack Forest Preserve and, as you know, is the same classification used at Camp Santanoni, John Brown's Farm, and the Crown Point State Historic Site. Because the tower would be used for public recreation and education purposes, its presence would not be in conflict with other public uses of the surrounding area. We encourage the Department and other involved state agencies to make the preservation and public use of this tower possible by reclassifying the area around the tower as Historic and by including language supporting the retention and preservation of the tower in the Unit Management Plan for the Giant Mountain Wilderness Area.

Please feel free to call me if you have questions or comments about these remarks.

Sincerely,

Steven Engelhart
Executive Director

Cc: Erin Crotty, Commissioner, NYSDEC
Chuck Vandrei, NYSDEC
Lynn Garofalini, NYSOPRHP
John Banta, APA

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PH 518-873-9272 BOX 426, ELIZABETHTOWN, NY 12932 FAX 518-873-2018

RECEIVED
MAY 3 1 2005
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
FIELD SERVICES BUREAU

SHPO
NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Peebles Island,
PO Box 189
Waterford, New York
12188-0189

Dear Ms Pierpont,

We are happy that the Hurricane Tower has been nominated and concur with it 100%. We are trying hard to save this local landmark and sentinel, which has guarded the area for so many years and is beloved by our citizens and visitors.

Our organization was formed in December of 2004. We want to save it, restore it, and help maintain it for our future generations. Then they will have insight into the Adirondack history of the fires that caused it to be put there; the ancestors of our local people who worked as observers and rangers and helped fight forest fires; how their diligence protected our beautiful forests for us to enjoy today. It will take them even farther back to the surveying of Verplanck Colvin who used this mountain as a major survey point back in the 1870s.

Hurricane is the only fire tower which can be seen for as many miles as it can. That alone makes it more important to the handicapped and elderly, who can see it from their cars and reminisce about it without the difficult climb. We think it is this sight that has made it such a symbol for our area. You may not know all the mountains names, but you surely can tell it is Hurricane. As one

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80 plus year old said, "That is my Statue of Liberty. When I see it, I know I am home."

This emotion may be seen by the 2620 plus signatures we have collected from people asking to save the tower since January. They come from every township in Essex County, plus others from outside the County.

Plus the signatures, we have received 5 resolutions to preserve the Hurricane Tower from Town Boards and 1 from Essex County. We have letters from 5 fire Companies, 2 American Legions, 2 Fish & Game local clubs plus one from the County Fish and Game Organization. 32 school children have written letters, and citizens have written 51.

I hope these numbers express to the Historic Committee how much the people of these small towns, Elizabethtown and Keene, like the Hurricane Tower and prize the history and culture of our area and want to keep it.

Thank you for nominating Hurricane Observer's tower. If you need any more information, please call.

For the group, Friends of Hurricane FireTower, Thank you.

Secretary,

Gretna L. Longware

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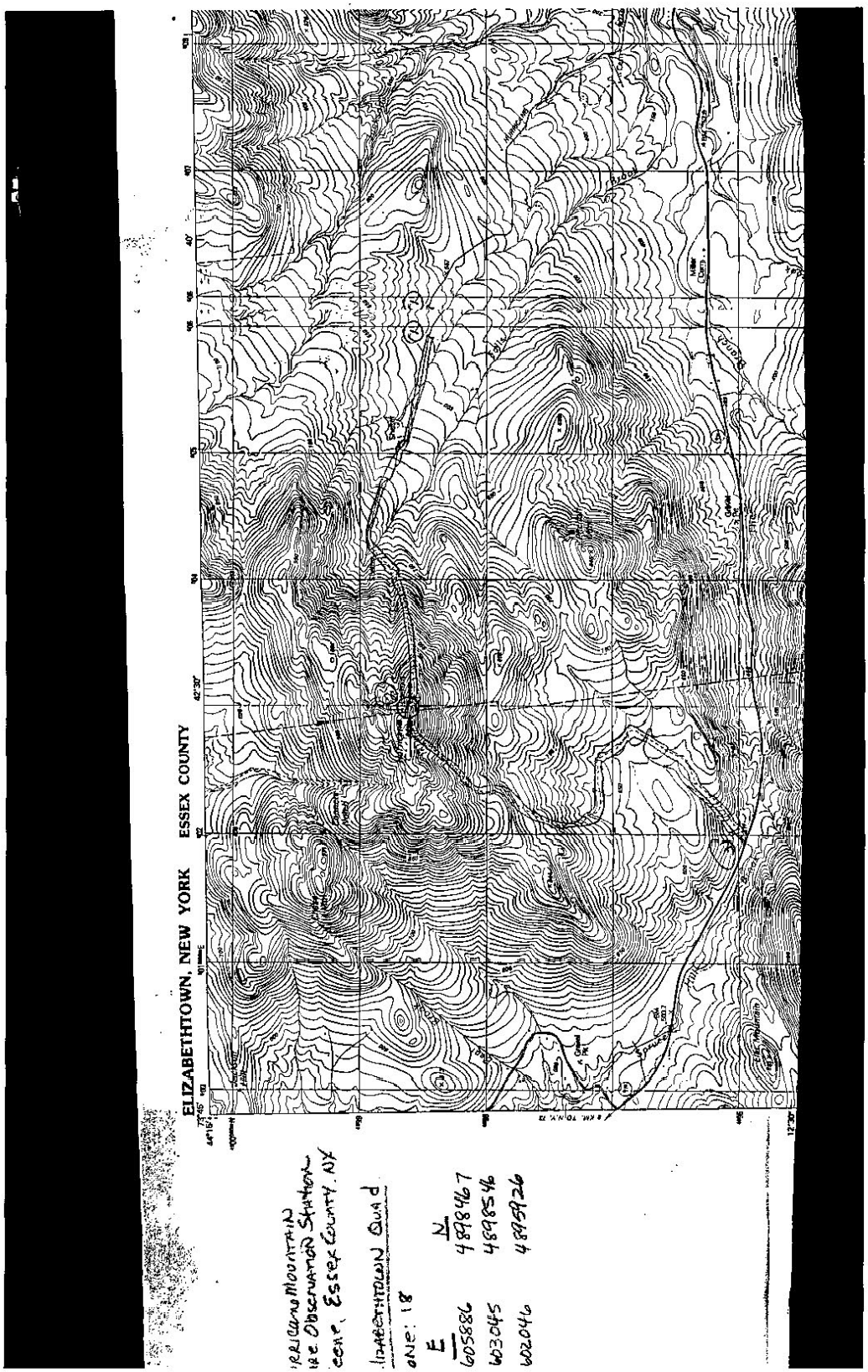
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Essex County, NY
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NATIONAL REGISTER APPLICATION ROUTING SHEET

PROPERTY/DISTRICT NAME Hurricane Mountain Fire Observation Station

LOCATION (C V T) Hurricane Mtn Summit, Keene

COUNTY Essex STAFF CHG

NR FILE NUMBER 05NR05467 UNIQUE SITE NUMBER 03106.000201

	STAFF	DATE
1. Application rec'd by PI staff		
2. SPHINX CHECK: verify and/or add USN		
3. Site visit		
4. PROPOSAL EVALUATED * No finding/inconclusive documentation |_| * Not eligible |_| * Eligible/in work program |✓| * Eligible/low priority |_| * LETTER SENT conveying above finding		
5. SPHINX UPDATE: log in above finding		
6. NR documentation complete		CHG
7. SECOND READER	PDS	8/7/06
8. CLG pre SRB (#1) letters		
9. State Register notice published		
10. Pre-SRB letters sent/ Public notice printed		
Public notice filed in NR file		
11. STATE REVIEW BOARD: Appr ✓ Rej ___		CHG
12. Notorized obj: — Support: ___		
13. SPHINX ___ MANUAL ___ for steps 8-11		
14. SHPO/DIR signature: STATE REGISTER LISTING		
15. State Register listing letter sent		
SPHINX ___ MANUAL ___ for steps 13-14		
16. Nomination dupicated, mailed, filed		
17. LISTED ON NATIONAL REGISTER		
18. Final notification (#3) letter sent		
19. SPHINX ___ MANUAL ___ for steps 16-17		

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Appendix K – Response to Public Comment

A public comment period for the Draft UMP for the HMFTHA was held from October 16 to November 15, 2013. During that time, the Department received over 80 written comments as well as several oral comments via telephone. Below is a summary of those comments requiring a response from the Department.

- Commenter questioned the closing date listed for the tower, and believes it was re-opened and managed well into the 1980's.

  The Hurricane fire tower was closed for direct fire observation in 1979. Communications continued at the fire observation station until 1982, when the observer's cabin was removed.

- Public money should not be used to restore the tower.

  While local friends groups or other organizations may be able to raise funds for maintenance of the fire tower, the Department is obligated to provide staff and fiscal resources where needed since the tower is a Department facility.

- Volunteers should be sought for the tower restoration effort.

  A volunteer organization, "The Friends of the Hurricane Fire Tower", has expressed an interest in participating in the maintenance of the tower. The Department will continue to support such volunteer efforts.

- No state jobs should be created for this project.

  This UMP does not propose the creation of any new staff positions. It does, however, advocate for the use of volunteers in the maintenance of the tower.

- Restoration of the fire tower will not attract more people to the summit.

  As with other fire towers maintained by the Department for public use, it is not expected that opening the tower in and of itself will increase use of the area. If local municipalities and other organizations begin to promote the tower as a tourism destination, then public use may increase.

- The fire tower should not be used for satellite disks or for cellular coverage.

  This UMP does not propose use of the tower for these purposes. The only communications infrastructure proposed is a radio repeater for emergency services purposes only.

- Removing the fire tower would be appropriate if it weren't for the cost.

  The Department considered several alternatives for the fire tower, including removal of the structure. Ultimately, all of the alternatives have a cost associated with them. Even if the tower were left standing with no further maintenance, it would eventually become a threat to public safety and have to be removed.

- Hurricane Mountain will be a great location for a cell tower and internet service provider.

  This UMP does not propose the use of Hurricane Mountain as a cell tower or for internet service. The only communications infrastructure proposed is a radio repeater for emergency services purposes only.

- The easiest course of action would have been to amend the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (SLMP) to make the tower a conforming structure.

  In 2010 the Adirondack Park Agency analyzed alternatives related to state land classifications. Their preferred alternative was the creation of a Historic Area to make the tower a conforming structure. The proposals in this UMP are consistent with that alternative.

- The tower should be removed to allow for Wilderness Classification.

  While the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan allows for this course of action, the Department's primary objective for the tower is to maximize its interpretive and educational potential as an historic resource.

- Adoption of this UMP would perpetuate an ongoing violation of the spirit of the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (SLMP), including the Wilderness and Historic Area guidelines.

  Being a Historic Area UMP, this plan was written to be consistent with the Historic Area guidelines of the SLMP. It is up to the Adirondack Park Agency to determine whether or not the UMP conforms to the SLMP.

- The state failed to commit financial resources to the permanent management of the towers when the land was classified as Historic in 2010.

  Funding for the management of recreational facilities is typically allocated on an annual, not permanent basis. In terms of initial maintenance requirements, there is existing state money dedicated for fire towers that will likely be used if private funds cannot be secured.

- The Adirondack Park Agency's 2010 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) regarding the reclassification of land under the fire tower failed to evaluate the alternative of relocating the tower to a nearby community.

  Management actions proposed in this UMP are consistent with the preferred alternative identified in the 2010 EIS.

- The spot zoning required for the Historic Area is a contradiction to the SLMP.

  This UMP was written to be consistent with the Historic Area guidelines in the SLMP.

- Ongoing maintenance of the Historic Area should conform to the standards of the surrounding Wilderness Area.

  Because the land is classified as Historic, the maintenance of the area will conform to Historic Area guidelines.

- The installation of the radio repeater should adhere to all Federal and State policy pertaining to historic properties.

  The proposal to install a radio repeater is consistent with both the National Historic Preservation Act and the State Historic Preservation Act.

- A remote meteorology station should be installed in the tower.

  There are several weather stations already present in the vicinity of the fire tower. Also, the presence of a weather station would not be consistent with the Department's objectives for the fire tower.