



To: Barbara Rice, Executive Director, Members and Designees, NYS Adirondack Park Agency (APA)

From: Adirondack Wild: Friends of the Forest Preserve, David Gibson, Managing Partner

Date: January 26, 2026

Re. Unconventional Concepts/ Michael Hopmeier's appeal of ALJ David Greenwood's ruling of January 12, 2026, granting Adirondack Wild Party Status in Project 2021-0276.

Applicant wrote to the Adirondack Park Agency on January 20, 2026, appealing ALJ, Judge Greenwood's ruling of January 12, 2026, granting Adirondack Wild intervenor status in the adjudication of Project 2021-0276. Adirondack Wild appreciates the opportunity afforded by hearing regulations to respond in support of Judge Greenwood's decision granting Adirondack Wild party status in this matter.

1. In his appeal to APA, Applicant reiterates every claim made before, and rejected by, Judge Greenwood. Applicant repeats the claim that Adirondack Wild has failed to properly comply with APA Part 580.7(1) whereby petitioners are asked to "state the nature and purpose of the organization...organizational structure, history of formation and legal nature, and include a copy of any charter, certificate of incorporation, bylaws, constitution, or the like." In granting Adirondack Wild party status on January 12, ALJ Greenwood disagreed, noting that Adirondack Wild had timely submitted our bylaws and had properly stated the nature, purpose, structure, history of formation and legal nature of Adirondack Wild: Friends of the Forest Preserve.

To reiterate, we are incorporated in New York State as Friends of the Forest Preserve and registered as such with the Charities Bureau, NYS Attorney General. Friends of the Forest Preserve was incorporated in November 1950 and received federal tax-exempt status in January 1996. Friends of the Forest Preserve was granted an Assumed Name by the NYS Department of State (Doing Business As, or DBA) of Adirondack Wild: Friends of the Forest Preserve in 2010. Our Federal EIN is 14-174368. We timely submitted our organization's by-laws to all parties on December 19, 2025. As previously stated, our

mission is to advance New York's 'forever wild' legacy and Forest Preserve policies in the Adirondack and Catskill Parks and promote public and private land stewardship that is consistent with wild land values through education, advocacy and research." As previously stated, we operate exclusively for charitable and educational purposes. We have a staff of two, a board of directors, an advisory board, and approximately 1,000 members.

2. Next, Applicant repeats claims that we lack capacity to participate in APA administrative proceedings and to supply information or expertise relative to the upcoming hearing. ALJ Greenwood disagreed, having read our petition stating that we have two full-time staff as well as volunteers who have demonstrated skills, readiness, and capacity to participate in APA administrative proceedings, including the Adirondack Club and Resort hearing of 2010-2011, numerous APA legislative hearings and permit proceedings since 2011, and several major APA proceedings interpreting and amending the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan from 2021 to 2025. Our Staff, Board of Directors, and Advisors include a variety of experts who could be called as witnesses, such as our Managing Partner David Gibson, former APA Department of State APA designee Richard Hoffman, former APA Member Chad Dawson, former APA member Elizabeth Thorndike, and others.
3. Applicant's appeal also repeats earlier contentions that Adirondack Wild fails to state an environmental interest concerning the project and fails to express the nature of the evidence or argument we intend to present. To the contrary, Judge Greenwood ruled that Adirondack Wild's petition clearly expresses our environmental interest in the potential undue adverse impacts of the project on adjacent public Forest Preserve, on adjacent or nearby private lands, on wildlife, and on the purposes, policies, and objectives of the Rural Use classification, among others. In accordance with our mission, the project presents several potential adverse impacts on the intermingled public and private wildlands of the Adirondack Park. We may present arguments on these issues ourselves, we may retain expert witnesses to be determined, and/or we may query expert testimony presented by others.

Given our long history of involvement in protecting and preserving the Adirondack Forest Preserve, we further note for the APA that parcels of Forest Preserve are near, in fact adjacent to the proposed howitzer testing range; that sound travels a great distance; and that noise and other factors impact upon open space resources and quality of land for outdoor recreational purposes, both of which are issues subject to this hearing and criteria for determining whether a project would have an undue adverse impact upon Park resources under Section 805 (4) (a) of APA Act.

4. Finally, Applicant alleges that the public's Forest Preserve is the responsibility of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, DEC, not the APA, and that somehow

our concerns for the project's actual and potential impacts upon State Lands in the Forest Preserve are irrelevant to this APA hearing. The facts completely belie this assertion. The planning for State and Private lands of the Adirondack Park are inextricably linked, in law and in practice. APA has brought this hearing, in part, to determine "whether the howitzer testing range could impact nearby Wilderness and Wild Forest areas" (part of Hearing Issue # 3). The APA Act acknowledges the State Land Master Plan and authorizes individual management plans for units of the Forest Preserve that conform to the Master Plan. The Act and the Master Plan make it plain that while DEC is lead on day-to-day management of the Forest Preserve, APA is charged with long range planning and policies for the State Lands and for regulating private land use and development so as to avoid impacts upon the public's Forest Preserve and related open space resources.

Thank you for considering our reasons for supporting ALJ, Judge Greenwood's decision to grant Adirondack Wild: Friends of the Forest Preserve intervenor status.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "David Gibson".

David Gibson, Managing Partner
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