



PROJECT SPONSOR'S FINAL COMMENTS

November 6, 2025

APA Project No. 2021-0276

Applicant: Unconventional Concepts, Inc. (UCI)

Project Sponsor: Michael Hopmeier

Type of Project – Ballistic Testing Range

Town of Lewis, Essex County

Land Use Area: Rural Use

Tax Map No.: 38.1-1-31.000 & 38.1-1-29.000

I will not waste the Board's time by rehashing the voluminous quantity of information submitted through the application process. However, I feel a few key facts should be brought to the Board's attention. Therefore, I wish to add the following comments to the official record for the above-referenced application.

- At its heart, UCI's proposal is no more, or less, than a request to use firearms in the park.
- The Board recently approved an application to expand mining at a site one mile away from the proposed test area. This mining operation has the express purpose to destroy small parts of the park, using high explosives in quantities 100 times greater than the proposal under discussion, and generating concomitant levels of noise and shock. That operation's location is closer to more sensitive areas of the Park than UCI's proposed test site. UCI supports their operation. However, we do not understand how it can be acceptable to destroy parts of the Park, but unacceptable to use firearms in the Park.
- The duration of *all* noise generated by the proposed project has been calculated to be a total of *7 seconds over a 5-year period*. The noise at the closest residence to the proposed test site will be less than that of a firearm, Harley Davison motorcycle, chainsaw, or heavy truck, and of much shorter duration.
- The number of shots fired during one year of the proposed project will be lower than the number of shots fired in the last 2 days in and around the same property by hunters, and lower than the number of blasts in the last month conducted by the mine.
- The goal of the proposed testing is to enhance the public good by improving national security. Unlike resource extraction, the proposed project is not merely for profit.
- Despite protestations of UCI's proposal, many local citizens also engage in blasting. They use Tannerite, a binary explosive with approximately half the explosive power of TNT. It is regularly used in the area for sport shooting,

destroying beaver dams, and basic civil engineering such as clearing trees and rock. The noise from Tannerite does not appear to bother local citizens.

With regard to the public comments submitted, I observed the following:

- Many of the comments provided no thoughtful input, revealed no critical information, were unrelated to reality, were based on demonstrably false information, or were form submissions designed to provide quantitative, but not qualitative, input.
- A significant number of the comments provided were from people who live far outside the local area, would be unaffected by the proposed project, and, thus, have no interest in the issue except perhaps to gain a brief period of notoriety and be part of a group.
- Statements related to the use of helicopters, drones, and low-flying F-35s were factually incorrect, technically impossible, and unrelated to the proposed project.
- While UCI has offered numerous opportunities for commenters to request factual, firsthand knowledge of the project and its effects, UCI has received no such requests.

UCI has been, and remains, an exemplary steward of the land and environment. We have spent significant time and many hundreds of thousands of dollars cleaning up the property; for example, we removed more than one hundred tons of garbage from the site that was illegally dumped by other citizens of the Park. We have also gone well beyond the community's baseline efforts to maintain forest health, from repairing and continually maintaining the logging roads to help suppress forest fires, to engaging in managed forest husbandry to encourage a healthy and sustainable woodland. When the APA was unable and unwilling to provide information on forest management and land maintenance for the Park, we went elsewhere to learn beneficial practices to apply, making us a model for conservation.

One final note involves the APA process itself. The APA's mission is clear:

The mission of the APA is to protect the public and private resources of the Adirondack Park through the exercise of the powers and duties provided by law.

This mission is laudable and UCI fully supports it. However, the APA fails in the application of its mission. Observed deficiencies range from being unable to answer simple questions about forest health and maintenance, to admitting a complete lack of scientific and technical knowledge relating to UCI's application, and a refusal to obtain that necessary knowledge. The process applied by the APA is woefully lacking in competence and ability. Thus, the APA is failing in its mission to protect the Park. Again, UCI fully supports the APA's mission. However, its implementation of its mission should be heavily reviewed and revised.

Lastly, based on questions related to the project application and the stated official position of the APA as elucidated by its staff, political expediency and personal inclination against the military will override the APA's mission and the regulations by which they are governed. If the proposal were to blast holes in the mountains and clear-cut the forest, it is apparent that the APA would accept it, as it has. However, supporting the men and women who work to preserve our freedoms and defend our rights through an environmentally friendly program is clearly not acceptable.

This state of affairs deeply saddens us, but it is what we must deal with. We only hope the APA will follow its mission and mandate, and not be subsumed by special interests and lack of foresight and courage.

Respectfully,

Michael Hopmeier
Unconventional Concepts, Inc.
Town of Lewis, New York