



Saving St. Regis Tower

1008 County Route 25 Malone, NY 12953 or by email at davidpetrelli@yahoo.com

April 28, 2006

Attn: Richard Weber
Adirondack Park Agency
P.O. Box 99, Route 86
Ray Brook, New York, 12977

Re: St. Regis Mountain Fire Tower and the
St. Regis Canoe Area Unit Management Plan

Dear Mr. Weber:

We are writing to indicate our support of the St. Regis Canoe Area Unit Management Plan (UMP) and ask that the APA go the next step so that the State Land Master Plan (SLMP) is permanently altered so that the St. Regis Mountain Fire Tower can be restored and remain on the summit of St. Regis Mountain in Franklin County.

Previous communications with the DEC approximately one year ago are still accurate today. We would like to again share our opinions of this UMP.

- We are highly in favor of the Management Alternative to Reclassify the land around the tower as wild forest or historic so that the tower would conform with the State Land Master Plan. We feel it is most appropriate for a historic classification as this tower is now on the National Register of Historic Places, having been listed on March 15, 2005.
- We want to express approval of the removal of language regarding the possibility of studying the cutting of vegetation on St. Regis Mountain summit. It is our position this would have a negative effect on the conservation education that is being explained to visitors to the summit by the active Stewart Program through Paul Smiths College and other partners. Additionally, it is felt that this proposition could be nothing but harmful to the Summit being part of a Bird Conservation Area. It is our position that if

we were allowed to restore this tower the tower would provide an unobstructed panoramic view from the summit.

- We understand that with the significant traffic of over 5,000 people yearly climbing this mountain why the proposed restrictions regarding group size of 15 is being proposed. While in some ways this may be advisable, we feel that there may be unintended consequences. This summit specifically, is ideally located for educational purposes especially given its proximity to the Adirondack Interpretive Center nearby. As a result, if group size restrictions were implemented large educational or school groups would not be allowed to travel together. We wonder if different restrictions such as requiring permits for groups over 15, or restrictions on groups only being allowed to hike on non-peak weekdays, could be explored as alternatives.

We have two other comments however these would only be applicable if the tower's current classification can be change, so we can adopt and restore it.

- Our group has discussed the possibility of donating materials and helping to build a Lean-to on the site of the old observer cabins, for educational, memorial, and recreational purposes after the tower restoration is complete.
- With the current Stewart Program and with the educational potential of the St. Regis Mountain Fire Tower we would like to be able to replace the current trail register with an educational kiosk / trail register similar to other tower restoration projects in NYS.

We would greatly appreciate the Adirondack Park Agency's support in changing the current classification of the fire tower on St. Regis Mountain, so it can be saved for future generations. If we can be of personal assistance in this process, please feel free to contact us at the above addresses or by phone at (518)-483-3767.

Sincerely,

David Petrell
Lawrence J. Funke
Brett Clark
Stephen D. Surtak
Jordan B. Geys
James A. Tucker
DAVID KNAPP
Lydia H. Wright
Thomas M. Willis
Patricia P. Willis
T. M. Booth
El Hossan
Michael Kudish
Robt. In. Scott
John A. Bell
Richard H. Hawley
Jay Harvey
E. Cameron
Lynn Cameron

CC: Dr. Ross Whaley, APA Chairman