



October 29, 2010

Governor David A. Paterson
Executive Chamber
The Capitol
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Paterson:

We respectfully submit for your approval, pursuant to Section 816 of the Adirondack Park Agency Act, amendments to the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (Master Plan) as set forth in the enclosed Adirondack Park Agency (Agency) Resolution. The action involves three State land reclassification proposals which include one-half acre on the summit of St. Regis Mountain and 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.

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

The Hurricane and St. Regis fire towers were closed in 1982 and 1990, respectively. In 2005 and 2006, the St. Regis and Hurricane fire towers were added to the State Register of Historic Places, respectively. At the May 2006 Agency Meeting, the Agency Board reviewed the St. Regis Canoe Area Unit Management Plan (UMP) for compliance with the Master Plan. The UMP committed the Department to the development of a comprehensive Adirondack fire tower management plan to address all State-owned fire towers in the Adirondack Park.

At the February 2010 Agency Meeting, Department staff presented the Park-wide fire tower study. At the same meeting, Department staff presented the St. Regis UMP amendment and the Hurricane Mountain Primitive Area UMP to the Agency. In conformance with the Master Plan, both UMP's outlined the removal of their respective fire towers.

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At the April 2010 meeting, the APA Board requested Agency staff examine alternatives regarding the future of these two fire towers. One alternative included classifying the area around the tower as Historic in recognition of their listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS) was released on July 21, 2010 for public review and comment. The public comment period ended on August 25, 2010. Public hearings were held in Albany, Keene Valley and Paul Smiths between August 9 and 11, 2010. Throughout this process, the Agency worked in close cooperation with the Department and the Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation. On October 14, 2010, the Resolution and reclassification package was unanimously approved at the Agency's monthly meeting.

Enclosed are the Agency Resolution, textual changes to the Master Plan, and maps developed by Agency staff showing the location for each reclassification recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,



Curtis F. Stiles
Chairman

CFS:dal

Enclosures

c: Peter Iwanowicz, Deputy Secretary for the Environment
Stuart Gruskin, Executive Deputy Commissioner, DEC
Andy Beers, Acting Commissioner, OPRHP
Robert Davies, Director, Division of Lands & Forests, DEC
Agency Members and Designees
Terry Martino, Executive Director, APA
James Connolly, Deputy Director, Planning, APA



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

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

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, this 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.

Recommended Text Changes to the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan

Note: Underlined text has been added. ~~Strikethrough~~ text is intended to be deleted.

Canoe

Guidelines for Management and Use

Structures and improvements

~~3. The St. Regis Mountain fire tower and observer cabins may be retained so long as retention is considered essential by the Department of Environmental Conservation pending ultimate removal upon final implementation of the aerial surveillance program and modernization of the Department of Environmental Conservation's communication system. The overhead telephone lines serving the fire tower and observer cabin will be promptly replaced with an on ground line which may be retained until alternative method(s) of maintaining communication become feasible.~~

Historic

Designation of Historic Areas

Five ~~Two~~ historic areas, Crown Point, and John Brown's Farm, Camp Santanoni, Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower, and St. Regis Mountain Fire Tower result from the application of the above criteria and are delineated on the map forming part of this master plan.

Area Descriptions

WILDERNESS AREAS

HURRICANE MOUNTAIN

This area is located in the Towns of Elizabethtown, Jay, Keene and Lewis, Essex County. It is predominantly steep, rocky ground with thin soils. Hurricane Mountain, 3,694 feet in elevation, dominates the area. On the north the area is separated from the Jay Wilderness Area by the Jay Mountain Road, a rough road not plowed in the winter. Should the road ever be closed or abandoned, all or a major portion of this area could be consolidated with the Jay Wilderness.

Spectacular views of Giant Mountain and High Peaks regions to the south, as well as the Champlain Valley and the Green Mountains of Vermont to the east, are afforded the hiker who scales Hurricane. There are three trails to Hurricane permitting access by all types of hikers. The novice mountaineer can also hike the fairly open circuit trail from Big Crow Mountain across Weston Mountain, down to Lost Pond and back to the starting point while enjoying the panorama of the High Peaks to the southwest.

In 2010, 13,948 acres of the area were reclassified as Wilderness when 0.5 acres of land associated with the Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower was reclassified to Historic.

Hurricane Mountain area statistics:

State Lands	13,948 Acres
Bodies of Water (1)	7.4 Acres
Inholdings (2)	41 Acres
<u>Elevation</u>	
(minimum)	810 Feet
(maximum)	3,694 Feet
Foot Trails	13.7 Miles
Lean-tos	2
<u>Non-conforming Uses: None</u>	

PRIMITIVE AREAS

Hurricane Mountain Primitive Area

This area consists of several corridors that cut through the Hurricane Mountain Wilderness in the Towns of Elizabethtown, Jay, Keene and Lewis, Essex County. These include: two Town roads that cross Forest Preserve, the Jay Mountain Road and the O'Toole Road; two rights-of-way to inholdings on private land near the Hurricane Road in Elizabethtown; and a right-of-way for a power line running through the western portion of the Wilderness area. If any of these corridors are closed, abandoned or acquired by the state, they should be consolidated with the Hurricane Mountain Wilderness.

Hurricane Mountain area statistics:

State Lands	43 Acres
<u>Non-conforming Uses:</u>	
Roads (private)*	0.6 Miles
Roads (public)*	2.4 Miles
Power Lines*	3.9 Miles

*Non-conforming uses whose removal cannot be scheduled by a fixed deadline.

CANOE AREA

SAINT REGIS

The State truck trail will be retained for administrative use relating to fish and water resource enhancement. ~~The fire tower, observer cabin and telephone lines have not yet been removed and under the canoe area guidelines the fire tower and observer cabin may be retained pending final implementation of the aerial surveillance program and modernization of the Department of Environmental Conservation's communications system. The overhead phone lines serving the fire tower and observer cabin should be replaced by alternative measures of communication, which could include an on-ground line, as soon as feasible to eliminate the intrusive character of the above ground lines and poles. Approximately 15.4 miles of snowmobile trails in this area have been closed, twenty-one tent platforms removed and motorboat use by the public prohibited.~~

~~Due to the relative ease of access to the peripheral ponds, public use has accelerated rapidly in recent years to a point where measures to control access are likely to be required at least during peak periods. The precise regulations which may be appropriate should be addressed in a unit management plan for the area. The one remaining non-conforming use, the 1/4 mile spur road leading from the Floodwood Road to the south shore of Long Pond, will be blocked near the Floodwood Road and a small parking area provided at that point by no later than March 31, 1987.~~

The 1/4 mile spur road leading from the Floodwood Road to the south shore of Long Pond has been blocked near the Floodwood Road and a small parking area has been provided at that point.

Public access to the area is restricted from the north and west by private posted land but is readily available on the south and east.

In 2010, 0.5 acre of land associated with the St. Regis Mountain Fire Tower was reclassified to Historic.

Saint Regis area statistics:

State Lands	18,231 17,613 Acres
Bodies of Water (52)	1,452 1,153 Acres
Elevation	
(minimum)	1,560 Feet
(maximum)	2,873 Feet
Foot Trails	23.8 Miles
Horse Trails	5.5 Miles
<u>Bike Trails</u>	<u>5 Miles</u>
Lean-tos	3
State Truck Trails	7.0 Miles
Non-conforming Uses:	<u>None</u>
Fire Towers (manned)*	1
Observer Cabins*	1
Telephone Lines*	1.0 Miles
Road	.25 Miles

~~*Non-conforming uses of an essentially permanent character
whose removal cannot be scheduled by a fixed deadline.~~

HISTORIC AREAS

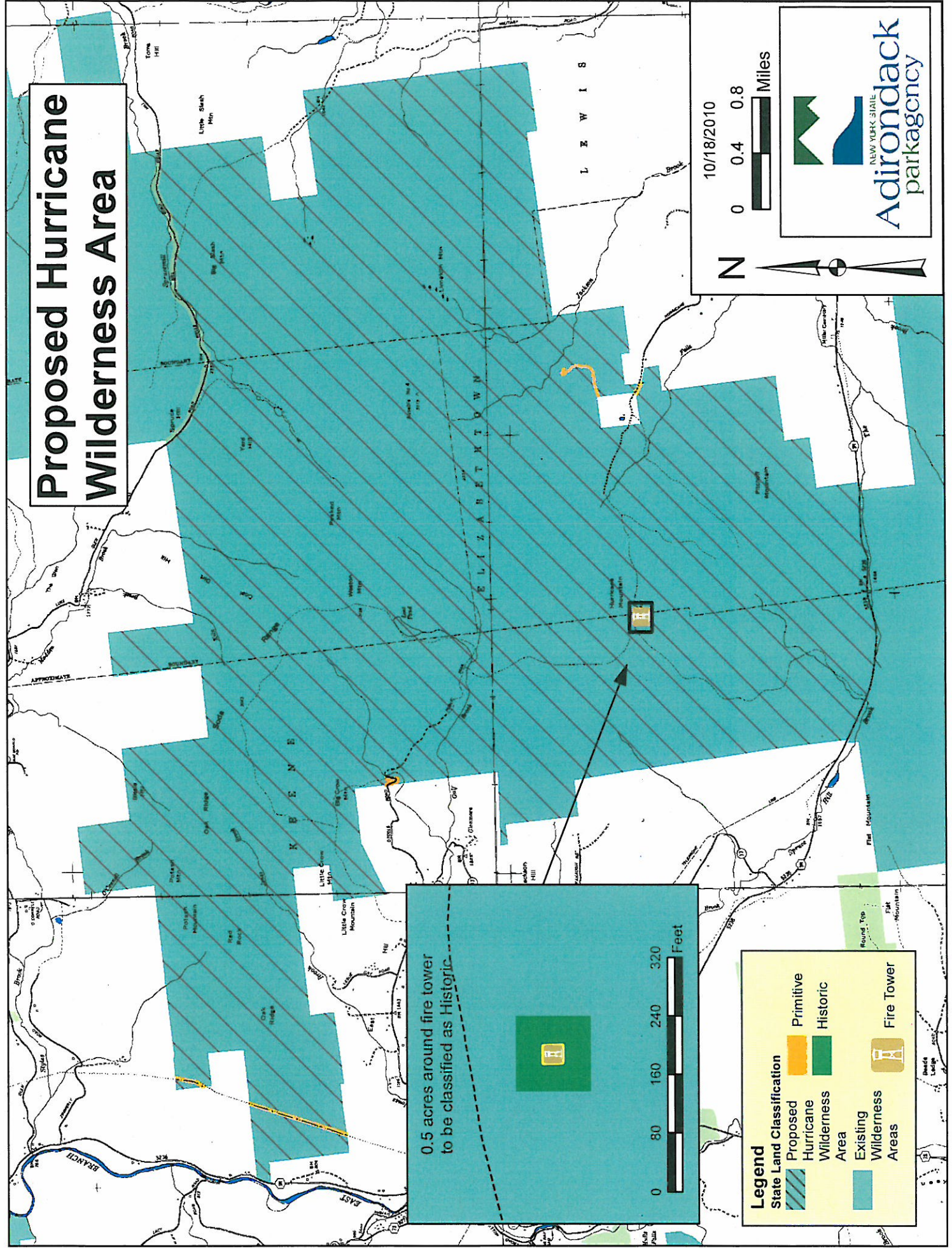
Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower

This area includes the fire tower on Hurricane Mountain and a 0.5 acre square surrounding the fire tower. The fire tower is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The area was reclassified from Primitive to Historic in 2010. The designation does not preclude the Department of Environmental Conservation from determining the fire towers structurally unsound and should be removed, nor does it preclude the DEC from relocating the fire tower to another location consistent with its historic setting. In this event, the area's classification will, without any further Agency action, become part of the Hurricane Mountain Wilderness Area. The Historic Area designation does not require, obligate or anticipate expenditure of State funds for maintenance and restoration of the fire tower.

St. Regis Mountain Fire Tower

This area includes the fire tower on St. Regis Mountain and a 0.5 acre square surrounding the fire tower. The fire tower is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The area was reclassified from Primitive to Historic in 2010. The designation does not preclude the Department of Environmental Conservation from determining the fire towers structurally unsound and should be removed, nor does it preclude the DEC from relocating the fire tower to another location consistent with its historic setting. In this event, the area's classification will revert to Canoe Area. The Historic Area designation does not require, obligate or anticipate expenditure of State funds for maintenance and restoration of the fire tower.

Proposed Hurricane Wilderness Area



0.5 acres around fire tower
to be classified as Historic

Legend

State Land Classification

- Proposed Hurricane Wilderness Area
- Existing Wilderness Areas
- Primitive
- Historic
- Fire Tower

St. Regis Canoe Area

Legend

State Land Classifications

- Canoe Area
- Historic
- Wild Forest
- Fire Tower

0.5 acres around fire tower
to be classified as Historic

0 70 140 210 280 Feet

10/18/2010

0 0.5 1 Miles



NEW YORK STATE
Adirondack
park agency