

October 31, 2016

The fire tower is open!!!

The summer/fall of 2016 was a time of great progress on the restoration of the St. Regis Mountain fire tower.

July 12, 2015



September 15, 2016



- Numerous donations, large and small, allowed the FRIENDS to contract with David Vana, an expert in fire tower restoration, to replace the roof of our fire tower. The project started on July 21, 2016 with the NYS police helicopter and DEC forest rangers airlifting the material to the summit. While there, they removed construction debris from the previous year. Over a 2 day period (July 26 and 29) Vana, his assistants, Sean Connin and Jeff Couture and FRIENDS Jack Burke and Rich Labombard removed the old roof and installed a brand new galvanized metal roof.
- Elisa McIntosh from the Paul Smith's Aquatic Watershed Institute (AWI) was a summit steward on Fridays during the summer, to provide educational information about the tower, it's history and the local fauna and flora.
- On August 27, 2016, FRIENDS David and Eryn Petrelli and Dr. Ed Hixson painted the cab, giving it a fresh new look.
- On September 1, FRIENDS Jack Burke, Bob Brand and Rich LaBombard led by Doug Fitzgerald, installed the hatch railings and window frames and were able to "soft open" the tower for public use.
- On September 15, FRIENDS Bob Norton and Barbara Buckhout painted the lower section of the frame.
- On September 29, FRIENDS Dr. Ed Hixson, Dale Pondysh, Jack Burke and Tom Hirshblond, led by Doug Fitzgerald removed debris (with the help of some fellow hikers) from the summit, painted the base mounting brackets and made

miscellaneous repairs to the wall panels, window brackets and hatch railing.

Future plans include creating interpretive panels in the tower which will show all the mountains, ponds and lakes, labeled for identification. Photographer Mark Kurtz is providing the photography for this project. Mark and FRIENDS, Scottie Adams, Dr. Ed Hixson and Rich Labombard did the photo shoot on October 6, 2016.

We hope to have summit stewards next summer on more days to provide educational information.

Future construction projects will include replacing all the cross braces, more painting and various other small projects.

Many thanks to the NYS police, DEC, FRIENDS and donors for all their contributions to restore and open the tower for public use.

See our Web site (<http://www.friendsofstregis.org/>) for more details of the whole process, lots of pictures, videos of the chopper event and a drone's eye view of the tower.

From the Friends of St. Regis Mountain Fire Tower Executive Committee.