



Forest Fire Lookout Association – New York Division

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2007 Annual Report

Coming off the successful fire tower restoration dedications in 2006 the FFLA-NY has become involved in several new restoration projects in 2007.

The first project is at Mt. Adams in the town of Newcomb in the Adirondack Mountains. At first all of the environmental groups had been against this fire tower being retained, but the efforts of several organizations and the FFLA-NY prevailed. The land containing Mt. Adams was purchased from NL Industries by the Open Space Institute (OSI), but the majority of this land will eventually fall under state ownership. OSI shall retain ownership of the land where the cabin and fire tower are located.

The Friends of Mt. Adams began restoration on the old observer's cabin last summer. This cabin is the first standard design cabin which was introduced in 1922 and the cabin at Mt. Adams is the only surviving cabin of this design.



Late in December the Friends of Mt. Adams received a \$500 restoration grant from the FFLA. Work will continue on the cabin in the spring of 2008 and the NYS Dept of Environmental Conservation are preparing to begin restoration of the fire tower in cooperation with the friends group.

The Friends of Mt. Adams is operating as a volunteer group under the OSI umbrella and in close cooperation with the town of Newcomb, N.Y.

The Beebe Hill Chapter of the FFLA-NY formed in 2006 and the chapter officially entered into an “Adopt-A-Natural Resource” agreement with the NYS Dept of Environmental Conservation. In 2007 the chapter also received a \$500 FFLA restoration grant. For a full account on the activities of the Beebe Hill chapter please refer to the chapter web site; www.beebehill.info



The Beebe Hill facility in May of 2007

The next project is located at Page Pond Hill near Binghamton, N.Y. Deputy State Director Warren Johnsen has been conducting this project. During the summer this project received a \$500 FFLA restoration grant. On October 13 & 14 several FFLA members came together to begin work at the Page Pond Hill Observatory. The participants were; Warren Johnsen, Deputy State Director Bob Eckler, two former Page Pond Hill forest fire observers Fred Murphy and Tom Vroman and Fred Lamb. Work at Page Pond will continue in 2008.



Next project on the list is Pillsbury Mountain, which is being lead by Deputy State Director Bob Eckler. The friends of the Forest at Pillsbury Mountain is a local chapter of the FFLA-NY and has been operating under an “Adopt-A-Natural Resource” agreement with the NYS Dept of Environmental Conservation since 2005. Work at Pillsbury has been delayed due to NYS-DEC administration issues and the final implementation of the Jessup River Wild Forest unit management plan. In the fall the chapter received a \$500 FFLA restoration grant to replace the roof on the aging observer’s cabin. NYS-DEC personnel will perform the roof replacement in the late spring of 2008.



The Pillsbury Mountain facility

Early in 2007 the Wakely Mountain Chapter of the FFLA-NY form under an “Adopt-A-Natural Resource” agreement with the NYS-DEC. Ann and Kevin MacBride head this group up. Until a formal restoration plan has been submitted and approved by the NYS-DEC and final implementation of the Blue Ridge Primitive Area unit management plan. Work is hoped to begin in 2008.



The Wakely Mountain cabin and fire tower

The NYS Dept of Environmental Conservation – Region 5 is currently working on a comprehensive fire tower plan for the Adirondack Park. Until this plan has been completed, reviewed by the Adirondack Park Agency (APA), put up for public comment, approval by the A.P.A and signed by Governor Spitzer any future fire tower restoration projects are on hold.

Hanging in the balance are the fates of the Hurricane Mtn. and St. Regis Mtn. fire towers. The retention of these two fire towers are being disputed by the major environmental groups as being “Non-Conforming” structures under the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan and with a new administration which is friendly to the desires of these Green groups the future looks bleak for these two fire towers. Although volunteer groups are in place to begin restoration work on these two fire towers.



Hurricane Mountain



St. Regis Mtn.

Informal talks have been held between the FFLA-NY and the Loon Lake Residents’ Committee concerning the possible restoration of the Loon Lake Mtn. fire tower. At present committee is investigating the formation of a restoration group to take on this project. The foot-trail leading up Loon Lake Mtn. currently passes over private property, but an easement for the state to this foot-trail will become affective in the spring of 2009.



The Loon Lake Mtn cabin and fire tower in 1974 by Bob Eckler