

1144



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Loon Lake Mountain Fire Observation Station

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Summit of Loon Lake Mountain not for publication

city or town Franklin vicinity

state New York code NY county Franklin code 17033 zip code 12970

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. See continuation sheet for additional comments.

Rudolf A. Peupont DSHPO 10/20/08
Deputy SHPO for Historic Preservation Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet for additional comments.

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper [Signature] Date of Action 12/5/2008

Station _____
Name of Property

_____ County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
_____	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____ 1 _____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
_____ 1 _____	_____	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

_____ Fire Observation Stations of the NYS Forest Preserve

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

_____ -0-

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

_____ GOVERNMENT/fire station _____

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

_____ Not in Use _____

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

_____ Utilitarian/firetower _____

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation _____ concrete _____
walls _____
roof _____
other _____ Metal: steel _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet****Loon Lake Mountain Fire Observation Station
Franklin County, NY**Section number 7 Page 1**Description**

The Loon Lake Mountain Fire Observation Station is located on state-owned land on the summit of Loon Lake Mountain (3,355') in the town of Franklin in northern Franklin County, New York. The tower is located in the area between the three US Geological Survey Markers on the highest point of the saddle-type summit (N44°33.492' W74°09.098'), which is mostly grown over by alpine evergreen trees, low blueberry bushes, and occasional mosses. The tower is located towards the north end of the only clearing of the summit, which is approximately 35 feet by 75 feet. The west portion of this clearing has a rock face, which drops downward steeply for about 30 feet and continues to drop off more gradually after that. Without the tower, the summit view is limited and one can only see views to the west, south and east.

The Loon Lake Mountain Station was established with a wood lookout tower in 1912(1), which was replaced in 1917 with the current thirty-five foot steel frame tower(2) with a nine-foot high cab. The tower was fabricated by the AerMotor Company and is typical of the "Heavier Type" tower with integral staircase erected by the Conservation Commission/Department between 1917 and 1950. The structure consists of a square steel and glass cab with a hip roof enclosing the observation platform, atop a riveted and bolted frame of angular steel. Steel stair risers, supporting wood stair treads, divided into five flights and four landings provide access to the cab from the ground. The four tower legs are anchored by standard coupling plates atop concrete footings placed on the exposed bedrock. The plates are anchored into the bedrock by two, ¾ inch steel threaded rods that pass through the concrete footings.

Although the last observer's cabin (N44°34.108' W74°08.730') and the original foot trail leading up to it and the tower still remain, as well as another foot trail up the mountain that was cut by the CCC in 1934.(3), they are all now on private property and the current owner does not wish to include them in the nomination. Currently, the observer's cabin is in significant disrepair. It is unclear when the first observer's cabin was built. The first noted mention of one was in 1922 when a notation was made that the cabin was repaired. It appears that the original cabin was of no standard design. (4) The original cabin was replaced in 1928 by a 1928 model observer cabin.(5) To get to the cabin, there is a separate footpath off to the right from the main footpath to the summit. This separate footpath is located about 10 yards from the old parking area after the first bridge. This footpath goes

1 Conservation Commission: *Report for the year 1912*. Albany. J.B. Lyon Co. 1913. Pg. 85

2 Conservation Commission: *Report for the year 1917*. Albany. J.B. Lyon Co. 1918. Pg. 85

3 Conservation Department: *Report for the year 1934*. Albany. J.B. Lyon Co. 1935. Pg. 101

4 Conservation Commission: *Report for the year 1922*. Albany. J.B. Lyon Co. 1923. Pg 166

5 Conservation Commission: *Report for the year 1928*. Albany. J.B. Lyon Co. 1929. Pg. 112

**United States Department of the Interior
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Continuation Sheet****Loon Lake Mountain Fire Observation Station
Franklin County, NY**Section number 7 Page 2

for approximately 300 yards through at times significant brush, as the trail is significantly grown over, and crosses two streams. A dam was built on the second stream just before the cabin, which would have been a good year-round source of water. The trailhead for the footpath cut by the CCC in 1934 is located on Old Route 99 (N44° 34.960' W74° 07.374'). It is approximately 1.2 miles long leading to the Loon Lake Mountain summit.

In the fall of 1971, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) closed the Loon Lake Fire Observation Station, and the tower has since been abandoned.

Contributing Structures: 1 (Tower)

Station _____
Name of Property _____

County and State _____

8 Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria considerations

(mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Conservation
- Engineering
- Recreation
- _____
- _____
- _____

Period of Significance

1917-1956

Significant Dates

1917

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

AerMotor Corporation (mfr.)

Primary location of additional data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet****Loon Lake Mountain Fire Observation Station
Franklin County, NY**Section number 8 Page 1

The **Loon Lake Mountain Fire Observation Station** is a component in the multiple property submission, **Fire Observation Stations of the NYS Forest Preserve**. It was identified as a historic resource in an unpublished inventory prepared by NYSDEC in 1991. Subsequently, with assistance from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Field Services Bureau, the **Loon Lake Mountain Fire Observation Station** was identified as meeting the criteria for listing on the State/National Register of Historic Places. Additional contextual information for the Loon Lake Fire Observation Station can be found in Sections **E: 1A *Recreation and Conservation in the Adirondacks and Catskills before the Forest Preserve, 1830-1885***; **E:1F *Conservation as a Social Service: Managing Recreation and Resource Protection with Fire Observation Stations, 1915-1930***; **E:2C *Standardized Fire Observation Stations, 1916-1932***; **E:2D *Impacts of the CCC and World War II, 1933-1950***; **E:2E *Decommissioning and Abandonment of the Fire Observation System 1951-1991***; and **E:2F *Adoption and Preservation of the Fire Observation Stations, 1992-2000*** of the Multiple Property Documentation Form. Additional associated property type information can be found in **Section F:1 *Steel Towers*** of the Multiple Property Documentation Form.

Statement of Significance

The Loon Lake Mountain Forest Fire Observation Station is significant under criteria A and C for its association with the New York State Forest Preserve and as an example of an early twentieth century forest fire observation tower.

Loon Lake Mountain (3,355') in northern Franklin County derives its name from the two-and-a-half-mile-long lake to the east of the mountain. During the late 1800s, Loon Lake attracted thousands of tourists who arrived at the hamlet of Inman's Station on one of two railroads, the Delaware & Hudson or the New York Central Adirondack Division. Many stayed at the famous Loon Lake House built by F. W. Chase in 1879.¹

In 1903, a forest fire raged to the south and east of Loon Lake. Then in 1905-1906, Loon Lake Mountain was logged. This created a lot of tops and debris in the forest. In 1908, there was a forest fire to the northwest of Loon Lake. The mountain was again logged in 1911-1912, and in 1913, a forest fire occurred to the north of Loon Lake.

The state established a fire tower observation station on Loon Lake Mountain in 1911 with a log tower and a tent or cabin for the observer. William Paye, from the town of Inman, was the first observer. He was paid sixty dollars a month plus twelve dollars for supplies.

 See continuation sheet

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Continuation Sheet

Loon Lake Mountain Fire Observation Station
Franklin County, NY

Section number 8 Page 2

In 1917, Forest Ranger Albert Tebeau, from the nearby hamlet of Owls Head, supervised the construction of a current steel tower on the summit. The tower is the typical "Heavier Type" tower with integral staircase built by the AerMotor Company for the Conservation Commission/Department between 1917 and 1950 for their fire observation stations in New York State. In 1921, a "Panoramic Map" was installed in the fire tower.¹

The 1922 Conservation Commission Report states that workers repaired the first cabin. In 1928, the state replaced the original cabin with a standard 12' x 16' cabin, which was roofed and sided with asphalt shingles.

During the 1927-1928 winter, strong winds blew the tower over, but it was restored in the Spring of 1928.²

A 1934 *Conservation Department Report* stated, "A sad note entered into the suppression of the Bay Pond fire when the body of Charles Williams, veteran observer at Loon Lake Mtn., was found on the trail between the cabin and tower, probably the victim of over-exertion."³ Leon Gonyea replaced him on the tower. During that same year, the CCC built a new foot trail to the tower.

The *Adirondack Enterprise* reported in the May 8, 1964 issue that on a large fire near Vermontville, Forest Ranger Harold Martin directed about a hundred firefighters from Paul Smith's College. The fire began on Paul Cass's land and moved over Church Mountain, Elmore Keith's property, and the state's pine plantation. The Conservation Department used thirty men to control the blaze, which consumed 250 acres of woods. The men were paid seventy-five cents an hour.

OBSERVERS

The following were observers on Loon Lake Mountain: William Paye (1912), James Quirk (1913-15), John J. Ryan (1916-17), ? (1918), John J. Ryan (1919), Bernard "Bryn" Paye (1920-24), Joseph Langlois (1925), Charles Williams (1926), Bernard Paye (1927), Charles Williams (1927-34), Leon Gonyea (1934-42), Michael Helley (1942), Joseph Makay (1943-46), Joseph Keith (1946), Ed Cochran (1947-49), William D. Plumley (1950-52), Paul S. Ferguson (1952-53), Bert Ducatt (1954-58), Mark Sperry (1959-64), Earl Forkey (1964-70), and Gerald Noreault (6/8, 1970).

¹ Conservation Commission: *Report for the year 1921*. Albany. J.B. Lyon Co. 1922. Pg. 109.

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Loon Lake Mountain Fire Observation Station
Franklin County, NY

Section number 8 Page 3

RANGERS

These forest rangers supervised the tower: Peter O'Malley (1911), A. I. Vosburgh (1911-13), James Keese (1912-14), George Tyler (1916-17), Tom Derby (1919-57), Rob Brown (1950-73), Harold E. Martin (1958-82), and John Dalton (1982-99).

Additional information on Loon Lake's Observers and Rangers can be found in *Adirondack Fire Towers: Their History and Lore, the Northern Districts* by Marty Podskoch.

In the Fall of 1971, The NYSDEC closed the Loon Lake Mountain Fire Tower. The tower has been abandoned but remains standing on Loon Lake Mountain. Although the state owns the summit and the fire tower, there is no public access to it because International Paper owns the land around the mountain. This land is leased to the Tower Mountain Club. Presently, efforts are being made by the DEC and International Paper to reopen the trail to the public.

FOOTNOTES:

- 1 Floy S. Hyde, *Water over the Dam at Mountain View in the Adirondacks: Early Resort Days in the Great North Woods*, New York: Vail Ballou Press Inc., 1970, pp. 362-363.
- 2 *The Conservation Department Report 1928*, Albany: 1929, p.112.
- 3 *The Conservation Department Report 1934*, Albany: 1935, p. 103.

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Loon Lake Mountain Fire Observation Station
Franklin County, NY

Section number 9 Page 1

Bibliography

- Adirondack Fire Towers Get New Lease on Life". *Adirondack Explorer*. Aug.1998. Pp. 14-15.
- Briggs, James. "Interest in Adirondack Fire Towers Growing". *Hamilton County News*. April 13, 1993. Pg. 10.
- Hyde, Floy S. *Water over the Dam at Mountain View in the Adirondacks: Early Resort Days in the Great North Woods*. New York. Vail Ballou Press Inc., 1970. Pp. 362-363.
- Karlin, Rick. "Renovating Adirondack Lookouts A Tall Order". *Albany Times-Union*. Aug. 2, 1998. Pg. A-3.
- Podskoch, Martin. *Adirondack Firetowers Their History and Lore, The Northern Districts*. Fleischmanns, New York: Purple Mountain press, 2005, Pp. 163-169.
- "Room with a View". *Adirondack Life*. June 1993. Pg. 16.
- Russell, Matthew. "New Use for Fire Towers Could Include Educational Initiative". *Daily Enterprise*. Feb. 4, 1993. Pp. 1,10.
- Williams, Stephen. "Lookout Lore". *The Sunday Gazette*. May 20, 2001. Pf. H-1, H-2.
- Conservation Commission: *Report for the year 1912*. Albany. J.B. Lyon Co.. 1913. Pg. 85.
Report for the year 1917. " " " 1918 Pg. 85
Report for the year 1921. " " " 1922. Pg. 109.
Report for the year 1922. " " " 1923. Pg. 166
Report for the year 1928. " " " 1929, p.112.
Report for the year 1934. " " " 1935. Pp.. 101, 103.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Loon Lake Mountain Fire Observation Station

MULTIPLE NAME: Fire Observation Stations of New York State Forest Preserve
MPS

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Franklin

DATE RECEIVED: 10/24/08 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 11/10/08
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 11/25/08 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/07/08
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 08001144

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 12/5/08 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

A good state example of a Fire observation tower. Originally constructed in 1912 as a wood tower. This 1917 metal frame tower replaced the original.

RECOM./CRITERIA ASAC

REVIEWER [Signature]

DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____

DATE 12/5/08

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N (N)

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



①

LOON LAKE Mtn. FIRE OBSERVATION
STATION

FRANKLIN COUNTY, NY

Photo by: David Petrelli;

1008 CR 25

MALONE, NY 12953

DATE: 7/7/05

FIRE TOWER w/view - looking west



②

Loon Lake Mtn. Fire Observation
STATION

FRANKLIN County, NY

Photo by: David Petrelli
1008 CR 25
Malone, NY 12953

DATE: 7/7/05

FIRE TOWER LOOKING WEST



LOON LAKE Mtn. Fire Observation ^③
FRANKLIN County, NY Station

Photo by: David Petrelli

1008 CR 25

Malone, NY 12953

Date: 7/7/05

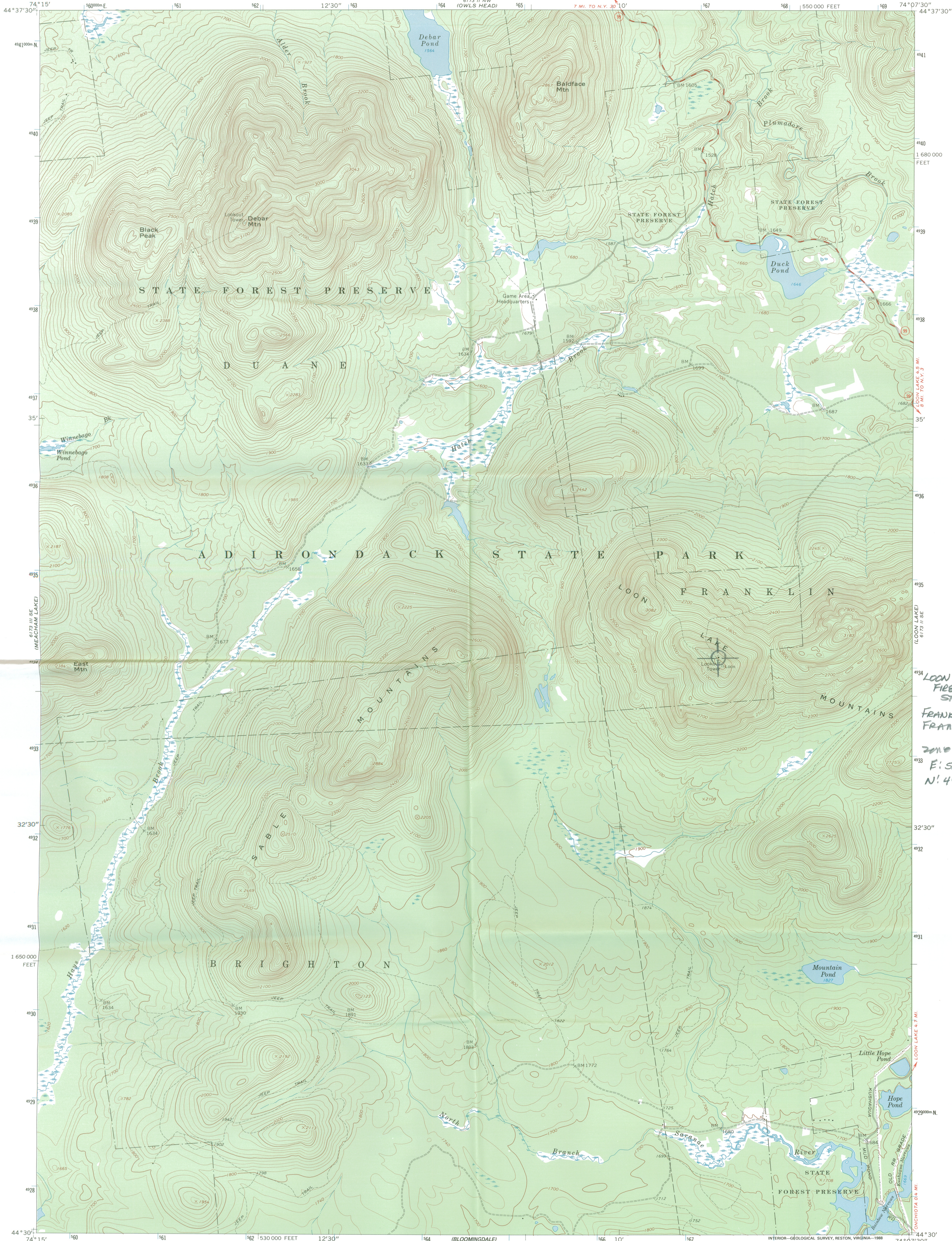
Firetower - detail of STEPS + CAB



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

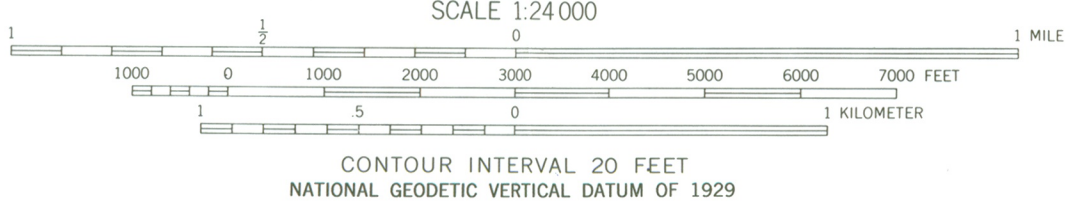
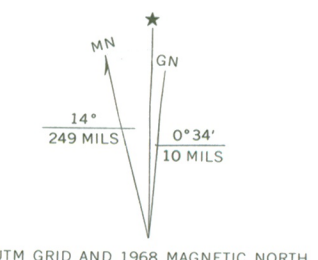
STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DEBAR MOUNTAIN QUADRANGLE
NEW YORK-FRANKLIN CO.
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
SW 1/4 LOON LAKE 15' QUADRANGLE



LOON LAKE Mtn
FREE OBSERVATION
STATION
FRANKLIN (T)
FRANKLIN COUNTY, NY
2010.18
E: 567363.485
N: 4934226.782

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and USC&GS
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial
photographs taken 1965. Field checked 1968
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on New York coordinate system, east zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 18, shown in blue
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983
move the projection lines 2 meters south and
32 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks
Map photoinspected 1980
No major culture or drainage changes observed



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Secondary highway, all weather, hard surface	Light-duty road, all weather, improved surface
Unimproved road, fair or dry weather	State Route

DEBAR MOUNTAIN, N. Y.
SW 1/4 LOON LAKE 15' QUADRANGLE
44074-E2-TF-024

1968
PHOTOINSPECTED 1980
DMA 6175 II SW-SERIES V821



TOWN OF FRANKLIN

7 COLD BROOK ROAD
P.O. BOX 209
VERMONTVILLE, NY 12989
email: franklinclerk@adelphia.net

Paul

Sandra J. Oliver
Town Clerk/Tax Collector

Tel: (518) 891-2189
Fax: (518) 891-6389

March 21, 2006

Hon. Bernadette Castro
NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Empire State Plaza, Agency Building 1
Albany, NY 12238

Dear Commissioner Castro,

At its monthly Board meeting on March 13, 2006, the Town Board of the Town of Franklin passed the following resolution concerning the Loon Lake Fire Tower:

RESOLUTION NO. 19: SUPPORT DESIGNATION OF LOON LAKE FIRE TOWER AS HISTORIC BUILDING

WHEREAS, the Loon Lake Fire Tower has been in existence for many years and has served the public; and WHEREAS, said Fire Tower is a building which engenders a feeling of security for residents of the area; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Franklin supports the consideration by the NY State Review Board of the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation of the Loon Lake Fire Tower as a historic building to be placed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places.

THOSE VOTING AYE: Supervisor Mary Ellen Keith
Councilman Gene Goff
Councilman Tim Goff
Councilman Walt Kretser
Councilperson Janet Ordway

THOSE VOTING NAY: None

This is to certify that I, Sandra J. Oliver, Town Clerk of the Town of Franklin in the County of Franklin, New York, DO HEREBY CERTIFY, that I have compared the foregoing with the original resolution adopted by the Town Board of the Town of Franklin at a meeting of said board held on the **13th day of March, 2006**, and that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of said original and whole thereof, and that said original is on file in my office.

Sandra J. Oliver
Sandra J. Oliver, Town Clerk

Sincerely,

Sandra J. Oliver
Sandra J. Oliver



cc: NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation, Albany
NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation, Ray Brook

RECEIVED
MAR 24 2006
COMMISSIONER
PARKS, REC & HIS. PRES

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

Division of Lands & Forests

Bureau of Public Lands, 5th Floor

625 Broadway, Albany, New York 12233-4255

Phone: (518) 402-9428 • **FAX:** (518) 402-9028

Website: www.dec.state.ny.us



Denise M. Sheehan
Acting
Commissioner

Ms. Ruth Pierpont
Chief, Historic Preservation Field Services
Office of Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation
Peebles Island State Park
PO Box 189
Waterford, New York 12188-0189

June 22, 2006

RE: Loon Lake Mountain Fire Tower
Franklin (T), Franklin County

Dear ~~Ms.~~ Pierpont:

The purpose of this letter is to indicate that the Department of Environmental Conservation endorses the nomination of the Loon Lake Mountain Fire Tower to the National Register of Historic Places.

Should you or your staff have any questions or require further information, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Charles E. Vandrei
Agency Historic Preservation Officer



**New York State Office of Parks,
Recreation and Historic Preservation**

Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau • Peebles Island, PO Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189

518-237-8643

www.nysparks.com



David A. Paterson
Governor

Carol Ash
Commissioner

October 23, 2008

Ms. Alexis Abernathy
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye St. NW
8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: Transmittal of National Register
Nominations

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to transmit four new National Register nominations to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register as follows:

Richmond Avenue Methodist-Episcopal Church, Buffalo, Erie Co., NY

Home Farm, East Whitehall, Washington Co., NY

Piermont Railroad Station, Rockland Co., NY

Loon Lake Mountain Fire Observation Station, Franklin Co., NY
(Fire Observation Stations of the NYS Forest Preserve MPDF)

Thank you for your assistance in processing these proposals. Please feel free to call on me at 518-237-8643 ext. 3258 if any questions arise.

Sincerely,

Mark L. Peckham
National Register
Program Coordinator

enclosures