PROTECT THE ADIRONDACKS!

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November 11, 2026

Kathy Moser, Commissioner
NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12238

RE: OPRHP Review of Projects Impacting the Adirondack Forest Preserve; National Register of Historic Places, Asset ID No. 98acd56f-0836-4683-b2e0-6bc1d518c1ed

Dear Commissioner Moser:

Protect the Adirondacks (PROTECT) recently reviewed an application seeking approval from the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) to bury a public utility line within the road corridor of NYS Route 30 on Forest Preserve lands that are part of the Jessup River Wild Forest in Hamilton County in the Adirondack Park. It is our understanding that the public utility line will involve the underground installation of approximately 9 miles of broadband fiber, some of which traverses Forest Preserve lands.

APA is reviewing the proposed project pursuant to Adirondack Park Agency Act § 814. In addition, the portion of the project sited on Forest Preserve lands must be reviewed by the Department of Environmental Conservation pursuant to Article 14, section 6 of the New York State Constitution and Environmental Conservation Law (ECL) § 9-2103. Review pursuant to these provisions involves the applicant consulting with the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) to determine whether the project is located in or substantially contiguous to a site listed on the National or State Register of Historic Places.

This is the third utility line project within the past two years that has been proposed to be located on the Adirondack Forest Preserve. In all three project reviews by APA, OPRHP provided ambiguous comment letters to APA in 2024. The letters appear to incorrectly imply that no listed resources are involved or, alternatively, that the projects will have no impacts to listed resources. The three 2024 OPRHP comment letters are enclosed for your reference.

In each of the letters, OPRHP claimed that "no properties, including archaeological and/or historic resources, listed in or eligible for the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places will be impacted by this project".

The letters could be interpreted as stating that the proposed projects are not located in or substantially contiguous to a site listed on or eligible for the National or State Register of Historic Places. As you know, the Adirondack Forest Preserve is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and the proposed projects are therefore located within a site listed on the National Register. *See* National Register of Historic Places, Asset ID No. 98acd56f-0836-4683-b2e0-6bc1d518c1ed[1].

Alternatively, the OPRHP comment letters could be interpreted as stating that OPRHP concluded that the Adirondack Forest Preserve, a resource listed on the National Register of Historic Places, will not be "impacted" by the projects. If this was the intended import of the letters, however, there is no explanation or analysis provided that would support that conclusion. At a minimum, the letters create uncertainty about whether applicants are sufficiently informed about the listed status of the Adirondack Forest Preserve and whether OPRHP is adequately assessing potential project impacts to the Adirondack Forest Preserve.

This uncertainty is reflected in APA's letter to the applicant for the most recent project, a copy of which is enclosed for your reference. APA required the applicant to obtain a revised determination from OPRHP as to whether the proposed project may impact the Adirondack Forest Preserve. APA requested this clarification because OPRHP's letter does "not appear to address this directly"[2].

Consequently, PROTECT respectfully requests that OPRHP clarify its determinations about these projects on the Forest Preserve. With respect to the recent project currently under review, OPRHP should confirm that the project will be located on or substantially contiguous to a listed property and provide an analysis of whether the proposed project may adversely impact the attributes that are the basis for inclusion of the Adirondack Forest Preserve on the National Register.

Going forward, we request that OPRHP's comment letters to APA concerning projects located in the Adirondack Park clearly state that the Adirondack Forest Preserve is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. We also request that OPRHP evaluate the impacts of proposed projects on the Forest Preserve and include the results of that evaluation, with supporting analysis, in the comment letters.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of PROTECT, thank for your time and consideration of our concerns regarding OPRHP's review of projects that may impact the Adirondack Forest Preserve, an important ecological and historic resource belonging to the State of New York.

Sincerely,

Claudia K. Braymer

Claudia Braymer
Executive Director
enc.

[1] Available at https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/66000891.
[2] Initially the proposed project involved the installation of overhead utility wires and new utility poles in the Jessup River Wild Forest, but the proposal has since been modified to use underground utility lines.