



ADIRONDACK  
**Powder Skier Association**

May 23, 2013

Mr. Dan Levy  
Planning Coordinator, New York State DEC Region 5

Re: Adirondack Powder Skier Association, Inc.  
Lyon Mountain—Chazy Highlands Wild Forest Unit Mgt. Plan

Dear Mr. Levy:

On behalf of the Adirondack Powder Skier Association, Inc. (“APSA”), please accept the following comments regarding the existing recreational uses and proposed management for the Chazy Highlands Wild Forest Unit Management Plan.

The APSA is a non-profit corporation whose members are some of the most experienced, skilled and knowledgeable backcountry skiers in the Adirondacks. Our group was formed in order to provide a user-based association of local backcountry skiers whose combined vision and knowledge will speak in a unified voice for the previously silent Adirondack powder skier. The shared goal of APSA is to study, protect, promote and enhance low-impact human powered snow sports, specifically alpine glade skiing, on public and quasi-public lands in the Adirondack Mountains of New York. The purpose of this statement is to provide comments to assist the DEC and the APA in the development of the Unit Management Plan (“UMP”) for Chazy Highlands Wild Forest—which encompasses Lyon Mountain.

Historically, Lyon Mountain has been subject to intense use. Over the past century, it has seen significant logging, mining, road construction, fire tower access, telecommunication tower construction, and in fact, used to contain the Lowenburg ski area. During the past three decades—when the property was privately held—a network of backcountry ski glades was developed and managed on the mountain. Now that this land has been recently sold to the people of the State of New York, the DEC has a duty to acknowledge this use and implement appropriate management protocols in this UMP. By far, the primary recreational use of the mountain from December through April is backcountry skiing. Due to the inordinate amount of snow, as well as the sloping terrain and mature forests, Lyon Mountain provides exceptional backcountry skiing opportunities. When we combine this natural resource with the advancements in the alpine-touring ski equipment, it comes as no surprise that the number of backcountry skiers using Lyon Mountain is exploding. However, the APSA fears that absent recognition by the DEC and the APA in the UMP of this historic and widespread use of Lyon Mountain by backcountry skiers—such that the existing glade zones are extinguished or otherwise re-vegetated with scrub brush—this fabulous resource will be destroyed. By law, the DEC cannot simply ignore this existing widespread and conforming use when developing this UMP.