

The Fire Towers of the New York State Bureau of Forest Fire Control
With Detailed Information for the Fire Tower Restoration Groups

© Copyright 1984 and 2003 Unpublished Work by Bill Starr

Former N.Y.S. Forest Fire Observer on Pillsbury Mountain

and Fire Tower Historian

This is currently a Draft Document

The Fire Towers of the NYS Bureau of Forest Fire Control

<u>Station</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Yr Est. & of Steel Tower</u>	<u>Model/Ht-ft</u>	<u>Elev</u>	<u>Status</u>
<u>District 1 (R4)</u>					
1. Bramley Mtn.	Delaware	1950-1950	AM LS-40 80'	2,817'	Removed
2. Hooker Hill	Otsego	1935-1935	ID 1933 76'9"	2,320'	Removed
3. Leonard Hill	Schoharie	1948-1948	AM LS-40 80'	2,620'	Remains
4. Petersburg Mtn.	Schoharie	1940-1940	ID 1937 67'6"	2,320'	Removed
5. Rock Rift Mtn	Delaware	1934-1934	ID 1933 72'9"	2,402'	Remains/Private Land
6. Twadell Point	Delaware	1910-1919	AM LS-40 47'	2,296'	Remains/Private Land
7. Utsayantha Mtn.	Delaware	1934-1934	ID 1933 59'3"	3,214'	Remains
<u>District 2 (R7)</u>					
8. Berry Hill	Chenango	1934-1934	ID 1933 59'3"	1,960'	Remains/Radio Equip.
9. Brookfield Mtn.	Madison	1948-1948	ID 1933 79'6"	1,900'	Removed
10. Chenango Lake**	Chenango	1935-1935	ID 1933 79'6"	1,966'	Moved to Brookfield
11. Georgetown Mtn.	Madison	1940-1940	ID 1937 67'6"	2,140'	Removed
12. Ingraham Hill	Broome	1950-1950	AM LS-40 80'	1,860'	Remains/Radio Equip.
13. Page Pond Hill	Broome	1935-1935	ID 1933 76'9"	2,000'	Remains/Private Land
<u>District 3 (R7)</u>					
14. Morgan Hill	Cortland	1941-1941	ID 1937 67'6"	2,020'	Removed
15. Padlock Hill	Tompkins	1940-1940	ID 1937 67'6"	1,900'	Removed
<u>District 4 (R8)</u>					
16. Alma Hill	Allegany	1950-1950	AM LS-40 80'	2,548'	Remains/Private Land
17. Erwin Mtn.	Steuben	1940-1940	ID 1937 82'6"	1,710'	Removed
18. Jersey Hill	Allegany	1935-1935	ID 1933 79'6"	2,240'	Removed
19. Prattsburg Mtn.	Steuben	1950-1950	AM LS-40 80'	2,163'	Removed
20. Sugar Hill	Schuyler	1941-1941	ID 1937 67'6"	2,090'	Maintained by DEC
<u>District 5 (R9)</u>					
21. Hartzfelt Hill	Cattaragus	1924-1924	AM LS-40 60'	2,410'	Removed
22. Mc Carty Hill	Cattaragus	1940-1940	ID 1937 82'6"	2,323'	Removed
23. Summit Hill	Cattaragus	1926-1926	AM LS-40 60'	2,385'	Restoring

** No Picture as of July 27, 2006

<u>Station</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Yr Est & of Steel Tower</u>	<u>Model/Ht-ft</u>	<u>Elev</u>	<u>Status</u>
<u>District 6 (R6)</u>					
24. Bald Mtn. a	Lewis	1911-1919	AM LS-40 47'	1,640'	Removed
25. Caster Hill	Oswego	1927-1927	AM LS-40 80'	1,560'	Removed
26. Gomer Hill	Lewis	1940-1940	ID 1937 67'6"	2,120'	Remains/Radio Equip.
27. New Boston	Lewis	1950-1950	AM LS-40 80'	1,643'	Removed
28. Number Four a	Lewis	1928-1928	AM LS-40 73'	1,540'	Removed
<u>District 7 (R6)</u>					
29. Arab Mtn. a	St. Lawrence	1911-1918	AM LS-40 35'	2,519'	Restored
30. Cat Mtn. a	St. Lawrence	1910-1917	AM LS-40 47'	2,260'	Removed
31. Catamount Mtn. a	St. Lawrence	1911-1917	AM LS-40 47'	1,820'	Removed
32. Moosehead Mtn. a	St. Lawrence	1910-1916	AM LL-25 40'	2,060'	Removed
33. Sand Hill**	St. Lawrence	1950-1950	AM LS-40 80'	320'	Removed
34. Tooley Pond Mtn. a	St. Lawrence	1913-1919	AM LS-40 47'	1,782'	Removed
35. Whites Hill a	St. Lawrence	1950-1950	AM LS-40 80'	1,436'	Removed
<u>District 8 (R6)</u>					
36. Beaver Lake Mtn. a	Herkimer	1910-1919	AM LS-40 47'	1,726'	Removed
37. Dairy Hill	Herkimer	1934-1934	ID 1933 79'6"	1,812'	Removed
38. Fort Noble Mtn. a	Herkimer	1910-1916	AM LL-25 50'	2,338'	Removed
39. Moose River Mtn. a	Herkimer	1912-1919	AM LS-40 60'	2,205'	Removed
40. Penn Mtn.	Herkimer	1950-1950	AM LS-40 80'	1,813'	Removed
41. Rondaxe Mtn. a	Herkimer	1912-1917	AM LS-40 35'	2,349'	Restored
42. Stillwater Mtn. a	Herkimer	1912-1919	AM LS-40 47'	2,267'	Remains/Private Land
43. Swancott Hill	Lewis	1940-1940	ID 1933 99'9"	1,500'	Removed
44. Woodhull Mtn. a	Herkimer	1911-1916	AM LL-25 50'	2,365'	Remains/Radio Equip.
<u>District 9 (R5)</u>					
45. Adams Mtn. a	Essex	1912-1917	AM LS-40 47'	3,520'	Awaiting Restoration
46. Ampersand Mtn. a	Franklin	1911-1921	AM LS-40 22'	3,313'	Removed
47. Azure Mtn. a	Franklin	1914-1918	AM LS-40 35'	2,500'	Restored
48. Belfry Mtn. a	Essex	1912-1917	AM LS-40 47'	1,863'	Remains/Radio Equip.

** No Picture as of July 27, 2006

a denotes a location within the Adirondack Forest Preserve

<u>Station</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Yr. Est & of Steel Tower</u>	<u>Model/Ht-ft</u>	<u>Elev</u>	<u>Status</u>
<u>District 9 (R5) con't</u>					
49. Boreas Mtn. a	Essex	1911-1919	AM LS-40 47'	3,776'	Removed
50. De Bar Mtn. a	Franklin	1912-1918	AM LS-40 35'	3,300'	Removed
51. Goodnow Mtn. a	Essex	1921-1921	AM LS-40 60'	2,690'	Restored
52. Hurricane Mtn. a	Essex	1910-1919	AM LS-40 35'	3,678'	Remains
53. Loon Lake Mtn. a	Franklin	1912-1917	AM LS-40 35'	3,320'	Remains
54. Lyon Mtn. a	Clinton	1910-1917	AM LS-40 35'	3,820'	Remains/Private Land
55. Makomis Mtn. a	Essex	1911-1916	AM LL-25 40'	1,663'	Removed
56. Mt. Morris a	Franklin	1909-1919	AM LS-40 22'	3,136'	Remains/Private Land
57. Palmer Hill a	Clinton	1930-1930	AM LS-40 60'	1,148'	Remains/Radio Equip.
58. Pharoah Mtn. a	Essex	1910-1918	AM LS-40 35'	2,556'	Removed
59. Poke-O-Moonshine Mt. a	Essex	1912-1917	AM LS-40 35'	2,165'	Restored
60. St. Regis Mtn. a	Franklin	1910-1918	AM LS-40 35'	2,874'	Awaiting Restoration
61. Vanderwacker Mtn. a	Essex	1911-1918	AM LS-40 35'	3,409'	Restored
62. Whitface Mtn. a	Essex	1909-1919	AM LS-40 22'	4,865'	Removed
<u>District 10 (R5)</u>					
63. Blue Mtn. a	Hamilton	1911-1917	AM LS-40 35'	3,759'	Restored
64. Cathead Mtn. a	Hamilton	1910-1916	AM LL-25 50'	2,431'	Remains/Radio Equip.
65. Dunn Brook Mtn.** a	Hamilton	1911	No Steel Tower	3,605'	Removed 1918
66. Hamilton Mtn. a	Hamilton	1909-1916	AM LL-25 50'	3,238'	Removed
67. Kane Mtn. a	Fulton	1925-1925	AM LS-40 60'	2,200'	Restored
68. Kempshall Mtn. a	Hamilton	1911-1918	AM LS-40 35'	3,346'	Removed
69. Owls Head Mtn. a	Hamilton	1911-1919	AM LS-40 35'	2,812'	Restored
70. Pillsbury Mtn. a	Hamilton	1918-1924	AM LS-40 60'	3,597'	Restoring/Radio Equip.
71. Snowy Mtn. a	Hamilton	1909-1917	AM LS-40 42'	3,897'	Restored
72. T – Lake Mtn. a	Hamilton	1916-1916	AM LL-25 50'	3,071'	Removed
73. Tomany Mtn. a	Hamilton	1912-1916	AM LL-25 50'	2,579'	Removed
74. Wakely Mtn. a	Hamilton	1911-1916	AM LL-25 70'	3,766'	Awaiting Restoration
75. West Mtn. a	Hamilton	1909-1920	AM LS-40 47'	2,913'	Removed

** No Picture as of July 27, 2006

a denotes a location within the Adirondack Forest Preserve

<u>Station</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Yr Est & of Steel Tower</u>	<u>Model/Ht-ft</u>	<u>Elev</u>	<u>Status</u>
<u>District 11 (R5)</u>					
76. Black Mtn. a	Washington	1911-1918	AM LS-40 35'	2,640'	Remains/Radio Equip.
77. Colfax Mtn.	Washington	1950-1950	AM LS-40 80'	1,267'	Remains/Radio Equip.
78. Cornell Hill	Saratoga	1924-1924	AM LS-40 60'	420'	Remains/Private Land
79. Crane Mtn. a	Warren	1911-1919	AM LS-40 35'	3,420'	Removed
80. Gore Mtn. a	Warren	1909-1918	AM LS-40 60'	3,562'	Remains/Radio Equip.
81. Hadley Mtn. a	Saratoga	1917-1917	AM LL-25 40'	2,680'	Restored
82. Ohmer Mtn.** a	Saratoga	1911	No Steel Tower	2,565'	Removed 1915
83. Prospect Mtn. a	Warren	1910-1932	AM LS-40 47'	2,020'	Removed
84. Spruce Mtn. a	Saratoga	1928-1928	AM LS-40 73'	2,009'	Remains/Private Land
85. Swede Mtn. a	Warren	1912-1918	AM LS-40 47'	1,900'	Remains/Private Land
<u>District 12 (R4)</u>					
86. Beebe Hill	Columbia	1964-1964	AM LS-40 60'	1,726'	Restored
87. Dickinson Hill	Rensselaer	1924-1924	AM LS-40 60'	1,760'	Remains
88. Hunter Mtn.	Greene	1909-1917	AM LS-40 60'	4,040'	Restored
89. Number Seven Hill	Rensselaer	1923-1923	AM LS-40 60'	2,010'	Removed
90. Washburn Mtn.	Columbia	1933-1933	AM LS-40 60'	1,542'	Moved to Beebe Hill
<u>District 13 (R3)</u>					
91. Balsam Lake Mtn.	Ulster	1887-1920	AM LS-40 47'	3,720'	Restored
92. Belleayre Mtn.	Ulster	1905-1930	AM LS-40 73'	3,375'	Removed
93. Chapin Hill	Sullivan	1924-1924	AM LS-40 60'	1,420'	Removed
94. Gallis Hill**	Ulster	1927-1927	AM LS-40 60'	780'	Moved To Overlook Mtn.
95. Graham Mtn.	Orange	1948-1948	AM LS-40 60'	1,300'	Remains
96. High Point Mtn.	Ulster	1912-1919	AM LS-40 47'	2,200'	Removed
97. Jackie Jones Mtn.	Rockland	1928-1928	AM LS-40 60'	1,260'	Remains
98. Mohonk Mtn.	Ulster	1912-1923	Stone Structure	1,610'	Remains
99. Overlook Mtn.	Ulster	1950-1950	AM LS-40 60'	3,120'	Restored
100. Pocatello Mtn.	Orange	1930-1930	AM LS-40 60'	1,020'	Moved to Graham Mtn.
101. Red Hill	Ulster	1920-1920	AM LS-40 60'	2,980'	Restored

** No Picture as of July 27, 2006

a denotes a location within the Adirondack Forest Preserve

<u>Station</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Yr Est & Of Steel Tower</u>	<u>Model/Ht-ft</u>	<u>Elev</u>	<u>Status</u>
<u>District 13 (R3) con't</u>					
102. Roosa Gap	Sullivan	1948-1948	AM LS-40 47'	1,647'	Remains/Radio Equip.
103. Slide Mtn.	Ulster	1912	No Steel Tower	4,180'	Removed 1915
104. Sterling Mtn.	Orange	1923-1923	AM LS-40 60'	1,320'	Active/Volunteers
105. Tremper Mtn.	Ulster	1917-1917	AM LS-40 47'	2,720'	Restored
<u>District 14 (R3)</u>					
106. Beacon Mtn.	Dutchess	1922-1931	AM LS-40 60'	1,600'	Remains
107. Clove Mtn.	Dutchess	1933-1933	AM LS-40 60'	1,400'	Remains/Private Land
108. Cross River Mtn.	Westchester	1931-1931	AM LS-40 60'	800'	Sold/Removed
109. Nelson Mtn.	Westchester	1950-1950	AM LS-40 80'	540'	Removed
110. Ninham Mtn.	Putnam	1940-1940	ID 1937 82'6"	1,340'	Restored
111. Stissing Mtn.	Dutchess	1934-1934	ID 1933 79'6"	1,370'	Restored
<u>District 15 (R1) Long Island</u>					
112. Bayshore	Suffolk	1948-1948	AM LS-40 80'	?	Removed
113. Camp Upton	Suffolk	1932-1932	AM LS-40 60'	100'	Removed
114. Clock ##	Suffolk	1920 Only	No Steel Tower		
115. Dix Hill	Suffolk	1922-1922	AM LS-40 60'	324'	Removed
116. Flanders Hill	Suffolk	1918-1918	AM LS-40 47'	236'	Removed
117. Kings Park	Suffolk	1948-1948	AM LS-40 80'	220'	Removed
118. Oakdale	Suffolk	1921 Only	No Steel Tower		
119. Stony Hill**	Suffolk	1930-1930	AM LS-40 73'	150'	Removed
120. Telescope Hill	Suffolk	1918-1918	AM LS-40 60'	334'	Removed
<u>Privately Built, Owned, and Operated Adirondack Fire Towers That Worked In Conjunction With State Fire Towers</u>					
121. Buck Mtn.	Hamilton	1933-1933	AM LS-40 60'	2,395'	Whitney Industries
122. Meenagha Mtn.	Franklin	1927-1927	AM LS-40 73'	2,067'	Adrk/Fla. School
123. Mt. Electra	Herkimer	1920-1920	AM LS-40 60'	2,303'	Nehasane Park
124. Salmon Lake Mtn.	Hamilton	1932-1932	AM LX-24 35'	2,523'	Whitney Industries

All remain standing on **private lands** with the exception of Mt. Electra.

No Picture as of July 27, 2006 and doubtful one will be available.

** No Picture as of July 27, 2006

1. **“AM” designation is for an AerMotor fire tower.**
2. **“ID” designation is for an International Derrick fire tower.**
3. Fire tower height, make, and model determined from photographic interpretation by Capt. Paul Hartmann, NYS Forest Rangers (ret).
4. As determined by factory blue prints the height of a fire tower is measured to the floor of the tower cab. Regardless of tower height cab dimensions are equal. The concrete footings are also **not** calculated in determining tower height. These footings vary in height from fire tower to fire tower, they were placed to provide a level plane to erect the fire tower upon.
5. Today many fire towers support or contain two-way radio equipment. For safety reasons these fire towers are no longer open to the public.
6. Respect the rights of land owners. The private fire towers in the Adirondacks are still **private**. Some fire towers are on private land, **do not** trespass, this may actually prompt these people to remove those towers to discourage uninvited visitors!!

2005 Inventory of the Fire Towers of the NYS Bureau of Forest Fire Control

As of July 27, 2006

124 – Total fire detection sites.

4 – Privately owned and operated fire towers.

6 – Locations never upgraded with a steel fire tower.

1 – Location upgraded to a stone masonry structure.

3 – Steel fire towers re-located to another site.

110 – Individual steel fire towers owned by Forest Fire Control.

81 – AerMotor Model LS-40 fire towers.

10 – AerMotor Model LL-25 fire towers.

12 – International Derrick Model 1933 fire towers.

7 - International Derrick Model 1937 fire towers.

53 – Fire Towers Removed.

23 – Fire towers in various stages of restoration.

9 - Fire towers remaining in place.

10 – Fire towers supporting or containing radio equipment, closed to public.

10 – Fire towers remaining in place on private lands.

4 – Fire towers sold, on private lands.

1 - Active fire tower supported and operated by volunteers.

57 – Fire towers remaining in place.

Facts and Notes About Certain Fire Towers

- Arab Mtn. The tower and Observer cabin has been fully restored by the “Friends of Mt. Arab” and is open to the public. This facility is registered on the National Register of Historic Places, and the National Historic Lookout Register.
- Azure Mtn. This tower has been fully restored by the “Azure Mountain Friends” and is open to the public. The tower is registered on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Bald Mtn. This facility is not to be confused with the Bald Mtn. near Old Forge, N.Y. Established in 1911 the Bald Mtn. near Old Forge was established in 1912. Two Bald mountains could not exist as fire towers so the name Rondaxe Mtn. was given to the Bald Mtn. near Old Forge, taking the name from the adjacent Rondaxe Lake, a fact that has never rested well with the Old Forge community. Onwership of the Bald Mtn. facility was transferred to the land owner, where it stood, about 1975 since the station was closed and would not re-open. The Diamond Match Co. owner of the land did not want to encourage the public to continue to visit the tower so they had the tower removed. The tower had two of the legs cut and it was pulled over. The tower now rests where it fell nearly 30 years ago.
- Balsam Lake Mtn. This facility is the oldest documented forest fire observatory within New York State. In 1887 the land was owned by the Balsam Lake Club, and fire was a serious concern to large land owners such as the club. They erected a tower made from timbers found on the mountain top and paid a man to staff the tower during dry conditions. This tower was struck by lightning and burned down about 1901. The club built a similar wood tower on the mountain in 1905. When the state began their fire tower system in 1909 operation of the Balsam Lake Mtn. facility was transferred to the state. The tower has been fully restored and is open to the public. It is also registered on the National Register of Historic Places, and the National Historic Lookout Register.
- Beacon Mtn. This station appears in the 1922 and 1924 Annual Reports to the Legislature as South Beacon Mtn. which was first established with no tower of any kind. During this time when the Observer spotted a fire he had to walk a quarter mile down the foot trail to a tree where the telephone line ended. He then had to climb that tree to dial out on a temporary type telephone. This facility was upgrade to a steel fire tower in 1931. Awaiting restoration group formation.
- Beaver Lake Mtn. This is one of the oldest forest fire observatories within the state, established in 1910 with a wood tower, then upgraded to a steel tower in 1919. This facility operated continuously until World War Two. During the war turn over of Observers was unusually high at this station, it was nearly impossible to keep the tower staffed. The state temporarily closed the tower in 1945, and with the operation of the nearby Number Four fire tower by the state began in 1950 the Beaver Lake Mtn. facility was abandoned. In 1977 a crew of Forest Rangers led by District Forest Ranger Bob Bailey dismantled the tower, and the pieces were flown out by helicopter.
- Beebe Hill This is the third site that this fire tower has stood upon. In 1928 the Taconic State Park Commission erected the tower on Alander Mtn., just barely within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, for the sole purpose of detecting fires on park land. In 1930 the area at Alander Mtn. burned, and the land owner asked for the tower to be removed. The tower was dismantled by Park staff and stored at the High Falls facility in the park. The Park re-erected the tower on Washburn Mtn., within the park boundaries, in 1933. Operation of the tower was turned over to Forest Fire Control about 1935 and was actively operated there until 1963. In November of 1963 the tower was dismantled by Forest Rangers and transported by helicopter to the Beebe Hill site and re-erected. The tower was actively operated at Beebe Hill until it was closed in 1987. The facility is under restoration, and will soon be open to the public, and the tower is registered on the National Historic Lookout Register.

- Belleayre Mtn. This facility was established circa 1905 by a gentleman who owned a great deal of land on and near the mountain. Using an abandoned windmill frame made of steel he erected a 65 foot open platform tower on the mountain summit. This gentleman also employed his own fire fighting crew as the timber on his land was quite valuable. The operation of the facility was turned over to the state in 1909 when the forest fire detection system began. This wind mill open platform tower was replaced in 1930 with an AerMotor model LS-40 tower.
- Berry Hill This tower now supports two-way radio equipment for law enforcement, and is closed to the public. The facility is also registered on the National Historic Lookout Register.
- Black Mtn Today the tower in no way resembles a fire tower. The structure has been drastically altered by the State Police to support, and contain two-way radio equipment. The tower is closed to the public. Scratched in the open rock just north of the tower are the words; 'R. Rogers 1763'. This is Robert Rogers of the colonial era "Rogers' Rangers". The marking has been determined as authentic by the NYS Department of Education.
- Blue Mtn. The model 1941 Observers' cabin here is the second cabin of this style on the mountain. The first, built in 1948 was struck by lightning and burned to the ground. The tower has been fully restored, but the restoration group has dissolved. The tower is registered on the National Register of Historic Places, and the National Historic Lookout Register.
- Brookfield Mtn. This tower was first erected on a hill quite near the Chenango Lake State Park in 1935 and was actively operated by Forest Fire Control until the tower was dismantled and re-erected at the Brookfield site in 1948.
- Buck Mtn. This fire tower was one of the two that was erected, owned, and operated by Whitney Industries of Long Lake. The company employed a man who was a dog handler for dog sledding, and the pieces of the tower were hauled up the mountain by his dog team. The parcel where the tower stands has been sold to the International Paper Company, and still remains posted land.
- Caster Hill This fire tower was erected in 1927 on the lands of the 'Mad River Club' by agreement. In about 1963 the then President of the club began questioning why a state fire tower stood on club land. Apparently the agreement of 1927 was not that binding. A crew of Forest Rangers dismantled the tower, and re-erected it on the opposite side of an adjacent road, on state land. It could be that the land where the tower was moved to was not under state ownership in 1927, or most likely the tower would not have been built on club lands.
- Clock and Oakdale For one year each these two stations appear in the Annual Reports to the Legislature as reporting stations. Each was actually an elevated open platform used by local Fire Wardens for spotting fires. Once an official fire detection site was determined, and a fire tower was erected, these two sites disappear from all records.
- Cornell Hill From 1924 through 1935 Round Lake native Noah La Casse served as the Forest Fire Observer at this tower. In 1901 Mr. La Casse was a guide in the party of Vice President Theodore Roosevelt at the time he was hiking to Mt. Marcy when President Mc Kinley was assassinated in Buffalo, N.Y.
- Dickinson Hill A group from the Grafton Lake, N.Y. area has formed to adopt and restore this fire tower. Currently the facility is owned by the State Police who had two-way radio equipment mounted on the tower. This radio equipment has been moved to a new monopole. The group has been working to have the State Police transfer ownership of the land to the adjacent Grafton Lakes State Park, and with this transfer begin restoring the fire tower. With the current 'Homeland Security' issues this transfer has been delayed. The tower is registered on the National Historic Lookout Register, and a nomination to the National Register of Historic Places has been submitted for this tower.
- Dunn Brook Mtn. This facility was established in 1911 with a wood tower. Due to the remote location of the facility, and inactivity the site was abandoned in 1919. The wood tower of rough timbers was removed. The Goodnow Mtn. facility, opened in 1922, replaced the closing of the Dunn Brook Mtn. station.

Gallis Hill	This tower was dismantled and re-erected at Overlook Mtn. 1950.
Georgetown Mtn.	In 1940 this station appears in the Annual Report to the Legislature in a picture labeled as Morrow Mtn. The tower was indeed erected on Morrow Mtn., but the name was changed to Georgetown to match with the Georgetown State Forest where the site is located. The tower has been removed.
Goodnow Mtn.	This site is on land owned by the State University of New York, College of Environmental Science and Forestry and is attached to the Huntington Forest in Newcomb. This land was originally logged by the Huntingtons', and an old two stall horse barn, and concrete slab of another building for the logging operations are past on the foot trail to the fire tower. The tower has been restored by SUNY-ESF, and is open to the public. The station is registered on the National Register of Historic Places, and the National Historic Lookout Register.
Gore Mtn.	The tower now supports two-way radio equipment and is closed to the public. This tower blew over in a hurricane that hit the Adirondacks in October of 1919. The tower was re-erected and operating in the spring of 1920.
Graham Mtn.	This tower was originally located at Pocatello Mtn. In 1948 the tower was dismantled and re-erected at the Graham Mtn. site. The Graham Mtn. station is registered on the National Historic Lookout Register.
Hadley Mtn.	The tower at this site was purchased to replace the wood tower on Ohmer Mtn. This tower is a 40 foot AerMotor model LL-25, one of the first ten steel towers introduced in the state in 1916. An agreement with the land owner at Ohmer Mtn. could not be secured, so the Hadley Mtn. site was chosen to replace the abandoned Ohmer station. Construction of the tower began late in 1916, but was not completed until early in 1917, the station was in operation for 80% of the 1917 fire season. This tower also blew over in the same October 1919 hurricane that struck Gore Mtn. The tower was re-erected and in operation early in 1920. Guy wires were installed on the tower at this time. The station has been restored by the "Friends of Hadley Mtn." and is open to the public. The facility is registered on the National Register of Historic Places and the National Historic Lookout Register.
Hartzfelt Hill	Locally known as Birdsall Hill.
Hooker Hill	Former Ampersand Mtn. and Utsayantha Mtn. Forest Fire Observer Al Jordan purchased this fire tower by sealed bid. He dismantled the tower and had plans to re-erect it on his farm near Hooker Hill. Once he was informed how much concrete he would need as footings to meet building codes the idea died. For years the pieces of the tower laid in a field until in 2001 when Al gave the tower to Fire Tower book author Marty Podskoch. The tower is now in pieces at Marty's farm near Delhi, N.Y.
Hunter Mtn.	This station is one of the first facilities operated by Forest Fire Control. Established in 1909 with a tower made of timbers found at the mountain top the station was established at the 4,000 foot elevation of the mountain. 40 feet shy of the true summit. In 1917 the steel tower was erected next to the wood tower site, and it remained at the 4,000 foot elevation until in 1950 the tower was dismantled and re-erected at the current location on the summit of 4,040 feet. The tower has been fully restored and is open to the public. The facility is registered on the National Register of Historic Places and the National Historic Lookout register.
Ingraham Hill	This tower was sold in the early 1970s to a company that has removed the walls of the tower cab, and has mounted two-way radio antennas on the tower and cab floor. The tower appears today as only a skeleton of a fire tower, and is closed to the public.
Jackie Jones Mtn.	Erected in 1928 by the Palisades Interstate Park Commission who operated the facility until 1931. From that time the facility was operated by Forest Fire Control until it closed in the 1970s. It is registered on the National Historic Lookout Register.

Kane Mtn.	This facility has been adopted by the Canada Lake Protective Association who in cooperation with the NYS-DEC has restored the tower, and maintains the site. I volunteer weekends to re-enact being an Observer at a fire tower, and to answer the many question of the visitors to the tower. The site is registered on the National Register of Historic Places, and the National Historic Lookout Register.
Kempshall and West	With pieces from both of these fire towers one fire tower has been re-erected at the Essex County Historical Society Building in Elizabethtown, N.Y.
Leonard Hill	This tower was originally erected by the Gilbert Lake State Park by the C.C.C. and operated by the Park to protect park lands. In the 1930s operation of this tower was transferred to Forest Fire Control. In 1948 the tower was dismantled and re-erected at the Leonard Hill site. The Leonard Hill site is actually Hubbard Hill, but by a typographic error the U.S.G.S. reversed the names on the two adjacent hills and Leonard became Hubbard and vice versa. The error has never been reversed. Awaiting inspection before restoration work begins.
Loon Lake Mtn.	During the winter of 1927-1928 this tower blew down. The tower was re-erected in the early spring and was back in operation for the 1928 fire season.
Makomis Mtn.	The pieces of this tower are now owned by Mr. George Barber of Plattsburg, N.Y. Mr. Barber has plans to re-erect the tower on an escarpment located just north of the City of Plattsburg.
Mc Carty Hill	Locally known as Irish Hill.
Meenagha Mtn.	This fire tower is one of the privately built fire towers within the Adirondack Forest Preserve. The Adirondack – Florida School was operated on Rainbow Lake in the 1920s and 1930s. Two students drowned while swimming in Rainbow Lake, and the tower was erected, on school property, as a memorial for the two boys. Forest Fire Control made arrangements with the school to operate this tower as a secondary station in periods of dry and dangerous conditions. This land has since changed hands, but is still under private ownership. <u>The tower is still private property.</u>
Moose River Mtn.	This station was originally established with a tower made of mountain top timbers in 1912 near the hamlet of Lyonsdale in Lewis County. When the steel tower was purchased for this facility Forest Fire Control picked a site with higher visibility to erect the steel tower upon at the present Moose River Mtn. in the Town of Webb, Herkimer County. Once the steel tower was erected the Lyonsdale site was abandoned, and the old wood tower was removed.
Mt. Electra	This tower was privately built and operated by the Webb family at their Nehasane Park at Lake Lila. It first appears in the 1920 Annual Report to the Legislature as “Rock Lake Mtn.” Soon Mr. Webb changed the named to “Electra” in honor of his wife. As shown in Forest Fire Control payroll records the estate was paid the salary for their Observer for the months of May and June from Federal Fire Control funds by the State. This continued up into the 1950s. Mt. Electra is a remote site and was the only fire tower with such a commanding view along the Lake Placid Branch of the N.Y. Central Rail Road. Many of the local people still know it as the “Partlow Tower” because the easiest access to the tower was via the old “Partlow Station” along the railroad. In the 1990s most of Nehasane Park was sold to the State of New York and incorporated into the Adirondack Forest Preserve. Mt. Electra fell within the “Five Ponds Wilderness Area” and such became a “Non-Conforming Structure”. Forest Rangers were dispatched to remove the tower. The tower was un-bolted from the footings and pulled over with the use of a “Come-A-Long”, and the tower rests today on the spot where it fell.
Mt. Morris	The station was established in June of 1909 with no tower. The open summit was determined not to need a wood tower, and a small tent shelter served as the first observatory. The significance of the June 1909 date determines that Mt. Morris was the first established forest fire observatory in the Adirondack Forest Preserve. The mountain, and tower are privately owned , and the tower now supports two-way commercial radio equipment. Mt. Morris was equipped with a 22 foot AerMotor model LS-40 tower, one of four in the state. Today this is the only 22 foot tower remaining in place on a mountain. The only other remaining 22 foot tower, from Whiteface Mtn., is on display at the Adirondack Museum in Blue Mountain Lake, N.Y.

New Boston	This tower was dismantled and stored at the DEC facility in Harrisville, N.Y. in 1982. The tower is now on loan to the Thompson Park of Watertown, N.Y. where it was re-erected for display.
Ninham Mtn.	Locally known as Smalley Mtn. The tower is under restoration by volunteers with the Town of Kent and is hoped to again be re-opened to the public. The tower is registered on the National Historic Lookout Register.
Number Four:	Originally privately owned and operated by a local land owner in 1928, the facility was turned over to state operation in 1950. This is actually an AerMotor model LE-40 originally equipped with 12" wide ladders between the landings of the tower. When the tower became state operated stair risers were installed between the landings, and the ladders removed. The only difference between a model LE-40 and a model LS-40 is the ladders instead of stairs. Regardless this was still a 73 foot tower. The tower was dismantled and stored at the DEC office in Lowville, N.Y. about 1984-85, and the Observers' cabin was re-built at the Nicks Lake State Campsite. Today the upper three sections of the tower, 22 feet, has been re-erected at the DEC Demonstration area in Lowville.
Oakdale	See entry for Clock.
Ohmer Mtn.	See entry for Hadley Mtn.
Overlook Mtn.	See entry for Gallis Hill. The Overlook tower has been restored and is open to the public. The facility is registered on the National Historic Lookout Register.
Padlock Hill	This tower was sold by sealed bid to the land owner where the site was located in 1977. In 1984 this gentleman donated the tower to the New York State Fair in Syracuse, N.Y. In 1985 Forest Rangers from Region 7 dismantled the tower and re-erected it at the D.E.C. facility at the State fairgrounds in Syracuse.
Page Pond Hill	Ownership of this facility was transferred to the land owner of the site, the Indian Hills Girl Scout Council, in 1992. The tower is closed to the public.
Palmer Hill	Originally this station was established solely as a secondary station for Whiteface Mtn. With the severe climate at the top of Whiteface it was impossible to open that tower early enough for the spring fire season. In the fall the Whiteface tower would have to be closed much earlier than all the other fire towers. So the Whiteface Mtn. Observer would begin, and end the season at Palmer hill. Today the land and tower are privately owned, on private property, and the tower supports commercial two-way radio equipment.
Petersburg Mtn.	In 1953 a 6 year old boy, who was visiting the tower with his family, fell off the landing halfway up the tower to his death. Due to this incident the "Turkey Wire" that surrounds the landings and stairs began to be installed on all Forest Fire Control fire towers. In 1972 ownership of this tower was transferred to the County of Schoharie, they removed the tower cab and extended the height of the tower by adding additional steel structuring. The tower remained this way, supporting two-way law enforcement radio equipment until 1999. At that time the fire tower was removed and a new monopole was erected to support the two-way radio equipment. The tower was given to a man from Esperence, N.Y. who kept the pieces at his home. In 2003 Mr. Barry Knight of West Hurley, N.Y. secured ownership of the tower pieces. Mr. Knight plans to erect the bottom two sections of the fire tower on an escarpment that he owns near West Hurley.
Pharoah Mtn.	In 1980s Schroon Lake, N.Y. teenager Melanie Crear led a fight to prevent this tower from begin dismantled and removed due to it being located on "Wilderness Area" land as a "Non-Conforming Structure". Her efforts led to an appointment with Gov. Mario Cuomo who assured her that the fire tower will remain on Pharoah. Two individuals from an environmentalist group took it upon themselves to vandalize the tower in such a way that in high winds the tower blew over onto the ground. With the tower on the ground no hope was present that the tower would be re-erected, it was soon removed from the mountain by DEC helicopter. A criminal investigation was unable to lead to an arrest of any person responsible for this act.

Pillsbury Mtn	This was the fire tower at which I worked in the late 1970s. The station was first established in 1918 by the land owner of the time, the Champlain Realty Company. The facility was equipped with a wood tower made from mountain top timbers, and a log cabin was built to house an observer. The station was operated by the company in conjunction with Forest Fire Control as a secondary station during periods of dry weather. In 1924 operation of the facility was turned over to the state. The company purchased the steel tower, and had it erected, before the station was turned over to Forest Fire Control. Today the tower houses, and supports a solar powered two-way radio repeater, and the cab is closed to the public. Excellent views are still possible from the top landing of the fire tower. This is the only fire tower in which a person can see West Canada Lakes. In 2005 minor restoration work was performed.
Pocatello Mtn.	See entry for Graham Mtn.
Poke-O-Moonshine	In 1918 Forest Fire Control tested the "Osborne Fire Finder" in this fire tower. With the fire finder immediately proving it's worth the bureau began making "Panoramic Circular Maps" with the plotting instrument on the fire finder for each of the fire towers. A simplified version of the "Osborne" was developed and installed at each fire tower beginning in 1919. This tower has been fully restored and is open to the public. The tower is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and the National Historic Lookout Register.
Rondaxe Mtn.	See the entry for Bald Mtn. This tower has been adopted through the "Adopt – A – Natural Resource" program, offered by the NYS-DEC, by the "Friends of Bald Mtn." and restoration work on the tower is in progress. This tower is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and the National Historic Lookout Register.
Sand Hill	This station had a very short life. Established in 1950 with an 80 foot AerMotor model LS-40 tower the facility operated only part-time. 1957 was the last entry in the Annual Reports to the Legislature of this tower. The station was officially closed in 1959, and the tower was removed by Forest Rangers about 1961. The model 1941 Observer cabin is now at the DEC facility at Brasher Falls, N.Y.
Slide Mtn.	Established in 1912 with a wood tower made of mountain top timbers, the station operated for only one year. In 1915 the facility was abandoned, and the tower was removed. The opening of the Tremper Mtn. station in 1917 replaced the closing of Slide Mtn. In 1934 an AerMotor model LS-40 fire tower was erected on Slide Mtn. but it was not built by Forest Fire Control, nor was it operated as a forest fire detection station. It is not clear why the Conservation Department erected this tower, nor do records exist as to the length of time that this tower stood on the mountain.
Snowy Mtn.	The original steel tower was an AerMotor model LS-40 22 foot tower. Due to the growth of trees around the tower 20 additional feet in height was placed on this tower in 1933. The 20 foot extension was purchased from AerMotor, and the 22 foot tower was dismantled. After setting new footings the tower was re-erected with the extra 20 feet. This is the only 42 foot model LS-40 tower in the state.
Sterling Mtn.	This fire tower is now under the control of the Bear Mountain State Park Fire Control Bureau. The facility has been fully restored, and is open to the public. The facility operates as an active forest fire detection site by volunteers. Sterling Mtn. is registered on the National Historic Lookout Register.
Summit Hill	Originally established in 1926 by the Allegany State Park, control of the facility was turned over to Forest Fire Control in 1931. The ownership of the facility has reverted back to the Park, and the Allegany State Park Historical Society is restoring the tower. The tower is listed on the National Historic Lookout Register.
Swancott Hill	This was the tallest fire tower within New York State. Equipped with an International Derrick Model 1933, the tower measured 99' 9" to the floor of the cab. As previously mentioned, on page 6 of this report, fire tower height is measured to the floor of the tower cab. This fire tower is no longer standing.

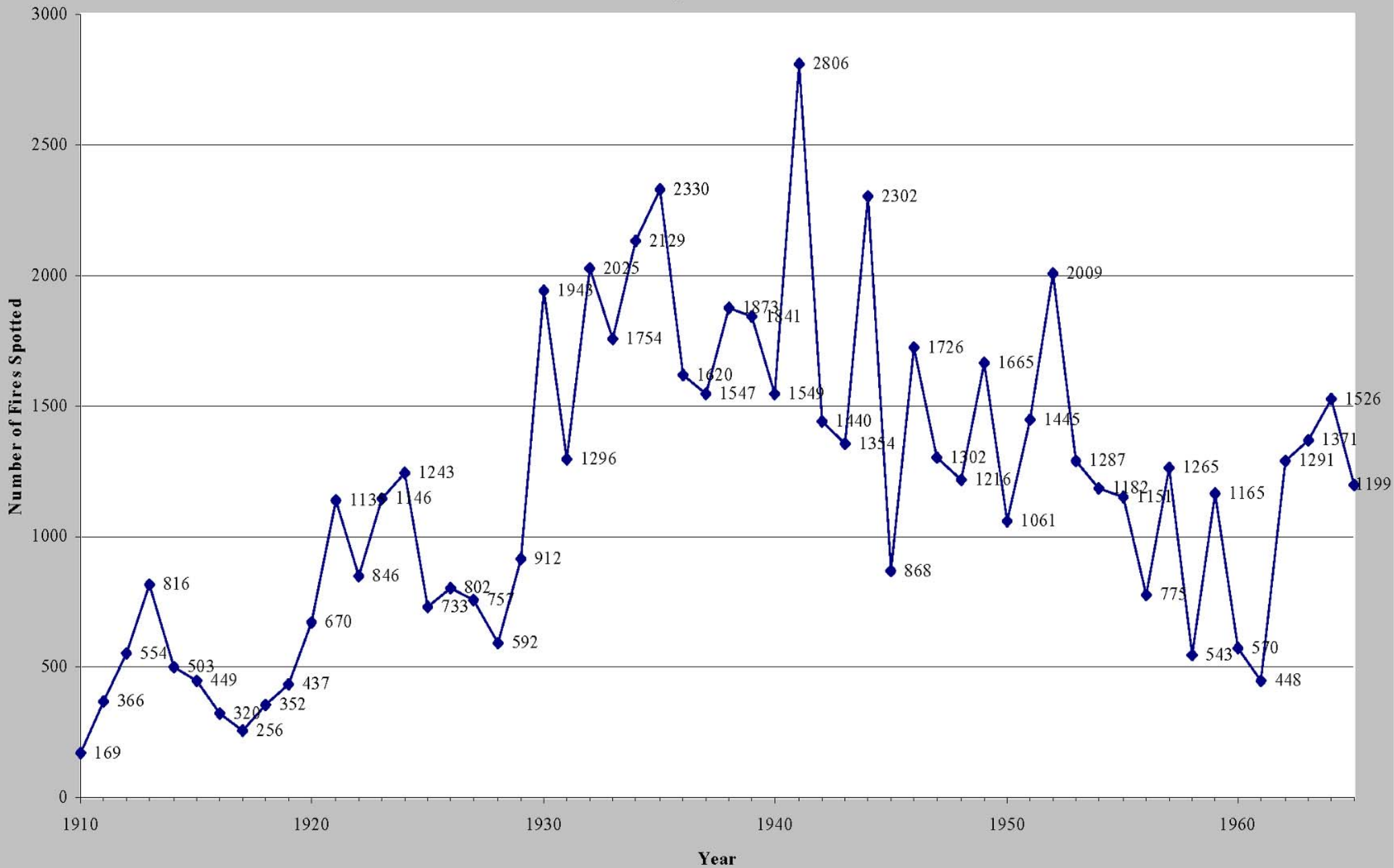
T – Lake Mtn.	This fire tower was closed after the 1970 season, and was placed on the “Stand-by” roster. In 1976 the facility was placed on the “Surplus Property” list as it was deemed a “Non-Conforming” structure for being within the boundaries of the “West Canada Lakes Wilderness Area”. In 1977 U.S. Army engineers were allowed to test shaped explosive charges on this fire tower which brought the tower crashing down. Within a week the sections of the fire tower were flown out by a heavy capacity helicopter.
Telescope Hill	This facility is the first forest fire detection station to have been established outside of the two “Forest Preserves” in New York State, established in 1918 immediately followed by the Flanders Hill station. As was the case during World War Two <u>all</u> of New York’s fire towers pulled double duty as forest fire detection stations, and aircraft spotting and monitoring stations. The Long Island fire towers also served as spotting stations for shipping along the approach to New York Harbor. The Telescope Hill tower actually had an additional cab placed immediately below the original cab on the tower. The upper cab housed “Civil Defense” personnel, and the lower cab housed the “Forest Fire Observer”. On three separate occasions “Nazi U-Boats” were spotted from this fire tower, and on one occasion the spotting of a “U-Boat” by the Telescope Hill fire tower actually led to the capture of that “U-Boat”.
Tomany Mtn.	This station operated until the end of the 1970 fire season. From then on the facility remained on the “Stand-By” list until it was declared “Surplus Property” in 1976. The station remained inactive, and was seldom visited by the public. This fire tower was not very well known about, and did not fall to the heavy vandalism as most of the inactive fire towers. In July of 1986 former Kane Mtn. Observer Rick Miller had visited this facility after he heard that DEC had burned down the two cabins. He found the tower to be in remarkable condition for having been inactive, and not maintained for 16 years. Three panes of glass were missing from the tower, four wooden steps were spongy, but the paint was holding up well. In August the DEC had the tower removed claiming that it had become unsafe due to the inactivity of the facility, well the tower never left the mountain. The DEC crew charged with removing the tower was told that they could not cut any trees larger than 3” in diameter to allow for helicopter removal of the tower pieces. When the crew chief asked what he was supposed to do with the tower pieces, he was simply instructed to take the tower down. So with no alternative, all the tower pieces were scattered in the woods surrounding the tower site. I have been to the site in 2000, 2001, and 2002 and I assure you that no salvageable pieces of the tower remain. All that remains are heaps of bent and mangled steel.
Tooley Pond Mtn.	This fire tower was dismantled and removed by the NYS Forest Ranger School at Wanakena in 1972. The tower has since been re-erected on their campus at Cathedral Rock.
Twadell Point Mtn.	The first tower on this site was also a converted steel wind mill frame that had been abandoned. Like the Belleayre tower it too was still an open platform tower. The AerMotor tower was erected here in 1919.
Wakely Mtn.	In 2001 Ann Spaziano, and I completed field data gathering of this facility so that Indian Lake Town Historian Bill Zullo could nominate the station to the National Register of Historic Places. The Wakely Mtn. station was placed on the National Register in 2003. Awaiting approval to begin restoration work.
Washburn Mtn.	See entry for Beebe Hill.
West Mtn.	See entry for Kempshall Mtn.

Number of Fires Spotted by NYS Forest Fire Control Fire Towers 1910 – 1965

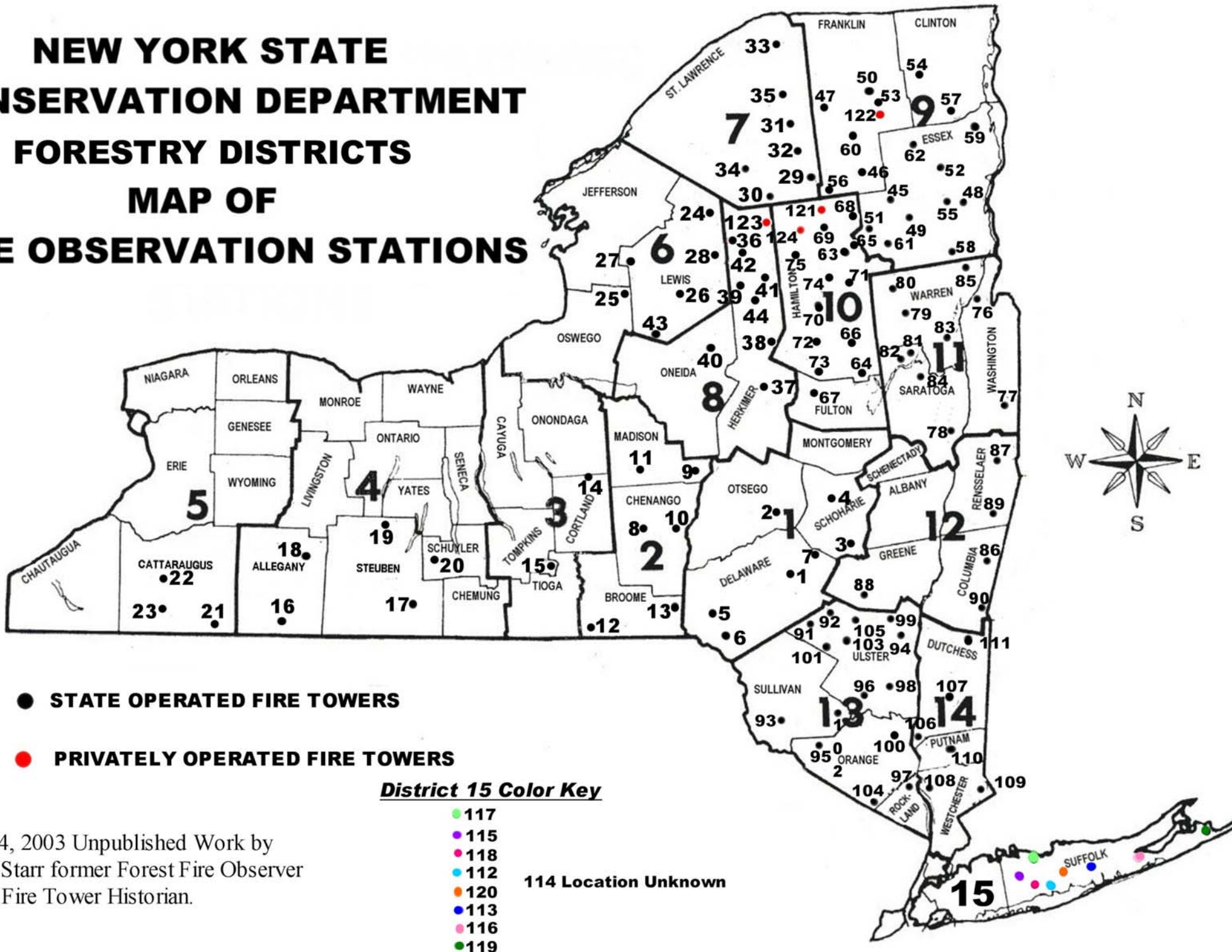
Data Source; Annual Reports to the NYS Legislature 1910 – 1965

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>
1910	169	1911	366
1912	554	1913	816
1914	503	1915	449
1916	320	1917	256
1918	352	1919	437
1920	670	1921	1135
1922	846	1923	1146
1924	1243	1925	733
1926	802	1927	757
1928	592	1929	912
1930	1943	1931	1296
1932	2025	1933	1754
1934	2129	1935	2330
1936	1620	1937	1547
1938	1873	1939	1841
1940	1549	1941	2806
1942	1440	1943	1354
1944	2302	1945	868
1946	1726	1947	1302
1948	1216	1949	1665
1950	1061	1951	1445
1952	2009	1953	1287
1954	1182	1955	1151
1956	775	1957	1265
1958	543	1959	1165
1960	570	1961	448
1962	1291	1963	1371
1964	1526	1965	1199

Forest Fires Spotted
1910 - 1965
© 1984, Bill Starr



NEW YORK STATE CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT FORESTRY DISTRICTS MAP OF FIRE OBSERVATION STATIONS



(c) 1984, 2003 Unpublished Work by
Bill Starr former Forest Fire Observer
and Fire Tower Historian.