

Restoration Grant Program Report 2011

Four Restoration Grants (\$500 each) were awarded in 2011, for a total of \$2000:

1) Wilton (former Cornell Hill) Fire Tower, New York

The first FFLA Restoration Grant of 2011 was to go toward the continued restoration of the former Cornell Hill Aermotor LS-40 tower, now the Wilton Fire Tower, relocated at Camp Saratoga near Ganessvoort in the Town of Wilton, New York. FFLA-NY is working with the Town of Wilton to complete the restoration of the tower and the site. The tower was re-erected by NY-FFLA member David Vana. The grant funds were expected to go toward furnishing the tower cab, including a fire tower map table, circular fire finder alidade map, and the fire finder alidade. Cornell Hill is listed on the National Historic Lookout Register (US #734, NY #31).

2) Stillwater Mountain Fire Tower, New York

The second FFLA Restoration Grant of 2011 was awarded to the Friends of Stillwater Fire Tower to go toward the total restoration of the 47-foot Aermotor LS-40 tower, located near Stillwater Reservoir in the Town of Webb in Herkimer County. The Friends group has partnered with NYS DEC and is in contact with FFLA-NY for the restoration. Stillwater is listed on the National Historic Lookout Register (US #904, NY #32).

3) Bearwallow Mountain Lookout, North Carolina

The third FFLA Restoration Grant of 2011 was to go toward the restoration of the Bearwallow Mountain Lookout, located in Henderson County, North Carolina. North Carolina Director (and Eastern Deputy Chair) Peter Barr was to lead the project in a partnership with the North Carolina Forest Service. Plans are for full rehabilitation of the tower including painting with rust-proof paint, replacement of needed wood stairs and bolts, replacement of missing windows, repair of cab trap door, rehab of roof; and installation of interpretive signage. The grant will be used to leverage additional funding. Plans were for work to be started in the fall of 2011. Bearwallow Mountain was built by the CCC in 1934 and was staffed until 1998. It is listed on the National Historic Lookout Register (US #718, NC #12).

4) Sugar Hill Fire Tower, New York

The fourth FFLA Restoration Grant of 2011 was to go toward the restoration of the Sugar Hill Fire Tower, located near Watkins Glen in Scuyler County. Bill Starr was to lead the project, with expected help from FFLA members Bob Eckler, Eric and Julia Hepperle, Fred Lamb, and Mark Haughwout, in cooperation with NYSDEC Region 8. The grant was to be used to recondition and refurbish rusted areas and structural joints on the 67'-6" 1937-model International Derrick tower. The work was planned for September with followup in the spring of 2012. This is the only fire tower in New York State that is 100% intact with all of its original parts and pieces, including all of the glass windowpanes. The tower and the ground cabin are museum pieces that NYSDEC has made an effort to maintain, but due to poor budgets, DEC has not been able to put any money into the tower in recent years and the neglect is beginning to show. Sugar Hill is listed on the National Historic Lookout Register (US #16, NY #2).

Gary Weber
Treasurer