



Dec. 17, 2025

Hon. David N. Greenwood  
Administrative Law Judge  
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To: Hon. ALJ David Greenwood, Ms. Grace Sullivan, and Mr. Matthew Norfolk,

Adirondack Wild: Friends of the Forest Preserve petitions the Adirondack Park Agency for party status in the upcoming adjudicatory hearing of Project 2021-0276 seeking a permit for a weapons range testing the internal ballistics of howitzer cannon barrels in Lewis, Essex County.

Pursuant to Agency regulations (Part 580.7) for intervention in adjudicatory hearings, we present the following:

1. Adirondack Wild: Friends of the Forest Preserve is a not-for-profit organization incorporated in New York State and employing advocacy to protect the Park's interconnected public and private wildlands from threats, document wildland mismanagement, hold officials accountable, and propose policy reforms for

improved conservation, protection, and connectivity of Park wildlands. Adirondack Wild was reorganized in 2010, with historic roots within Friends of the Forest Preserve founded in 1945 by Paul Schaefer. Schaefer earned a national reputation for successfully fighting to protect remote and wild areas in the Adirondack Park from exploitation. Adirondack Wild has a board of directors, an advisory board, 1000 members, and two full-time staff. Our organizational by-laws and other documents are available as required.

2. Adirondack Wild is very familiar with and a frequent participant in APA administrative proceedings. We submit monthly verbal public comments to the Agency and regularly submit written comments about new land use and development applications, including many projects proposed in the same Rural Use land use classification as the howitzer cannon application. We also participate in APA legislative hearings considering proposed variances. In 2024-25 we participated in months of verbal and written public comment about draft amendments to the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan.
3. Adirondack Wild was an intervenor and party to the last adjudicatory hearing held by the Agency, Adirondack Club and Resort, in 2011. We have demonstrated the capacity to participate in the administrative proceeding concerning this Project, 2021-0276.
4. Because our program is focused on conservation of wildlands for the interconnected public and private landscapes of the Adirondack Park, we are especially concerned about the relationship of the howitzer cannon testing with adjacent Forest Preserve located just hundreds of yards away at the closest point. The sound impacts of the cannon testing threatens the peace, tranquility, character, solitude, wildlife, and open space values of the Adirondack Park Forest Preserve, including lands classified as Wild Forest, as well as Wilderness areas located just several miles away from the testing range.

Furthermore, the proposal affects a large block of private lands classified Rural Use. Adirondack Wild has long advocated for greater protection of Rural Use areas consistent with the APA Act. According to the APA Act, such areas are “characterized by a low level of development and variety of rural uses generally compatible with the protection of the generally intolerant natural resources and the preservation of open space. Rural use areas and the resource management areas provide the essential open space atmosphere that characterizes the Adirondack Park.”

Military-style testing of cannons exhibiting sound forces at or exceeding 100 dbA should not be deemed compatible with the stated legislated purposes, policies, and objectives of Rural Use. The legislature was clear about this. Military-style weapons testing is not listed as either a primary or secondary use, meaning it is presumed incompatible in this land use classification. Moreover, the project’s use

and maintenance over a five-year period appears to lack a military or commercial sponsor and purpose. Its use over five years threatens to industrialize and pollute this Rural Use area with new, very loud sound forces, negatively impacting adjacent private property, nearby homes, and public land resources.

5. Adirondack Wild has a demonstrated strong interest in defending the “forever wild” constitutional protections and wilderness values of the Forest Preserve. These protected lands, waters, and wildlife are located within a few hundred yards of the proposed cannon testing at the closest point. The military-style testing will introduce new, potentially damaging noise forces within these public wildlands, thus directly affecting our environmental interests. Our work also involves limiting overuse of the Forest Preserve by keeping such uses within the carrying capacity, or ability of the area to withstand a variety of human uses. The proposed military-style testing may exceed the area’s carrying capacity and desired uses measured by visitor use management indices and study. Furthermore, our environmental interests could be severely affected if the cannon testing directly or indirectly violates State Land Master Plan guidelines for management and recreational use of Wild Forest and Wilderness, and related unit management plan management recommendations for the several Forest Preserve areas proximate to or within several miles of the military-style cannon testing.

Thank you for considering our petition to become a party to this hearing.

Sincerely,



David Gibson, Managing Partner  
Adirondack Wild: Friends of the Forest Preserve

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