

The Sunapee-Ragged-Kearsarge Greenway Coalition

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10 September 2014

Mr. Jeffrey J. Rose, Commissioner
Department of Resources and Economic Development
Mount Sunapee Public Comments
PO Box 1856, Concord, NH 03302-1856

Dear Commissioner Rose:

RE: Comments on Mount Sunapee Resort's Master Development Plan for 2014-2019

The SRK Greenway Coalition (SRKGC) Board of Directors has authorized this letter commenting on the Master Development Plan (MDP) proposed by Mount Sunapee Resort (MSR).

This letter has three purposes:

- 1) To suggest that Mount Sunapee Resort be assigned responsibility for maintenance of the Summit Trail and other year-round four-season hiking trails that may be developed within the western slope section of the lease area.
- 2) To notify you of errors in the maps contained in the MDP.
- 3) To emphasize the importance of the Summit Trail both within Mount Sunapee State Park and as a key component of the larger, regional recreational hiking trail system.

First: We suggest that DRED assign to Mount Sunapee Resort primary responsibility for maintenance of hiking trails for year-round, four-season hiking within the new ski area. We suggest that DRED formalize the presently informal relationship between volunteer hiking groups and the Resort with a memorandum of understanding (MOU) giving NH Parks oversight of that relationship with MSGTC and SRKGC and other trail maintaining groups. This will assure that the interests of recreational hikers, volunteer trail maintainers, and the Resort are properly recognized in the future as the ski area is developed, whatever the future changes in management may be for the Resort and its lease operators. Under the MOU, SRKGC volunteers would assist MSR.

Second: All maps in the MDP misrepresent the location of hiking trails. As shown on current MDP maps, the Summit Trail never reaches the summit of Mt Sunapee. Also, MDP maps do not show the Province Trail that connects the lower Summit Trail to the Province Road trailhead of the SRK Greenway, nor connections to east side trails from the summit. The Summit Trail is a 2.1 mile subsection of the SRK Greenway's 5.4 mile first section connecting Newbury Harbor to Goshen's Old Province Road. Portions of the Monadnock-Sunapee Greenway within the lease area are not shown. We have reported this problem to Jay Gamble of MSR and provided him with a copy of the NH Parks trail map for Mount Sunapee State Park. Jay has authorized corrected maps for your final review.

Third: The Summit Trail was developed with NH State Parks and Trails Bureau assistance in the early 1990s expressly to provide hikers with a woodlands trail away from ski operations. Development of the trail was related to the early history of the SRK Greenway Coalition, incorporated in 1993. A 1997 memorandum between DRED/Parks and the three volunteer trail groups maintaining hiking trails in the Park recognized trail responsibilities of these volunteer

groups. The 75-mile SRK Greenway connects 4 State Parks, 3 State Forests, and land conserved by NH Fish and Game as well as town and private properties. The SRKG also links with the 50-mile Monadnock-Sunapee Greenway and Pillsbury SP. In sum, hiking trails and the broader conserved landscapes which those trails traverse are crucial to the future of both New Hampshire's self-identity and long-term recreational economy.

Sincerely yours,

Tom Lawton, Chairman, SRK Greenway Coalition
Gerry Gold, Trailmaster, SRK Greenway Coalition