

## Friends of Mount Sunapee



Mount Sunapee from Gunnison Lake, Goshen, N.H.

# FOMS

**Friends of Mount Sunapee**  
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*Friends of Mount Sunapee  
advocates for protection of  
Mount Sunapee State Park  
and its essential public values;  
conservation of the Sunapee  
highlands and its watersheds;  
and preservation of the unique  
character and natural beauty  
of the rural communities in  
the mountain's shadow.*

March 2018

Dear Members, Supporters, and Friends,

As Mount Sunapee State Park marks its 70th year, we would like to **update you with a summary of our activities and thank you for your continued support.**

**We face challenging times.** Nationally, we see increased threats to our public lands, ancient and treasured sites, forested and open spaces, and water resources. Private interests, with direct pipelines into the very agencies charged with preserving our special places, use their influence to gain leases and corporate-friendly policies and practices.

**Mount Sunapee State Park is one of New Hampshire's special places**, part of our great outdoors where we go for recreation, exploration and study, and quiet nature-focused enjoyment. Additionally, the park is part of an iconic landscape of unique ecological importance. Yet, last spring, the Union Leader reported: "Sunapee's new leaseholder fined millions in bribery case."

Without public review, the criminally sanctioned hedge fund Och-Ziff quietly took over and mortgaged the lease of our state-owned ski area at Mount Sunapee. The lease changed hands with NO public review by the governor and council, and the citizens of N.H. were left in the dark. This is unacceptable.

**With your help, we must hold corporate and state officials accountable and ensure the protection of state assets and our precious natural resources. Your support will allow the Friend of Mount Sunapee (FOMS) to build on last year's efforts.**

- **With many friends, FOMS responded to the lease sale with an outpouring of concern and probing questions at the August 2017 meeting at the park.** At this forum, representatives from N.H. agencies and Och-Ziff attempted to explain the sale of the lease and what it meant for Mount Sunapee. **View the meeting** via Vimeo (a Newport Community TV video). Go to [www.friendsofmountsunapee.org](http://www.friendsofmountsunapee.org).
- **With your support, FOMS obtained legal counsel**, who helped us analyze complex contracts related to the Och-Ziff deal and focus our on-going efforts.

Email: [info@FriendsofMountSunapee.org](mailto:info@FriendsofMountSunapee.org)  
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- **We have met and continue to meet with N.H. Attorney General Gordon MacDonald. We must have lawful and transparent and accountable oversight of our state park.** Note: After FOMS contacted Public Citizen, the national corporate watchdog group warned the state: "It would be prudent for the state of New Hampshire to insist on additional measures to ensure that a corporate felon is an adequate custodian of the lease."
- **With the help of friends, we remain alert to activity and plans of the leaseholder Och-Ziff and operator Okemo/Mount Sunapee Resort.** Och-Ziff's uncertain financial stability and aggressive and deceptive practices demand attention. Additionally, the management agreement between the lessee and operator remains undisclosed and leaves the public in the dark.

We do know that the operator's expansion plan anticipates private resort/real estate development on Mount Sunapee's western flank. We do know that commercially driven construction and related activities will result in a larger and heavier footprint on our treasured public park and further diminish the park's integrity and essential conservation values. **As citizen advocates, our work for parkland protection is more important than ever.**

- **FOMS remains alert to specific projects that impact public use and safety and the natural environment.** Without notice to the Goshen Planning Board, last spring the operator installed a 3D archery course on state park land in Goshen. In December, FOMS members attended a Goshen Planning Board meeting where information was presented showing lack of compliance by the resort with state directives. The Planning Board agreed to take the matter under review and conduct a site review in the spring.
- **Additionally, we are planning outreach meetings that will provide an opportunity for supporters to share with us their thoughts and concerns about the future of Mount Sunapee. We invite your participation, information, and ideas.** We always welcome your calls and emails.

In the early 1900s, 40 years before the formation of the state park, conservationist Herbert Welsh initiated the first campaign to protect Mount Sunapee and preserve its remaining ancient forest. State studies confirm the continued existence on Mount Sunapee of ecologically significant forest, rare ancient forest and exemplary natural community systems. **We are committed to preserving Mount Sunapee's natural heritage, which represents the best of New Hampshire's biodiversity. Help us meet this challenge.**

**FOMS is uniquely focused on protecting Mount Sunapee's conservation legacy and Welsh's mission to "Save Mount Sunapee For All People To All Time!" Join us!**

**At this critical time, we seek your support, your new or renewed membership, and your participation. Every donation is appreciated - \$50, \$100, \$500 or \$15.**

Thank you!

The board of directors of Friends of Mount Sunapee,

Steve Russell

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Deb Flanders

Catherine Bushueff

Dan Banks

Jolyon Johnson

**P.S. To donate on-line, visit our website: [www.FriendsofMountSunapee.org](http://www.FriendsofMountSunapee.org).**

**P.S.S. To share your interest and expertise, join a FOMS committee. Please see the enclosed!**