



Department of  
Environmental  
Conservation

# BELLEAYRE MOUNTAIN SKI CENTER

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## Amendment

to the

**2015 Belleayre Mountain Ski Center Unit Management Plan**

NYS DEC, DIVISION OF LANDS AND FORESTS

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## OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

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### MEMORANDUM

MAY 08 2020

**TO:** The Record  
**FROM:** Basil Seggos  
**SUBJECT:** Belleayre Ski Center Unit Management Plan Amendment

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The Unit Management Plan amendment for the Belleayre Ski Center has been completed.

The amendment is consistent with Environmental Conservation Law, and Department Rules, Regulations and Policies and is hereby approved and adopted.



Basil Seggos  
*Commissioner*  
*New York State Department of Environmental Conservation*

Date: May 8, 2020



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## Introduction

The Belleayre Mountain Ski Center (“Belleayre”, or “Ski Center”), is a state-owned and operated recreation facility in the Catskill Park on Forest Preserve lands in the Town of Shandaken, Ulster County, New York. The underlying management responsibility for Belleayre belongs to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (“DEC” or “Department”), however, the day-to-day management of the facility is undertaken by the Olympic Regional Development Authority (“ORDA”).

A Unit Management Plan (UMP) for Belleayre was adopted in 2015. The UMP proposed and authorized numerous changes to modernize and expand the Ski Center as well as address future needs. These changes can generally be categorized as:

- replacement of old and outdated equipment with more modern and energy-efficient equipment;
- renovation of infrastructure, lodging and amenities; and
- improvement of ski trails and lift systems to maximize the skiing experience.

An important element to operating a successful ski area in the Northeastern United States is the ability to make snow as needed. Snowmaking enables the area to open earlier and close later in the season and creates more consistent and safer trail conditions when natural snow cover is lacking. A general goal identified in the 2015 UMP was to address the increased snowmaking demand within Belleayre while improving energy efficiency at the same time.

The water pumping and air compression functions of the snowmaking process were identified as an area where upgrades would be beneficial. One proposal approved in the 2015 UMP was to remove the existing diesel-powered compressed air system from the Upper Mountain pumphouse and to install a high-efficiency electric-powered compressed air system in a newly constructed 7,000 square-foot building. The location of the building was to be sited on the southernmost end of the existing upper Tomahawk parking lot (see attached Map A).

Also approved in the UMP was a proposal to reconfigure and upgrade the water pumping system within the existing Upper Mountain pumphouse with new pumps, controls and electrical equipment.

## **New Management Proposals**

In order to reduce energy demands (and related costs) and achieve greater operational efficiencies, facility managers have determined that the water pumping and air compression systems should be co-located within the same structure. Rather than utilizing the original site location for the new air compression system identified and approved in the 2015 UMP, facility managers have proposed the site location for the newly constructed building be moved to a more centralized location (see Maps A and B). This new, centralized site location will enable the facility to operate more productively and efficiently, maximizing the productivity achieved by investments in new equipment, reducing energy needs/costs while improving water pumping capacity and pressures for enhanced snowmaking abilities. Snowmaking capabilities are expected to increase by 23% without changing water withdrawal rates. These improvements to the water pumping and air compression systems will also allow the facility to use more modern snowmaking equipment and further reduce energy needs. The newly proposed site location is also located closer to the electrical service, which makes the electrical supply more efficient, less expensive and less intrusive, while reducing air emissions and dependence on fossil fuels.

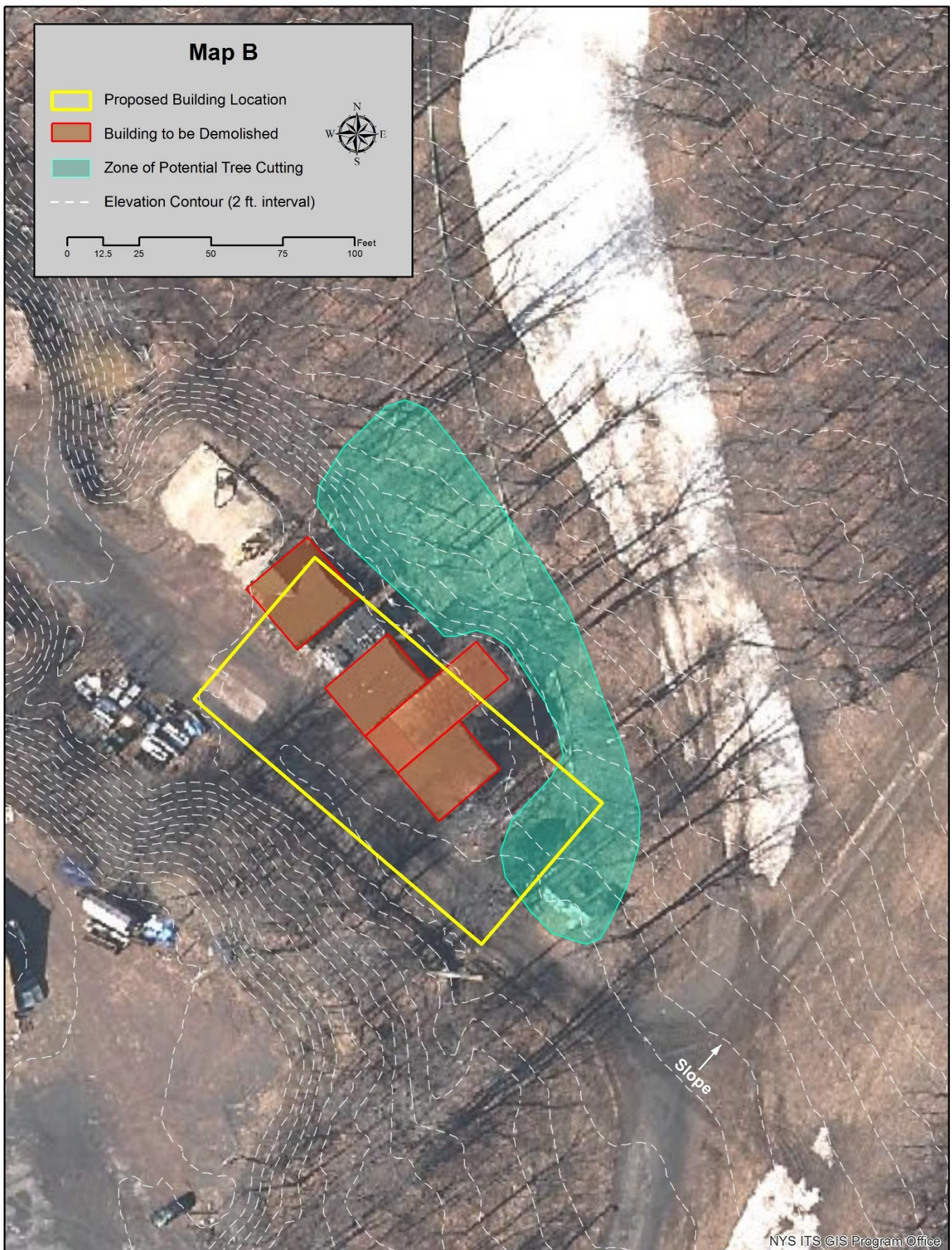
This building will have the same footprint (approximately 7,000 square feet) as the air compressor building proposed and approved in the 2015 UMP. Ninety-seven trees will need to be cut for the new building construction and associated utility line installation (see Map B for tree-cutting zone). Three antiquated structures—as well as a covered storage area connecting two of them—will also be removed to accommodate the new structure. Existing stormwater control measures have been previously installed in the vicinity of the proposed building, and the only additional measures needed will be filter strips at the drip edge of the new building.

Future uses of the existing Upper Mountain pumphouse will be identified at a later date but will likely continue to serve various functions related to operation of the Ski Center.











## **Appendix A – Public Comment**

The Department held a public comment period for the Draft UMP amendment from March 4 through March 20, 2020. No public comments were received during this time.