

Appendix E: Cultural Resources Letter



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To: Mark Hohengasser, Planning, OPRHP

CC: Edwina Belding, EMB, OPRHP

From: Julian W. Adams

Re: Robert G. Wehle State Park
Master Planning
Cultural Resources Recommendations

Date: 4/10/10

Thank you for requesting the comments of the Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau for the Master Plan being developed for Robert G. Wehle State Park. At this point, I am familiar with both the park and the planning effort underway, and am prepared to offer the opinion of this office under the provisions of Section 14.09 of the New York State Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation Act of 1980.

The Master Plan will have No Adverse Impacts on historic resources either listed on determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places if the following information, conditions, and processes noted below are incorporated into the final Plan document.

The following buildings, structures, landscapes and/or sites are considered contributing to the historic significance of Robert G. Wehle State Park. All work other than normal maintenance and repair for these resources should be submitted to and reviewed by the Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau. Information about existing conditions, projects, or planned projects for Park buildings at the time of inspection (September 23 and 24, 2009) are addressed in the comments for the specific resources.

1. Rifle Range Landscape Features: The series of low earthen berms running northwest by southwest and the earthen, concrete and stone target "hill" at the termination of the berms are together an important physical feature remaining from the period that this was the rifle training range for Fort Drum. These features should be maintained within the landscape. Any tree or brush removal should be undertaken as simply as possible, without any disturbance to the land features: for example if trees or brush are cut, this should be done as close to the ground as possible, without disturbing or removing root systems. Stump grinding would be

appropriate to achieve a mowable surface.

2. “Watch stations”: The series of small concrete watch stations (also known as pillboxes) along the shore line and also farther inland are contributing historic features to Robert G. Wehle State Park. However, it is evident that there is a greatly varying level of conditions from feature to feature. At least one watch station is severely deteriorated due to wave action and natural deterioration exacerbated by wind blown water and ice. Others have a small amount of concrete deterioration, while still others are in overall good repair. The appropriate treatment options at the watch stations are as follows:
 - a. Allowing the stations to remain, without treatment or repair. If this treatment is chosen, recordation of the stations should be undertaken, with photographs and measurements, with the photographs keyed to a map as to location and direction of view.
 - b. Undertaking an analysis of the material conditions, and determining the best course of action. For example where concrete deterioration is minor, either removing loose material down to a sound layer and replacing it in kind, or using a proprietary stone or concrete consolidant to rebind the concrete. Where concrete deterioration is severe, making a decision to either provide a base level of treatment (such as consolidant application to surfaces), or a higher level of repair which could involve rebuilding those stations in the worst condition, retaining and reusing as much historic material as possible.
3. Foundations: There are several foundations of buildings that should be retained and protected. This includes the foundations of the “Officer’s Quarters”, those of the water treatment plant, and the footers of the former building visible near the visitor’s center. All these foundations appear to be in good condition, and at this time it does not appear that they need any treatment. Any moving, tree removal or brush removal should be undertaken with care not to damage these features. If any concrete treatment is deemed necessary, it would be appropriate to use the approach outlined in #2 above.
4. Former Water Pumping Building: This small concrete building near the water’s edge at the northern part of the Park is a contributing feature from the rifle range/target training period(s) of the property’s use. At present it lacks a roof, but is in fair to good condition overall, with equipment fairly intact. The concrete of this structure should be treated in accordance with the proposed approach for the watch station in #2 above. It would be best to limit access to this interior of this structure for the safety of the resource as well as the public. Installing some form of metal bars or tamper resistant screening in the door and window openings would be an appropriate treatment.
5. Archeology: A Phase 1a Archeological Sensitivity Assessment for Robert G. Wehle State Park was completed September 10th 2004. This report recommends that a Phase 1b survey be done in undisturbed portions prior to any future sub-surface work undertaken within the Park.
6. Former Wehle Residential Compound Structures: This includes all buildings at and around the former Wehle residence, including the guest house, “game house”, cabin, garages, stables, barns, etc. These buildings are all outside the “period of significance” for Robert G. Wehle State Park, and therefore are not eligible for listing on the National Register. Any

work at or near at these features will not need to be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau.

7. Former Wehle Game Bird and Dog resources: This includes all remaining kennel features, bird enclosures, statuary, graves, etc. These features are outside the period of significance for Robert G. Wehle State Park, and therefore are not of the “historic” character of the Park. Any work at or near these features will not need to be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau.

