

Pennsylvania Chapter FFLA Report for the year ending 2020

Tower Statistics: (Answers provided by Mike Kern, Chief - Division of Forest Fire Protection)

- 1) Standing Lookouts: 50 owned by DCNR – there are a few other towers still standing in PA in private ownership that DCNR does not track. We have a map of the towers on public land here: <https://dcnr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapTour/index.html?appid=ef806e4ec39f4accb2355309e1a35c60>
- 2) Lookouts in active service (paid and volunteer): 10, all staffed by DCNR employees. Very difficult to find volunteers willing to staff a fire tower.
- 3) Lookouts in partial service or ready standby: 6, Hopewell Tower is staffed by volunteer Forest Fire Wardens on an as-needed basis.
- 4) Rental Lookouts: zero
- 5) Lookouts needing significant repairs: 25 of the remaining towers need significant repairs if they are going to remain standing.
- 6) Lookouts converted to alternative uses: 3 (Mt. Davis, Kooser State Park, Seneca Point at Cook Forest State Park are all viewing platforms or recreational destinations)
- 7) Lookouts lost in 2020, or likely to be removed soon: None. Zero towers removed in 2020. Big Flat may be removed soon (within next year or three I do not know the exact status of this project), I am not aware of any discussions regarding removal of Snowy Mountain. Funding to replace, fix, or even remove towers is basically non-existent due to budget restrictions.
- 8) Reports on on-going restoration projects and other activities -- Can you provide an exact number for the new towers built, as well as repairs done to existing towers? 16 replacement towers were built, none were repaired. I do know throughout PA several top sections of the old towers were kept to be used as Interpretive Displays....any idea how many? As of right now, three (Mauch Chunk, Sideling Hill, Keffers) Any word on the project funded by the District Office helping to rehab. Greenwood and Little Flat with Standing Stone Trail group? We are trying to develop a legal agreement to cooperate with the trail groups on the tower work. DCNR will do the rehab, trail groups will be caretakers and maintenance after that. No funding has been committed to this effort right now. Big Pocono is being rehabbed at Grey Towers in Milford. Mt. Pleasant top section is at Owl Creek Reservoir in Tamaqua as Interpretive Display.....any others you are aware of? No others that I am aware of. Mt. Dunlop (privately owned) is a possible restoration by the Township for historical purposes.

Our in-house engineers are planning to inspect the condition of some of the remaining towers in 2021.

<<END SURVEY QUESTIONS>>

TOTAL number of Chapter members: 23

Members Gained and Members Lost: Lost one member. Gained two members.

Facebook PAFFLA Group: 201 members

Finally, our Facebook Group has been extremely active over the past few years. There is much information and history that is shared among our members. Because of the large geographic area the Commonwealth covers for the present time it appears this is how our Chapter best interacts and keeps active.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Bubnis, Chapter Director