

c r o s s r o a d s v e n t u r e s l l c

DRAFT
Environmental Impact Statement

Appendix 21

Visual Impact Study

The Belleayre Resort at Catskill Park

Visual Impact Study

The following is a set of photographs taken from various locations outside the five-mile radius of the visual impact study area. A five mile radius encompasses approximately 31 square miles.

Five miles is the standard limit of visual concern as it represents the far, distant view.

We have expanded the normal industry standard of five miles to address concern for potential visual effects from surrounding trails, viewpoints and mountain peaks.

The photographs were taken from the following locations.

Bearpen Mountain
Buck Ridge Overlook
Cornell Mountain
Fir Mountain
Giant Ledges
Hunter Mountain
North Dome Mountain
Overlook Mountain
Panther Mountain
Plateau Mountain
Slide Mountain
Sugarloaf Mountain
Table Mountain
Tremper Mountain
Twin Mountain
Westkill Mountain

Included with the photographs are descriptions of the existing views from these locations, the location of the proposed project in the photograph, and how the existing views could be affected by the proposed project.

Bearpen Mountain

Investigations of the views from Bearpen Mountain were conducted on July 6, 2000. There is no marked trail to this summit. Figure BE-1 illustrates views from Bearpen Mountain. As shown in View 2, there is a break in the vegetation that provides views into the upper portions of Highmount Ski Area and some of the higher elevation sections of trails on the western portion of Belleayre Mountain Ski Center. Views into all parts the project site are blocked by vegetation.



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Sheet Title

Bearpen Mountain View
Summit

Figure _____

BE-1

Balsam Mountain Belleayre Ski Area Eagle Mountain (probably)



View 1: 150mm View from Bearpen Mountain summit, towards Belleayre ski area.

Balsam Mountain Belleayre Ski Area Eagle Mountain (probably) Highmount Ski Area



View 2: 50mm View from NW side of Bearpen summit area, towards Belleayre and High Mount ski areas.

Balsam Mountain Belleayre Ski Area Eagle Mountain (probably)



View 3: 50mm View from summit of Bearpen Mountain, towards Belleayre ski area southward and south southwestward.

West Kill Mountain

Views from the Buck Ridge Lookout and the Summit of West Kill Mountain were investigated on May 3, 2000 and November 15, 2000. These locations were accessed from the Devil's Path Trail (West Kill Mountain section) originating at the trailhead at the bridge over Diamond Notch Falls. Vegetation blocks views towards the project site at both locations. The project site is not visible from either the Buck Ridge Lookout or the summit of West Kill Mountain. Photo BU-1 illustrates the view at Buck Ridge Overlook and photo WE-1 illustrates the view at the summit of West Kill Mountain.

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Buck Ridge Overlook View

Figure _____

BU-1



View 1: View from Buck Ridge Overlook

Belleayre Mountain (249°)



View 1: 50mm from Summit of Westkill Mountain. No view due to tree coverage.



View 2: 50mm from Summit of Westkill Mountain. No view due to tree coverage.

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Westkill Mountain View
Summit

Figure

WE-1

Cornell Mountain

Views from Cornell Mountain were investigated on May 27, 2000 and December 5, 2001. According to New York –New Jersey Trail Conference Trail Map 43, “Southern Catskill Trails” there is a viewpoint located just off the trail at Cornell Mountain. This viewpoint provides views towards the Ashokan Reservoir to the East. The project site is located to the northwest (compass bearing 322 degrees). Photographs were taken in the direction of the project site along the trail leading from Slide Mountain to Cornell Mountain approximately 0.2 miles before the summit of Cornell Mountain. Photographs of the views towards the project site are illustrated in figure CO-1. In this photograph Panther Mountain is visible in the middleground and Balsam Mountain in the background. The ridgeline of Belleayre Mountain is visible in the very background. Due to the distance from Cornell Mountain to the area around and including project site (almost ten miles), no specific features of the landscape are discernable. Any changes made to the landscape as a result of the project will also not be discernable, especially the Big Indian Resort and Spa since this largest building potentially visible will be fully landscaped.

Giant Ledges (Foreground) Belleayre (Notch in Far Corner) Panther



View 1: 110mm View

Belleayre (Notch in Far Range)
Balsam Panther



View 2: 50mm View

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Cornell Mountain View

Figure

CO-1

Fir Mountain

Investigations of the views from Fir Mountain were conducted on June 29, 2000. There is no marked trail to this summit. There are no views to the project site from Fir Mountain. Figure FI-1 illustrates the only view located on Fir Mountain, and this view does not include any portion of the project site.

Big Indian Mountain



View 1: 50mm View from summit of Fir Mountain, in only place where vegetation was open enough for a distant view.
View toward W 35 N

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Fir Mountain View

Figure

FI-1

Giant Ledges

Views from Giant Ledges were investigated on November 17, 2000. Particular attention was paid to the three locations indicated as having viewpoints according to New York – New Jersey Trail Conference Trail Map 43, “Southern Catskill Trails”. Figures GI-1, GI-2, and GI-3 contain copies of photographs illustrating the views from the southern, middle and northern viewpoints indicated on the Trails Map, respectively. Vegetation obscures view into the project site at all three locations. Elements of the project will not be visible from Giant Ledges.

Belleayre



View 1: 110mm from View Point 1 on Giant Ledges

Belleayre



View 2 50mm from View Point 1

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Giant Ledges View 1

Figure _____

GI-1



Balsam

View 1: 110mm from View Point 2



Balsam

View 2: 50mm from View Point 2

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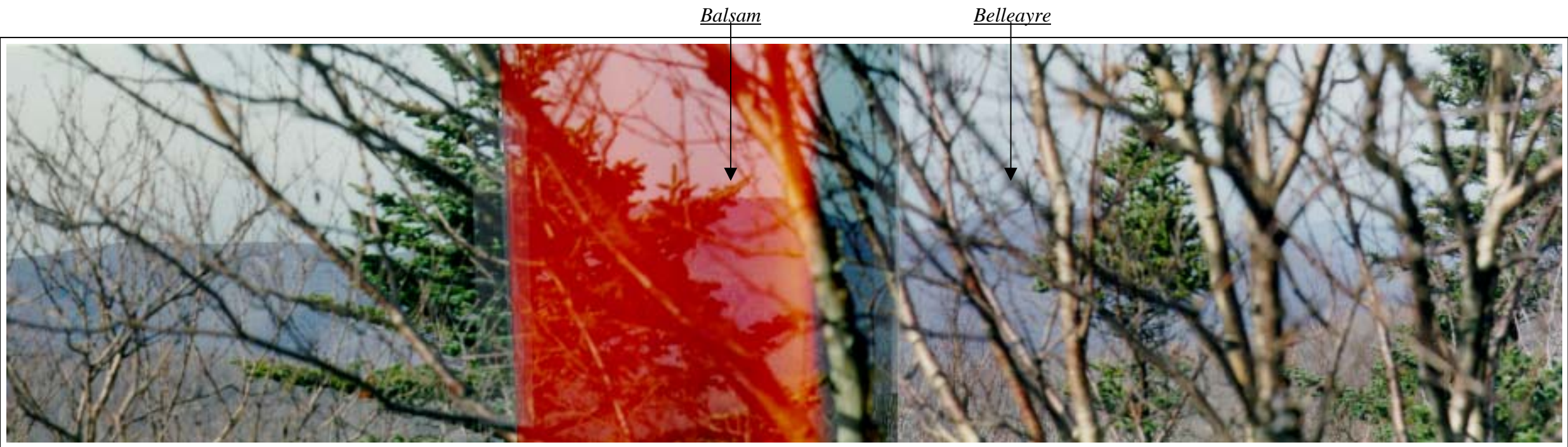
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Sheet Title

Giant Ledges View 2

Figure

GI-2



View 1: 110mm from View Point 3



View 2: 50mm from View Point 3

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Giant Ledges View 3

Figure _____

GI-3

Hunter Mountain

On April 26, 2000 views from the summit of Hunter Mountain were investigated. The summit was accessed from the Becker Hollow Trail. The summit was an open area encircled by conifers with no views into the project site. Copies of photographs from this investigation are shown on Figure HU-1.

All trails and lifts on Hunter Mountain are on the north side of the mountain while the project site is located to the southeast. Views have been evaluated from the Colonel's Chair ski lift at Hunter Mountain in addition to hiking trails, summit and fire tower. There are no views in a southerly direction from this chair lift. Views from the chair lift are to the north and of Hunter Mountain and surrounding mountains to the southeast and northwest.

Belleayre Mountain



View 1: View from Hunter Mountain Summit. Compass Heading 180°- 250.°

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Hunter Mountain View
Summit

Figure

HU-1

North Dome Mountain

Investigations of the views from North Dome Mountain were conducted on July 7, 2000. There is no marked trail to this summit. At and around the summit vegetation was dense and there were no distant views in any direction (see Figure NO-1). The only views found were on north facing slopes going to the summit and these views were in the opposite direction of the project site.



View No 2. View at summit of North Dome Mountain, showing 3500-ft. club sign-in box at right.



View No 1. Typical view at summit of North Dome Mountain, near Geodetic Survey Marker, 3610 ft. elevation. Vegetation is too dense to see more than 30-40 feet in any direction.

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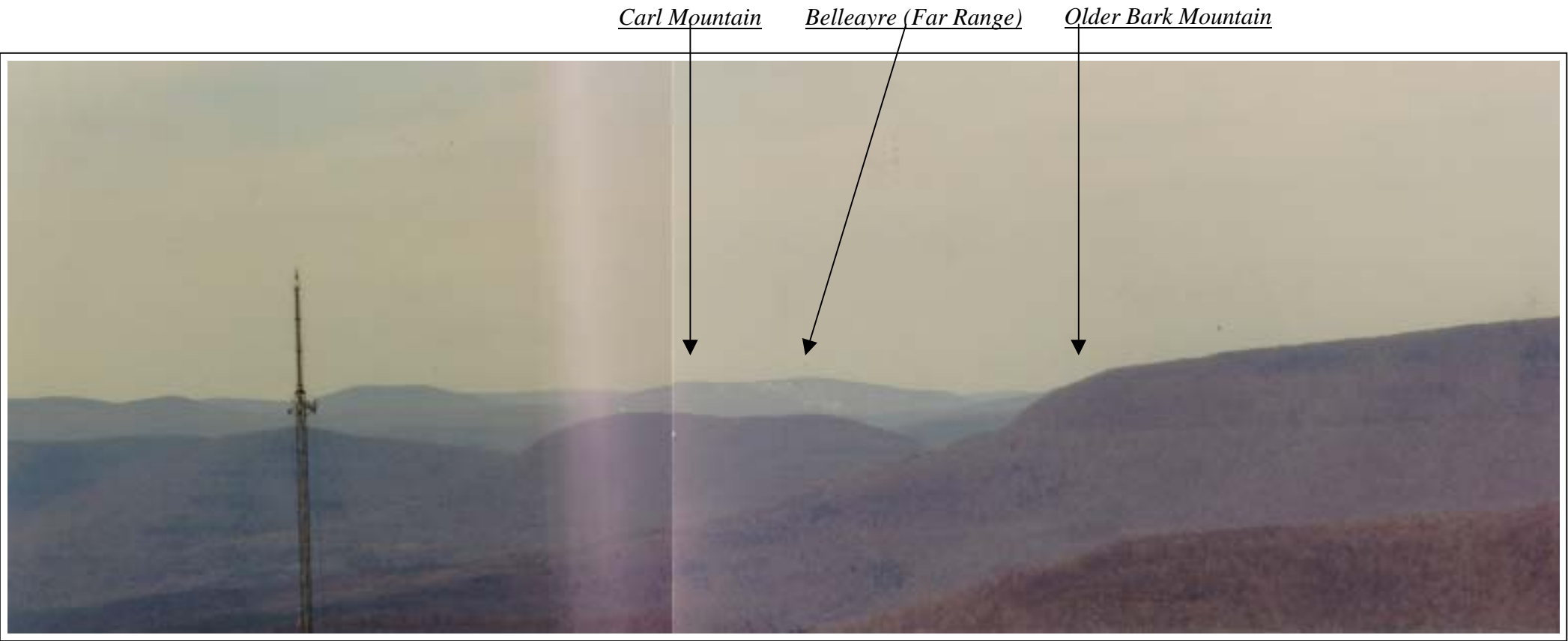
North Dome Mountain View

Figure

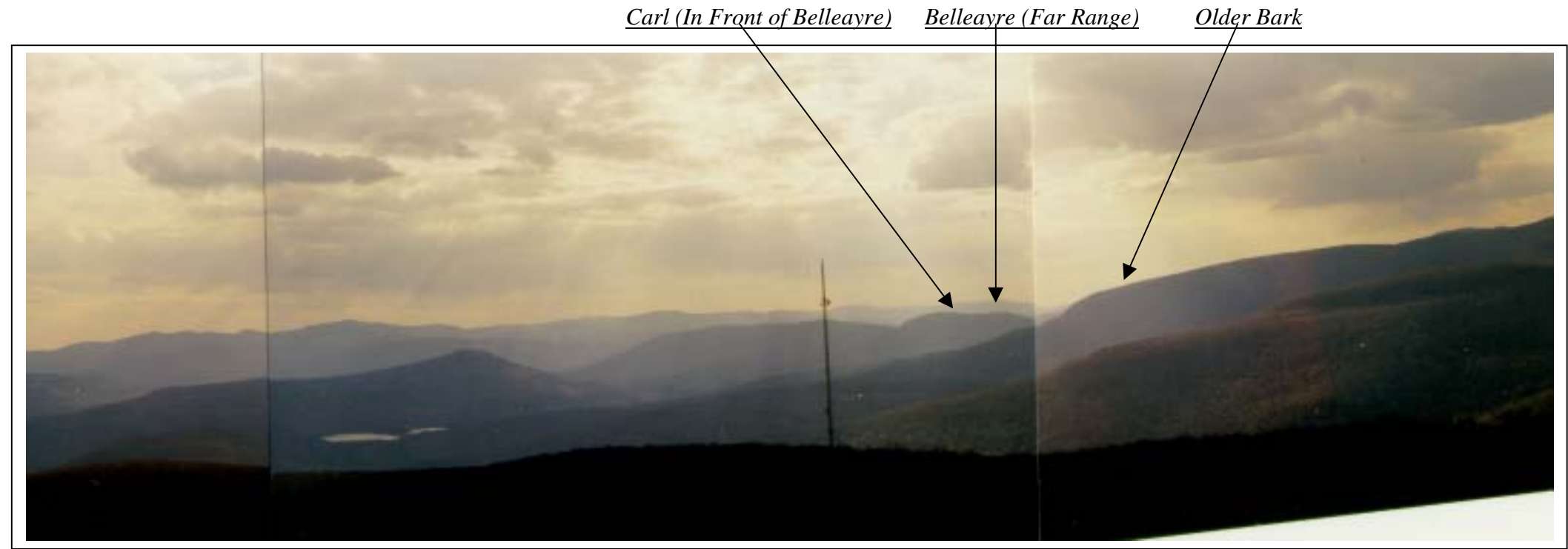
NO-1

Overlook Mountain

Views from Overlook Mountain were investigated on April 7, 2000 and April 29, 2000. Photographs were taken from the fire tower on Overlook Mountain and are shown on Figure OV-1. In View 1 taken with a 110 mm telephoto lens the ski trails at Belleayre Mountain Ski Center are visible. This is not unexpected since the lands on and around the project site are almost 20 miles from the summit of Overlook Mountain. It may be possible to see some clearing on the project site once the project is complete. This would occur on the Big Indian Plateau portion of the project site to the west of the Ski Center (left in the photograph). More specifically a break in the tree line from holes 3 and 4 on the Big Indian Country Club may be discernable as a line in the vegetation. No buildings would be visible. This possible view would be in the same context as the Ski Center and would also include the radio tower in the foreground. The disturbance associated with the project would not be nearly as visible as the ski trails at the Ski Center that run up and down the hill. Because the change to the view could involve only minimal disturbance in the context of the disturbance of the ski area, consisting of only a break in the tree canopy not altering the silhouette of the ridgeline, and be much less visible than the ski trails, and since no buildings would be visible, no mitigation measures are necessary.



View 1: 110mm View from Overlook Mountain



View 2: 50mm View from Overlook Mountain

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Overlook Mountain View

Figure

OV-1

Panther Mountain

Views from Panther Mountain were investigated on October 6, 1999 and on November 17, 2000. The first investigation accessed Panther Mountain from the trailhead on Fox Hollow Road to the north and the second investigation accessed Panther Mountain from the south from the trailhead on Slide Mountain Road. No views towards the project site were found during either investigation. Vegetation blocks views to the project site to the west. The only distant views available were to the east and not in the direction of the site. Figure PA-1 contains copies of photographs from the October 6, 1999 investigation and Figure PA-2 contains photographs from the November 17, 2000 investigation.



50mm??? Panoramic View to East from summit of Panther Mountain ???



50mm from View Point 5 looking West from summit of Panther Mountain

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Panther Mountain View Point 5
No View

Figure

PA-1



PA 1. 110mm from View Point 4 on Panther Mountain



PA 2. 50mm from View Point 4 on Panther Mountain

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Panther Mountain View Point 4
No View

Figure

PA-2

Slide Mountain

Views from Slide Mountain were investigated and photographed on April 14, 2000. Potential views into the project site are blocked by landform and vegetation. Figures SL-1 and SL-2 contain photographs from two locations on Slide Mountain. Figure SL-1 illustrates how views to Giant Ledge and Panther Mountain are possible, but how vegetation obscures views into the site. Figure SL-2 shows how vegetation blocks views to the site from the second location.

Belleayre (Behind Trees)

Giant Ledge

Panther Mountain



View 1: 80mm from View Point A

Belleayre (Behind Trees)

Giant Ledge

Panther Mountain



View 2: 50mm from View Point A

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Slide Mountain View A

Figure _____

SL-1

Panther Mountain



View 1: 80mm from View Point B

Panther Mountain



View 2: 50mm from View Point B

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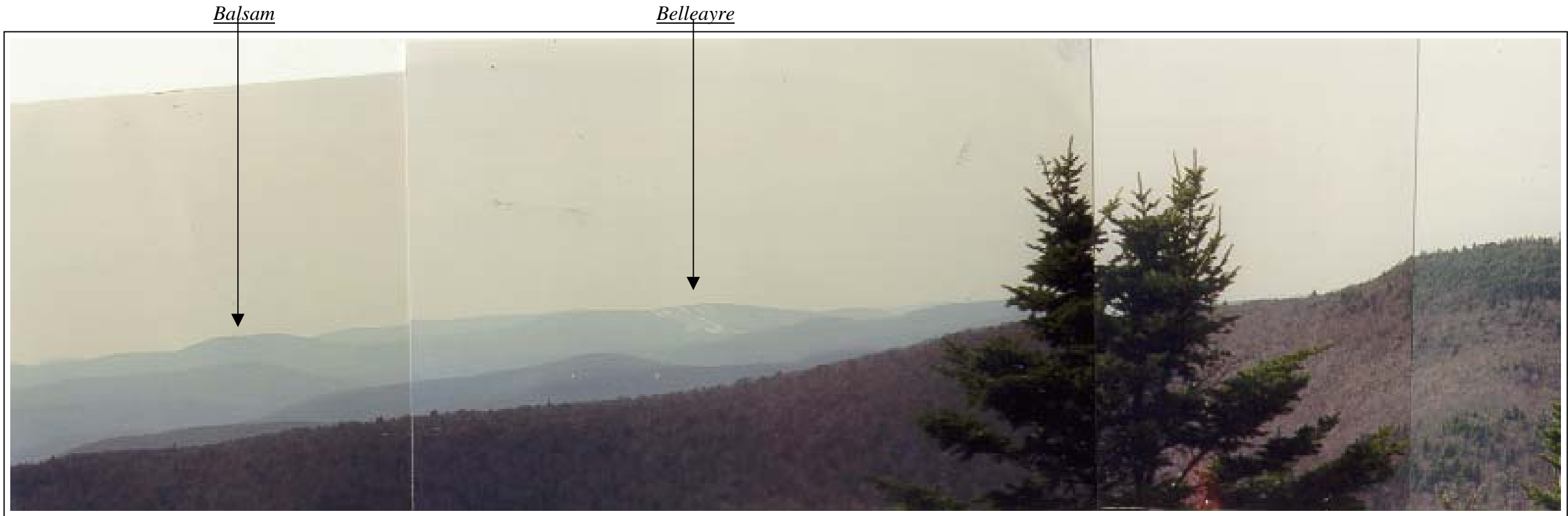
Slide Mountain View B

Figure

SL-2

Sugarloaf Mountain

Views from Panther Mountain were investigated on April 1, 2000. Figure SU-1 shows the photographs of the site taken from viewpoint indicated on Sugarloaf Mountain on the New York – New Jersey Trails Conference trail map. In the 110 mm lens photograph in Figure SU-1 the snow covered trails of Belleayre Mountain Ski Center are visible in the middle of the photograph. In the 50 mm photograph of the same view, the photograph representing the field of view of the human eye, the ridgeline of Belleayre Mountain is evident and the ski trails are barely discernable. The project site and Belleayre Mountain Ski Center form only a small portion of the rich visual texture as experienced from this location. The visual change resulting from the project implementation will be imperceptible, although possibly discernable through magnification. Based on this investigation, it is possible that clearing from the project may create some small discernable breaks in the tree canopy on the Big Indian Plateau, but no structures will be evident, nor will the silhouette of the ridgeline be altered. The views from this vantage point, located over 16 miles from the site will not be significantly changed given the distance to the site, the limited canopy breaks that may be evident, and given that the visual context that includes the downhill ski trails at the Ski Center. The character of the disturbance would be very similar to that rendered for the view from Plateau Mountain and illustrated in Section 3.4.8 of the DEIS.



View 1: 110mm from Sugarloaf



View 2: 50mm from Sugarloaf

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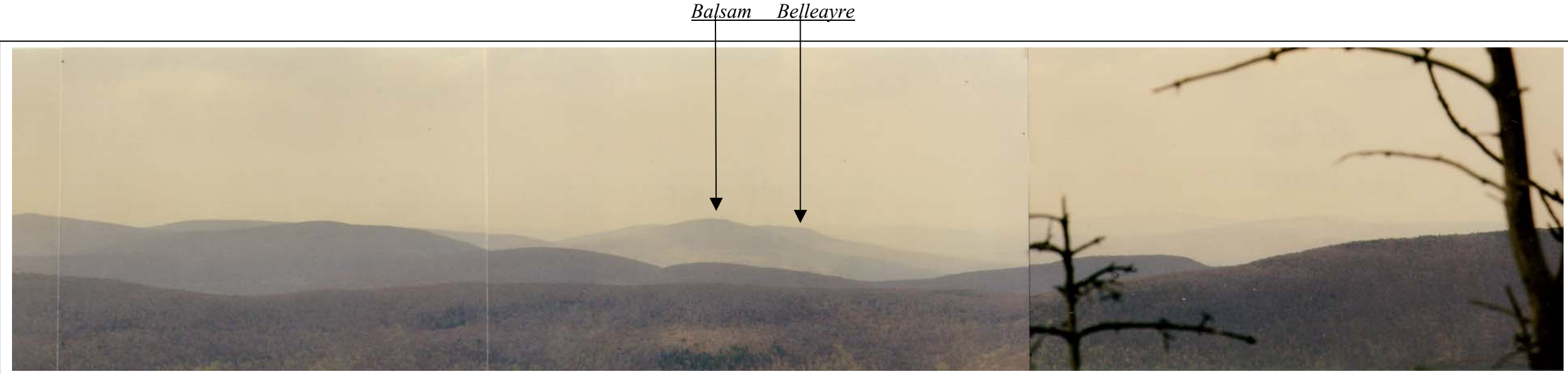
Sugarloaf Mountain View

Figure _____

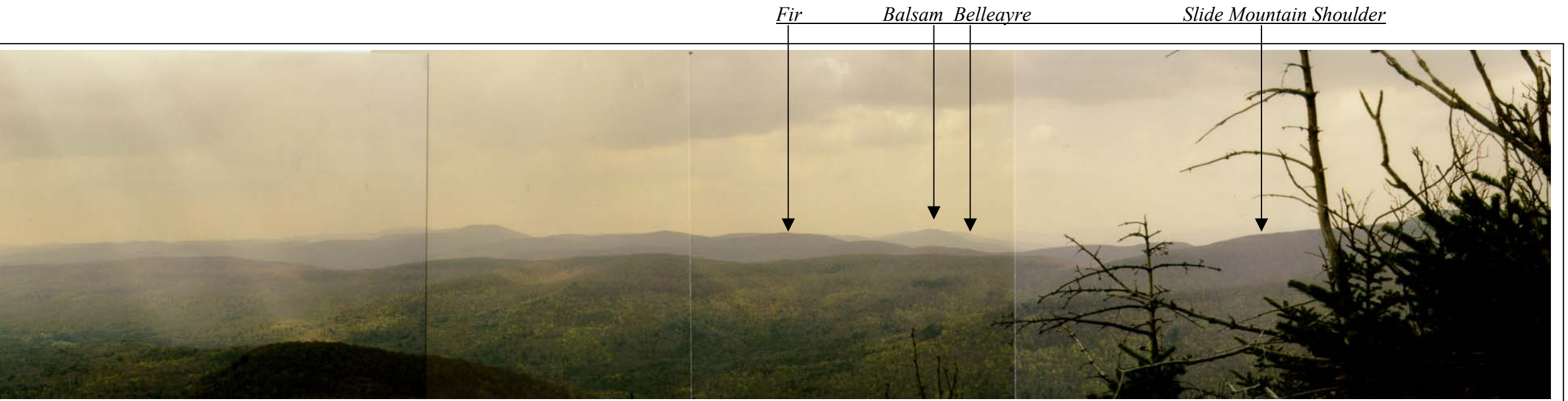
SU-1

Table Mountain

Views from Table Mountain were investigated on May 7, 2000. The summit of Table Mountain is tree covered and there are no views into the project site. However, on the northwestern descent off of the summit of Table Mountain, at a location off of the hiking trail, there is a view to the northwest towards the project site. This location was found only because the photographer was purposefully searching for views to the project site. Figure TA-1 includes photographs towards the project site from this location. Most of the Belleayre Mountain ridgeline is obscured by Balsam Mountain which is between the viewpoint and Belleayre Mountain. This is more evident in View 1 on Figure TA-1 which is a 110 mm lens view showing the eastern portion of the Belleayre Mountain ridgeline. If a hiker were to go off of the trail and go to the same location where the photographs were taken, and purposefully look for the project site during leaf off conditions and with snow on the ground, a slight break in the canopy may be discernable from this location. The character of the disturbance would be similar to, but even less than that rendered for the view from Plateau Mountain and illustrated in Section 3.4.8 of the DEIS, which is essentially indiscernible.



View 1: 110mm Off Trail



View 2: 50mm Off Trail

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Table Mountain View

Figure

TA-1

Tremper Mountain

Views from Tremper Mountain were investigated on April 7, 2000, November 20, 2000, and December 6, 2001. Figures TR-1, TR-2, TR-3, and TR-4 illustrate how vegetation blocks views into the project site from the trails to the summit and the summit itself. Figure TR-5 shows the views towards the project site from the fire tower on Tremper Mountain. From the fire tower views towards the project site are possible, but the project site itself is not visible. It is possible to see the ski trails at Belleayre Mountain which are about 10 miles away, particularly when there is snow on the ski trails. However, intervening topography, that appears to be the northern peak of the Panther Mountain ridgeline, obscures views of the project site from the Tremper Mountain fire tower.



View 1: 80mm from View Point A on Tremper Mountain



View 2: 50mm from View Point A on Tremper Mountain

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Tremper Mountain View A
No View

Figure

TR-1



View 1: 80mm from View Point B on Tremper Mountain



View 2: 50mm from View Point B on Tremper Mountain

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Tremper Mountain View B
No View

Figure _____

TR-2



View 1: 80mm from View Point C



View 2: 50mm from View Point C

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Tremper Mountain View C
No View

Figure _____

TR-3

Peak of Panther Mountain Ridge

View toward 284,° Bearing Direction Toward Belleayre Mountain (Not Seen).



View 1: 50mm from Top of Tremper Mountain

Crest of Panther Mountain Ridge

View toward 284,° Bearing Direction Toward Belleayre Mountain. This may be uppermost part of Belleayre Mountain.



View 1: 50mm from Top of Tremper Mountain

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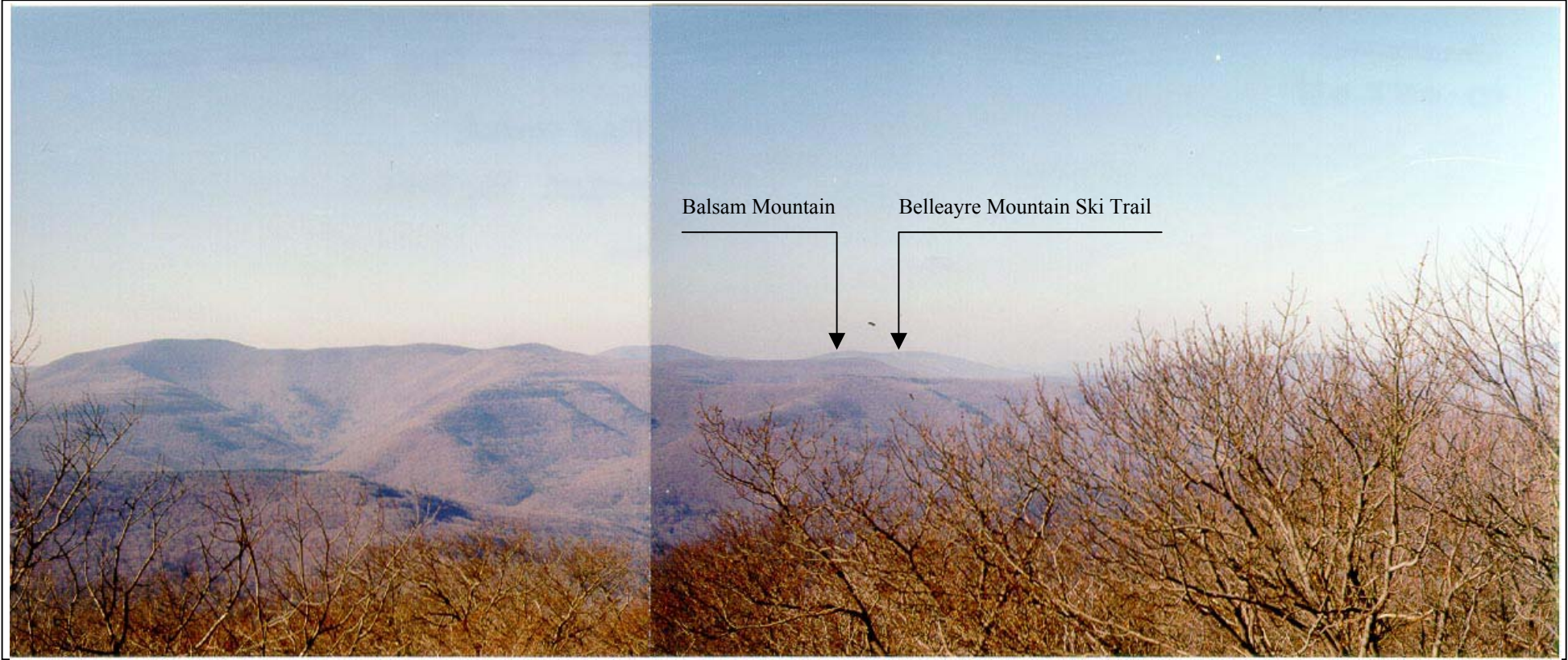
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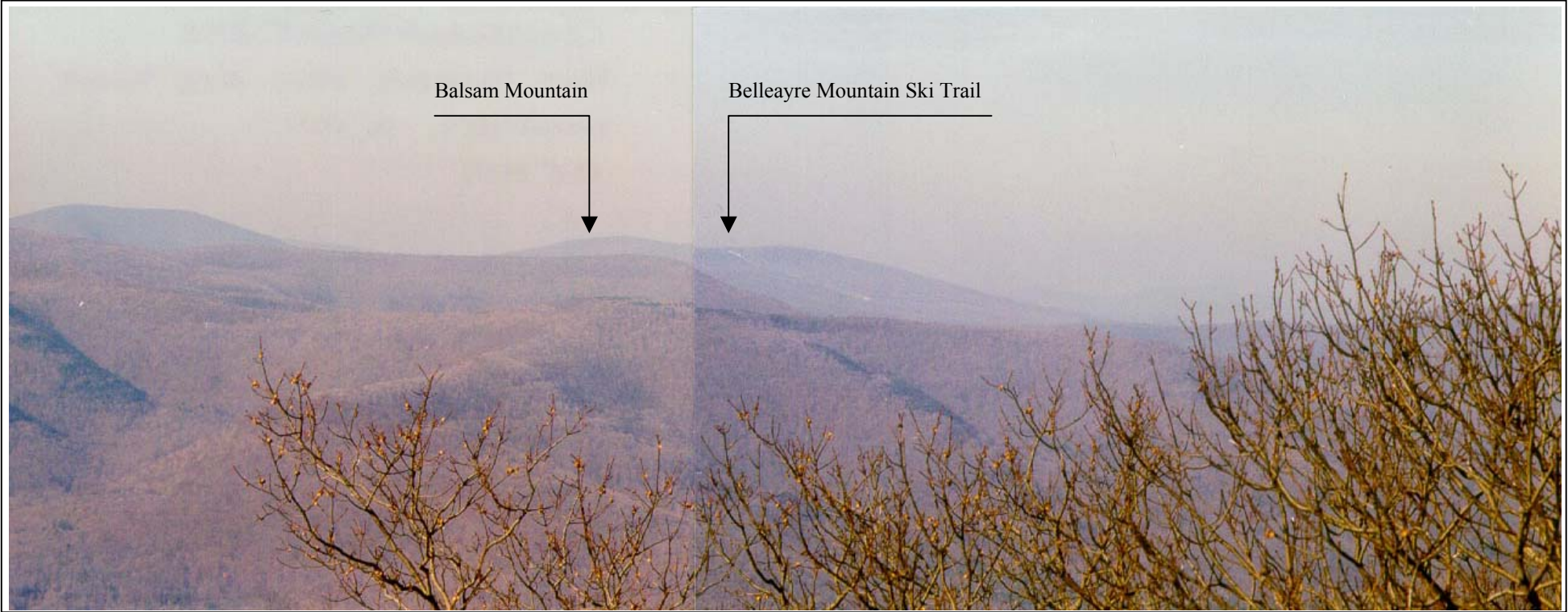
Tremper Mountain Views
Summit

Figure

TR-4



View 1: 50mm Project Site from Tremper Mountain on Fire Tower



View 2: 135mm Project Site from Tremper Mountain on Fire Tower

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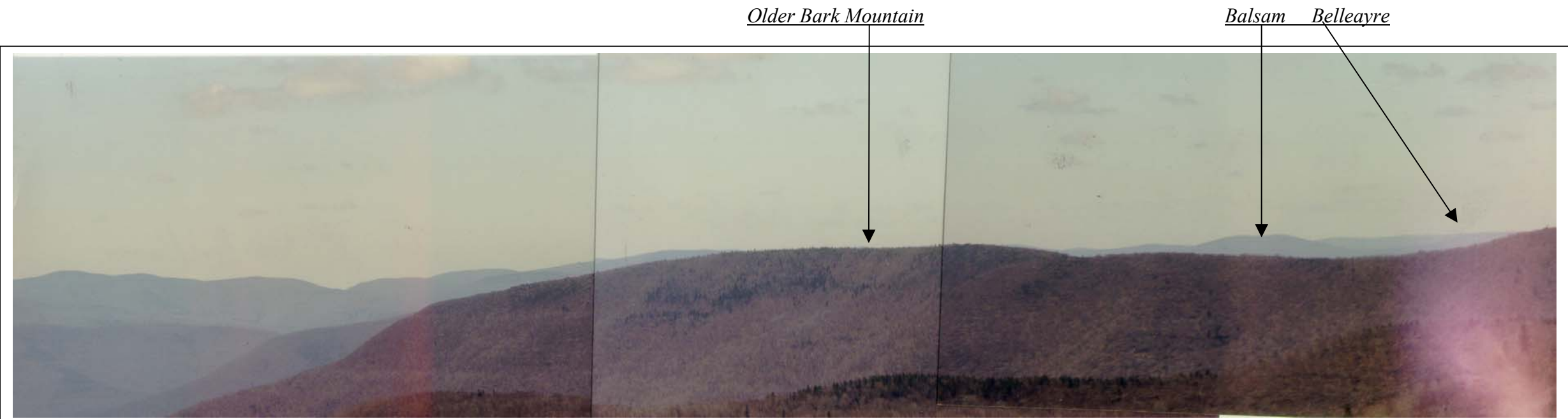
Tremper Mountain View
From Fire Tower

Figure

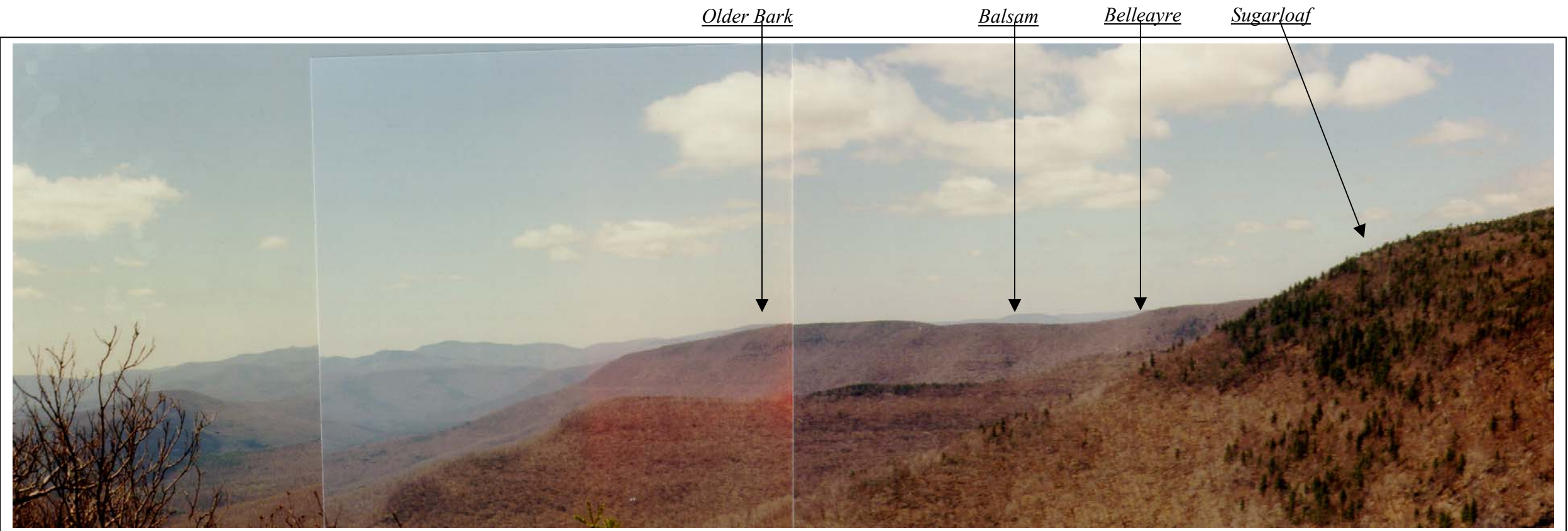
TR-5

Twin Mountain

Views from Twin Mountain were investigated on April 24, 2000. Figures TW-1 and TW-2 are views from the two viewpoints on Twin Mountain indicated on the New York – New Jersey Trails Conference maps, the western viewpoint and the eastern viewpoints respectively. The ski trails at Belleayre Mountain Ski Center were visible from both locations. A part of the Big Indian Plateau portion of the project site is also visible from both locations. Some evidence of project-related disturbance could potentially be visible from this location, some 17.5 miles from the proposed project site. The affect of the project on these views will be similar to those illustrated for Plateau Mountain in Section 3.4.8 of the DEIS (essentially indiscernible) and would appear as a break in the tree canopy but not as a change in the silhouette of the ridgeline. This view will be viewed in the same context as the existing ski trails which would be much more prominent than the very minor change to the view because of the proposed project.



View 1: 110mm from View Point 1 at Summit



View 2: 50mm from View Point 1 at Summit

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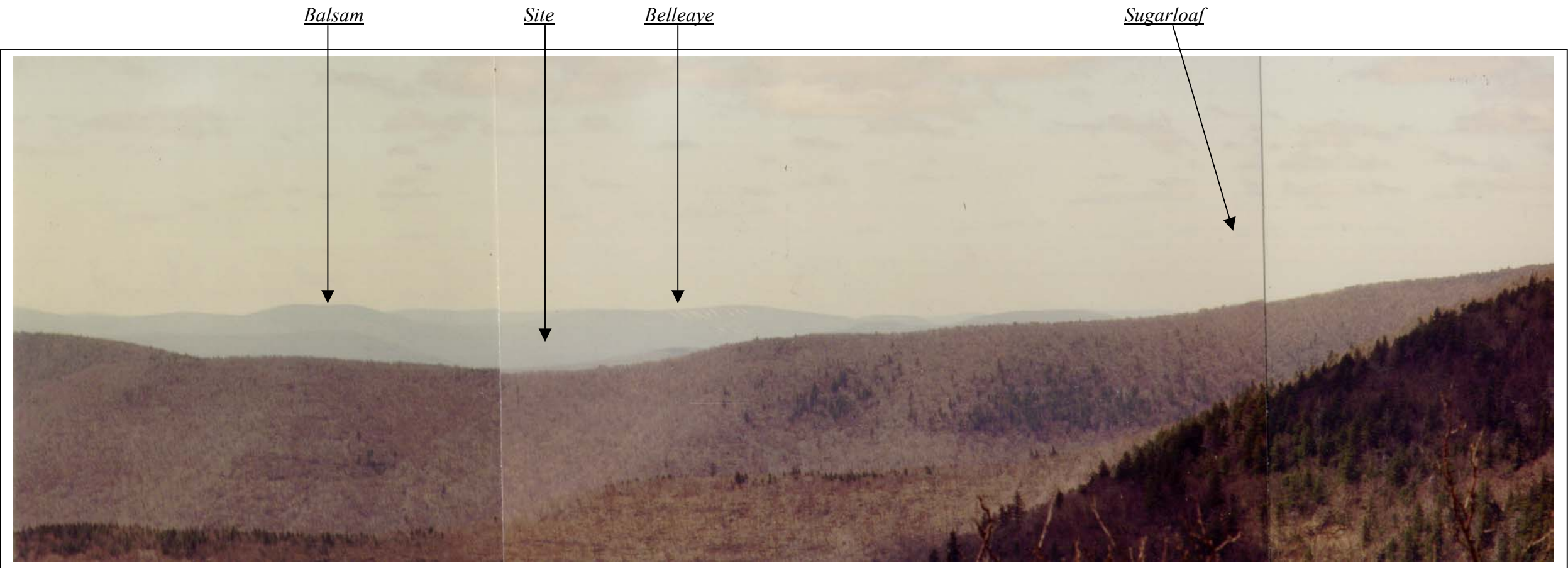
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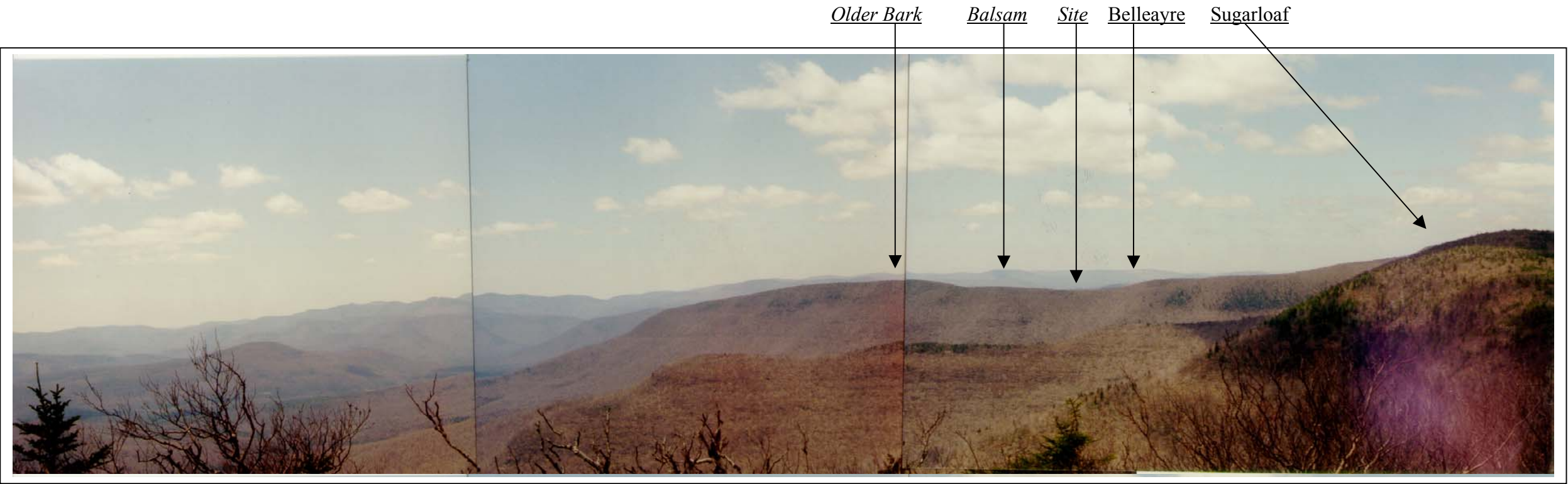
Twin Mountain View 1
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Figure _____

TW-1



View 1: 110mm from View Point 2



View 2: 50mm from View Point 2

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Twin Mountain View 2
Summit

Figure
TW-2