

Finger Lakes National Forest

Schedule of Proposed Action



April 1 to June 30, 2015

ABOUT THIS SCHEDULE

The purpose of the Schedule of Proposed Action (Schedule) is to provide a status report and short summary of project proposals that are undergoing, or will undergo, environmental analysis on the Finger Lakes National Forest. Issued quarterly, this Schedule is intended to provide the public with informal notice of proposed activities. The publishing of this Schedule is required by Forest Service regulations for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

An effort will be made to seek public input (called "scoping") on proposed projects based on specific response to this Schedule. Scoping may be in the form of letters, email requests or phone calls that will include more specific information in order for the public to provide meaningful feedback that may be incorporated into the environmental analysis process. When required, legal notices announcing project decisions will be published in the *Ithaca Journal*, our newspaper of record.

The Schedule lists projects by name, location, and a brief description of the proposal. Also included is the scoping date (which indicates when public participation began or will begin), decision date, and the expected implementation date.

Analysis which supports any decision is documented in either an Environmental Assessment (EA), or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Proposals which have been "categorically excluded" from documentation in an EA or EIS are supported by project files, which may or may not include a Decision Memo. The analysis and decision documents are kept on file at the Hector Ranger District office and is available for your review.

HOW YOU CAN BECOME INVOLVED

Your participation is important. Read through the list of proposed projects. If you want to provide site-specific comments on a project, get more information, or be placed on a project mailing list, either write or call using 1) the contacts listed at the end of the Schedule or; 2) the project contact included for the specific project of your interest. A generic statement of interest in all projects based on your review of this Schedule is not specific enough. It is only through site-specific input that we can be responsive to and incorporate your concerns into project development.

Walk in Requests: Requests from the public occasionally require that the environmental analysis be completed with a short turnaround time. This means that the analyses may be conducted and decisions made without prior listing in this Schedule. Efforts for public input for such requests will be conducted as applicable in accordance to regulations. An example of a walk-in request would be a short-term special use permit for a recreation event on the forest.

VISIT US ON OUR WEBSITE

For more information about planning or projects on the Finger Lakes National Forest you may visit our website at:

http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/project_list.php?forest=110920

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you would like more information on the projects described in this Schedule of Proposed Action, contact:

John A. Sinclair
Forest Supervisor
Green Mountain & Finger Lakes
National Forests
231 North Main Street
Rutland, VT 05701
802-747-6700

Jodie Vanselow, District Ranger
Hector Ranger District
Finger Lakes National Forest
5218 State Route 414
Hector, NY 14841
607-546-4470

This document available in large print upon request.



U.S. Department of Agriculture



Forest Service
Green Mountain and Finger Lakes
National Forests
231 North Main Street
Rutland, VT 05701

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Schedule of Proposed Action (SOPA)
04/01/2015 to 06/30/2015

Hector Ranger District, Finger Lakes National Forest

This report contains the best available information at the time of publication. Questions may be directed to the Project Contact.

Project Name	Project Purpose	Planning Status	Decision	Expected Implementation	Project Contact
Finger Lakes National Forest	Hector Ranger District			R9 - Eastern Region	
Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Suppression Project CE	- Vegetation management (other than forest products)	In Progress: Scoping Start 01/16/2015	Expected:04/2015	04/2015	Timothy Noon 607-546-4470 x316 twnoon@fs.fed.us
	Description: Application of biological and chemical control measures to control the spreading infestation of hemlock wooly adelgid and reduce the chances of widespread hemlock mortality in areas of high hemlock density across the Forest.				
	Web Link: http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa_project_exp.php?project=45582				
	Location: UNIT - Hector Ranger District. STATE - New York. COUNTY - Schuyler, Seneca. LEGAL - Not Applicable. Towns of Lodi, Covert and Hector.				
Springer Spaniel Field Trial Special Use CE	- Special use management	Completed	Actual: 03/27/2015	11/2015	Paul Widowski 607-546-4470 x312 pwidowski@fs.fed.us
	Description: Issue a special use permit to authorize the use of pastures and grasslands for the 2015 English Spaniels National Amateur Championship.				
	Web Link: http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa_project_exp.php?project=44857				
	Location: UNIT - Hector Ranger District. STATE - New York. COUNTY - Seneca. LEGAL - Not Applicable. Town of Lodi.				

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Finger Lakes National Forest, Hector, New York

Forest Happenings!!

Caring for the Land and Serving People

Spring Happenings - 2015

*Pleasure in the job puts perfection
in the work. ~Aristotle*

Welcome... John Sinclair



Green Mountain & Finger Lakes National Forests new Forest Supervisor.

John is a native New Englander who grew up in southern Maine and spent much of his childhood roaming the working forests of northern Maine. He attended the University of Maine (BS) and Oklahoma State University (MS) earning degrees in Wildlife Ecology and Management. John has been with the Forest Service since 2012 serving as the Assistant National Wildlife Program Leader in Washington, DC. In addition, his experience includes working for APHIS-Wildlife Services as the Deputy Director for Administration, the National Park Services' National Capital Regions' Inventory and Monitoring program, a Wildlife Biologist for

Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission as well as the Minnesota DNR.

John and his wife Lanie, have a 2 year old son (Caleb). Others in his household include an aging golden retriever (Ori), and 3 cats. They are all looking forward to making Vermont their home.

We missed a few things...

- Burned some NNIS piles on South Stevens unit at the Finger Lakes NF
- Grasslands restoration work on Aman North

Remote Automated Weather Station (RAWS)



The GMFL Fire crew was jumping for joy late last fall after they installed the new permanent RAWS station on the Forest.

The RAWS will provide more accurate local weather conditions for prescribed burning.

Grassland Restoration Work – Aman North



The GMFL Fire crew also helped with some Grassland Restoration in Aman North by cutting and piling pine trees. This work will help to maintain this area as a Grassland for Wildlife, and while they were here they also got to breathe a little smoke, by burning some piles in South Stevens Pasture.



Fuelwood Permits...Did you know?

That during 2014 the Finger Lakes National Forest sold approximately 45 cords worth of the fuelwood permits.



Fuelwood Permits are available for purchase. The 2 cord minimum still applies for \$20.00, or you may purchase up to 10 cords for \$10.00 per cord.

Only dead and down timber may be removed. Make sure you have your permit

in your possession and you are properly recording each load of firewood. Permits expire at the end of each year.

Remember... The NY State Quarantine area for transport of firewood includes the counties that surround Seneca and Schuyler.

America the Beautiful Passes...

These passes provide a discount on many expanded amenity fees (i.e. camping, day use, etc.) at many Federal Recreation Areas.



Senior Pass: \$10.00 Lifetime Pass for U.S. Citizens 62 years or older.



Access Pass: Free lifetime pass for permanently disabled U.S. Citizens



Annual Military Pass: Free annual pass for active military personnel and their dependents, valid for 12 months from the date of issue.

In 2014 we sold a lot of passes:

- Annual – 2
- Volunteer – 0
- Senior - 98
- Access – 12

TOTAL = 112

Recreation

Camping

Blueberry Patch and Backbone Horse Camp will be open the Friday of Memorial Day weekend (Friday, May 23).

Blueberry Patch also has a few rules and regulations to follow. Please remember that you have 30 minutes to check in and leave your payment. Each site is allowed two vehicles. Check out time is 2:00 PM. Please remember to be quiet for your neighbors.

A couple of rules and regulations to remember for *Backbone Horse Camp* are that you need to make sure you have horses to be eligible to stay at the camp. You will also need to fill out the permit at the main kiosk.

The horse trail map is also located in the same kiosk.

Trails- Winter Update

We had a large number of winter enthusiasts on the trails this winter! The snow and cold weather brought snowshoeing, cross country skiing, snowmobiling, and camping to the forest for most of the winter season.

The snow was a big draw to users of the forest. If you are looking to take part in any

Finger Lakes National Forest – Spring 2015 Forest Happenings!

of these activities next season you will find the best deals on new and used equipment now. Buy your equipment early and enjoy the forest all four seasons.

All Trail Users Meeting!

On March 16th, the FLNF hosted a trail users meeting at the Hector Ranger District. Representatives were on hand from the Twin Lakes Snowmobile Associations, Burnt Hill Trail Rides Association, Cayuga Trails Club, and Cycle CNY. The groups discussed their current trail uses, areas of concern, and how they might work together in the future. The result of the meeting is the planning of a volunteer trail day to take place in July of 2015 – drawing volunteers from all trail user types to work together on some difficult trails sections. An exciting prospect!

Wildlife



With the amount of snow we've had on the ground this past winter, along with the bitter cold temps, don't be surprised if you see dead fish and other pond life in our Forest ponds as things begin to thaw out. This is referred to as winterkill.

Most of our ponds don't have the required depth to sustain fish life during prolonged durations of ice and snow. Essentially what happens is the snow covered ice doesn't

allow sunlight to reach aquatic plant life, therefore shading them and causing them to use up the available oxygen rather than produce it. This deprives the fish of oxygen, resulting in death, aka winterkill. If you happen to observe this please notify our office.



We will again be stocking several of our Forest ponds with brook trout in preparation for recreational fishing season. Be forewarned, you just might be asked to help carry a bucket or two!

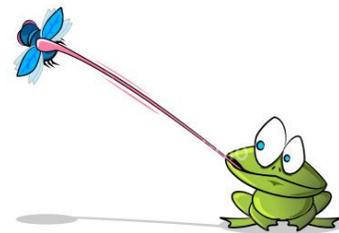
This year, we will be celebrating the **20th year of our Annual Youth Fishing Derby.**

The date for the derby is set for **Saturday, May 16th.** As in past years, gift bags will be available for all registered participants and an awards ceremony and lunch will follow upon conclusion of the fishing. Again this year, we are cutting off the registration at 100 kids, so hurry up and call or stop in the office to sign up!

This event would not happen without the generous donations of many local businesses, if you would like to help in any way – don't hesitate to give Paul a call at the office.

Fish Monitoring

Fish and Wildlife staff from the Green Mountain National Forest will be on Forest this summer to assist in fish monitoring efforts taking place in some of our ponds. Staff will be conducting fish population surveys to determine what species are using these ponds. They will also be monitoring other pond qualities as well, i.e. aquatic plant life, temperature, depth, etc. These results will help us better manage these ponds for wildlife and provide ample recreation opportunities to the public as well.



Salamander Research

Scientists from Hobart and William Smith Colleges are conducting research will continue their research on terrestrial salamanders here on the Forest over the next few years. They are looking at the movement of uncommon to rare species across the landscape.

Please do not disturb any structure or other surveying equipment that you might run across while out on the Forest. If you have any questions pertaining to their research please call the Hector Office.

As always...anyone interested in volunteering with the wildlife program here

on the Forest, please call or email Paul Widowski at 607-546-4470 or pwidowski@fs.fed.us

Range

With snow conditions as they were during the winter of 2014-2015, the FLNF briefly considered switching our prescribed grazing to one more suitable for musk ox or arctic yaks.



Okay – April Fools!

Winter did have an effect on pasture fence conditions, with a good amount of repair work predicted on top of normal pasture maintenance. The snow continues to melt, but is expected to persist into April at many locations on the Forest. The grazing season start date will be dependent on some hopeful warm temperatures to warm the soil and flush the season's grasses to a bright spring green.



Forest Health

The FLNF has been actively engaged in working through the environmental analysis for the FLNF Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) Suppression Project. A decision on the project is expected during the first week of April, and a good amount of public support has been documented by adjacent landowners and other public land management agencies during the analysis. Pending successful completion of the environmental analysis, crews will prioritize sections of Hemlock for potential treatment this summer. For more information on the FLNF HWA Suppression Project, feel free to contact Tim Noon at 607-546-4470 or twnoon@fs.fed.us

Another forest health question that comes up frequently after cold winters, is what effect the cold has on invasive pests in our area. According to Mark Whitmore, at Cornell University, persistent cold temperatures and subsequent mortality may provide some limited relief to current infestations, but they shouldn't be expected to be long lasting. Some evidence suggests cold temperatures actually increase cold hardiness in future generations of pests such as the HWA.

Planting, Planting, Planting!

This April and May marks the beginning of a busy planting season on the FLNFF. Riparian planting is planned for three pastures; (Woodard, Tunnison, and Ballard.) The bulk of the planting work is being organized by the Forest Service – Northern Research Station (NRS). Ecologists from NRS are expanding current riparian planting research with more dutch elm resistant American elm trees, as well as other trees and shrubs. These plantings will be studied to determine Elm hardiness and riparian health. In conjunction with this, a general riparian planting is planned for Tunnison pasture, where space around the research plantings will be filled with native trees and shrubs. This effort will be undertaken with the help of college students from SUNY Morrisville.

Arbor Day

Additionally, a second annual Arbor Day tree planting is being planned for Friday April 24th, New York State’s Arbor Day. The FLNFF is working with the National Wild Turkey Federation and local volunteers to set up an tree planting event on National Forest land. Specifics are yet to be determined, although it is likely that the tree planting will add to the dutch elm resistant elms put into Ballard last summer, or the riparian planting taking place in Woodard, Tunnison, or Ballard.



Butternut Planting

The last bit of planting planned for this year is a truly exciting one. This year we will begin to plant Butternut seedlings into the Seed Orchard constructed along Searsburg road. The trees coming to our seed orchard have been on an incredible journey.

They began as terminal branches on mostly healthy mature Butternut trees collected around the Finger Lakes region. From there, they were taken to the Forest Service Oconto River Seed Orchard in White Lake, Wisconsin where they were grafted with walnut root stock to and grown on site. This spring they are ready to return with the hope of one day producing a seed source that shows higher resistance to the Butternut canker.

A true labor of love, as these iconic trees will have traveled across the country and lived in multiple seed orchards.



Interested in planting a tree? We'll be seeking anyone interested to help out with our Arbor Day tree planting, and may have needs elsewhere as they arise. **Contact Tim Noon 607-546-4470 ext. 316 or John Cody ext. 313** for more information.

Law Enforcement

Spring Turkey Hunters

A reminder to spring turkey hunters...be sure to carry your hunting license on your person when out hunting. Also, it's recommended - not required - to wear orange in and out of the woods to your hunting location. Please be safe and always completely identify your target before shooting.

Remember...please report all suspicious activity to our law enforcement officer at 607-546-4470 x312.



Safety...

Cell Phones & Driving - - Not a good combination!

A picture is worth a 1,000 words – but the true picture of what this rig looks like in “real life” is worth far more.



In late December 2014, I received a call to see if we could store a Forest Service rig in our parking lot that was in an accident, until they could figure out what to do with it.



The above is what arrived the next day...

My first thought was someone had to have been killed, fortunately the driver walked away with a few bumps and bruises. Had there been a passenger, there would have been a fatality.

Come to find out, the driver of this vehicle heard his cell phone “beep” reached over to turn it off and when he looked up, saw the taillights of a semi. An eye opening and life changing moment I’m sure! And a good reminder to store those phones where you can’t reach them.

Mark Your Calendar...

Friday, April 24th - Arbor Day Tree Planting

Saturday, May 16th - 20th Annual Youth Fishing Derby

From the Ranger...

What a winter, and one that just does not want to go away! Hard to imagine that in less than a month and a half we will be having our 20th Annual Youth Fishing Derby!

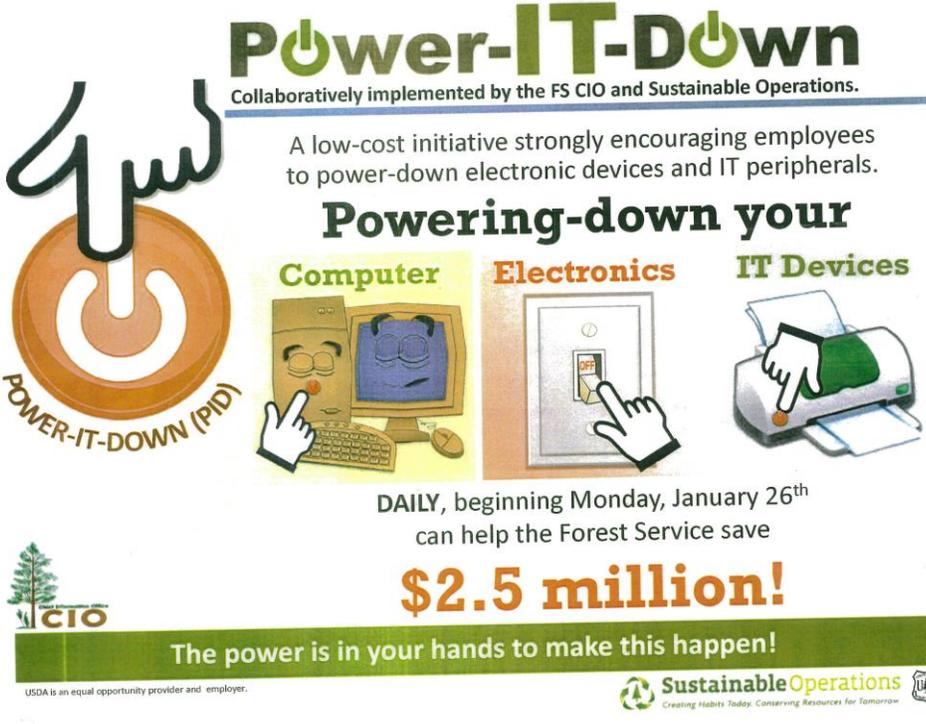
We will also be planting thousands of trees and shrubs in our riparian areas, and musk ox – sorry Cattle, will be grazing again in the pastures.

Since my arrival in October 2009, I've seen many great changes happen on the Forest, with many great things in the works.

So, when you get the opportunity come out and visit your National Forest – the only one in the State of NY, and a beautiful one at that! Happy Spring - Jodie

Green / Sustainability Tip...

The Finger Lakes National Forest is participating in a Forest Service wide challenge to “Power IT Down”. How much could you save in your home if you did something similar?



Power-IT-Down
Collaboratively implemented by the FS CIO and Sustainable Operations.

A low-cost initiative strongly encouraging employees to power-down electronic devices and IT peripherals.

Powering-down your

- Computer** (Illustration of a computer monitor and keyboard)
- Electronics** (Illustration of a hand plugging a device into a wall outlet)
- IT Devices** (Illustration of a hand plugging a device into a printer)

DAILY, beginning Monday, January 26th
can help the Forest Service save

\$2.5 million!

The power is in your hands to make this happen!

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Sustainable Operations
Creating Habits Today. Conserving Resources for Tomorrow

Just For Fun! Just For Kids!



Careless Campers

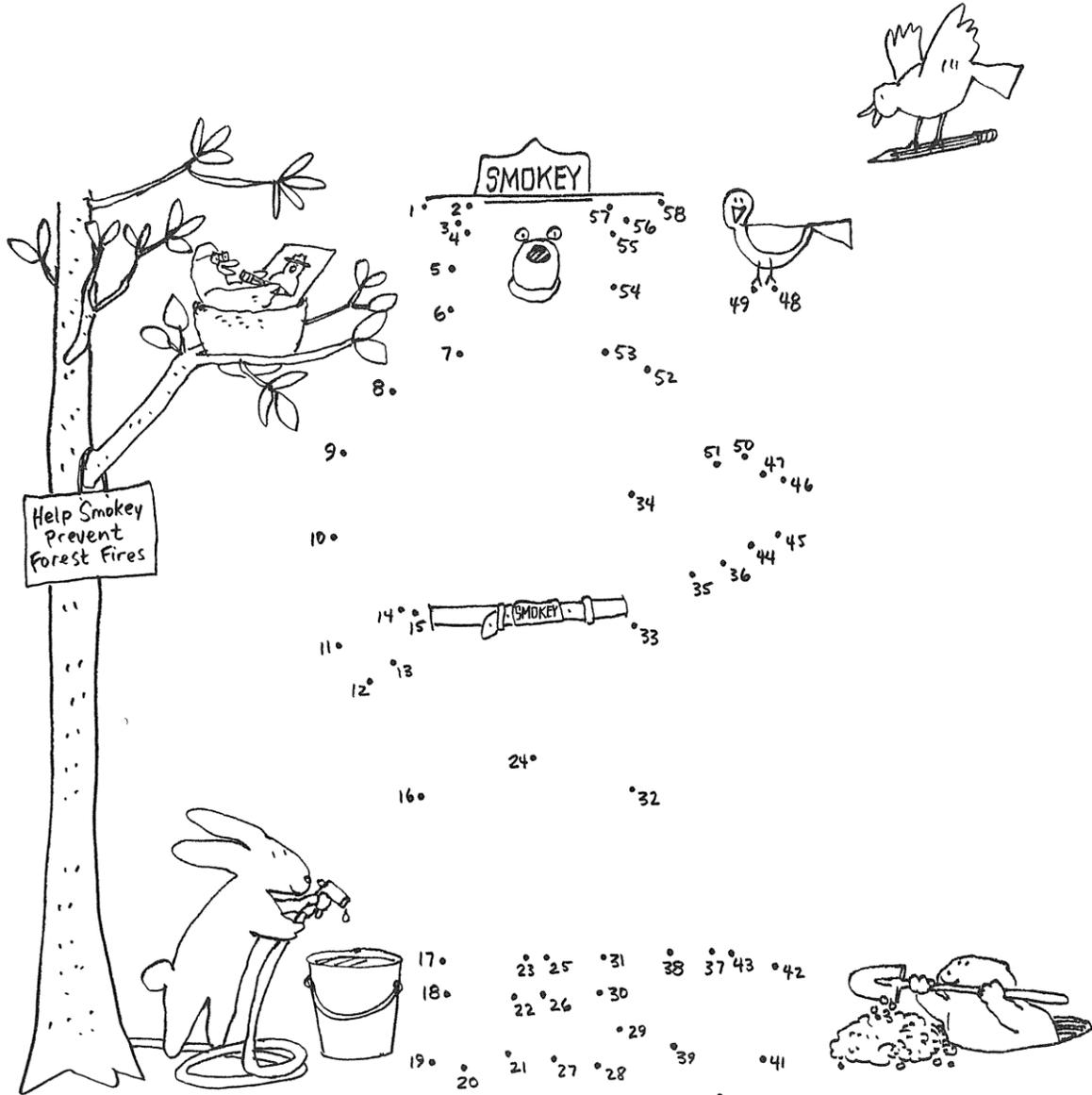
Everyone knows that careless campers cause forest fires. In the top picture, cross out the 10 ways Mr. Smith and Billy are being *careless* campers. In the bottom picture, circle the 10 ways Mr. Smith and Billy are being *careful* campers.



NFES #94001 U.S.D.A. Forest Service and your State Forester Resale prohibited by 16USC580

Dot-to-Dot

Connect the dots below to find the hidden picture.



NFES #94001 U.S.D.A. Forest Service and your State Forester Resale prohibited by 16USC580