

# Finger Lakes National Forest

## *Schedule of Proposed Actions*



**January 1 to March 31, 2014**

### **ABOUT THIS SCHEDULE**

The purpose of the Schedule of Proposed Actions (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](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 Actions, contact:

Colleen Pelles Madrid  
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)**  
**01/01/2014 to 03/31/2014**  
**Finger Lakes National Forest**  
**Hector Ranger District**

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
<b>Finger Lakes National Forest</b>		<b>Hector Ranger District</b>			<b>R9 - Eastern Region</b>
<b>A-House West Wetland Creation</b> CE	- Wildlife, Fish, Rare plants - Watershed management	Developing Proposal Est. Scoping Start 03/2014	Expected:06/2014	09/2014	Timothy Noon 607-546-4470 ext. 316 twnoon@fs.fed.us
	<b>Description:</b> Construct two shallow water depressions up to three feet deep in the southeastern portion of the A-House West grassland to re-create natural-appearing and functional wetland habitat.				
	<b>Web Link:</b> <a href="http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa_project_exp.php?project=41836">http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa_project_exp.php?project=41836</a>				
<b>Location:</b> UNIT - Hector Ranger District. STATE - New York. COUNTY - Seneca. LEGAL - Not Applicable. Town of Lodi.					
<b>Backbone Horse Camp Water Source</b> CE  <b>*NEW LISTING*</b>	- Recreation management - Watershed management	Developing Proposal Est. Scoping Start 02/2014	Expected:05/2014	08/2014	Timothy Noon 607-546-4470 ext. 316 twnoon@fs.fed.us
	<b>Description:</b> Create an improved and cleaner water source for stock users at Backbone Horse camp and trail by dredging and piping to a frost free hydrant. A small trough or bucket above a gravel hardened surface will allow for resource protection.				
	<b>Web Link:</b> <a href="http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa_project_exp.php?project=43459">http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa_project_exp.php?project=43459</a>				
<b>Location:</b> UNIT - Hector Ranger District. STATE - New York. COUNTY - Schuyler. LEGAL - Not Applicable. Town of Hector.					
<b>Breakneck Brook Large Woody Debris Restoration</b> CE	- Wildlife, Fish, Rare plants - Watershed management	Completed	Actual: 12/17/2013	08/2014	Daniel McKinley 802-747-6738 dmckinley@fs.fed.us
	<b>Description:</b> Place large woody debris into Breakneck Brook to restore aquatic habitat functions. Trees and rootwads would be placed and anchored with a small tracked excavator.				
	<b>Web Link:</b> <a href="http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa_project_exp.php?project=41826">http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa_project_exp.php?project=41826</a>				
<b>Location:</b> UNIT - Hector Ranger District. STATE - New York. COUNTY - Schuyler. LEGAL - Not Applicable. Town of Hector.					

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<b>Finger Lakes National Forest</b>		<b>Hector Ranger District</b>		<b>R9 - Eastern Region</b>	
<b>Peterson Pasture Hedgerow Removal</b> CE	- Wildlife, Fish, Rare plants - Grazing management	In Progress: 215 Comment Period Legal Notice 08/02/2013	Expected:02/2014	04/2014	Timothy Noon 607-546-4470 ext. 316 twnoon@fs.fed.us
	<b>Description:</b> Removal of all hedgerows within the Peterson pasture that are not adjacent to streams or cattle ponds making this pasture more open and more appealing to grassland nesting birds.				
	<b>Web Link:</b> <a href="http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa_project_exp.php?project=42478">http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa_project_exp.php?project=42478</a>				
<b>Location:</b> UNIT - Hector Ranger District. STATE - New York. COUNTY - Seneca. LEGAL - Not Applicable. Town of Lodi.					
<b>Potomac North Wetland Creation</b> CE	- Wildlife, Fish, Rare plants - Watershed management	Developing Proposal Est. Scoping Start 03/2014	Expected:06/2014	08/2014	Timothy Noon 607-546-4470 ext. 316 twnoon@fs.fed.us
	<b>Description:</b> Construct three shallow water depressions in the eastern portion of the Potomac North grassland for wildlife to recreate natural appearing and functional wetland habitat.				
	<b>Web Link:</b> <a href="http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa_project_exp.php?project=43023">http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa_project_exp.php?project=43023</a>				
<b>Location:</b> UNIT - Hector Ranger District. STATE - New York. COUNTY - Schuyler. LEGAL - Not Applicable. Town of Hector.					
<b>Smith Pond Dry Hydrant</b> CE  <b>*NEW LISTING*</b>	- Watershed management - Special use management	Developing Proposal Est. Scoping Start 02/2014	Expected:05/2014	08/2014	Timothy Noon 607-546-4470 ext. 316 twnoon@fs.fed.us
	<b>Description:</b> Create a dry fire hydrant along Smith Road for use by local volunteer fire departments and Agency resources to aid in fire protection. The pond would also be dredged to install the hydrant and improve water quality.				
	<b>Web Link:</b> <a href="http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa_project_exp.php?project=43460">http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa_project_exp.php?project=43460</a>				
<b>Location:</b> UNIT - Hector Ranger District. STATE - New York. COUNTY - Seneca. LEGAL - Not Applicable. Town of Lodi.					

Project Name	Project Purpose	Planning Status	Decision	Expected Implementation	Project Contact
<b>Finger Lakes National Forest</b>		<b>Hector Ranger District</b>			<b>R9 - Eastern Region</b>
<b>Terry Berry Wetland Restoration</b> CE	- Wildlife, Fish, Rare plants - Watershed management	Developing Proposal Est. Scoping Start 03/2014	Expected:06/2014	08/2015	Timothy Noon 607-546-4470 ext. 316 twnoon@fs.fed.us
	<b>Description:</b> Reshape existing, unused constructed pond into a shallow wetland to recreate natural appearing and functional wetland habitat.				
	<b>Web Link:</b> <a href="http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa_project_exp.php?project=43024">http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa_project_exp.php?project=43024</a>				
<b>Location:</b> UNIT - Hector Ranger District. STATE - New York. COUNTY - Schuyler. LEGAL - Not Applicable. Town of Hector.					

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



# Finger Lakes National Forest, Hector, New York

# Forest Happenings!!

Caring for the Land and Serving People

## Winter Happenings 2013

*I prefer winter and Fall, when you feel the bone structure of the landscape – the loneliness of it, the dead feeling of winter. Something waits beneath it, the whole story doesn't show. ~Andrew Wyeth*

### *Some things we meant to share...*

The Fall was an extremely busy time of year for the Forest, with employees going in many different directions, here are a few things we forgot to share in the Fall Forest Happenings...

### *Grey Towers 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*



(Left to Right: Sherise Foster, Rebecca Wright, Tim Noon & Jodie Vanselow)

Personnel from the Forest had the opportunity of helping “Grey Towers National Historic Site” celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on September 21.

Grey Towers was the summer home of Gifford Pinchot, first Chief of the US Forest

Service and Pennsylvania Governor for two terms.

In 1963, Gifford Bryce Pinchot, son of Gifford and Cornelia, donated Grey Towers and 102 acres to the US Forest Service, the federal agency founded by his father and which now administers the site.

The US Forest Service works with numerous partners to carry on the Pinchot legacy by delivering public programs, interpretive tours and conservation education programs.

Today, conferences and seminars at the estate bring together a diversity of leading conservation and environmental thinkers to help guide the future of natural resource conservation.

One of the highlights for the forest staff was being able to hear our Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell speak.



## ***“FEDs Feed Families”***



For a few short weeks in the month of August the Forest participated in the annual “FEDs Feed Families” campaign. Donation bins were located in our office as well as at the “Ovid Big M”. An estimated 265 lbs of non-perishable food items was donated to the Ovid Federated Church Food Bank.

Our thanks to those who donated and to the Ovid Big M for allowing us to place a bin in their store!

## ***NY STATE ENVIROTHON***



We were quite pleased and very proud to hear that students from the Mount Academy of Ulster County, New York had won the North American Envirothon held in Bozeman, Montana! In addition, the students also took first place in the oral presentation which was on Rangeland, a big deal for a school from the East!

So, why is this important to the Forest – not only does it show that NY State kids are

Finger Lakes National Forest – Winter 2013-2014 Forest Happenings!

connecting to the environment, but the pastures located on the Forest were used as the basis for the scenario for the NY State Envirothon Competition. Our input helped, Dave Roberts from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) develop the Grazing Management Plan Scenario.

This is the first time a school from New York has won this competition!!!

## ***Seneca Meadows Open House***

Personnel from the Forest participated in the Seneca Meadows Wetlands Preserve & Environmental Education Center Open house on Sunday, September 8<sup>th</sup>. About 100 folks visited the booth, with over 1,500 touring the Seneca Meadows Landfill.

***Now that we're caught up – here's what's happening this winter.***

## ***2<sup>nd</sup> Annual “Toys for Tots” Toy Drive***

This year we expanded our efforts with the “Toys for Tots” Toy Drive thru the help of Seneca Falls Tractor Supply and Seneca Waterways Council Boy Scout Troop 78. It was a very successful year, especially with a last minute donation from O’Malley’s Restaurant in Interlaken.

We were able to fill the back of our Ford Hybrid and a portion of the back seat with donations.



Tim and Rebecca were also able to break away to play Santa and deliver the toys to the Marine Armory in Syracuse, and help out with the sorting. The armory received more than 2,000 donated toys!



This is becoming a yearly event, and it provides support to families across New York State. If you're interested in becoming involved next year give our office a call or search the U.S. Marine Corps Toys for Tots website

## **Safety...Winter Driving Tips**

### **AAA recommends the following winter driving tips:**

- Avoid driving while you're fatigued. Getting the proper amount of rest before taking on winter weather tasks reduces driving risks.
- Never warm up a vehicle in an enclosed area, such as a garage.

- Make certain your tires are properly inflated.
- Never mix radial tires with other tire types.
- Keep your gas tank at least half full to avoid gas line freeze-up.
- If possible, avoid using your parking brake in cold, rainy and snowy weather.
- Do not use cruise control when driving on any slippery surface (wet, ice, sand).
- Always look and steer where you want to go.
- Use your seat belt every time you get into your vehicle.

## **Going Green...Rain Barrels**

This past fall we installed two Rain Barrels here at the office. So we thought we would share some information on their benefits.

A rain barrel is a system that collects and stores rainwater from your roof that would otherwise be lost to runoff and diverted to storm drains and streams. Usually a rain barrel is composed of a 55 gallon drum, a vinyl hose, PVC couplings, a screen grate to keep debris and insects out, and other off-the-shelf items, a rain barrel is relatively simple and inexpensive to construct and can sit conveniently under any residential gutter down spout.

What are the advantages of a rain barrel?

Lawn and garden watering make up nearly 40% of total household water use during the summer. A rain barrel collects water and stores it for when you need it most -- during periods of drought -- to water plants, wash your car, or to top a swimming pool. It provides an ample supply of free "soft water" to homeowners, containing no

chlorine, lime or calcium making it ideal for gardens, flower pots, and car and window washing.

A rain barrel will save most homeowners about 1,300 gallons of water during the peak summer months. Saving water not only helps protect the environment, it saves you money and energy (decreased demand for treated tap water). Diverting water from storm drains also decreases the impact of runoff to streams. Therefore, a rain barrel is an easy way for you to have a consistent supply of clean, fresh water for outdoor use, FREE.

### **Firewood Quarantine Still in Effect**

To avoid the spread of non-native and invasive insects that might be living in your firewood, do not transport your firewood outside the local area. Schuyler County has been quarantined by the State of NY, which means wood cut within Schuyler County cannot be transported out of the county.

### **Firewood Permits**

Firewood 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.

The annual permit is good until December 30, 2014. Make sure you have your permit in your possession and you are properly recording each load of firewood. To avoid the spread of non-native and invasive insects that might be living in your firewood, do not transport your firewood outside the local area.

### **Searching for Butternuts**

We continue the search for Butternut trees on the Forest and nearby private properties that have no outward appearances of the Butternut Canker disease. As we find and document these, they will become part of a long term study to see if a resistant tree can be found to propagate. This is an ongoing project in conjunction with Forest Service Research. Any area landowners who think they may have Butternuts that appear healthy are welcome to contact our office for more information. (607) 546-4470, please ask for Rebecca or Tim.

### **Recreation...**

#### **Camping**

Blueberry Patch Campground is closed for the winter. Backbone Horse Camp is open for hearty folks who enjoy winter camping! (No horse needed this time of year!)

Potomac Group Campground is available by reservation only, pre-paying through [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov) or by calling 1-877-444-6777. Both Blueberry Patch and Potomac campgrounds had improvements done this past fall that included fire rings, a group grill, benches and picnic tables.

As always, the National Forest is open to camping, unless posted closed. You can camp pretty much anywhere using no-trace techniques if you prefer that over a campground.

#### **Snowmobile Trails**

Many thanks go to the Twin Lakes Snowmobile Association for their work on the trail system that runs through the Forest. Through a partnership with the club, signing, grooming and other trail maintenance happens on the Forest.

Snowmobiles are allowed on designated trails and in pastures. For current trail conditions, including when trails are open, go to their web site

<http://twinlakesnowmobile.com> or call our office during business hours.

## Horseback Riding Trails

Horse riders will have some new ride through gates to enjoy. We have gotten positive feedback on these gates.



The gates get permanently installed on the trails open to horses which allow easier and safer passage while riding. As always – be sure to close any gates as you pass through! We hope in the near future to install more of these where needed.

## Hiking Trails



The Cornell Outdoor Odyssey club came out twice, to work on replacing boardwalks along Interloken Trail.

The Finger Lakes Runner’s club generously donated the materials for this project.

Finger Lakes National Forest – Winter 2013-2014 Forest Happenings!



We also hosted a VT YCC trail crew who replaced a section of boardwalk with boards made out of recycled plastic. It is designed for decks and seems quite durable. You will come across it when walking south of Teeter Pond on the Interloken Trail. Let us know what you think of it!



As always, please report any concerns or information about trees down, etc. to the District Office.

## Wildlife...

### Hunting season

The Forest was quite busy during gun season as usual. There were many good contacts and conversations with hunters. It

is great to see that the majority of hunters wear blaze orange, as mentioned in our last newsletter, a highly effective method to stay visible and safe.

Deer season is over until next year. Coyote season is open through the winter until March 30. They may be hunted during the day or night. As always, hunting is allowed on the Forest, following the NYS DEC hunting regulations. For more info, go to [www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov).

### **2014 Fishing Derby Reminder**

The 2014 Fishing derby will occur on **Saturday, May 10<sup>th</sup>**. Due to the many requests we will begin 1 hour earlier and start fishing at **8:00 a.m.** Another change that may be happening is **REQUIRED** pre-registration. Over the past few years the number of participants has been close to 100, if not over. For those that have attended when the numbers get that high – it is very close fishing, and we have growing concerns about kids getting hurt. If we choose to go to a pre-registration system it will be well advertised in the local papers.

### **Non-Native Invasive Species**

#### **Japanese stiltgrass**



Another Non-Native Plant has been identified on the Forest, *Microstegium vimineum* (Japanese Stiltgrass). This plant was found growing along a significant stream this summer.

A rapid response protocol was initiated by using manual treating (i.e. hand pulling) and will continue to monitor this area in the future. We have been in discussion with a private landowner upstream with a heavy infestation and are encouraged by their willingness to help to control this aggressive plant.

### **Prescribed Fire**

We successfully completed prescribed burning on approximately 300 acres of grasslands managed for Wildlife. The intent of the burns was to reduce woody brush to maintain open grasslands preferred by the diverse wildlife that uses the Forest.



Firefighters from the Green Mountain and Finger Lakes NF's, Allegheny NF, New York DEC, as well as the Lodi, Burdett, and Hector volunteer departments worked together to implement the burns.



## **Wildfire**

The District also had one Wildfire this fall that burn 0.2 acres off of Potomac Road. The town of Hector VFD and a Forest Service Law Enforcement Officer contained the fire that may have been started as a result of an abandoned campfire. The fire burned through a steady rain, so this is a good reminder that even on the Finger Lakes National Forest it's important to remember what Smokey says and Please Be Careful with Fire!

## **Grazing**

Another successful grazing season has come to an end. Cows have been replaced with snow drifts as the pastures and trails through them see the increase in winter recreation. Remember to beware of the barbed wire fences, ponds, and corrals that may exist under the snow if recreating in these pastures.

## **From the Ranger...**

For the avid birders out there, be on the lookout for the Snowy Owl! He/ She hasn't been seen on the National Forest yet, but isn't too far from it. An amazing and beautiful bird to see!

And a reminder with winter weather in full swing, please use extra caution on the roads. Watch for icy spots and snowmobiles – and slow down. The Forest is a beautiful spot to enjoy anytime of the year.

Happy Holidays! - Jodie

## **Upcoming Events**

May 10<sup>th</sup> – Youth Fishing Derby: Remember we are starting 1 hr earlier @ 8:00.

Pre-registration may be required!

## **Just for kids...Just for fun!**



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