



Finger Lakes National Forest, Hector, New York

Forest Happenings!!

Caring for the Land and Serving People

Spring Happenings – 2024

5 Lessons in Life from Dr. Seuss

1. Today you are You, that is truer than true. There is no one alive who is Youer than You.
2. 'Why fit in when you were born to stand out?'
3. You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose.
4. Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind.
5. Today I shall behave, as if this is the day I will be remembered.

Recreation

Campgrounds

Spring is just around the corner, and we are getting ready for it! With a milder winter, we are anticipating an earlier start to the camping season on the Finger Lakes National Forest, particularly with a Solar Eclipse occurring April 8th! Our goal is to have the campground gates for Backbone and Blueberry Patch Campgrounds swung open prior to the 8th so that forest visitors can enjoy camping on the forest for the eclipse while minimizing any damage to our natural resources.

The improvements we have been able to make over the last several years in the campgrounds (new bathrooms, tent pads, hardened access, etc.) have played a large part in increasing our ability to open the campgrounds earlier in the year and increase access to the forest. A reminder to please park on the graveled spurs and not on the grass! Although this has been a mild winter, spring still is “mud season” on the forest and we want to minimize any damage to our natural resources. Ruts and other issues caused by going off the improved areas can be costly for us to fix and impede our ability to

make even more improvements to the campground in the future.

Spring Volunteer Day – April 28th!

We are once again planning on a spring volunteer day in partnership with Lucky Hare Brewing Company! These events have been a super fun and productive way for people to engage with public land management on the Forest and be involved with some super cool projects we are working on!

Although we haven't yet settled on final activities, we anticipate a few different activities such as planting native trees or pollinator species, painting new and existing improvements around the forest, trash clean up, and perhaps some trail work! We're always super excited to see our users come out and help and are really looking forward to seeing everyone again soon! If you're interested in participating, feel free to call me at 607-546-4470 ext 3319 or email matthew.kautz@usda.gov for more information!



Trails

Ravine Trail Kiosk

Be on the lookout for a new kiosk to be installed at the Ravine Loop Trailhead on Picnic Area Rd! We have been working each year to replace kiosks as there is funding and work toward a more “uniform”

design for all kiosks on the forest. We have the kiosk built and ready for installation when conditions on the ground are more favorable. We hope to get it out as soon as possible and will likely be looking at painting the kiosk as a project for our Spring volunteer day on Sunday, April 28th with Lucky Hare!



Trail Damage

Previous windstorms have caused trees to fall across numerous trails on the forest. The recreation program is working hard to clear up the trails for all trail users.

Fire crews, from many other forests, are joining us to assist with spring prescribed burns. However, these crews will also help us clean these downed trees during their time between burnings.

It is very important to us that our trails are suitable for usage to forest users.

Prescribed Fire

Prescribed fire – just what the doctor ordered!

With spring just around the corner, staff at the Finger Lakes National Forest are finishing up preparation for prescribed burns that will be implemented this spring. Although there is a lot of work that is done on the ground the day of the burn, the preparation for this work takes a lot more time than the burn does itself! It's a process that begins several months before the burn is planned to be

implemented and can be a process that starts even a few years before the burn occurs.

The first step in preparing for a prescribed burn is identifying a unit and deciding on what boundaries are appropriate for the unit. This decision can be affected by many factors including fuel type, different type of resource concerns, property boundaries, and smoke considerations (to name just a few!). All units identified for prescribed fire have also been through a National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) analysis where resource specialists provide input and mitigations on the proposed area to protect and enhance the resources present in that area.

After a boundary has been identified, preparation for the burn may begin to occur. Preparation can look a lot different depending on the fuel type. Some fuel types will burn readily without any prep, other areas may require a treatment a year or two prior to implementing a burn. Most areas burned on the Finger Lakes are a grass dominated fuel type and require little preparation to carry fire, some areas such as shrublands may require forestry mulching to enhance the fuel to where it will carry fire and accomplish resource objectives for the unit.



One may ask why we would be encouraging fire in these areas...that is a great question! Most native species in our grasslands and shrublands in New York are fire adapted species that benefit from the nutrient cycling and reduction of thatch in units where we are utilizing fire. In many of these areas,

woody invasive species have moved in and threaten to take over the native ecosystem. Fire is a very useful tool for us to combat these invasive species and give native species an advantage going into the growing season.

Another aspect of preparation is the identification of control lines on the boundary of the units where fire will be held. These can be natural fuel breaks such as a road or stream, or created fuel breaks such as a mowed line where the fuel has been eliminated and it can be held with personnel present the day of the burn.

Happening concurrently with the burn prep in the field, Fire personnel prep for burns in the office too! A safe prescribed burn is just like what you might imagine a doctor prescribing medicine to a patient is like. The patient (a burn unit) is evaluated for conditions present on the ground and what kind of treatment (fire) is the most effective and safe for the conditions. A burn plan is created that specifies what fuel types are present, what personnel and resources are necessary (Tools, Engines, number of people, etc), smoke management, and many other details. This is a lengthy process and one that is not taken lightly, fire managers even model fire behavior in the areas we're burning to get the best information possible so that the burn accomplishes objectives!

Rest assured the next time you see some smoke rising from the Finger Lakes National Forest, it is the culmination of a great deal of work by our fire staff and other program areas and that the safe and effective burn that happens that day is the cherry on top for a great deal of work and effort by all involved!



Brush was also cut in blueberry patch to reduce competition with low and high bush blueberry. The brush cuttings were formed into piles and burned. This project was completed for future rehabilitation of the forests' blueberry patch.

Piles are burned to reduce the intensity of the fire on established blueberry bushes to eliminate competing vegetation.

Range

A fresh start on the range this season! We spent a little bit of time this winter doing some freshening up of pasture signs.



Pastures like South Velie and Johnson that had corrals rebuilt last year seem to be lacking the finishing touches. We brought several signs in over the winter to give them a fresh coat of paint.



Aurora is re-installing the sign on South Velie.

Look for the cows to be back out on pasture right on May 15th. With the light winter again, spring sure is trying to push up fresh greenery. Which should provide some good early grass growth! We always look forward to getting the cows back out, we are busy planning all the improvements for later in the

summer. You can't help but think spring is right around the corner.

Soon you will see HGA out and about clearing downed trees and repairing fences. Much like the trails systems the fence lines really got hit hard by the high winds.

Wildlife

Winter Raptor Surveys

Every year the NY State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) holds winter raptor surveys to record location and behavior data on all raptors seen during the survey period. Forest staff helps in these survey efforts here on the forest due to two species of conservation concern that can be found here, the Northern Harrier and the Short-eared Owl.



Adult males are grayish, long tail with a characteristic white rump patch. **Photo Credit:** Tom Reed/Macaulay Library.

The data that is collected during these surveys help the state and the Forest with the management of habitat that these two raptors use during the long winter months. Both species uses the open grasslands and pastures found throughout the state to hunt prey in, and during the spring use these areas for breeding purposes.



Adult Northern Short Eared Owl.

Photo Credit: Pavel Stepanek/Macaulay Library.

Soft Mass (Fruit bearing trees) on the FLNF

Forest staff have started to map out apple trees across the forest. Some apple tree locations are from old orchards that have been around for many, many years. This project aims to prune soft mast trees and help get sunlight onto the forest floor, promoting growth for these species.

If you have a favorite apple or pear tree that needs some pruning or opening around the tree, feel free to reach out and let us know where it is so we can help increase production on the tree!



An apple tree near Mathews Road at Interloken Trail, Finger Lakes National Forest. Hector, New York

Photo Credit: <https://www.asergeev.com/pictures/k/r-475-15.htm>

Finger Lakes Institute (FLI) Proposal

The Finger Lakes Institute has put together a funding request to seek funds to complete a “Participatory Science” (Citizen Science) project on the Forest. If awarded, this project will help map the hydrologic flow network on the forest, as well as test waters to examine water quality and quantity where it enters and exits grazing allotments.

This project can help the forest expand best management practices within allotments! It will also train volunteers to help test water quality and work with the lab at FLI to ensure samples are properly collected and analyzed. We look forward to working with and continuing our relationship with FLI on this project if funding is secured!

Regional Wildlife Meeting

Wildlife biologist Greg Flood and wildlife technician Dylan Welch recently spent a week in Madison, Wisconsin at the Region 9 Wildlife Biologist meeting. This meeting generally happens once every 3-5 years and allows all regional (from Maine to Missouri to Minnesota) biologist staff to come together and discuss current issues, receive training, and plan the best path forward for the region.



Photo of Greg Flood, Wildlife Biologist at the entrance to the Forest Products Laboratory in Madison, Wisconsin.

This year's meeting was at the USDA Forest Service's Forest Products Lab at the University of Wisconsin - Madison. The facility was built in 1931 and has been one of the United States largest wood products research facilities. Aldo Leopold served as associate director of the Forest Products Lab before he went on to form a wildlife program at UW-Madison.

Standing in a building having conversations about conservation and the role of government in conservation was a truly immersive experience. To know that Aldo Leopold once stood in these same rooms having conversations similar but vastly different from the conversations, we were having was remarkable. I have a lot of take aways from the meeting last week, most notably the innate desire to continue to drive the mission of the Forest Service forward on this little piece of ground.

Midwin National Tall Grass Prairie Visit

If you're driving from New York to Wisconsin, you must make a stop at Midwin!

Midwin National Tall Grass Prairie is an old munitions factory of the U.S. Military. The lands have been since transferred to the U.S. Forest Service and have been working to transition the lands to tall grass prairie. The unit is about 20,000 acres, just a little larger than the Finger Lakes NF and they are setting the stage for grassland enhancement within the region.

Greg and Dylan stopped by their facility to see the great work they are completing and to learn more about the methods and challenges they face. There was so much to see and discussions to have a half day was not nearly enough.

One of the biggest take aways for me was the fact that they use row crop agriculture to allow for ground preparation before converting the lands back into prairie. At first it seems like an odd concept to create a monoculture for restoration, but the lands have been in agriculture production for some time and in the end the short-term reduction in biodiversity will yield a long-term gain in limited crucial tall grass prairie habitat!



Photo of newly (2 year) restored tall grass prairie.

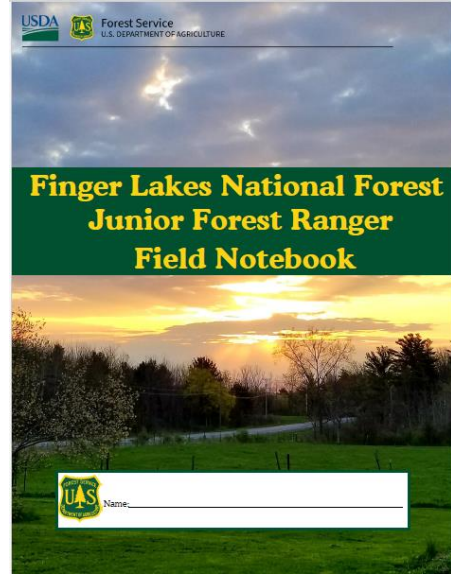
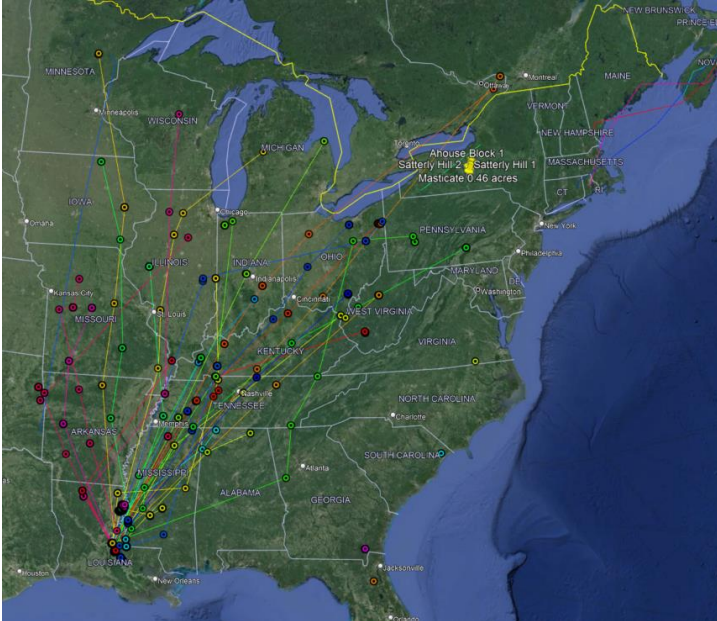
Photo credit-Greg Flood

Where's the Woodcock???

Last spring we were able to trap and tag woodcock on the Finger Lakes NF in partnership with NYDEC as part of the Eastern Woodcock Migration Research Cooperative (woodcockmigration.org).

We were able to put a transmitter on one male and one female. While we haven't gotten any data from the two, we tagged, northern migration information

has been coming in from birds tagged in Louisiana this winter. The map below depicts tagged birds this winter at 2 sites in LA. It is truly amazing where these birds come from and go to! Stay tuned for when our FLNF birds start checking in!



Junior Forest Ranger Activity Guide

We are very excited to announce that the Finger Lakes National Forest will soon have its own “Junior Forest Ranger Field Notebook” available.

These guides act as a welcome to the National Forest and are full of activities. When you complete the activities, you will be qualified to be an Official Junior Forest Ranger! Complete the registration form, send it in and you will be sent an official junior ranger pin, patch and card!

Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) Proposals Submitted

This year the Finger Lakes NF submitted three proposals to the GLRI. These projects included hydrology correction at North Stevens Pasture. Trail and wetland work near Teeter Pond and a project to remove hedgerows in Butcher Hill Pasture to create high quality habitat for grassland birds.

We will know which projects got funded in the next month or two and we will begin implementing projects shortly after.



If you would like more information on this program, you can contact the District Ranger Jodie Vanselow at (607)-546-4470 ext. 3314 or at Jodie.vanselow@usda.gov.



permitting, people along the path of totality will see the sun's corona, or outer atmosphere, which is usually obscured by the bright face of the sun. (https://assets.simpleviewinc.com/simpleview/image/upload/v1/clients/newyorkstate/ILNY_eclipse_factsheet_5c1604b7-cc9f-4640-8c28-9f842fc597fd.pdf)

Campgrounds on the Forest will be open during this time, as well as the dispersed areas on the Forest. We wanted to advise folks that camping in the pastures is permissible when cows are not present, however vehicles should not be drive into the pastures as the potential for resource damage is very high this time of year.

April 8, 2024 Solar Eclipse

I'm sure you have all heard that a total solar eclipse will come to North America. This cosmic event will be visible from within a narrow route, called the path of totality, of which the Finger Lakes Region is a place you will be able to experience it from.



Office Hours

Our front office is open to the public on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm.

If you have any questions, please call 607-546-4470 and choose "0" for the operator.

As always, the front Foyer is open 24/7 and stocked with maps, trail sheets and information about the area.



Upcoming Events

- April 8 - Solar Eclipse
- April 22-26 - Trees Across New York
- May 4 - Annual Fishing Derby
- May 11- Stage Reading of "Fossenvue" by Chris Woodworth – *See Below*
- May 22 open house for public input on Caywood Point – *See Below*

A total solar eclipse happens when the moon passes between the sun and earth, completely blocking the face of the sun. People viewing the eclipse from locations where the moon's shadow completely covers the Sun, known as the path of totality, will experience a total solar eclipse. The sky will become dark, as if it were dawn or dusk. Weather

From the Ranger...Please see the flyers below that outline two great happenings on the Forest. The first, "Fossenvue" and the second providing you input into the management of Caywood Point. - Jodie

"Fossenvue" a staged reading by Chris Woodworth

Presenting:

"Fossenvue" a staged reading by Chris Woodworth

Saturday, May 11 @ 2:00pm

Finger Lakes National Forest - Caywood Point (rain or shine)

Logistics: The staged reading will occur in front of the Queen's Castle (aka Fossenvue) which is located on the shore of Seneca Lake at Caywood Point. Access to the point by trail is a 1/3 mile hike on a gravelled path. Slopes exceed 20% and it is physically demanding. Please bring your own chair.

Alternative transportation (via pontoon boat) will be offered departing from Smith Memorial Park in the Town of Hector. Reservations must be made by **April 26** for pontoon transport (limit of 18 people).

A donation to the Burdett Fire Department is requested and appreciated!

For several decades Geneva suffragists Elizabeth Smith Miller and Anne Fitzhugh Miller, and many of their friends gathered on the shore of Seneca Lake at a summer camp they called "Fossenvue." Swimming, singing, writing, and suffrage strategizing filled their days and nights at Caywood Point.

Inspired by research conducted at Historic Geneva and in the Library of Congress NAWSA digital collections, as well as site visits to "Queen's Castle," playwright Chris Woodworth weaves together past and present. The play imagines the early days of Fossenvue and raises difficult questions about the legacies of race and suffrage activism today. How do we reckon with the echoes and reverberations of the predominantly white women's suffrage movement in the present? How do we acknowledge the harms of the past without denying or whitewashing? How do we grapple with these thorny questions while navigating the loving and tumultuous personal landscapes of families? At its core, *Fossenvue* is a play about mothers and daughters.

To make a reservation, please contact the Hector Ranger District by calling 607-546-4470.





Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Finger Lakes National Forest Requests Your Feedback

Caywood Point is a popular and well-loved destination despite it having considerable access challenges. Rest assured the Forest is looking at ways to permanently address the washouts on the trail going to the point.

For generations people have been drawn to this area to view the lakefront, be in nature and enjoy the historical site, Queens Castle. We want to know more about why this place is so special to you!

In your opinion, what characteristics, qualities, activities, or other conditions at Caywood Point are important for the future?

Please email your opinions/comments to the District Ranger, Jodie Vanselow at sm.fs.caywood@usda.gov prior to April 15.

In addition, a public meeting will be held on May 22 from 5:00 – 7:00 pm at the Valois-Logan-Hector Volunteer Fire Department (5736 State Rte 414, Hector, NY 14841)

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Caywood Point is a very special place on the Forest. Whether you are looking for a great view of Seneca Lake, solitude, a challenging trail or history on the suffrage movement, it's the place to go. We want your input though on what's next for Caywood. Please join us on May 22 to provide your input!

Climate Change:

What Is Climate Change?

The Short Answer:

Climate change describes a change in the average conditions — such as temperature and rainfall — in a region over a long period of time. NASA scientists have observed Earth's surface is warming, and many of the warmest years on record have happened in the past 20 years.

Weather vs. Climate



Weather describes the conditions outside right now in a specific place. For example, if you see that it's raining outside right now, that's a way to describe today's weather. Rain, snow, wind, hurricanes, tornadoes — these are all weather events.

Climate, on the other hand, is more than just one or two rainy days. Climate describes the weather conditions that are expected in a region at a particular time of year.

Is it usually rainy or usually dry? Is it typically hot or typically cold? A region's climate is determined by observing its weather over a period of many years—generally 30 years or more.

So, for example, one or two weeks of rainy **weather** wouldn't change the fact that Phoenix typically has a dry, desert **climate**. Even though it's rainy right now, we still expect Phoenix to be dry because that's what is usually the case.

Want to know more about the difference between weather and climate? Take a look at [this video!](#)

What Is Climate Change?



Alaska's Muir glacier in August 1941 and August 2004. Significant changes occurred in the 63 years between these two photos. Credit: USGS

Climate change describes a change in the average conditions — such as temperature and rainfall — in a region over a long period of time. For example, 20,000 years ago, much of the United States was covered in glaciers. In the United States today, we have a warmer climate and fewer glaciers.

Global climate change refers to the average long-term changes over the entire Earth. These include warming temperatures and changes in precipitation, as well as the effects of Earth's warming, such as:

- Rising sea levels
- Shrinking mountain glaciers
- Ice melting at a faster rate than usual in Greenland, Antarctica and the Arctic
- Changes in flower and plant blooming times.

Earth's climate has constantly been changing — even long before humans came into the picture. However, scientists have observed unusual changes recently. For example, Earth's average temperature has been increasing much more quickly than they would expect over the past 150 years.

<https://climatekids.nasa.gov/climate-change-meaning/>

Safety Message:

How to Safely View the April 8, 2024, TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE

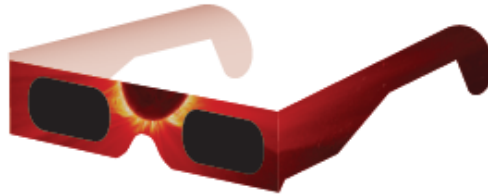
A solar eclipse occurs when the Moon blocks any part of the Sun. On Monday, April 8, 2024, a solar eclipse will be visible in North and Central America, as well as parts of Europe and South America. All 50 U.S. states (excluding most of Alaska) will have a chance to see at least a partial solar eclipse. In a narrow track across Mexico, the U.S. from Texas to Maine, and Canada from Ontario to Newfoundland, the Moon will completely cover the Sun's bright face, producing a spectacular total solar eclipse.



A total solar eclipse is about as bright as a full Moon — and just as safe to look at. But the Sun at any other time is dangerously bright. View it only through special-purpose solar filters that comply with the transmittance requirements of the ISO 12312-2 international standard for filters for direct solar viewing.

Protect Your Eyes

- Looking directly at the Sun without proper eye protection is unsafe EXCEPT during the brief total eclipse phase ("totality"). This happens ONLY within the narrow path of totality. At all other times, it is safe to look directly at the Sun ONLY through special-purpose solar filters, such as "eclipse glasses," that comply with the transmittance requirements of the ISO 12312-2 international standard. Ordinary sunglasses, even very dark ones, are not safe for looking at the Sun.
- If you are inside the path of totality on April 8, 2024, remove your solar filter ONLY when the Moon completely covers the Sun's bright face. As soon as the Sun begins to reappear, replace your solar filter to look at the remaining partial phases.
- Outside the path of totality, there is NO TIME when it is safe to look directly at the Sun without using a solar filter that complies with the transmittance requirements of the ISO 12312-2 international standard.



Instructions for the Safe Use of Solar Filters and Viewers

- Always inspect your solar filter before use; if scratched, punctured, torn, or otherwise damaged, discard it. Read and follow any instructions printed on or packaged with the filter.
- Always supervise children using solar filters.
- If you normally wear eyeglasses, keep them on. Put your eclipse glasses on over them or hold your handheld viewer in front of them.
- Stand still and cover your eyes with your eclipse glasses or solar viewer before looking at the bright Sun. After looking at the Sun, turn away and remove your filter — do not remove it while looking at the Sun.
- Do not look at the uneclipsed or partially eclipsed Sun through an unfiltered camera, telescope, binoculars, or other optical device. Do not do so even while wearing eclipse glasses or using a handheld solar viewer in front of your eyes — the concentrated solar rays could damage the filter and enter your eyes, causing serious injury.
- Solar filters must be securely attached to the front of any telescope, binoculars, or camera lens. Seek expert advice from an astronomer before using a solar filter with a camera, telescope, binoculars, or any other optical device.



What If You Don't Have a Safe Solar Filter or Viewer?

Another method for safe viewing of the partially eclipsed Sun is indirectly via pinhole projection. For example, with your back to the Sun, cross the outstretched, slightly open fingers of one hand over the outstretched, slightly open fingers of the other, creating a waffle pattern. In your hands' shadow on the ground, the spaces between your fingers will show the Sun as crescents.

A solar eclipse is one of nature's grandest spectacles. By following these simple rules, you can safely enjoy the view and be rewarded with memories to last a lifetime. For more information about eye safety and the eclipse, visit <https://eclipse.aas.org/eye-safety>.

This safety information has been endorsed by the American Astronomical Society, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. National Science Foundation, the American Academy of Ophthalmology, the American Academy of Optometry, and the American Medical Association.



NP-2023-11-169-GSFC

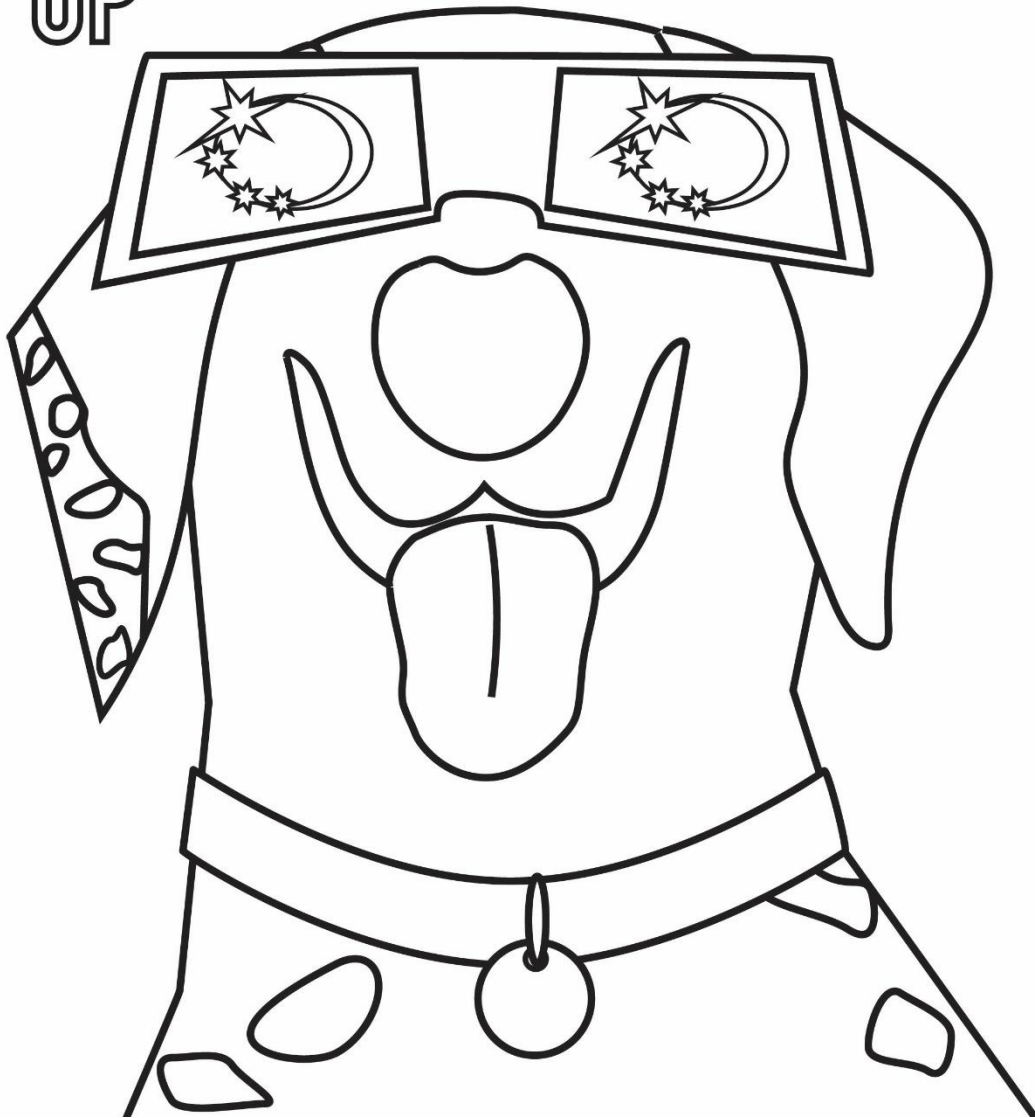
Just for Kids...

National Aeronautics and
Space Administration



TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE 4.8.24

KEEP
LOOKING
UP





Finger Lakes National Forest

Schedule of Proposed Actions

April 1 to June 30, 2024

ABOUT THIS SCHEDULE

The purpose of the Schedule of Proposed Action (SOPA) is to provide a status report and short summary of project proposals that are undergoing, or will undergo, environmental analysis by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) - Forest Service on the Finger Lakes National Forest. Issued quarterly, this SOPA is intended to provide the public with informal notice of proposed activities. The publishing of this SOPA 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 SOPA. 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 information will be published in the *Ithaca Journal*, our newspaper of record.

The SOPA 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" (CE) 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 SOPA 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 SOPA 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 SOPA. 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.usda.gov/projects/gmfl/landmanagement/projects>

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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

John A. Sinclair
Forest Supervisor
Green Mountain & Finger Lakes
National Forests
Mendon, VT
802-747-6700

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



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Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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Schedule of Proposed Action (SOPA)

04/01/2024 to 06/30/2024

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
Projects Occurring Nationwide					
Land Management Plan Direction for Old-Growth Forest Conditions Across the National Forest System EIS *UPDATED*	- Land management planning	In Progress: NOI in Federal Register 12/20/2023 Est. DEIS NOA in Federal Register 06/2024	Expected:01/2025	01/2025	Jennifer McRae 505-377-3145 Jennifer.McRae@usda.gov
	Description: Amend all land management plans for units of the National Forest System to include consistent direction to conserve and steward existing and recruit future old-growth forest conditions and to monitor their condition across planning areas of NFS.				
	Web Link: http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=65356				
Location: UNIT - All Districts-level Units. STATE - All States. COUNTY - All Counties. LEGAL - Not Applicable. National Forests and Grasslands (128 units).					
Locatable Mining Rule - 36 CFR 228, subpart A. EIS	- Regulations, Directives, Orders	On Hold	N/A	N/A	Sarah Shoemaker 907-586-7886 sarahshoemaker@fs.fed.us
	Description: The U.S. Department of Agriculture proposes revisions to its regulations at 36 CFR 228, Subpart A governing locatable minerals operations on National Forest System lands. A draft EIS & proposed rule should be available for review/comment in late 2020				
	Web Link: http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=57214				
Location: UNIT - All Districts-level Units. STATE - All States. COUNTY - All Counties. LEGAL - Not Applicable. These regulations apply to all NFS lands open to mineral entry under the US mining laws. More Information is available at: https://www.fs.usda.gov/science-technology/geology/minerals/locatable-minerals/current-revisions .					

Project Name	Project Purpose	Planning Status	Decision	Expected Implementation	Project Contact
Projects Occurring Nationwide					
Nationwide Aerial Application of Fire Retardant on National Forest System Land. EIS *UPDATED*	- Regulations, Directives, Orders	Completed	Actual: 02/06/2024	02/2024	Laura Conway 406-802-4317 laura.conway@usda.gov
	Description: Programmatic Supplemental EIS for the Nationwide Aerial Application of Fire Retardant on National Forest System Land.				
	Web Link: http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=60450				
Location: UNIT - All Districts-level Units. STATE - All States. COUNTY - All Counties. LEGAL - Not Applicable. The direction in the SEIS will apply to use of aerially delivered fire retardant on all National Forest System land.					

Finger Lakes National Forest		Hector Ranger District		R9 - Eastern Region	
Backbone Shrubland Planting CE *NEW LISTING*	- Recreation management - Wildlife, Fish, Rare plants - Vegetation management (other than forest products)	Developing Proposal Est. Scoping Start 04/2024	Expected:10/2024	04/2025	Dylan Welch 570-529-7115 Dylan.Welch@usda.gov
	Description: Restoring ecosystem resilience and biodiversity by planting native, woody, fruit bearing species in an area currently dominated by invasive species.				
	Location: UNIT - Hector Ranger District. STATE - New York. COUNTY - Schuyler. LEGAL - Not Applicable. Town of Hector.				

Project Name	Project Purpose	Planning Status	Decision	Expected Implementation	Project Contact
Finger Lakes National Forest		Hector Ranger District		R9 - Eastern Region	
Backbone Trail Bridge Replacement CE *UPDATED*	- Recreation management - Watershed management - Facility management	Completed	Actual: 01/22/2024	08/2024	Matthew Kautz 607-546-4470 x3319 matthew.kautz@usda.gov
	Description: Replace existing trail bridge with larger structure designed to meet current Trail Management Objectives. Stabilize streambank to prevent erosion and improve watershed resiliency.				
	Web Link: http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=63329				
Location: UNIT - Hector Ranger District. STATE - New York. COUNTY - Schuyler. LEGAL - Not Applicable. Town of Hector.					
Burnt Hill Tower Replacement CE *UPDATED*	- Facility management	Completed	Actual: 01/30/2024	06/2024	Jodie Vanselow 607-546-4470 jodie.vanselow@usda.gov
	Description: Removal and replacement of a communications tower and associated infrastructure.				
	Web Link: http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=65155				
Location: UNIT - Hector Ranger District. STATE - New York. COUNTY - Schuyler. LEGAL - Not Applicable. Town of Hector.					
Butcher Hill Hedgerow Removal Project CE *UPDATED*	- Wildlife, Fish, Rare plants	In Progress: Scoping Start 01/01/2023	Expected:04/2024	04/2024	Gregory Flood 607-546-4470 gregory.flood@usda.gov
	Description: This project includes all aspects of hedgerow removal within the Butcher Hill pasture including removal of overstory trees, understory vegetation, stumps and rocks, and grading of the land.				
	Web Link: http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=63338				
Location: 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
Finger Lakes National Forest		Hector Ranger District			R9 - Eastern Region
Finger Lakes Mountain Biking Enhancement CE *NEW LISTING*	- Recreation management	Developing Proposal Est. Scoping Start 09/2024	Expected:12/2024	03/2025	Matthew Lark 479-667-2191 ext 2171 matthew.lark@usda.gov
	Description: This project would enhance mountain biking opportunities by the adoption of some existing user-created trails, and authorized use changes on some existing system trails.				
	Location: UNIT - Hector Ranger District. STATE - New York. COUNTY - Schuyler, Seneca. LEGAL - Not Applicable. Towns of Hector and Lodi.				
Finger Lakes National Forest Wetland Creation CE *NEW LISTING*	- Wildlife, Fish, Rare plants - Watershed management	Developing Proposal Est. Scoping Start 04/2024	Expected:10/2024	10/2025	Dylan Welch 218-663-8060 Dylan.Welch@usda.gov
	Description: Creation of small, natural appearing wetlands in multiple locations where natural wetlands may have existed prior to artificial drainage by farmers. These wetlands would be fully functional and provide habitat and protection against flooding.				
	Location: UNIT - Hector Ranger District. STATE - New York. COUNTY - Schuyler. LEGAL - Not Applicable. Town of Hector.				
Potomac Pond Shrubland Drainage Restoration CE *UPDATED*	- Watershed management	Completed	Actual: 03/01/2024	03/2024	John McCann 802-747-6739 john.mccann@usda.gov
	Description: Restoration of riparian habitats by reducing the influence of anthropogenic features and incision on drainage. Process-based restoration practices will include utilizing natural materials to create check dams to slow and spread runoff.				
	Web Link: http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=65383				
Location: 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.