

2013 TOWN FOREST REPORT

The traditional spring meeting and roadside clean up took place on April 21. Teresa Koehler, Kate and Doug Freeland, Bill Palmer, Jim Fitch and Ginny Prince attended. Topics discussed included forest inventory, invasive plants, establishing a Valley Quest, potential summer activities and ways to control damage from motor vehicles.

August 24 was the date of the summer meeting. Jim, Ed, Linda and Ginny discussed the ATV issue, the forest inventory, a potential new trail and the fall workday. Also Linda and Ginny did a preliminary walk through of the Valley Quest route.

On Oct 12 John Kulvicki, Kate Barber, Glen Coutu, Bill Palmer, the Fuersts, Jim Fitch, Ed and Ginny met for the fall meeting and very successful workday. The view from the lookout was maintained and erosion control on Root Hill Rd was enhanced. Linda worked on the Quest.

During the fall unknown persons set up campfires at several locations. Minor damage consisting of cutting trees, littering and leaving lawn chairs, etc. occurred. The litter and furniture was removed and disposed of through the recycling center, and signs posted to remind visitors that cutting trees and littering is prohibited and a permit required for fires.

Many anonymous friends of the forest perform trail maintenance throughout the year. As a result the trails were in excellent shape once again. Loop road maintenance and release of desired trees such as apple and spruce was performed as usual.

The most problematic invasive plants in the town forest are common and glossy buckthorn and autumn olive. Hand cutting and focused spot spraying of the stumps on the power line right of way in 2012 and 2013 appears to have been much more effective than previous control measures (repeated cutting, pulling, girdling, covering stumps, mowing) Hand spraying small amounts of glyphosate in the late fall prevents absorption by other plants because the leaves have fallen.

The forest continues to be very popular for hunting, mountain biking, hiking, snowshoeing and skiing. Maps are posted near the start of each trail and are also available at the town office, online in the appendix of the management plan or by contacting Ginny Prince. The Eagles Ledge lean-to is available for anyone to use. Check out the many great entries in the logbook at the lookout!

As in past years, the town forest budget includes no tax money. State law requires that spending any funds, donation or payment or otherwise, must be authorized in the warrant, so the committee is requesting permission to spend up to \$1500 for trail marking materials and other miscellaneous items for repair and construction of signs, bridges, gates etc.

For more information, if you're interested in youth or community projects or to share thoughts about the town forest contact any committee member:

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