



Vegetation Management

Finger Lakes National Forest Factsheet



Introduction

The National Forest System was established in 1891 to protect forests and watersheds as well as to provide the American public with a continuous supply of timber. The Forest Service has since expanded their mission to provide other things including: recreation, grazing, various habitats for wildlife, special areas, and education. Providing a sustainable source of timber is still an important part of the Forest Service mission.

Why do National Forests Harvest Timber?

Wood products are one of the multiple uses the Forest Service is required to provide under the 1960 Multiple Use-Sustained Yield Act. Timber harvesting is used as a tool to manage the National Forests for forest health, wildlife habitat, water quality, roads and trail systems and sustainable production of wood products.

Timber harvesting is done in a sustainable manner and is done in a way that protects the environment. Federal laws like the National Environmental Policy Act, Clean Water Act, and Endangered Species Act are followed when harvesting timber on National Forest Land.



Reasons for past timber harvests on FLNF

- Create younger forest areas to enhance wildlife habitat and maintain healthy forests
- Maintain oak forest on National Forest
- Convert non-native red pine plantations to native hardwoods
- Thin hardwood stands to enhance oak acorn crops for wildlife and encourage future oak regeneration.

- Maintain vistas
- Remove diseased trees and hazard trees along hiking trails

History of FLNF Timber Harvesting

- FLNF has harvested 38% less acreage than what was estimated in Forest Plan.
- On average, 58 acres per year have been harvested. That translates to cutting our forested areas once every 154 years!
- Activities to improve forested stands are completed on about 20 acres per year.
- 145 cords of firewood are sold each year to local people.
- Only about 34% of the FLNF is available, or suitable, for timber harvesting.



Other Vegetation Management

The Finger Lakes National Forest also maintains grassland and shrubland. Tools used for this include mowing, burning and hand pruning. Several wildlife groups, the Hector Grazing Association, and local volunteers help the National Forest maintain these habitats. These habitat types are uncommon on other lands in the area and are important for wildlife, recreation, and grazing.

Other Information

- Implementing the FLNF Land and Resource Management Plan a 15 Year Retrospective
- Finger Lakes National Forest Timber Management - Definitions and Frequently Asked Questions

This information can be found on our web page or requested from our District office in Hector, NY.



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The mission of the Green Mountain and Finger Lakes National Forest is to sustain, protect and enhance the forest ecosystem. Employees, with the aid of the public, understand that their greatest asset is the land, their greatest strength is the work force, and they will strive to gain public understanding, trust, and confidence in all that they do through demonstration and education.

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