

2008 Report to NYS Conservation Council from Division of Lands and Forests

Connect New Yorkers to Nature

Land Acquisition - During the past decade, the State has announced the conservation of more than 1 million acres of land, and the overwhelming majority is open to hunting, fishing, hiking, birdwatching, camping and other outdoor recreational activities. The main highlight of the previous year's projects is the announcement by DEC and The Nature Conservancy of the protection of over 160,000 acres of former Finch, Pruyn lands. This project is a combination of fee and working forests easement. A primary goal of the project is to balance the public's right to hunt, hike and recreate on these lands while protecting the right of the long established North Country hunting club culture. [Detailed quarterly lists of acquired lands, conservation easements and public fishing rights](#) can be found on the DEC website.

State Land Interactive Mapper - A new and improved [State Land Interactive Mapper](#) was released during the summer of 2008. The Interactive Mapper shows seven types of recreational trails, parking lots and access points on State-owned properties managed by the Division of Lands and Forests statewide, the overwhelming majority of which are open to hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and other recreation.

Safeguard New York's Unique Natural Assets

Firewood Regulation - An [emergency regulation](#) was instituted in June 2008 to reduce the risk of introduction and spread of invasive insects and diseases of trees by preventing untreated firewood from entering New York State and restricting the movement, sale and possession, within the State, of untreated firewood that originates in New York State.

Invasive and Nuisance Species - [Updates and general information](#) about giant hogweed, tent caterpillars, gypsy moth, friendly fly, Asian long-horned beetle, emerald ash borer, sirex woodwasp and hemlock woolly adelgid have been made available to the public via the DEC website.

Giant Hogweed - The Division of Lands and Forests began eradication efforts of [Giant Hogweed](#) at some of the nearly 400 currently known sites. A June 2008 Conservationist article about giant hogweed sparked many phone calls and emails from the public who may have information about additional giant hogweed sites. The sap from this plant combined with sunlight can cause burns on the skin.

State Forests Natural Heritage Inventories - The Division of Lands and Forests contracted with the Nature Heritage Program to identify rare and endangered species and unique natural communities on all 770,000 acres of State Forests and over 100,000 acres of Forest Preserve. This 5-year project will be completed within the next year.

Trail Supporter Patch - The Division of Lands and Forests created and released the first [Trail Supporter Patch](#) in 2007. The proceeds from the sale of the patch, which costs \$5, are deposited in the Conservation Fund's Outdoor Recreation, Trail Maintenance, and Development Account, and will help maintain and enhance non-motorized trails throughout New York State. Since its release sales of the Trail Supporter Patch have raised \$5,000.

Combat Climate Change

Forests and the Environment - The Division of Lands and Forests has created a series of web pages which describe the importance of trees and forests in our environment. Topics include Carbon Sequestration and Forests and How Plants Run the Carbon Cycle. Additional topics will be added to DEC's [Forests and the Environment webpage](#).

Sustainability of DEC's Own Operations

Green Certification of DEC's State Forests - In January 2008, 780,00 acres of State Forests managed by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) Bureau of State Land Management earned the highly coveted status of "[green certified](#)" from the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) - two organizations internationally recognized for establishing forest management standards. With this recognition, DEC has demonstrated that the forests under its care are managed to the highest sustainability requirements.

State Lands Regulations - The Department has proposed a [series of regulations](#) (6 NYCRR Part 190 State Lands) to modernize state land management and to reduce inappropriate private uses of state lands so that state land resources are available to the public including the sportsmen and sportswomen community.