



# Division of Forest Protection **2007 ANNUAL REPORT**



**New York State Department of Environmental Conservation**

This page left intentionally blank.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Letter From the Director</b> .....   | <b>1</b>  |
| <b>Statewide Highlights</b> .....   | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>2007 Division of Forest Protection Fact Sheet</b> .....                              | <b>7</b>  |
| <b>Color Inserts</b>  |           |
| Photos .....  | <b>9</b>  |
| State Land Maps .....   | <b>13</b> |
| <b>Regional and Program Narrative Summaries</b> .....                                   | <b>15</b> |
| <b>Fire Management Report</b> .....   | <b>32</b> |
| <b>2007 Training and Development Report</b> .....                                       | <b>37</b> |
| 2007 Forest Ranger Training Summary .....   | <b>41</b> |
| 17 <sup>th</sup> Basic Academy Class Picture .....                                      | <b>43</b> |
| 2007 Training Pie Chart Summary .....   | <b>44</b> |
| <b>2007 Summary of Wildfires Reported by Forest Rangers</b> .....                       | <b>45</b> |
| <b>Historic Record of Statewide Fires, 1955-2007</b> .....                              | <b>46</b> |
| <b>Summary of All Search &amp; Rescue Missions (Statistical Analysis)</b> .....         | <b>47</b> |
| <b>2007 Summary of Search &amp; Rescue Incidents by Zone</b> .....                      | <b>48</b> |
| <b>Historic Record of Search &amp; Rescue Missions, 1963-2007</b> .....                 | <b>49</b> |
| <b>2007 Annual Report of Activities by Forest Rangers</b> .....                         | <b>50</b> |
| <b>2007 Annual Report of Public Presentations &amp; Training Given By Rangers</b> ..... | <b>51</b> |
| <b>2007 Summary of Tickets or Arrests Made by Rangers By Region &amp; Zone</b> .....    | <b>52</b> |



## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

I am pleased to present the 2007 Annual Report of the New York State Forest Rangers. Our role as protectors of state land and the people who use these lands is a critical responsibility, and we offer this report to the public, our fellow agencies and division members to highlight our achievements over the past year. Within these pages, you will see how we have applied our unique training and skills to an array of law enforcement, search and rescue, wildland fire, and emergency management problems. Along with reports from our individual work units, you will also find, in tabular form, a record of statewide activity that has been conducted by forest rangers throughout the year.

I would like to thank our division members who dedicated time to the thorough and accurate collection of data and narratives presented herein. Special thanks to DEC's Division of Public Affairs and Education who provided editing, graphics and publishing support.

As Director of the Division of Forest Protection, I am committed to continued and improved public service, accomplishing the Division's mission and supporting the Department's objectives. Our future is bright, exciting, and filled with ample opportunity to serve the people of New York. I commend our rangers, seasonal employees, support staff, and volunteers for their many accomplishments and sincere dedication.

Sincerely,

Thomas Rinaldi  
Division Director



## DIVISION OF FOREST PROTECTION 2007 ANNUAL REPORT STATEWIDE HIGHLIGHTS

The Division of Forest Protection (forest rangers) is responsible for the protection of 4.3 million acres of state-owned and department-managed lands and easements. Nearly three million acres are in the Adirondack Park alone, but every region of the state has substantial state-land resources. The protection of these public lands and the people who use them is the division's first priority. An important part of protecting public lands is wildfire management. New York has a vast landscape of public and private forest lands that are susceptible to seasonal wildfires. In the last exceptionally dry fire season of 2002, 324 wildfires occurred throughout the state, burning a total of 2,062 acres. In historical contrast, the similarly dry weather of 1903 spawned more than 643 fires, which burned 464,000 acres in the Adirondack and Catskill parks alone. The difference from 1903 to 2002 is a direct result of 100 years of forest ranger efforts, working to prevent wildfires and improve fire-control response. An important part of protecting the people who use our public lands is wildland search and rescue. The need often arises to find and rescue lost or injured people in wild or remote locations of New York. Throughout 2007, the division fulfilled its traditional responsibility of assisting, rescuing and comforting hundreds of people.

Forest rangers also continue the historic tradition of being the "eyes and ears" for the department regarding public use of state lands. The direct professional contact rangers make with state land users is an essential service for both New Yorkers and visitors to the state. The information rangers provide helps enhance people's enjoyment and safety, while protecting the land resources from which we all benefit. This public service role is a 365-day responsibility for every ranger. Historically, summer hiking/camping and fall hunting seasons were the primary periods of state-land use. However, in recent years, the use of state lands has expanded throughout the entire year, with summer and fall weekends as peak-use periods. In 2006, forest rangers were designated police officers after 26 years as peace officers and 122 years of law-enforcement history protecting New York's natural resources. This enhanced authority is necessary for the division to accomplish its primary mission of protecting state lands and the people who use these lands and resources.

In 2007, as a means of informing and educating people before they enter state lands, forest rangers conducted 109 presentations on proper use, etiquette and safety concerns related to outdoor recreation. Altogether, 12,829 people attended these presentations. Rangers use the "Leave No Trace" program as a means of promoting and inspiring responsible outdoor recreation on public lands through education, research and partnerships. Rangers issued 2,123 camping permits to groups of 10 or more or to any group staying at one site for more than three nights. Throughout the year, rangers inspected or patrolled public campgrounds 2,379 times to support campground staff or to check facilities during the off-season. Routine patrols included 78,843 inspections of trail-head access points and inspection of 2,134 miles of non-roadside state boundary lines.

Continuing a trend of several years, the most problematic year-round activity encountered by rangers was the illegal use of all-terrain vehicles (ATV) and snowmobiles on state land. In 2007, forest rangers issued tickets or made arrests for 745 violations involving ATVs. Another 132 violations involved the unauthorized use of traditional motor vehicles on state land. Rangers executed enforcement actions in response to 710 non-vehicular violations of various regulations designed to protect state land. An increased emphasis on curbing underage alcohol consumption on state lands resulted in rangers making 128 arrests for illegal possession of alcohol by a person under 21 years of age. Ranger patrols have been most crucial on weekends when state-land use is most intense and the majority of violations occur.

The division employed 31 seasonal assistant forest rangers (AFR) during the summer of 2007 for the primary purpose of informing the public of proper state-land use. Each day, AFRs met people on the trails. They provided tips on how best to enjoy state land, promoting low or no-impact land-use techniques, which maintain the integrity of the natural resource for future visits. All AFRs attended a five-day training session designed to prepare them for the season and develop skills that enhance their interactions with the public. Forest rangers provided most of the instruction, but the interaction between returning AFR veterans and newly hired AFRs was extremely valuable as well. About 60 percent of

AFRs return for two or more seasons, providing stability for the program. In addition, all newly hired AFRs received five days of training in the "Basic Federal Wildland Firefighting" (S130/190) Course.

Forest rangers have always provided search-and-rescue response in the Adirondack and Catskill parks. During the last four decades, this service has expanded to all wildland areas of the state. In rural areas, local services are insufficient to effectively find a lost hiker or rescue an injured person in a remote area. In urban and suburban areas, local services are available but generally not trained or experienced in wildland search or back-country rescue techniques. New York's forest rangers are nationally known and respected for search-and-rescue work and are even asked to teach agencies and volunteer groups from other states.

In 2007, forest rangers conducted 153 search missions, 67 rescues and three recoveries. Sixty-seven percent (150) of these incidents occurred on state lands. Most of them were resolved in one or two days, but several searches went on for a week or more, incurring thousands of hours of search time. Although hikers are the activity group which is most often reported lost or injured, people suffering from dementia or mental illness are often the most difficult to find. Rescue and recovery missions are often complicated by the nature of wildland recreational activity. Ice-climbing rescue requires special training and equipment. White-water boating activities require rangers to prepare for fast-moving water rescue, sometimes in the most remote and inaccessible areas of the state. Snowmobiling accidents require rangers to be prepared to treat potentially serious injuries in cold weather and remote locations. The prevailing motto within the division, "If it was easy, someone else would do it," reflects the nature and complexity of search-and-rescue missions conducted by forest rangers. In 2006, the division added two new airboats to its fleet of three to support flooding, whitewater and ice rescues or recoveries.

Considerable time and effort goes into preparing for search-and-rescue missions. Rangers train emergency-service agencies and volunteer groups in order to work with them during incidents. Together, they maintain positive relationships and continually improve the search-and-rescue program. In 2007, rangers presented 36 NYS "Basic Wildland Search" courses to 736 participants. Another 111 presentations, covering wilderness first aid, advanced search-and-rescue training and incident management were given to 2,131 participants in support of local and division response to incidents statewide.

In 2002, forest rangers experienced one of the busiest and most difficult summer fire seasons in the Adirondacks since the early 1960s. After several years of drought in the Adirondack region, an abundance of "dry-lightning" caused 40 fires to ignite in August. At one point, 30 fires were active, and most of the division's personnel were involved with suppression activities. By the end of the year, rangers had controlled 324 fires that burned 2,062 acres at a direct cost of \$318,758. In contrast, 2003 through 2007 were just the opposite, with frequent rains that prevented wildfires from occurring in the state throughout the year. Statistically, during the last 25 years, the division has responded to an average of 328 wildland fires per year, with 66 percent of these fires occurring in March, April and May. Eighty-five percent of these fires are smaller than 10 acres and only six fires burned more than one-thousand acres. The primary cause of wildland fire in New York is debris burning; however, arson, campfires and lightning have been the causes of the most damaging fires encountered by rangers. On average, the division experiences about 100 days per year in which a wildfire is likely to occur. In 2007, rangers contained and extinguished 131 fires in the spring, 65 fires in the summer and 15 fires in the fall that burned a total of 855 acres. Twenty-one of these fires required the division to incur direct costs at a combined expense of \$4,042. Sixty-eight of these fires occurred on department-managed state lands. The most significant wildfires of 2007 occurred in the northeastern corner of the state, where 25 incendiary (arson) fires occurred burning, 13 acres in total. Although a suspect was not arrested, the investigation resulted in arson fires no longer occurring.

The wildfire management role of the division requires considerably more time than that which is spent extinguishing fires. Similar to the search-and-rescue program, significant time and energy is spent preventing fires from occurring and preparing for fire suppression. Forest rangers instructed the 12-hour NYS "Basic Wildland Fire Suppression" Course on 26 occasions, teaching 576 volunteer fire department members the basics of wildfire suppression. On four occasions, rangers taught the 44-hour "Basic Federal Wildland Firefighting" Course, commonly referred to as S130/190. A total of 87 firefighters, state

employees, students and volunteers completed this course, which is considered basic training for professional (non-volunteer) wildland firefighters. Rangers provided an additional 56 training sessions to 1,371 firefighters, emergency-service personnel and volunteers in advanced firefighting or incident-command management. The division relies heavily on NYS Department of Correctional Services (DOCS) inmate crews for "mop-up" of controlled fires. Rangers gave five four-hour training sessions to 253 inmates. Through advanced training of corrections officers, this course will be taught by DOCS staff in the future.

The best way to reduce wildfire occurrence is to prevent fires from starting. Rangers gave 112 prevention presentations to 89,088 people. Many of these events were large gatherings such as the state and county fairs where Smokey Bear appears with a ranger. Smokey continues to be the most recognized symbol of fire prevention in the world. Of the 211 wildfires extinguished by the division in 2007, rangers attributed only one fire to the actions of children. This statistic stands as a tribute to the effectiveness of the six-decade-old Smokey Bear campaign at preventing wildfires caused by children.

Debris burning, unextinguished campfires and arson are the three leading categories of human-caused wildfires in New York State. As a means of preventing debris fires, rangers and their permit-issuing agents issued 19,055 burning permits as required by the NYS Environmental Conservation Law. Rangers inspected 1,002 of the permitted burns to insure compliance with the terms of the permits. In addition, rangers issued tickets or made arrests for 115 violations of law related to fire prevention. The most frequent violation was burning without a permit in towns within the Adirondack and Catskill parks. Department burning permits are not required in other areas of the state. The year 2007 was the fifth year that seasonal assistant forest rangers (AFRs) were required to discuss campfire safety with campers during their patrols. This increased focus on preventing wildfires through campfire awareness contributed to a continued reduction in the occurrence of wildfires and the resulting damage they do to New York State forests. Only 50 campfire-caused wildfires, burning a total of 49 acres, were extinguished and reported by rangers in 2007.

In 2007, the division mobilized two 20-person firefighting crews to western wildfires as part of its cooperative agreement with the US Forest Service. Each crew was staffed with a forest ranger as its crew boss plus three other rangers as squad bosses. The other 16 members were forest rangers, other DEC employees and department volunteer firefighters. New York State Crew #1 was sent to the Battle Creek Fire in Oregon, and Crew #2 was sent to the Jocko Lakes Fire in Montana. This was another busy year for rangers supporting western or southern wildland firefighting efforts since 1979 when New York sent its first crews.

The division transitioned from sub-regional storage and deployment of equipment in fixed facilities to a centralized "fire cache" system in mobile facilities (large cargo trailers). The division now manages its firefighting equipment through its fire cache, located in Saratoga Springs. The year 2002 was the first time this new system of managing firefighting equipment resources was tested during a busy fire season. All firefighting equipment for extended suppression efforts is ordered and dispensed through the cache to support large or multiple fires in various localities. Large cargo trailers are stocked with sufficient and diverse firefighting equipment to outfit one large firefighting complex. In 2002, all eight trailers were used to support suppression activities in the eastern Adirondacks. Although this was sufficient, no additional trailers were available for other areas of the state. In 2007, 19 trailers were in service as the division achieved its statewide objective. The trailers provide a rapid response with sufficient equipment to contain large or complex fires.

In 2007, forest rangers maintained their working relationship with the department's Division of Lands and Forests and Division of Fish and Wildlife to use prescribed fire as an ecosystem management tool. Throughout the year, rangers conducted four prescribed fires on departmental state lands, burning a total of 185 acres. Rangers also assisted its federal, county and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) partners with nine prescribed burns on their properties, treating 116 acres in total.

Each year, the Division of Forest Protection administers the Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) Grant Program, using funds provided by the United States Forest Service. VFA grants assist rural volunteer fire departments with the purchase of fire suppression equipment and supplies. In 2007, 365 qualifying fire

departments received VFA grants of \$1,000 each. Not only does this program place much needed dollars in the hands of rural fire departments, it also furthers the solid working relationship between forest rangers and the volunteer firefighter service.

Forest rangers provide several support activities to other programs within the department, other state agencies and local governments throughout New York State. Rangers assisted other agencies with emergency incidents on 486 occasions in 2007. Many of them were automobile accidents at which a ranger came upon the scene. Others included fugitive searches, fire-scene traffic control, evidence searches, drownings and marijuana-plantation eradication. Because rangers are considered experts in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Incident Command Systems (ICS), they often are called upon to teach courses on these topics at police academies, county government centers and local fire departments.

The division manages the NYS Licensed Guide Program. By the end of 2007, there were a total of 2,090 licensed outdoor guides in New York State. Of that total, 164 new licenses and 277 license renewals were processed throughout the year. Rangers made 306 guide license checks throughout the state and made eight arrests for guiding without a license. Eleven guides had their licenses revoked for being convicted of committing violations of New York's Environmental Conservation Law.

Forest rangers often are asked to speak on environmental topics or to make presentations regarding careers in forestry or with the department. In 2007, rangers made 79 career-day presentations to 11,578 attendees. Another 13 presentations were made on a variety of topics not categorized as state land-use rules, search and rescue or wildfire control. Some of the presentations were made at fairs, while others were made at community events and agency-sponsored events. Altogether, 234 attended these presentations.

Throughout 2007, the division met or exceeded its primary training initiatives described in the *2004 Training and Development Report*. It coordinated and accomplished delivery of all training in the following areas: police officer training mandated by the Division of Criminal Justice Services, Wilderness Medical Associates First Responder training, agency-mandated health-and-safety training, National Wildfire Coordinating Group certified courses in fire management and suppression, information technology, aviation, supervision and a one-week assistant forest ranger academy.

In 2007, ranger training activities accounted for a total of 52,654 program hours. This amounted to a significant increase of 22,536 hours from the previous year. The large increase was attributed to holding the 17th Basic School for 10 newly hired forest rangers. This year, the training and development program for the division concentrated on five primary training program areas. They included: search and rescue (9,952 hours), wildfire management (7,535 hours), police officer program (13,443 hours), 17th Basic School (17,805 hours) and all other training (3,921 hours).

On January 31, opening ceremonies were held for the 17th Basic School for Uniformed Officers. The Office of Public Protection (OPP) joint school was successfully completed by 10 forest rangers and 17 environmental conservation officers (ECOs). During the 26-week curriculum, the ranger recruits received a total of 1,194 hours of training. In addition, each probationary ranger was expected to satisfactorily complete an intensive 160-hour, field-training program after graduation. This class of rangers is the first to have successfully met all DCJS-mandated training requirements for police-officer certification.

The division's *2007 Annual Report* includes summary tables of reportable data on wildfire occurrence, prescribed fire, search-and-rescue missions, arrests or tickets issued, public presentations and general activities. Most summaries are reported at the division's zone level. A zone is identified as the smallest work group under the direct command of a division supervisor. There are 17 division zones in the state, each within a department region. Each zone supervisor has provided a narrative review of activities within their zone as part of the division's annual report. All summaries are substantiated by data reporting at the region, zone or individual ranger level. A fact sheet on 2007 forest ranger accomplishments and statistics follows this summary.

# 2007 DIVISION OF FOREST PROTECTION FACT SHEET

## Division Members

- 106 Forest Rangers
- 28 Forest Ranger Lieutenants, Captains & Directors
- 31 Seasonal Assistant Forest Rangers
- 4 Administrative Support Staff
- 2 Fire Cache Equipment Specialists

## State Lands & Easements Acres

- 2,800,000 Adirondack & Catskill Forest Preserve
- 770,000 State Forests, Reforestation and Multiple Use Areas
- 224,000 Wildlife Management Areas
- 667,000 Conservation Easements

## 2006 Population (in millions)

- 19.3 New York State
- 31.7 Surrounding States (VT,MA,CT,NJ,PA)

## Wildfire Management Program

- 131 Fires Suppressed in the Spring
- 65 Fires Suppressed in the Summer
- 15 Fires Suppressed in the Fall
- 855 Acres Burned
  - 13 Prescribed Fires
  - 301 Acres of Prescribed Fire
- 19,055 Burning Permits Issued
- 1,002 Burning Permits Inspected
  - 91 Wildfire Control/ICS Training Events;
    - 2,287 Participants
  - 112 Fire Prevention Events;
    - 89,088 Attendees
  - 115 Fire Prevention Law Violations/Tickets
- 365 \$1,000 Grants to Rural VFDs
  - 2 20-Person Crews Mobilized to Western Wildfires

## Search & Rescue Program

- 153 Search Missions
- 67 Rescue Missions
- 3 Recoveries
- 147 Search & Rescue or 1<sup>st</sup> Aid Training Events; 2,867 Participants

## Protection of State Lands

- 78,843 Inspections of Trailheads/Access Points
- 20,398 Miles of Trails Walked or Waterways paddled (canoe/kayak)
- 15,319 Inspections of Occupied Campsites
- 2,123 State Land Camping Permits Issued
- 2,134 Miles of State Boundary Line Inspected
- 1,123 State Land Use Permits Inspected
- 2,379 Patrols of DEC Public Campgrounds
- 745 ATV Violation Tickets Issued
- 1,006 State Land Offense Tickets/Arrests
- 316 Fish & Wildlife Offenses Tickets
- 109 Outdoor Safety and State Land Use Presentations; 12,829 Attendees
- 1 Week of Training for 31 Seasonal Assistant Forest Rangers

## Licensed Guide Program

- 2,090 Licensed Guides on 12/31/07
- 164 New Guide Licenses Issued
- 277 Guide Licenses Renewed or Updated
- 11 Guide Licenses Revoked
- 306 Checks of Licensed Guide Credentials
- 8 License Guide Violations Ticketed

## Other Statistics

- 79 Career Day & Other Presentations
- 11,578 Attendees
- 486 Incidents of Assisting other Agencies
- 393 Other EnCon or Other Law Offenses
- 1,076 DEC Permit Inspections

## How Rangers Spent Their Time In 2007

- 41% State Land Patrol & Mgt. Planning
- 13% Fire Management Activities
- 10% Search & Rescue Missions & Training
- 19% Administrative Responsibilities
- 7% 17<sup>th</sup> Basic Academy
- 6% Enforcement Actions
- 4% Other Responsibilities



# FOREST RANGERS 2007



Forest Ranger recruits at the 17th Basic Academy learning the techniques of external loading of a State Police helicopter.

Rangers Bob Rogers, Evan Donegan and Adam Pickett end a day of mop-up firefighting on the Battle Creek Fire, Hells Canyon Recreational Area, in Oregon.



One of the hybrid patrol vehicles used by Forest Rangers.

Rangers conducting an 88-acre prescribed fire on the Long Pond State Forest in Chenango County.



# FOREST RANGERS 2007

Smokey Bear and Ranger Suzie Heare meeting young fair-goers at the New York State Fair in Syracuse.



Ranger Jeremy Oldroyd on the Jocko Lakes Fire just west of Seelye Lake, Montana in mid-August.

Rangers Bryan Gallagher and Ian Kerr help instruct Long Island firefighters and emergency services personnel in the use of "bambi-buckets" on a NY Army National Guard "Blackhawk" helicopter at the David A. Sarnoff [State] Preserve, Suffolk County.



Rangers and other members of the 20-person NYS-1 Type 2 Initial Attack crew join other firefighters at one of the spike camps on the Battle Creek Fire, Hells Canyon Recreational Area, in Oregon.

Region 7 Rangers practicing flat ice rescue techniques at Whitney Point Reservoir, Broome County.



NY Army National Guard "Blackhawk" helicopters demonstrating the use of a "bambi-bucket" at the David A. Sarnoff [State] Preserve, Suffolk County.

The wreckage of a glider crash is removed from along the escarpment trail in the Windham High Peak Wild Forest (Forest Preserve), Greene County.



# FOREST RANGERS 2007

Smokey Bear and Ranger Howard Thomes talking to inner-city children in Queens on October 30th.



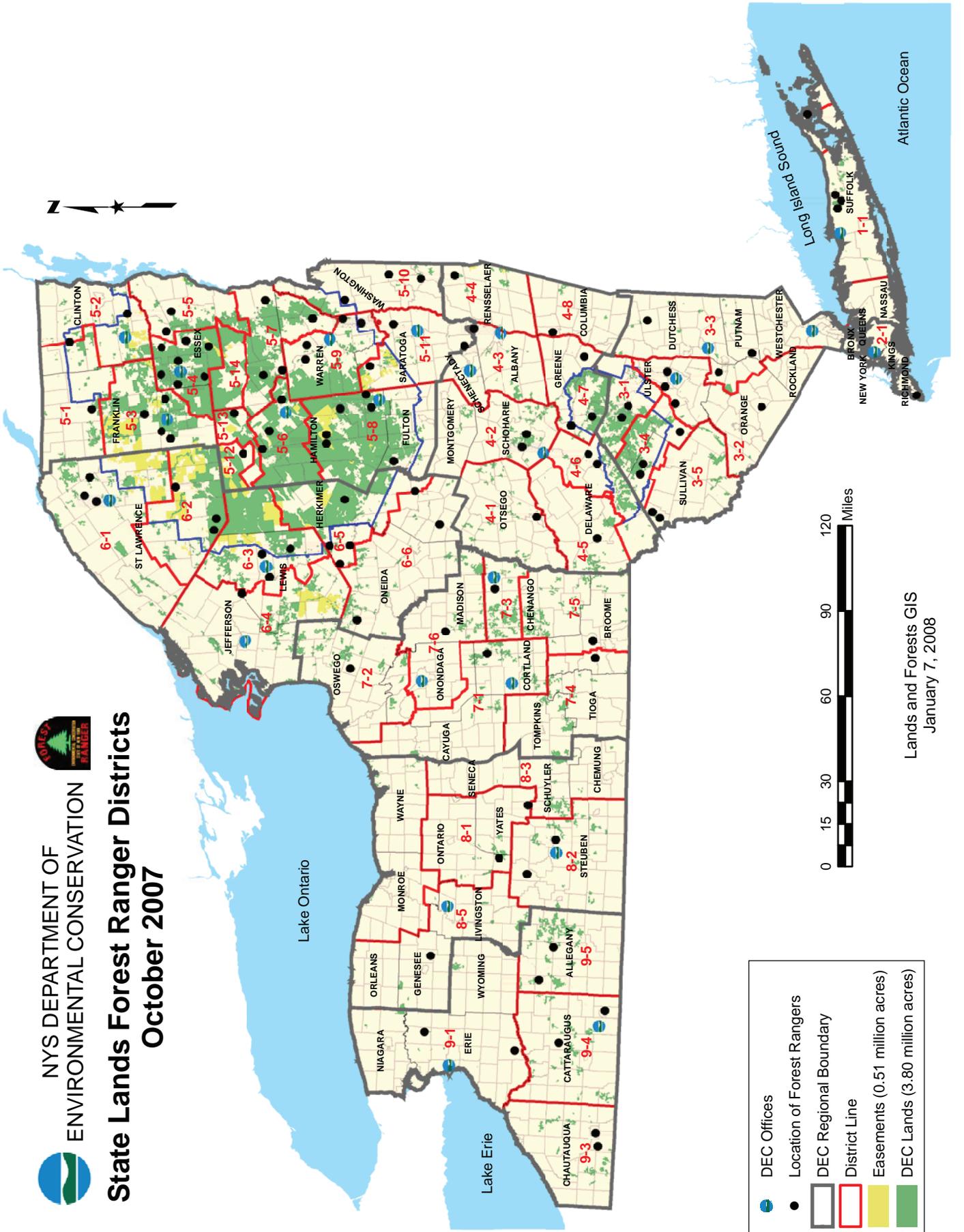
Ranger Jim McPherson holding a "bouquet" of evidence from a marijuana eradication detail in Region 7.

Ranger Anne Farrand (right) and Lt. Joe Shafer patrol the 48-acre prescribed fire on the Rush Oak Openings Unique Area in Monroe County on April 24th.




**NYS DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION**  

**State Lands Forest Ranger Districts**  
**October 2007**



-  DEC Offices
-  Location of Forest Rangers
-  DEC Regional Boundary
-  District Line
-  Easements (0.51 million acres)
-  DEC Lands (3.80 million acres)

Lands and Forests GIS  
January 7, 2008



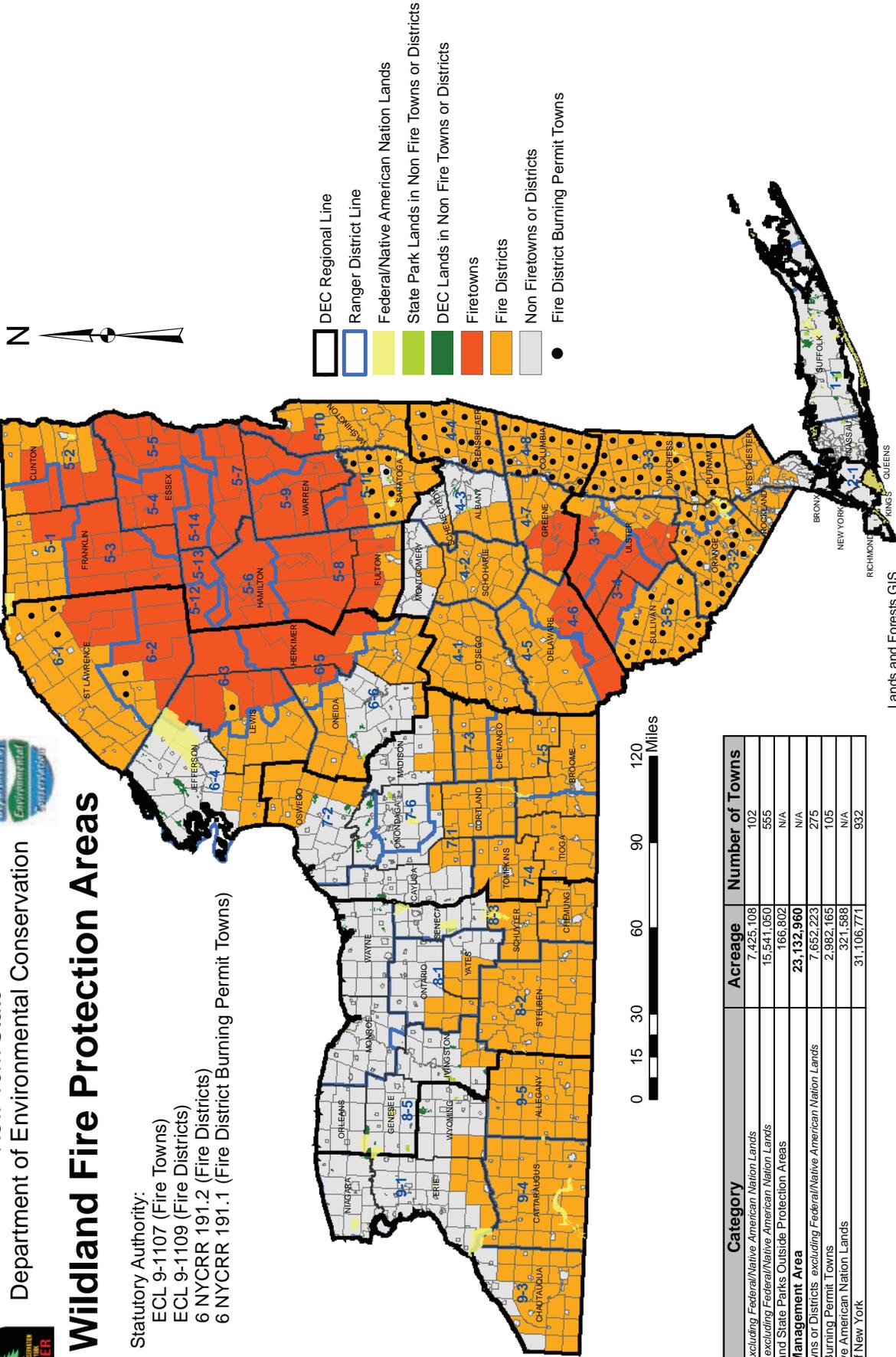
New York State  
Department of Environmental Conservation



# Wildland Fire Protection Areas

Statutory Authority:

- ECL 9-1107 (Fire Towns)
- ECL 9-1109 (Fire Districts)
- 6 NYCRR 191.2 (Fire Districts)
- 6 NYCRR 191.1 (Fire District Burning Permit Towns)



| Category   | Acreage           | Number of Towns |
|--|-------------------|-----------------|
| Fire Towns excluding Federal/Native American Nation Lands                  | 7,425,108         | 102             |
| Fire Districts excluding Federal/Native American Nation Lands              | 15,541,050        | 555             |
| DEC Lands and State Parks Outside Protection Areas                         | 166,802           | N/A             |
| <b>Total Fire Management Area</b>  | <b>23,132,960</b> | N/A             |
| Non Fire Towns or Districts excluding Federal/Native American Nation Lands | 7,652,223         | 275             |
| Fire District Burning Permit Towns   | 2,982,165         | 105             |
| Federal/Native American Nation Lands                                       | 321,988           | N/A             |
| Total State of New York  | 31,106,771        | 932             |

Lands and Forests GIS  
December 27, 2007

## REGIONAL AND PROGRAM NARRATIVES



### Region 1 and Region 2 Captain Tim Byrnes

Region 1 comprises two counties: Suffolk and Nassau. Region 2 comprises the five boroughs of New York City: Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens and Staten Island. Both regions 1 and 2 comprise one forest ranger working unit or administrative “zone.” The entire zone comprises 1,501 square miles, with a population of 11 million people. The department owns 19,136 acres of land and easements throughout this area. The zone has five rangers, with four rangers assigned to Region 1 and one ranger assigned to Region 2. One regional captain supervises the entire zone.

The majority of forest ranger time in these regions involves enforcing state and local laws regarding the use of state lands and other public properties. Preventing or apprehending illegal all-terrain vehicle (ATV) use on public lands is the primary focus of much of this work. Rangers are among the 25 law enforcement agencies of the Central Pine Barrens Law Enforcement Council that focus on the most significant problems facing these critically important lands in Suffolk County.

Dumping or disposal of solid waste on state lands was effectively curbed by Ranger David Pachan, who successfully investigated and charged several offenders with crimes involving solid waste. In one case, a plea deal resulted in the offender cleaning a one-mile stretch of Wading River Hollow Road of all debris.

On March 7, Ranger David Pachan was injured from a vehicular assault while on a routine patrol of the Rocky Point Natural Resource Management Area. The subject evaded Ranger Pachan's orders to stop and then intentionally drove his ATV into Ranger Pachan's legs. The subject was placed under arrest and charged with one count of criminal assault in the second degree, resisting arrest

and several vehicle, traffic and environmental conservation law infractions.

On a May 5 detail, Ranger Bryan Gallagher was assigned to an ATV arson patrol with the Riverhead Police Department and Fire Marshall's Office on the old Shoreham Nuclear Power Plant property. Briefly into the patrol, Ranger Gallagher spotted a theft in progress of copper wire from telephone poles. Two individuals were arrested and each charged with one felony count of criminal mischief in the second degree, one felony count of criminal trespass in the third degree, and one misdemeanor count of possession of burglar's tools. Damage was estimated at \$10,000.

Rangers were instrumental in the Fuels Reduction and Ecological Demonstration Project on 200 acres of the 2,183-acre David A. Sarnoff Preserve. Region 1's prescribed fire burn boss, Ranger Bryan Gallagher, along with The Nature Conservancy's (TNC) fire management staff, expanded the mechanically treated acreage to reduce destructive wildfire potential. In addition, a total of 32 acres were treated with prescribed fire to reduce wildfire risk to the nearby community of Flanders. Other prescribed fire projects included a 45-acre grassland burn in the Eastport Management Area in early April.

In keeping with the goal of assisting land managers in stewardship projects, rangers coordinated an Army National Guard aviation unit "Help" project for the Oak Brush Plains Preserve at Edgewood on June 14. Three abandoned vehicles were airlifted from the state lands, and several concrete barriers were placed strategically around the property to effectively curb illegal motor vehicle access.

As the training requirements for structural firefighters have begun to merge with wildland firefighters' training requirements, rangers, working in partnership with the Central Pine Barrens Wildfire Task Force, coordinated a helicopter water bucket drop training class on July 29 and 30. Members and volunteers of the National Guard aviation unit, the Suffolk County Fire Rescue and Emergency Services, the State Emergency Management Office (SEMO) and the Central

Pine Barrens Commission received classroom training and observed a field demonstration of ground and air operations during a water bucket drop.

Early in 2007, Region 2 Ranger Joseph Bink was informed that the Asian long-horned beetle had made landfall on Pralls Island, a small heron rookery situated in the southwestern Arthur Kill waterway. Upon determining that eradication of this dangerous beetle would require a specialized incident management team, Ranger Bink quickly developed an incident action plan that addressed the need for a fast response. Working closely with members of the Region 2 Natural Resource team and staff from the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, US Department of Agriculture and New York City Parks, the removal of 100 percent of infected and host trees began. The project was a success, and Ranger Bink was an integral team member.

Ranger Bink also worked effortlessly on several public relations events, such as speaking with young career-minded students at Grover Cleveland High School in Queens and PS 6 in Staten Island.

In November, the former Princes Bay Lighthouse, where the Region 2 ranger is required to live, was dedicated with a new light in memory of the late John J. Cardinal O'Connor. For the first time since 1922, a light once again shines from atop the Mount Loretto bluffs, providing a navigation aid to all mariners on Raritan Bay.



**Region 3, Zone A**  
**Lt. Stephen M. Scherry**

Zone A, the westernmost of the two Region 3 zones, comprises all of Sullivan County and the western portion of Ulster County. Nearly all the state land holdings designated Forest Preserve are located in Zone A, totaling 168,948 acres. The two wilderness areas comprise more than 81,000 acres. Another 25,690 acres of land spread across dozens of separate parcels of state forest, wildlife management areas and unique areas. Seven

rangers, four seasonally employed assistant forest rangers (AFRs) and one lieutenant are assigned to this zone.

Policing four DEC campgrounds kept rangers busy on weekend evenings, particularly for rangers Dave Meade, Gary Miller and Del Jeffery. Campground staff often expressed their gratefulness for the rangers' presence into the late hours, which helped them tremendously. Swiftwater rescue training, led by Ranger Jeffery, ensured everyone had basic awareness and skills in the event such a rescue was needed.

Efforts during the past several years to establish and train a volunteer search-and-rescue (SAR) team within Sullivan County fire departments was well rewarded in 2007. On February 13, state police requested ranger assistance with the search for a 54-year old woman missing from the Roscoe Adult Home for two days. Rangers Meade, Jeffery and Miller contacted the Sullivan County SAR team and quickly established an incident command post to search as much ground as possible. A snowstorm was forecast later that evening, and the worsening weather would significantly hamper any search efforts. Rangers and the SAR team, having trained extensively together, quickly deployed search teams to likely areas. Later that day, searchers located the body of the missing woman in a wooded area of a neighboring town. Everyone credits the close relationship between local rangers and the Sullivan County team as the reason the operation was rapidly deployed and able to cover extensive terrain as quickly as they did.

On June 19, rangers, the Sullivan County SAR team and nearly every other emergency response agency in the region were severely taxed when a torrential rainstorm hit Cat Hollow in Delaware County and Beaverkill Valley in Sullivan County. This storm dropped eight inches of rain in one evening, creating the worst flash flood the area had ever experienced. Rangers Jeffery and Meade immediately responded to assist with treacherous house-to-house evacuations at night as flood waters were still rising. Before long, the entire valley saw whole houses washed away, along with bridges, roads, trees, cars and everything in the torrent's path. By morning, the flood's devastation became clear,

and large-scale efforts began in earnest to locate an undetermined number of missing people suspected of being washed away in the aftermath. Nearly every ranger from regions 3 and 4 participated in searching during the next week, combing through debris piles, house wreckage and subsiding flood waters for any signs of the missing people. By week's end, the bodies of two of the missing were located one mile downstream from their home. Later in the summer, the remains of one more missing person was located by State Police more than 12 miles downstream from where the incident occurred. One person remains missing.



**Region 3, Zone B  
Lt. Paul Rinaldi**

Zone B lays in the heart of the historic, burgeoning Hudson Valley region of New York State and is considerably influenced by those moving up from or traveling from the greater New York City (NYC) metropolitan area. Most of the wildlands are increasingly owned by State Parks, along with several other non-governmental organizations such as The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Scenic Hudson, Open Space Institute, Mohonk Preserve and others, and they offer significant outdoor recreation. Forest rangers provide a presence at many of these publically used tracts through joint training and response to emergencies. In total, rangers protect 21,467 acres of state lands administered by DEC. Seven rangers, three seasonal AFRs and one lieutenant are assigned to this zone.

Stewart State Forest in Orange County, along with various other parcels throughout Dutchess, Putnam and eastern Ulster counties provide the public with nearly 15,000 acres of wildland recreational opportunities. While hunting activity remains constant from year to year, mountain biking and unlawful all-terrain vehicle (ATV) use of these state lands continues to soar. Joint patrols with Division of Law Enforcement off-road team members are routinely carried out to protect these areas from unlawful ATV use.

While patrolling state lands continues to be a priority for Zone B rangers, significant outreach opportunities provide benefits beyond the borders of the region. Many local recreational groups and individuals seek state land opportunities farther upstate and are better informed to make their excursions safer and more enjoyable after attending a ranger presentation.

After participating in a street drug-awareness course in NYC sponsored by the joint New York-New Jersey High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (NY/NJHIDTA), lieutenants Paul Rinaldi and Steve Scherry presented this training to Region 3 rangers in March. This course provides all law enforcement officers with the latest information on the availability, nomenclature and awareness needed when encountering illegal substances.

Spring got off to a busy start with the continued participation with the Shawangunk Ridge Biodiversity Prescribed Fire Program on cooperators' properties in Ulster County. Several open fields and brushy areas received fire treatments on Mohonk Preserve properties in an ongoing effort to maintain species diversity and desired habitat, while strengthening cooperative relationships for joint wildfire-suppression operations. Minnewaska State Park, The Nature Conservancy, Mohonk Mountain House, Mohonk Preserve and DEC continue to train, share resources and support mutual projects. DEC benefitted from this cooperation during a prescribed fire at the Bog Brook Unique Area this past spring. Rangers David Russell and Jason Scott successfully laid out, organized and executed this burning operation in DEC's efforts to reduce encroaching invasive vegetative species that threaten the endangered Bog Brook turtle habitat in this area situated in the Town of Paterson, Putnam County. Personnel from many of the cooperating groups and agencies along with several DEC programs participated in this operation.

On September 19, State Police requested ranger assistance for a large-scale marijuana eradication at the Bog Brook Unique Area. More than 200 mature cannabis plants were found to be actively cultivated on state land. Rangers, environmental conservation officers (ECOs) and State Troopers removed all these

plants before they could have been harvested. The illegal plants were bundled and removed by helicopter hoist to an appropriate disposal area.

During the first few days of the big game hunting season in November, a small plane crashed in heavily used Stewart State Forest, killing the pilot and seriously injuring two passengers. This incident required the closing of the forest for several days. Rangers Jacob Deslauriers, Jennifer Temple and Benjamin Baldwin and assistant forest rangers Doug Sturm and Jamie DuBois worked with neighboring police agencies, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) to keep the forest closed for the investigation. Hunters typically come from New York City, Long Island and New Jersey and would not be aware that the forest was closed due to the plane crash. Through the rangers' adroit handling of the public and contact with local press, no incidents were reported throughout the investigation and removal of the crash debris.



**Region 4, Zone A**  
**Lt. Darryl Kittle**

Zone A consists of Rensselaer, Columbia, Albany, Schenectady and Greene counties and constitutes an area of 2,686 square miles, with a population of 705,000 people. Within these counties are approximately 112,961 acres of DEC-administered lands and 3,935 acres of conservation easements, managed under ten different land classifications. The zone includes two wilderness areas and five wild forests (39,620 acres), one DEC public campground and 15 detached parcels of forest preserve (757 acres). Throughout the five-county zone, there are 21,820 acres in 18 different state forests. Rangers also patrol 1,851 acres of the Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve, 51 acres in scenic areas, 2,751 acres within the Albany Pine Bush Preserve (APBP) and 10,847 acres of wildlife management area property on eight parcels. Finally, there is also a 435-acre environmental education center in Delmar,

Albany County. Six forest rangers, three seasonally employed assistant forest rangers (AFRs) and one lieutenant are assigned to this zone.

Kaaterskill Falls, one of the busiest trails and most popular destinations in the Catskills, has seen an increase in serious injuries in recent years. Rangers participated in several field trips by department administrators to provide better signage and information to deter future injuries. New kiosks and signs are planned to better encourage hikers to stay on the trails and avoid high-risk "scrambling" up the sides of the falls. In the summer of 2007, two hikers were seriously injured as they attempted to ascend the steep slope. A 12-year old boy from Kingston, NY fell 60 feet to the rocky fall's bottom. In another incident, a 21-year old male from Summitville, NY fell nearly 80 feet while scrambling near the top of the upper falls. Both had sustained serious physical injuries and were successfully extracted from the area by helicopter. Rangers and investigators from the Bureau of Environmental Crimes Investigations (BECI) reviewed the area and documented conditions following both these rescues. Rangers also led staff from the Attorney General's Office to Kaaterskill Falls on several occasions to conduct pre-trial tours of the area, which involved the rescue of a 20-year-old who survived a 170-foot fall from the top of the falls in 2004.

Rangers conducted 25 patrols of the Taconic Ridge State Forest in Rensselaer County during the winter and spring months in response to complaints of illegal ATVs damaging portions of the 18-mile hiking system. Another 12 miles of this trail system extend into Massachusetts and Vermont. Two meetings were held with DEC, the Adirondack Mountain Club and the Taconic Crest Hiking Club to address rehabilitation, outreach and enforcement measures. During the next three months, 14 patrols took place, resulting in one snowmobile ticket and eight ATV tickets. As a result, ATV use during the remainder of the year was significantly reduced from previous years.

During the spring of 2007, the replacement of the Colgate Lake Dam in the Town of Jewett, Greene County began. This process involved public meetings, drawing down the lake and

closing the existing parking and construction areas. After several complaints of young adults "partying" late at night in a nearby Forest Preserve parking area, patrols were scheduled for late evening hours on weekends throughout most of the summer. This was very successful at stopping the activity and preventing vandalism to the large amount of heavy on-site construction equipment.

Rangers patrolled DEC's North/South Lake and Devil's Tombstone campgrounds on most weekends during the summer months, holiday weekends and during events at the nearby Hunter Mountain Ski Area. Eleven tickets were issued for various campground offenses. Following the close of the season, Ranger DiCintio responded to the Devil's Tombstone Campground to assist an investigation of a break-in at the caretaker's cabin. Fortunately, nothing was found missing.

A late-season winter storm in April resulted in large amounts of blowdown at elevations above 2,500 feet in vast areas of the Forest Preserve in Greene County. Nearly all Forest Preserve hiking trails were closed in the county as the volume of blowdown from almost a foot of wet, heavy snow and ice made them impassable. Rangers assisted department and volunteer crews in the three-month effort to clear trails. All trails eventually were reopened for the busy summer hiking season. The 31st Annual 18-mile Escarpment Run from East Windham to North/South Lake Campground across six northern Catskill peaks was still held on its traditional last Sunday of July with only one runner needing assistance for a minor injury.

Forest Rangers conducted frequent patrols of the Albany Pine Bush Preserve (APBP), Albany County and the Tibbits State Forest in Rensselaer County as a result of ongoing complaints of public lewdness. Complaints generally originated from either APBP staff or the hiking public encountering these activities in trail-less areas. No arrests were made at the Pine Bush despite frequent patrols; however, Ranger Hess arrested four subjects at Tibbits State Forest. Upon obtaining criminal histories on two of the subjects, it was revealed that one was a registered sex offender, and the second was working in a

public school system in Vermont dealing with youth groups.

On November 4, rangers assisted State Police and fire departments at the scene of a glider crash on the summit of Windham High Peak in Greene County. A landing zone was set up at CD Land Park for the helicopters assigned to the incident. Twenty volunteers led by rangers headed to the crash site, which was three miles from the nearest road. They helped prepare the subjects for state police helicopter evacuation. Both subjects were transported to Albany Medical Center with non-life threatening injuries. The cause of the crash is still under investigation. Later that month, rangers Dearstyne, Nelson and Breigle assisted with removal of the glider by JBI Helicopter Services of New Hampshire.

Rangers participated in four prescribed burns in the Albany Pine Bush Preserve in 2007, treating nearly 54 acres. Rangers are always scheduled for each burn and bring a division fire equipment trailer, fire engines and ATVs to the prescribed fire program. Rangers responded to ten wildfires in the zone this year, with the largest being a 23-acre fire in the Town of Claverack, Columbia County. Rangers were instrumental in helping



organize volunteer fire resources for the initial attack on this wind-driven, hardwood litter fire in rolling terrain.

**Region 4, Zone B  
Lt. Robert Morse**

Zone B consists of Delaware, Otsego, Schoharie and Montgomery counties, encompassing 3,504 square miles. The zone comprises three wild forest areas totaling 38,769 acres, 14 state forest units covering 79,334 acres, four wildlife management areas totaling 7,617 acres and 3,448 acres of Forest Preserve on nine detached parcels. The zone also includes two DEC public campgrounds and a forest ranger field station at the Huckleberry Brook storage facility. The zone

comprises six forest rangers, one seasonally employed assistant forest ranger and one lieutenant.

On April 24, 2007, during a traffic stop in Margaretville, Delaware County, State Trooper Gombosi was shot in the torso. He didn't sustain any serious injuries due to his bullet proof vest. This incident led police on a manhunt for suspect Travis Trim. As police responded to the scene, Ranger Kallen also responded to assist. He worked with State Police Captain Campbell in the command post producing maps for personnel in the field. On Wednesday, while searching a house, an exchange of gunfire developed, killing Trooper Brinkerhoff and injuring Trooper Mattson. Suspect Travis Trim also was killed during the same exchange of gunfire. During the investigation, forest rangers were requested by State Police to help organize an evidence search in the area around the stolen vehicle and in the woods. No evidence was located.

On February 21, 2007 at approximately 3:00 PM, rangers were notified by Delaware County emergency dispatch that Susanne Shader was last seen that Monday afternoon. She had dropped her children off at a bus stop for a trip to Germany. Her vehicle was located on Tower Road in the Village of Stamford. Rangers responded and Type 1 searches were conducted where possible (deep snow was a limiting factor). Search crews worked until dark finding no evidence that Ms. Shader was in the woods. The next morning, rangers on snowshoes swept the area around the top of the mountain and along the road using a modified Type II pattern. At 10:15 AM, the subject's body was located by the rangers approximately 0.4 mile from the last known sighting and about 20 feet off the road. The body was partially covered with snow. The county sheriff's office was notified and arrived on scene at approximately 11:05 AM. Rangers remained on site to assist.

While patrolling Steam Mill State Forest on November 17, 2007 at approximately 7:00 PM, Ranger Kerr noticed a vehicle parked on a logging road off of Steam Mill Road. He stopped the vehicle as it was exiting the logging road to speak with the driver. He then asked the driver for identification and was told that it was back at his house. Ranger Kerr

then followed him back to his house to get his driver's license. At the house, Ranger Kerr noticed an eight-point buck that had no tag attached to it. Upon further investigation, he found that the defendant shot a doe deer over a bait pile. Ranger Kerr then requested assistance from environmental conservation officers (ECOs) Card and Eastwood. The defendant was issued ECATs for taking a doe deer without a permit, hunting deer over bait, depositing any substance with the intent to entice deer to feed, failure to possess a DMP tag, operating a motorized vehicle on state land, failure to report deer taken and failure to tag deer. The defendant was taken to court in the Town of Masonville for immediate arraignment. He pled guilty and paid a \$2,300 fine.

On June 19, 2007, a storm stalled over Brock Mountain in the Town of Colchester in Delaware County. The storm dumped approximately 12 inches of rain in 90 minutes, causing severe damage along Rt. 206 and along Berry Brook/Holiday Brook Road. Forest rangers were requested to assist with a



search for several people that were reported missing. Rangers from regions 3 and 4 responded to assist. Three homes were completely destroyed, and

numerous others were severely damaged. The flooding resulted in the deaths of four individuals.

### **Region 5, Zone A Lt. Bob Marrone**

Zone A covers the southern portion of Franklin County and the northwestern corner of Hamilton County. It includes the towns of Duane, Waverly, Franklin, Brighton, Harrietstown, Tupper Lake and the northern half of Long Lake. The primary recreational uses in the zone are canoeing and camping in summer and cross-country skiing and snowmobiling in winter. The zone contains all or parts of the Saranac Lakes Wild Forest,

Debar Mt. Wild Forest, the St. Regis Canoe Area, the William C. Whitney Wilderness and the High Peaks Wilderness, totaling 284,055 acres of forest preserve and 103,914 acres of conservation easements. There are also six campgrounds, Fish Creek Pond, Rollins Pond, Meacham Lake, Buck Pond, the Saranac Lake islands, Lake Eaton and one outpost at Raquette Falls, that are run by Operations in the summer and protected by rangers during the off season. Staffing includes six forest rangers, four assistant forest rangers (AFRs) and one lieutenant.

In 2007, Ranger Keith Bassage continued to teach Paul Smith's College students on such subjects as search and rescue, state land use and fire management. He also spent time with the staff of the Adirondack Park Agency's (APA) Visitor Interpretive Center at Paul Smith's, doing training on state land use and Leave-No-Trace. Ranger Julie Harjung spent many hours training department staff and others about hypothermia at the winter mountaineering workshop. Rangers continued to work with SARNAK, the local search and rescue team, training them in first aid, low-angle rescue, Type II search techniques and crew supervision. Ranger Jeff Balerno provided flat ice, rope rescue and helicopter operations training to members of various fire companies around Franklin County.

On Friday, May 4, at about 11 PM, Ray Brook dispatch received a call from Paul Smith's College requesting assistance with a boating accident on Lower St. Regis Lake in front of the campus. About 20 students were returning to the campus shoreline from a lean-to site across the lake. Two canoes with three students each were about halfway across when one canoe overturned. When the second canoe tried to help, it was swamped. The students shouted for help, and many more students started to respond from shore. At the same time, a 14-foot boat with eight students was starting out from the lean-to site. When they heard the noise and saw the lights from campus, they turned the boat sharply. It took in water and sank, along with a canoe they were towing. Some camp owners on the lake responded with boats and helped the students coming out from shore, and they were able to rescue all but two of the students.

Rangers along with State Police and firefighters worked until about 4 AM to find the missing two. A search was resumed in the morning involving State Police divers working in the lake with the help of a ranger boat and rangers working with the local search-and-rescue team to sweep the shoreline and nearby woods. At about 3 PM, just after the ground search was completed, the body of one of the students was recovered from the lake. The second student was recovered on Sunday.

During an early November helicopter reconnaissance flight, Ranger Balerno spotted bait piles in the woods behind a hunting camp near state land. He contacted the local environmental conservation officer (ECO), and plans were made to observe the area and determine when the camp would be occupied. On Nov 23, Balerno and ECO Dan Malone led a team of ECOs and rangers to serve a search warrant at a family hunting camp in the Town of Duane, Franklin County. Five members of the Landry family were charged with a total of 16 violations of the Environmental Conservation Law (ECL), including possession of three illegal deer, taking deer over bait, feeding deer, using a salt lick, failing to follow the tagging regulations, hunting without a valid license and possessing marijuana illegally.

The Department of Homeland Security has developed a national response plan that includes call-out procedures for wilderness and mountain search and rescue. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has assembled a nine-person review board to create credentialing criteria for personnel to be deployed for that type of incident. Lt. Bob Marrone was selected to be a member of the review board. In June, Lt. Marrone went to Washington, DC to attend a meeting that produced a draft version of the credentialing criteria and a search-and-rescue resource typing document. These will be finalized in 2008. At the Washington meeting, the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standard for Level I Land Searcher was adopted as the foundation document for wilderness search-and-rescue credentials. In November, Marrone traveled to Denver, Colorado to attend a meeting of the ASTM committee on search and rescue. At that meeting, the document that he authored, Level

II Land Searcher, passed its final approval and is now an ASTM standard. It is expected that this document will be included in the FEMA package.

### **Region 5, Zone B Lt. Gary Friedrich**

This zone, in the northeastern corner of the state, runs along the St. Lawrence Valley in northern Franklin County. It contains all of Clinton County as it transitions south into the Champlain Valley and encompasses ten towns in northeastern Essex County. Zone B has large areas of agricultural farmland combined with remote forests and islands on Lake Champlain which are entirely state-owned Forest Preserve. Along with numerous wildlife management areas and state forests, the zone includes partial or whole portions of the DeBar Wild Forest, Chazy Highlands Wild Forest, Taylor Pond Wild Forest, Giant Mountain Wilderness Area, Split Rock Wild Forest, Hurricane Mountain Wilderness Area, Hammond Pond Wild Forest and the Champlain Islands. Altogether within Zone B, there are 113,142 acres of Forest Preserve lands within the Adirondack Park and an additional 45,328 acres of state forests, wildlife management and unique areas outside the park. There are also 22,272 acres of conservation easements within this zone.

Zone B experienced a very active fire season this year. Drier than normal conditions and arson kept rangers busy throughout the summer and early fall. In mid-September, the region was below average rainfall totals by six inches. As a result when thunderstorms passed, dry conditions allowed lightning-strike fires to start. In addition, dry conditions allowed other ignition sources to produce fires requiring forest ranger suppression activities that kept most of these fires below ten acres in size. In addition to the fires resulting from dry conditions, Zone B experienced arson in the towns of Jay, Black Brook, Ausable and Chesterfield. Arson fires began in April and continued through June totaling 25 different events. When Ranger Rob Prackajlo realized

he might be dealing with an arsonist, he requested assistance from two of the division's fire investigators, rangers Wil Giraud and Ed Russell. Early in the investigation and with the help of Essex County Fire Investigator Bill Minoque, the team identified several possible suspects. Realizing the scope of the situation, Investigator Karen Stanewski of the department's Bureau of Environmental Criminal Investigations (BECI) unit was assigned to the case. Through the diligent work of this team, one suspect was identified. Unfortunately, only circumstantial evidence could be accumulated. In an effort to stop the arson, the suspect was called in for an interview on two different days. The suspect never admitted to the arson; however, all arson in the area ceased after the interviews. Even though no arrests were made, the investigation led to an end of arson fires for the rest of the year.

On May 11, State Police requested ranger assistance with a homicide investigation at a remote camp along the Canadian border in the Town of Mooers, Clinton County. Seven rangers and five environmental conservation officers (ECOs) provided assistance with ATVs and wildland search skills in an effort to locate the person(s) responsible for the death of Darcy Manor and any related evidence. The victim was located in the woods between the camp and the Canadian border. Her vehicle was missing, and it was believed that the suspect(s) may have taken it and tried to cross the border into Canada via woods roads in the area. After searching many miles of remote roads and the border area during a five-day period, State Police were confident that the suspect(s) and vehicle were not in the area. A suspect was later arrested by US Border Patrol in Texas, attempting to

cross the border into Mexico still in possession of the murder weapon. State Police expressed their gratitude for continued assistance when problems occur in remote locations in which they are not trained to work.

Zone B rangers continue to provide support to adjacent rangers' zones and assistance to other agencies as requested. Rangers also continue their dedication to educating youth in northern New York about resource protection. Through conservation field days in Franklin, Clinton and Essex counties, Rangers Tom Gliddi, Sarah Bode and Dan Fox attended five events and brought the message of conservation and environmental awareness to more than 900 youth.

### **Region 5, Zone C Lt. Brian Dubay**

Zone C consists of the towns of Keene, North Elba, Wilmington and parts of St. Armand, North Hudson, Newcomb and Harrietstown within the counties of Essex and Franklin. The zone includes the Adirondack High Peaks and other surrounding wilderness and wild forest state lands totaling 358,246 acres and 9,302 acres of conservation easements. The seven forest rangers assigned to this zone equate to 80 square miles of forest preserve and easements for each ranger to patrol.

In the summer months, six assistant forest rangers (AFRs) assisted rangers with back-country user education in some of the busiest camping and hiking locations in the state. Rangers in Zone C are continually rescuing hikers and climbers who have succumbed to all types of injuries and ailments in remote and rugged areas. The most significant rescue occurred on the side of the Great Range in the High Peaks Wilderness Area during a cold-weather snap in January. A hiker was sledding down a steep slide when he crashed and broke his leg. Rangers ended up spending an uncomfortable night (-19 F) at the rescue site until a helicopter evacuation could be accomplished at first light. Another rescue of note occurred later that month as an

ice climber was rescued using a technical rope-rescue system after the climber had fallen and broken his leg. A significant increase in ice-climbing activity was noticed within the zone in 2007, and, on some winter days, it constituted the majority of state-land use. This was mostly due to new equipment that has opened up the sport to most skill levels.

In mid-summer, rangers rescued a 100-pound black Lab that was trapped on a ledge. This dog had gotten too close to the edge and tumbled 50 feet to a small ledge. Rangers, who were concerned about the owners trying to rescue their pet, set up a technical rope system which allowed the rangers to rescue the dog, which had only minor scrapes.

Summer was not all about rescue as rangers stayed busy with protecting resources too. Rangers arrested three men in the High Peaks Wilderness Area and charged them with obstructing an officer's duties, failing to use a bear-resistant food canister and having an illegal campfire. The subjects were belligerent to department staff and rangers throughout the ordeal. In the end, the judge issued more than \$1,300 in fines to the three.

As for wildfires, rangers extinguished three small fires, including a five-acre fire that began when climbers tipped over their cookstove while camping in the Dix Mountain Wilderness. The fire spread quickly due to dry summer conditions.

### **Region 5, Zone D Lt. Steve Preston**

Zone D comprises Fulton County and the majority of Hamilton County. The zone headquarters is located at the DEC sub-office in Northville, and the zone also maintains an office at the Indian Lake DEC facility. Nine rangers are assigned to this zone, with three assigned to Fulton County and six assigned to Hamilton County. State land unit management areas include all or parts of the West Canada Lake Wilderness Area, Silver Lake Wilderness Area, Ferris Lake Wild Forest,

Shaker Mountain Wild Forest, Jessup River Wild Forest, West Canada Mountain Primitive Area, Sargent Pond Wild Forest, Pigeon Lake Wilderness Area, Moose River Wild Forest, Hudson River Gorge Primitive Area, Blue Mountain Lake Wild Forest, Blue Ridge Wilderness Area and the Siamese Ponds Wilderness, along with several state forest reforestation areas in Fulton County and 15 DEC campgrounds. In total, there are 780,802 acres of forest preserve, 6,158 acres of state forest and similar state lands and 46,886 acres of conservation easements in the zone.

While the zone didn't experience the long-duration search incidents of the previous year, it did have its share of noteworthy searches. On February 14, after a major winter storm left 48 inches of snow in the area, Ranger Art Perryman was notified by the Fulton County Sheriff's Office that three snowmobilers from the Mayfield area had left during the height of the blizzard for a short snowmobile ride but had not returned. Due to the heavy snows, cold weather and an extensive snowmobile trail system, a large contingency of rangers were dispatched to assist with the search effort. Through interviews, Ranger Perryman felt that the vicinity of Tolmantown Road, Town of Mayfield, was the primary search area. Search crews found the sledding very difficult because the snow hadn't settled, and most of the large snowmobiles became stuck. Ranger John Ploss, with his long-track Tundra snowmobile, was able to work his way six miles into the Shaker Mountain Wild Forest area and located the three individuals, who were huddled around a small fire. Ranger Ploss then packed the trail for the larger sleds to assist in the evacuation. While two of the subjects survived the ordeal unscathed, one had to be admitted to the local hospital with severe frostbite to his feet.

While most rescues by rangers involve people, Zone D always seems to have one rescue a year that involves a four-legged friend. On July 17, rangers Tom Eakin, John Ploss, Sarah Geesler and Lt. Steve Preston responded to assist a DEC wildlife biologist and environmental conservation officers (ECOs) when two orphaned bear cubs were spotted in the Lake Pleasant area. The night prior, the mother bear was killed by a car, but no one had seen the cubs until the next

morning when they came to nurse. When DEC staff arrived, the cubs were nowhere to be found. The mother was brought to an area off the road with hopes that the cubs would return. After some time, the cubs did come to the mother but when an attempt was made to capture them, they ran for the safety of an 80-foot pine tree. With the cubs high in the tree, it was impossible to get a shot with the tranquilizer gun, so it became a waiting game. Eventually they did come down the tree and gave the biologist an opportunity for a shot. One of the cubs quickly felt the effects of the drug and was easily captured, while the other cub decided to make a run for it into an adjacent spruce swamp. With rescuers hot on his heels, the cub evaded the crew for 150 yards until he finally gave up. Both cubs were examined, tagged and sent to a rehabilitation facility with hopes they might be released into the wild on a later date.

During the summer, Zone D received multiple complaints from various licensed guides that some rafting companies were hiring unlicensed individuals to guide rafting trips down the Hudson River. On July 3, Ranger Bruce Lomnitzer was kayaking the Hudson River on his day off when he witnessed rafts from the Hudson River Raft Company operated by unlicensed guides. Ranger Lomnitzer radioed Lt. Preston about the situation and asked to have a ranger detail present to check the individuals at the take-out site. Rangers Eakin, Perryman and Lt. Preston responded and apprehended two individuals for guiding without a license. One of the subjects refused to give his name during the interview. After being informed by Ranger Perryman that he was under arrest, the man became combative. Rangers Perryman and Preston subdued the subject and placed him under arrest. Both subjects were brought before Indian Lake's town justice and remanded to the Hamilton County Jail in lieu of bail.

During the summer, the fire tower on Blue Mountain was again opened to the public after it had been closed in the early 1990s for needed repairs. Ranger Greg George, along with Region 5 Operations staff, were the driving force behind the renovation of the tower, replacing windows and footings. Greg has taken great pride in maintaining a piece of

ranger history with the renovation of the Blue Mountain and Snowy Mountain fire towers that stand in his ranger district.

**Region 5, Zone E**  
**Lt. Chris Liebelt**

Zone E comprises Warren and southern Essex County. The majority of department-administered lands in Warren County are within the Lake George Wild Forest, Wilcox Lake Wild Forest and the Siamese Ponds Wilderness Area. Also in Warren County is a portion of the Pharaoh Lake Wilderness Area, six DEC public campgrounds with 1,284 campsites combined, Prospect Mountain Memorial Highway Intensive Use Area and the Hudson River Special Management Area. State-administered lands in southern Essex County include the Hudson Gorge Primitive Area, Vanderwacker Wild Forest, the Hoffman Notch, Pharaoh Lake and portions of Dix Mountain Wilderness Area. In total, the zone includes eight forest rangers, two assistant forest rangers (AFRs) and one lieutenant protecting 369,397 acres of forest preserve, 706 acres of other types of state land and 644 acres of conservation easements.

A Niskayuna man and his friend were reported overdue in the Siamese Ponds Wilderness Area. Warren County sheriff's deputies found the subjects' vehicle parked at the 11th Mountain trailhead and contacted Ray Brook dispatch for assistance. Rangers responded and began searching trails leading to the Siamese Ponds lean-to. Rangers Steve Ovitt and Chuck Kabrehl located the subjects' tracks in the snow about a half-mile from the trailhead. The tracks were heading off the trail in the wrong direction. Ovitt and Kabrehl followed the tracks for a few hundred yards and, at 10 PM, located the subjects in their tent preparing to spend the night. The subjects had lost the trail in the dark, wandered around for a while and, due to the cold, wet weather, gave up and set up their camp. The two subjects were cold and wet but otherwise in good condition.

The Hudson River Special Management Area is intensively used Forest Preserve land along the Hudson River in the towns of Lake Luzerne and Warrensburg. Historically, this area is subject to a multitude of state-land, vehicle, traffic and penal-law violations. Several enforcement details were undertaken in 2007 in a continuing effort to protect these lands and the people who use them. Rangers Evan Donegan and Charles Kabrehl have spent much of their time patrolling the area and informing users of proper public-land use.

Several fires occurred in 2007 in Zone E. The Second Brother fire in the Pharaoh Wilderness burned 8.5 acres. An abandoned campfire spread out of a stone fire ring and into very steep, ledge terrain high on the mountain. Rangers, volunteer firefighters and prison crews from New York State Department of Corrections took five days to get the fire completely contained. State Police helicopters equipped with "bambi buckets" were used to get water to the top of the mountain and drop it directly on the fire.

In late fall, two new air boats were delivered to Region 5. Ranger Rick Schroeder worked closely with Major Joe Zeglen to design and purchase a craft that would work best for the division. One air boat will be kept in Warrensburg and the second in Zone C, Northville.

Public outreach and interaction is a priority in Zone E. Rangers conducted many programs regarding state-land use and back-country safety. The Environmental Field Days Program, administered by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Warren County, is a two-day event where rangers speak with all the county's sixth-grade students regarding state-land use. Zone E rangers developed an interactive educational program tailored to the students.

**Region 5, Zone F**  
**Lt. John Solan**

Zone F includes Saratoga and Washington counties. Both counties combined have

35,921 acres of forest preserve, 1,076 acres of wildlife management areas, 6,646 acres of state forest, 44,814 acres of conservation easements. These lands are protected by five forest rangers, one AFR and one lieutenant. Shelving Rock is a heavily used day-use and undeveloped camping area located in the Lake George Wild Forest in the Town of Fort Ann, Washington County. In addition, both counties have land holdings by The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Battenkill Conservancy and the Lake George Conservancy that are generally adjacent to DEC-administered lands.

Dry weather was prevalent during the spring and summer; however, no significant wild land fires occurred within Zone F in 2007.

State land patrol initiatives and priorities centered on unauthorized ATV use, illegal drug use and underage alcohol consumption throughout the zone. Warm weather shifted ranger attention to the Shelving Rock Intensive Use Area. This area continues to be very popular and heavily used from early summer through autumn, with peak use occurring during mid-summer and fall leaf season. All rangers within the zone prioritize the Shelving Rock Area during periods of peak use and maintain a high-profile presence. Illegal use has declined steadily during the last four years due to land-use changes through implementation of the Lake George Wild Forest Management Plan. While illegal activity has decreased slightly, overall use remains relatively constant from year to year because of the easy, free access to the Lake George shoreline. Rangers continue to play a role and be heavily involved in the Cooperative Wilton Wildlife Preserve and Park study area, within which DEC is a major partner and land holder with TNC and the Town of Wilton.

Search activity in Zone F saw an increased number of quick, overdue-hiker searches along the east shore of Lake George. The trails in this area are some of the most accessible trails in the southern Adirondacks to those hikers coming from metropolitan New York and New England. Often, these hikers are young, inexperienced and not equipped with lights, maps, compasses and other basic outdoor gear.

On November 3, rangers assisted in the search for a missing 12-year-old boy in the Village of Greenwich. Rangers, along with the Cambridge-Greenwich Police Department and State Police managed a massive, intensive search effort through the month of November. Rangers specifically were tasked with searching radially from the point-last-seen and with searching areas of interest to the investigation.

**Region 6, Zone A  
Lt. Robert Barstow**

Zone A consists entirely of St. Lawrence County (2,842 square miles), geographically the largest county in New York State. Presently there are five rangers, three seasonally employed assistant forest rangers (AFRs) and one lieutenant who patrol approximately 252,875 acres of state lands and 159,322 acres of easements under department jurisdiction. The majority of this land lies in the southern portion of the county. The most significant tracts are the Five Ponds, Bog River and Lows Lake wilderness areas and the Aldrich Pond, Horseshoe Lake, Cranberry Lake, Whites Hill and Raquette boreal wild forests. In addition, there are large tracts of easement lands, numerous state forests and the Cranberry Lake public campground, with 173 sites.

Although snow came late to the north country in early 2007, there were excellent snowmobile conditions for about six weeks. Rangers ran several snowmobile patrols and safety checks in conjunction with members of the Division of Law Enforcement (DLE) and the New York State Police. These actions were well received by snowmobilers, and this was the first year in the last decade without a snowmobile fatality in St Lawrence County. Rangers were able to avail themselves of field sobriety and radar training at the Police Academy at SUNY Canton this spring, which should further their ability to insure safe operation on the trails.

All-terrain vehicles (ATV's) on state land continue to be a problem, particularly in the

northern portions of the zone. During a weekend-long ATV enforcement detail in the Brasher State Forest, and after 20 tickets were issued, a lone ATV operator was spotted riding in a closed area and not wearing a helmet. When Ranger Scott Murphy attempted to stop him, the subject fled. Murphy intercepted the individual at a nearby road crossing where the operator became very combative. The subject eventually complied and was arrested on several counts, including unlawfully fleeing from a police officer. He was arraigned and committed to the St. Lawrence County Correctional Facility in lieu of bail.

Rangers Will Benzel and Bernie Siskavich once again taught the federal wildland firefighter course (S/130-190) at the SUNY Ranger School in Wanakena. Thirty-seven students participated in the training, which has become a part of the curriculum. This is a very popular course with the students, and many have obtained employment with western state and federal fire crews.

2007 was relatively quiet in regard to fire and search. The only fire of significance was on a small island in Silver Lake.

Most of the searches this year were of short duration. In one incident, a hunter became lost in Yellow Lake State Forest. Rangers Greg Hoag, Wayne LaBaff and Scott Murphy, along with several State Troopers, responded. Rangers attempted to track the subject in the general direction he was thought to have traveled, but they were unsuccessful. Rangers then tried to locate the subject with signal shots and other sounds but were again unsuccessful. Ranger Hoag, on a hunch, contacted the subject on his cellphone, and, surprisingly, the subject answered. Hoag was quickly able to ascertain where the subject was and spared the hunter a long, cold night in the woods.

Criminal use of controlled substances on state land continues to be a problem. Several arrests were made for small amounts of marijuana throughout the county. While on patrol in the Brasher State Forest during Memorial Day weekend, rangers Hoag and Jay Terry observed three individuals sitting at a picnic table where one was "snorting" something off

a mirror through a rolled up dollar bill. A subsequent investigation revealed the substance to be cocaine, and the individuals were arrested and charged with criminal possession of a controlled substance. They are currently awaiting prosecution.

**Region 6, Zone B**  
**Lt. Joel Nowalk**

Region 6, Zone B comprises Lewis and Jefferson counties and the northern portion of Herkimer County. It encompasses the Tug Hill Plateau, which annually receives the highest measured snowfall in the state and the western portion of the Adirondack Park. Zone B has a diverse array of state land, including 26,964 acres of wildlife management areas (WMAs) in Jefferson County, 103,683 acres of state forests managed for multiple use in Lewis and Jefferson counties and 204,492 acres of forest preserve lands in eastern Lewis County and northern Herkimer County. With the addition of the 40,000-acre Fish Creek easement on the Tug Hill Plateau, there are now four large conservation easements in Zone B, totaling 104,947 acres. This zone is staffed with five forest rangers, two AFRs and one lieutenant.

These diverse state lands host a variety of user groups throughout the year. With heavy snowfall, Zone B has the largest snowmobile trail system in the state. Cross-country ski trails have been developed in many state forests, and a network of horse trails has evolved in a portion of the Independence River Wild Forest. The popularity of white-water rafting and kayaking has brought users to the Beaver, Black and Moose rivers. Hunting and fishing still comprise a large portion of use on state land. It has been observed that ATV use is declining on these state lands as a result of aggressive enforcement by rangers.

Zone B includes Stillwater Reservoir which, by far, has the greatest intensity of use of all areas in the zone. With an easily accessible state boat launch, fishing, boating and camping (more than 40 designated campsites) are very popular during the summer. Both

AFRs are assigned to the Independence River Wild Forest and are instrumental in public outreach at Stillwater. Unlike other summertime destinations, Stillwater Reservoir's use does not decline in the winter, when thousands of snowmobiles pass through the community every year. Snowmobile accidents are very common on the reservoir. To facilitate a safe and immediate response to accidents, a rescue-boggan is staged at the Stillwater ranger headquarters.

The Otter Creek horse trails system in the Independence River Wild Forest continues to be a popular destination for riders. There is extensive camping near the riding assembly area, and Ranger Michael Hubschmitt is called upon regularly for his vast knowledge of this area and its history.

Rangers spent much of their time during the winter months focusing on the ever increasing snowmobile use on state lands. Recent acquisition of new snowmobiles led to an increased number of snowmobile patrols and checkpoints. During a check, snowmobilers are informed about proper state-land use and snowmobile safety equipment. They are also checked for compliance with the rules governing snowmobiling use. On more than one occasion, rangers responded rapidly to snowmobile accidents to provide first aid and scene safety before local emergency services could transport victims to hospitals.

Rangers issued more long-term camping permits in 2007 than in years past and focused enforcement efforts on state-land violations that occur during the big-game hunting season. One incident involved illegal cutting of trees, hunting over bait and illegal ATV use. Rangers also focused their attention on unauthorized



long-term camping and storage of camping gear. Ranger Marty Candee, in conjunction with DEC Lands and Forests personnel, investigated a timber theft in which more than 800 trees were illegally cut in a state-land timber sale. The suspects were charged with

grand larceny and multiple Environmental Conservation Law (ECL) violations.

Fire activity was relatively low in 2007; however, multiple fires were set in Jefferson County in DEC wildlife management areas and surrounding private lands. Although most were grass fires, some buildings also were burned. In early October, a task force of State Police, sheriff's deputies, emergency management office employees and forest rangers was created to investigate the fires. On Monday, November 26, a barn fire occurred in the Town of Lyme on the property of a possible suspect. State Police investigators interviewed the suspect, who later confessed to setting many of these fires during the last year. The subject was charged with two felony counts of willfully setting forest lands on fire, along with numerous other violations.

### **Region 6, Zone C Lt. Doug Riedman**

Region 6, Zone C comprises Oneida County and the southern two-thirds of Herkimer County. State land interests include 272,540 acres divided among 28 state forests, portions of four wild forest areas, three wilderness areas, one unique area, three fish and wildlife management areas, two campgrounds (Alger Island and Nicks Lake) and Hinckley Day Use Area. Several large land parcels totaling 64,571 acres are under easement and gift conditions. Six forest rangers, one assistant forest ranger (AFR) and one lieutenant are assigned to Zone C.

On January 27, 2007, Zone C rangers were involved with a multi-agency snowmobile enforcement detail at two different state land locations in Oneida and Herkimer counties. Rangers checked more than 200 snowmobiles and provided a variety of information to many of the operators. Eighteen tickets were issued for violations, including lack of insurance, no registration and illegal exhaust, and rangers received a lot of positive feedback for their efforts.

During the summer, all Zone C rangers were involved in frequent patrols of the two DEC campgrounds and day-use areas within the zone. These patrols, which included radar speed enforcement, helped deter speeding and under-age drinking within the campgrounds and day-use areas.

On May 6, rangers Adam Pickett, Dave Cornell and Bob Coscomb were called to a search in the Town of Forestport, Oneida County for a subject who fled on foot from the scene of a motor vehicle accident. Using his cellphone, the subject contacted his brother to tell him that he was injured from the accident and lost in the woods. Rangers coordinated a search with Oneida County sheriff's deputies and State Troopers. The subject was located approximately five hours later, some four miles from the scene of the accident. He was transported to a Utica hospital and later charged by the Oneida County Sheriff's Department for leaving the scene of an accident and driving while intoxicated.

On May 27, Ranger Rob Piersma was the first at the scene of a shooting in the Town of Boonville, Oneida County. A male subject shot his female companion while staying at a camp along the Black River. He then fled into the adjoining woods with a high-powered rifle. Ranger Piersma and other police officers surrounded the wooded area where the subject was hiding. Although a police negotiator was called to the scene, the subject died from a self-inflicted rifle wound.

On August 18, rangers Piersma, Candee, Pickett, Luke Evans and Chad Richardson were notified of a large party occurring in Buck Hill State Forest in the Town of Western, Oneida County. Rangers set up a vehicle checkpoint for all those entering or leaving Buck Hill State Forest. At a little past midnight, rangers entered the party area where they witnessed three male subjects get in a vehicle with open alcoholic-beverage containers. Rangers stopped the subjects and were questioning them when the driver fled on foot from the scene. The subject was later found, taken into custody and charged with resisting arrest and several other violations.

On September 25, Ranger Richardson was called to DEC's Nicks Lake Campground for

a domestic violence incident. A man and woman were involved in a verbal altercation, but the woman eventually left the campsite in her vehicle. When she returned an hour later, her companion was burning all their camping and personal gear in the fireplace. As another verbal argument ensued, the woman once again went to drive away from the campsite, but this time, the man jumped onto the back of the vehicle in an effort to detain her. He fell off the vehicle and both his ankles were run over by the vehicle. The man was transported to a Utica hospital and later charged with several misdemeanors and violations.

On December 9, Ranger Richardson responded to Stillwater Reservoir for a reported snowmobile through the ice, but the report turned out to be false. A short time later, rangers Richardson and Evans stopped a snowmobile coming off the reservoir. The snowmobile operator made a run at Ranger Evans but then finally stopped. The operator then became combative toward both rangers. An altercation ensued with rangers Evans and Richardson being struck and bitten several times by the snowmobile operator. Eventually, the subject was subdued, arrested, arraigned and transported to the Herkimer County Jail. He was charged with reckless operation of a snowmobile, two counts of second-degree assault, two counts of second-degree harassment, resisting arrest and disorderly conduct, and bail was set at \$100,000. Rangers Richardson and Evans were treated at a Utica hospital for their bite wounds.

## **Region 7 Lt. Timothy Taylor**

Region 7 functions as one large ranger division administrative zone and comprises nine counties in central New York. The total area of Broome, Cayuga, Chenango, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, Oswego, Tioga and Tompkins counties exceeds 6,300 square miles and contains 227,820 acres of state lands and 257 acres of conservation easements managed by DEC. The landscape stretches

from the Pennsylvania border north to the eastern shore of Lake Ontario and from the Finger Lakes area east to Unadilla River country. The operating state-land base includes conservation easements, a multiple-use area, state forest lands, unique areas and wildlife management areas. Six forest rangers, one assistant forest ranger (AFR), one lieutenant and one captain are assigned to this zone.

Ranger Scott Jackson saw a case started in 2006 against licensed guide Daniel Peschler of Oswego County brought to conclusion this year. The case started from an incident in which Peschler was on the Salmon River and, after exhibiting harassing and abusive behavior toward some clients, set off alone down the river in a drift boat. Mr. Peschler pleaded guilty and paid \$200 in criminal fines and another \$200 in civil penalties. After a hearing, he also had his guide license revoked.

Rangers provided assistance to local law enforcement agencies on a number of homicide cases in Chenango County. On March 28, Tammy Periard of Norwich was reported as missing and rangers were called to assist with the search of areas in and around the city. The investigation led city police to charge Daniel Brown, Sr. of Norwich with her death. He pleaded guilty to her rape and murder in December and was sentenced to 20 years to life. On July 8, twelve-year-old Shyanne Somers was pronounced dead at Chenango County Memorial Hospital. George Ford, Jr. claimed he had accidentally run over the babysitter hours earlier near Otselic State Forest. Ranger Prunoske initially assisted investigators with the search for evidence at the scene and later with developing a map using a global positioning system (GPS) unit installed in Ford's truck by his wife and without his knowledge. This led to Ford being charged with second-degree murder. On July 30, Prunoske was again called by the Chenango County Sheriff's Department to assist with the mapping of a another murder crime scene. The case involved the shooting death of Joshua Richheimer, which supposedly occurred while he attempted to break in to the residence of Robert Reynolds, a known drug dealer. Reynolds tried to cover up the matter by burying Richheimer's body

on his property. He was remanded to county jail on \$1,000,000 bail.

Little more than a week after being part of the ranger division display at the state fair, a unique, life-size statue of Smokey Bear valued at \$3,500 was stolen from the Rogers Environmental Education Center. Two weeks later, the significantly damaged statue was found alongside a road near the center. The investigation so far has produced no leads.

## **Region 8 Capt. Daniel Richter**

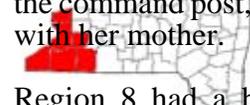
Region 8 is considered one ranger division administrative zone and comprises the following 11 counties in west-central New York: Orleans, Genesee, Monroe, Wayne, Ontario, Livingston, Yates, Seneca, Steuben, Schuyler and Chemung. Among the 53 parcels within the region, 79,124 acres of state lands are administered by DEC. These lands are divided between state forests (49,056 acres) and wildlife management areas (30,068 acres). The region has a mix of urban and rural areas. The region's largest metropolitan area is Rochester in the northern county of Monroe. Significant oil and gas deposits are located in the region, and some state-land parcels have active wells. The region often has a higher incidence of wildfires than both Region 7 to the east and Region 9 to the west. Many state parks are located in the region with the two largest being Watkins Glen and Letchworth. The region is also home to several federal properties, including the Finger Lakes National Forest and the Montezuma and Iroquois national wildlife refuges.

While on routine patrol in Greenwood State Forest, Ranger Anne Farrand received a complaint from a hunter who stated he heard a strange noise emanating from a gas transmission line on state land. She investigated, determined a valve was leaking and immediately requested appropriate authorities to respond. The gas company was able to determine a valve was indeed leaking and closed it. Farrand successfully averted a potential disaster.

In April, Ranger Farrand responded to a wildland fire at the Erwin State Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in Steuben County. Farrand worked with nine fire departments to extinguish the fire, using ATVs, hand tools and backpack pumps. Farrand subsequently conducted an investigation to determine the cause and origin of the fire and discovered remnants of fireworks. Farrand further investigated leads during the next few days which led her to the local high school, where she spoke with both the school resource officer and the school principal, who subsequently summoned the alleged offender to the school principal's office. During an interview by the school principal, the student confessed to purchasing and bringing fireworks to Erwin WMA and proceeded to name eight other participants. Ranger Farrand, the school resource officer and the school principal then discussed the possible fate of all the students, and, based on the students' lack of such behavior in the past, decided perhaps there was a more appropriate punishment for these students than the normal tickets and fines. They then summoned all the students to the school principal's office and asked them whether they preferred to receive tickets and possible fines or whether they would like to assist Ranger Farrand with a cleanup of the parking areas on Erwin WMA and the fire site. The decision to assist with the cleanup was unanimous. On a subsequent Saturday, the eight students met Farrand at Erwin WMA and cleaned up the remnants of their fireworks, raked the ruts the fire trucks left on the state boundary line and then cleaned up four additional parking areas at the WMA, eventually collecting an entire pickup truckload of trash.

In June, rangers were conducting a search in Steuben County for a missing 10-year-old. An incident command post was established, and more than 100 people were staged at a local outdoor park facility. Unfortunately, a bear was spotted in the area, which caused great apprehension from the searchers and the lost child's mother. Rangers requested the regional biologist to respond to the command post with appropriate equipment to repel the bear should it present problems. The biologist remained on scene until the search was terminated.

One of the tactics employed on this particular search was to request local media to notify the public of the description of the missing child. This proved crucial because the little girl emerged from the woods approximately one mile from the command post walking away from the primary search area. A passerby who had heard the public safety message recognized the child identified in the public service announcement (PSA). He then notified the command post, and the child was reunited with her mother.



Region 8 had a busy prescribed fire year. Rangers treated a total of 76 acres and involved DEC foresters, Operations personnel, fire wardens and other volunteers. The management objective for the state land units is to bring back the native, warm-season grasses to restore endangered-species habitats. Prescribed fire is the primary tool to accomplish this and, as evidenced by the prolific resurgence of the grasses in burned areas, is very effective. Participation with prescribed burns primarily accomplishes land-management objectives, strengthens relationships with land-owning organizations, provides a larger pool of trained volunteer firefighters and offers fire-related training for new and seasoned firefighters.

Other agencies continue to seek out Ranger Pat Dormer's expertise in the incident command system (ICS). Ontario County developed a Child Abduction Response Team for deployment in Ontario and surrounding counties. Whereas the team is fully capable of learning basic ICS through coursework, county leaders wanted Dormer's expertise in practical applications of implementing the system. Dormer trained team members in how to conduct and manage a large-scale incident with practical and reality-based incident-command management techniques. He also assisted in developing qualifications, training and dispatch protocols for the team.

**Region 9**  
**Capt. Daniel Richter**

Region 9 is considered one ranger division administrative zone and comprises the six western-most counties in New York; Niagara, Erie, Wyoming, Chautauqua, Cattaraugus and Allegany. There are more than 103,117 acres of state forest lands located on approximately 75 parcels within the region. In addition, there are 17,663 acres of wildlife management areas located on nine parcels. Some of these state lands experience heavy public use because of their proximity to the Buffalo metropolitan area. One notable example is the Zoar Valley Multiple Use Area, which attracts many day-use recreationists. This area contains the Zoar Valley Gorge, which holds the region's only regulated whitewater creek, the Cattaraugus.

The region is a mix of urban, suburban and rural areas. There are many state land parcels with significant oil and gas deposits, some of which have active wells and pipelines on them. In addition, solution mining for salt is also located on both state and private parcels in Wyoming County. Several state parks are located in the region, the two largest being Allegany and Letchworth. The region is also home to several Native American reservations, the most notable being the Allegany Indian Reservation near Salamanca and the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation near Brant. Eight forest rangers, one lieutenant and one captain are assigned to the region.

Due to wet spring conditions and an average lake-effect snowfall, the region experienced a low incidence of wildfires. However, the search-and-rescue program saw significant activity in 2007 with 21 incidents. The most notable incident occurred on December 13, when Robert Rogers overheard a Cattaraugus 911 radio call that a man was in the Allegheny River. The river was rain swollen with a water temperature in the high 30s. Rogers called for other rangers to assist and then entered the river in his cold-water rescue suit. Once in, he managed to free Carl Smith from the tree in which he was entangled and bring him safely to shore. Due to Rogers' quick response, Smith was only treated for mild hypothermia even though he had been in the water for 45 minutes. Ranger Rogers' day was not over though. After he attended a meeting in the regional Allegany Office, he began to travel home. While in route and monitoring the

Cattaraugus County 911 radio system, a bank robbery was reported in progress in Franklinville, only minutes from his location. He quickly responded and provided cover for the Franklinville police officer who arrested the suspect.

Another search of significance was the assist that several Region 9 rangers provided to the Erie County Sheriff's Department and New York State Police on January 17. Ranger John Kennedy was requested to assist in the search for Nancy Phelps and Geraldine Jackson in rural eastern Erie County. Both elderly females were missing for a long period before their bodies were later found in a garage. The main suspect, Robert Henchen, was arrested and died of self-imposed starvation and dehydration before he could stand trial for their murders.

On January 8, Ranger Tim Flanagan responded to a call for four missing subjects in the Town of Persia, Cattaraugus County. Four subjects ended up spending the night in the woods after becoming lost while trying to locate a geocache. High technology GPS units do not always replace compass and map!

Ranger Pete Liebig assisted the Southern Tier Drug Task Force again this year, which was successful in the eradication of more than 150 marijuana plants. This multi-agency response has been a tremendous success as it has removed thousands of plants from the area. Investigation of the identities of the various suspected growers continues.

Lieutenant Shawn Plaisted and rangers Dave Pachan, John Kennedy and Tom Koss participated in a month-long radio testing of the Statewide Wireless Network and MACOM/Tyco radios in August and September of this year in Chautauqua and Erie counties. This digital radio system will greatly enhance communications among all first responders in New York State when it is fully implemented.

## **FIRE MANAGEMENT REPORT**

**Captain David Brooks,  
Fire Management Officer**

New York State experiences two primary wildfire seasons and a periodic secondary season. The spring fire season is March 1 through May 31, and the summer fire season is June 1 through September 15. A fall wildfire season periodically occurs between September 15 and the end of December, when climactic conditions are suitable for wildfire activity. Typically, fall fires occur during periods of drought and when there is little daily rain or snow. New York does not experience a winter fire season, but fires occasionally occur then for the same reasons as fall fires. Winter fires are generally so infrequent and of such low significance that the division includes them as fall fires for reporting purposes. The 2007 fire occurrence was well below New York's 25-year running average of 328 fires burning 2,833 acres. This was primarily due to above-average precipitation across the state during the summer and fall. Rangers contained and extinguished 211 wildfires, which burned a total of 855 acres. Of these fires, 131 occurred during the spring fire season, 65 occurred during the summer and 15 occurred during the fall-winter period. The largest fire occurred in spring and burned 96 acres in Orange County. Debris burning was the most frequently reported causal agent for wildfire starts, causing 23 percent of all reported wildfires and amounting to 21 percent of the total acreage burned.

The fire-reporting database was improved in 2007 to capture basic information on real property losses (or potential for loss) and human fatalities or injuries due to wildfire events. Of the 211 wildfire incidents reported, nearly 6 percent (12 events) had negative effects on people and real property, with 1 home lost, 15 homes threatened, 10 structures (buildings other than houses) lost and 6 structures threatened. In addition, six injuries were reported. Eleven of these 12 events occurred during the spring fire season.

Fire management in New York, however, is much more than simple wildfire suppression. In brief, it encompasses many management projects and collaboration with many other agencies and programs. Some of these efforts are listed below:

- Developing and implementing statewide and regional fire plans
- Assessing and developing wildland fire training and equipment needs
- Developing and implementing fire prevention and education programs in high-risk, wildland-urban interface areas
- Developing and maintaining wildland fire weather and predictive-services programs
- Working with DEC's regional programs, other state agencies, neighboring state wildfire agencies in the Northeast Forest Fire Protection Compact (NFFPC) and federal wildland fire agencies to implement strategies and agreements for better interstate and intrastate cooperation in areas of training, information exchange, equipment sharing and qualified personnel sharing during wildland fire emergencies

To improve and promote the above in 2007, the fire management officer (FMO) attended the following:

Nine regional meetings

Seven state agency meetings (statewide county fire coordinators, Department of Corrections, Department of State, Office of Prevention and Control [OFFPC], the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, New York State Police Aviation Unit and the State Emergency Management Office

Ten meetings with regional and federal partners (NFFPC, National Weather Service [NWS], US Forest Service and Northeast Forest Fire Supervisors)

Seven meetings with other organizations concerned with wildland and prescribed fire in New York (New York Wildfire and Incident Management Academy and Long Island Pine Barrens Commission Wildfire Task Force)

The division made excellent progress developing several aspects of the fire-management program in 2007. The following is a synopsis of the most noteworthy wildland fire-management accomplishments for the year.

#### **STATE AND REGIONAL WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT PLANS**

The division revised its draft of the New York State Wildland Fire Management Plan ("statewide plan") and revised subsets of

regional wildland fire management plans ("regional plans"). The statewide plan provides overall guidance to the fire-management program, while regional plans provide specific guidance for the fire program within each region and within each fire-danger rating area (FDRA). All plans have an annual review and revision process at the end of each fire season to incorporate necessary changes in policy or procedure. Close monitoring of weather and fire events in the ten FDRAs during the past several years will result in reducing FDRAs to eight in 2008.

#### **FEDERAL WILDLAND FIRE GRANT ADMINISTRATION**

The division administered three federal grants from the USDA Forest Service in 2007, representing more than \$1.3 million. New York's State Fire Assistance (SFA) Grant, which consists of two sub-grants, totaled \$692,813. The SFA grant supports two forest ranger positions, firefighting equipment purchases, training opportunities and interstate-interagency cooperation. The division also administered a \$300,000 National Fire Plan - Hazard Mitigation Grant in which \$10,000 was directed to the division's FireWise and wildfire prevention/education programs in the Adirondack Park. The remaining \$250,000 were pass-through grants to the Eastern New York and Long Island chapters of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) for conducting hazard-mitigation projects in New York. In addition, the division administered a Volunteer Firefighter Assistance (VFA) Grant, which provided \$1,000 to approximately 365 rural New York volunteer fire departments. VFA grants are used by rural volunteer departments to support purchasing of wildland firefighting equipment. All funds allocated to the state from these grants require a 50 percent cost-share match, in which the division and its partners (TNC and volunteer fire departments) match the amount received with dollars and/or in-kind service.

**Prescribed Fire Program in New York State**  
The division's FMO reviewed six new prescribed burn plans, which encompassed 14 separate prescribed burn units in 2007. These plans were submitted by the Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission, TNC's Long

Island Chapter and other department divisions. Above-average precipitation across the state made conditions generally unfavorable for achieving prescribed-burn objectives, and approximately only one-half of the targeted acreage was actually burned. However, even with poor weather conditions, New York achieved the highest acreage treated on non-federal lands in the Northeast in 2007. Rangers participated in 13 prescribed burns totaling 301 acres in 2007. Rangers conducted four prescribed burns on department lands totaling 185 acres and assisted TNC and other partners at the Mohonk Preserve, Ulster County and Albany Pine Bush Preserve, Albany County with completing nine prescribed burns treating 116 acres. The division continued its work with TNC, Albany Pine Bush Commission, Mohonk Preserve and other department divisions using prescribed-fire events as training and qualification opportunities for wildland firefighters. This is achieved by matching inexperienced individuals with experienced firefighters and prescribed burn specialists. Rangers and volunteers participated in all prescribed fires conducted by TNC and Albany Pine Bush Commission.

The division has worked for several years to develop a standard format for prescribed-fire plans that are required for conducting prescribed fire on department lands. A standard-plan format was adopted by the division in December 2004 and was tested in 2005. The draft booklet, *Guidelines for Preparing a Prescribed Fire Plan on Department Lands* was made available to all prescribed-fire managers in 2007. The booklet, along with a sample prescribed-fire plan, is useful for guiding department personnel and cooperators through the process of developing prescribed fire plans which meet the criteria established in New York laws and regulations.

The FMO also participated in several regional and national conference calls with prescribed-fire councils, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and with the department's Division of Air to better understand and help guide national policy on the EPA's "Interim Smoke Management Guidelines for

Prescribed Fire" which is due to be finalized in 2008.

### **PREDICTIVE SERVICES AND FIRE-WEATHER FORECASTING**

The predictive services component of the fire-management program continued its primary mission of providing informational support to the division to assist with planning and decision-making within the framework of the State Wildland Fire Management Plan. Support includes seasonal, monthly and weekly fire-weather and fire-danger outlooks, daily fire-weather and fire-danger reports, weekly fire-danger severity summaries and on-site fire-behavior predictions for both wildland fire and prescribed-fire operations.

In September 2007, Commissioner Grannis outlined a number of organizational goals. The following four department goals are an integral part of the fire-management and predictive- services program:

- Science: Apply state-of-the-art science and engineering knowledge in policymaking.
- Partnerships: Foster partnerships across agencies and sectors, both public and private.
- The public: Engage the public in decision-making, and be proactive in meeting the public's needs.
- Technology: Use innovative technology to streamline operations.

These goals are addressed throughout the fire-management program and are a focal point for the predictive-services aspect of the program. The following responsibilities and tasks were completed in 2007 in furtherance of achieving those goals.

The division continues to operate, maintain and improve a network of 16 interagency, state-of-the-art, remote, automatic fire-weather stations (RAWS). The weather-station network provides the division and interagency partners with hourly fire-weather data. The division's 25-year historic fire-weather project to support the RAWS network was successfully implemented statewide in 2007. The fire-weather project coupled with state-of-the-art weather monitoring provides the ability to identify critical fire-weather

breakpoints and fire-business thresholds within unique fire-danger rating areas.

Predictive services also provided a dynamic fire-danger and fire-weather training program for the division and our cooperators in 2007, including:

- Six training sessions for regional captains and lieutenants on the interpretation and application of the National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS) within the framework of the regional fire plans
- Fire-danger training to the Office of Public Protection (OPP) dispatch center in Ray Brook, including fire-danger structure and terminology, a description of the RAWS network and associated products and application of the NFDRS by the division within the framework of the state and regional fire-management plans
- Fire-danger and fire-weather training for the division's interagency cooperators, including Northeast Forest Fire Protection Compact (NFFPC) members, local volunteer fire departments and federal and state fire personnel

The predictive-services coordinator maintains contact with the five National Weather Service (NWS) offices serving the state. This communication has improved NWS fire-weather services for the division and state cooperators by providing NWS with a better understanding of the division's and cooperators' roles in fire-organization and fire-management responsibilities. In addition to a daily fire-weather planning forecast issued for each forecast zone in the state, the NWS now prepares a daily, next-day weather forecast for each of the 16 RAWS in the division's interagency network. This allows for next-day forecasting of fire-danger indices, which, in turn, allows for improved fire-management planning at the local, regional and division levels.

The division actively maintains open lines of communication to share fire-weather and fire-danger information with interagency partners. Communication with our interagency partners is primarily achieved through the efforts of the predictive-services coordinator and includes communication to: the National Park Service at the Saratoga Battlefield and Fire

Island National Seashore on Long Island; the US Fish & Wildlife Service at the Montezuma Wildlife Refuge in Genesee County; the Wertheim Wildlife Refuge on Long Island; the US Army at West Point and Fort Drum; the USDA Forest Service at Finger Lakes National Forest; New York State Office of Parks and Historic Preservation overseeing the Lake Champlain, Palisades and Allegany districts; Eastern Chapter and Long Island Chapter of The Nature Conservancy; the Albany Pine Bush and Long Island Pine Barrens Commissions; the Mohonk and Wilton preserves, and neighboring state wildland fire agencies in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The fire-management officer and predictive-services coordinator also maintain lines of communication and provide presentations to local volunteer fire departments, the Department of State, Office of Fire Prevention and Control, County Emergency Management Coordinators and the State Fire Chiefs Association. These contacts improve cooperation and availability of resources when needed under emergency conditions.

Predictive services continued to coordinate real-time access to the National Lightning Detection Network for division managers and supervisors in 2007. Access to this network is made possible through an extension of an agreement negotiated through the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management. The service provides division personnel with the ability to remotely track severe thunderstorms and assists in early detection and suppression of lightning-caused wildfires.

The fire-management program and particularly the predictive-services coordinator provided fire-behavior training programs for the division and cooperating personnel by providing:

Fire-behavior courses at the OPP Basic Recruit Academy in Fulton, NY  
Fire-behavior course instruction at the New York Wildland Fire and Incident Management Academy on Long Island  
Instruction at the State University of New York (SUNY) Ranger School at Wanakena, NY

The predictive-services coordinator maintains several professional memberships related to fire weather/fire danger and serves as the following:

Eastern and southern states representative to the National Wildfire Coordinating Group Fire Environment Working Team  
State representative to the National Steering Committee for Fire Danger  
State representative to the Northeastern Forest Fire Compact (NFFPC), Fire Science Working Team

Participation in these teams and committees advances the knowledge and understanding of fire-weather and fire-danger science, as well as enhancing expertise in the application of the NFDRS as an integral part of the division's fire-management programs. It also provides an opportunity for New York's ideas and influence to be incorporated into the decision-making process of these organizations.

In addition to the above, the fire-management, predictive-services program initiated the following new projects in 2007:

An NFFPC research project to use fire science and technology to identify correct fire-weather criteria for use by the NWS in its red-flag warning program. Identification and use of correct parameters will increase the credibility of the red-flag warning program, increase firefighter safety and awareness and decrease the number of false warnings and watches issued within the state.

A wildland urban interface (WUI) and fuels-mapping project in conjunction with the department's GIS unit. This mapping initiative will develop and integrate new wildland fuels data with New York's population-density data from the 2000 census to identify areas of high, moderate or low risk to wildland fire losses in the wildland urban interface and intermix areas within the state. Once completed, the project will allow state, regional and local fire managers to focus efforts on mitigating or reducing the potential for wildfire losses in those areas considered to have the highest levels of risk.

#### **PREPAREDNESS AND ASSISTANCE WITH NATIONAL EMERGENCIES**

The division fielded two, 20-person Type 2 Initial Attack wildland firefighting crews to assist with suppressing wildfires in 2007. Crew #1 was dispatched to Oregon to fight the Battle Creek Fire, located on the Willowa-Whitman National Forest. The crew was assigned to the eastern flank of the fire with the primary duty of keeping the fire from entering the Hell's Canyon National Recreation Area. Crew #2 was dispatched to fight the Jocko Lakes Fire, Jocko Lakes, Montana. This fire was particularly troublesome as it frequently moved around and through populated areas. The crew assisted with fire-proofing residences and evacuations several times during the course of the two week assignment. Each of these crews were comprised of forest rangers, assistant forest rangers, other department employees and department volunteer firefighters.

In addition to the above out-of-state assignments, several forest rangers, retired forest rangers, department employees and volunteers with specific single-resource, incident-management skills also were mobilized for wildfire emergency incidents. These include:

Region 1 Natural Resources Supervisor, Charles Hamilton, Forest Ranger Tom Koss and Forest Ranger Steve Ovitt were dispatched as part of a NFFPC Incident Management Team assigned to assist the State of Georgia with managing numerous wildfires during a period of drought. Charles Hamilton served as the team logistics section chief, Tom Koss served as a logistics section chief trainee and Steve Ovitt served as a planning-operations section chief.

Retired Forest Ranger James Carpenter was dispatched as strike team leader for engines to the Cascade Complex in Idaho. This was one of the largest multiple-fire incidents this country has ever experienced.

Department volunteer Robert Miles served as a support dispatcher on assignments to the Northeast Dispatch Center in Bolton Maine, the Kelly Creek Complex in Nevada and the Cow Creek Complex in Idaho.

Department volunteer, Gary Glintenkamp served on both fire crews and also worked as a dozer boss trainee for the Jocko Lakes Fire in Montana.

DEC Region 1 Natural Resource Supervisor Charles Hamilton was dispatched as a type 2 logistics section chief to the Yolla Bolla Fire Complex at the Mendocino National Forest, Willows, California.

Civilian volunteer Chelsea Nied worked five assignments from May through July as a public information officer on major incidents in Georgia, California, Utah, Montana and Idaho.

These mobilizations not only assisted the division's state, federal and NFFPC cooperators in a time of need but also provided excellent training opportunities for in-state firefighting and incident-management support.

#### **WILDFIRE PREVENTION AND EDUCATION**

The division embarked on a wildfire hazard mitigation project for the Adirondack Park in 2006, which was funded by a \$50,000 National Fire Plan grant from the USDA Forest Service. The project goal is to reduce potential life and property losses in communities at risk within the Adirondack Park by raising the awareness of homeowners and local officials to wildfire hazards.

The nationally recognized FireWise Program describes typical hazards encountered and methods of mitigating those hazards with practical, low-cost solutions. Five video and audio public-service announcements were produced to spread the message of wildfire prevention and FireWise concepts. The division also produced a 30-minute digital video FireWise presentation for local government officials and homeowners, plus a New York FireWise brochure and hangtag as handouts at various meetings and gatherings. The multi-media FireWise project was fully implemented in 2007. The fire-management officer delivered FireWise presentations to Adirondack Park Agency officials and to a large annual meeting of Adirondack local government officials. A follow-up survey is

currently being conducted to measure the effectiveness of the presentations. Several thousand FireWise brochures have been handed out at county and state fairs and are available on request to any individual or group requesting them.

More than two-thousand minutes of public-service announcements have aired in the Adirondack region in 2007. The message varied from the dangers of debris burning and campfire safety and fireworks safety to fire safety during periods of high fire danger and FireWise principles for homeowners. All public service announcements were designed to help reduce the number of wildfires or reduce losses should a wildfire occur.

## **TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT**

### **Captain Eric Lahr Division Training Officer**

The Division of Forest Protection's training and development program provided and accomplished the delivery of ranger training in a wide range of topics. They include but are not limited to training received and given in these principle areas: police officer training mandated by the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS); Wilderness Medical Associates First Responder; National Wildfire Coordinating Group certified courses in fire management and suppression; information technology, and supervisor- and department-mandated health-and-safety training.

In 2007, ranger training activities accounted for a total of 52,654 program hours. This amounted to a significant increase of 22,536 hours from the previous year. The large increase was attributed to holding the 17th Basic School for 10 newly hired forest rangers. This year, the training and development program for the division concentrated on five primary training program areas. They included: search and rescue (9,952 hours), wildfire management (7,535 hours), police officer program (13,443 hours), 17th Basic School (17,805 hours) and all other training (3,921 hours).

### **17th Basic School for Uniformed Officers**

On January 31, opening ceremonies were held for the 17th Basic School for Uniformed Officers. The Office of Public Protection (OPP) joint school was successfully completed by 10 forest rangers and 17 environmental conservation officers (ECOs). During the 26-week curriculum, the ranger recruits received a total of 1,194 hours of training. In addition, each probationary ranger was expected to satisfactorily complete an intensive 160-hour field-training program after graduation. This class of rangers is the first to have successfully met all DCJS-mandated training requirements for police officer certification. The rangers who successfully completed and graduated from the 17th Basic School are: Howard Thomes, Michael Burkholder, Michael Thompson, Kevin Slade, Jacob DesLauriers, Megan McCone, Jenifer Temple, Benjamin Baldwin, Sarah Geesler, and Jason Seeley.

The success of the basic school can be attributed to the continued dedication of OPP Academy staff and instructors. It is through their service that the latest class of rangers have been trained to the highest standards. While it is difficult to list all instructors who assisted in this effort, a few are noted because of their outstanding contribution to furthering the development of the recruits. They are: rangers Robert Dawson, Scott Murphy, Ian Kerr, Steve Ovitt, Pete Liebig, Mark St. Claire, Lt. Timothy Taylor, Joan Oldroyd, Julie Harjung, David Meade and Captain Eric Lahr, plus ECO captains Sam Servadio, Michael Van Durme, David Bennet and ECO sergeants Steve Rawson, Paul Adam and Robert Inman.

In May 2007, OPP hosted a DCJS-certified Field Training Officer (FTO) School in preparation for the recruit class' field-training program. The school was successfully attended by 15 rangers. Each FTO worked between two to four weeks with a probationary ranger. During this period, their coaching and mentoring efforts allowed for a smooth transition from the academy lifestyle of a recruit to that of an enthusiastic ranger. The FTOs who assisted in this effort were: lieutenants Steve Scherry and Paul Rinaldi and rangers Joe Bink, Rob Dawson, Martin

Flanagan, Ken Gierloff, Karen Glesmann, Joe Hess, John Kennedy, Ian Kerr, Tom Koss, David Meade, John Ploss, Jenifer Snyder and Greg Tyrell.

### **SEARCH AND RESCUE (SAR) TRAINING**

In 2007, the division continued to further the search-and-rescue skills of its members by approving regional delivery of SAR training. Each region continues to offer SAR training in subject matter that is considered relevant for their specific regional programs. SAR training events typically include a diverse range of topics. Some examples of regional SAR training include: swift-water rescue, high- and low-angle rope rescue, flat and vertical ice rescue, basic backcountry skiing, global positioning system (GPS) and land navigation, airboat operation, snowmobile operation and helicopter operations.

In addition to regionally approved events, several rangers attended Rescue 3 International Rope Training and Rescue 3 International Swiftwater Training.

In March, Lt. B. Dubay and Ranger C. Kostoss served as instructors at a Mountain Rescue Association training event for a New Jersey SAR team. The training was held in Stowe, VT.

In May, Lt. R. Marrone attended an annual ASTM committee meeting on search and rescue in Charlotte, NC. This meeting brings together professional search-and-rescue personnel from across the country and is working to establish universal standards for SAR.

### **POLICE OFFICER TRAINING PROGRAM**

In 2007, several police officer training initiatives were undertaken to enhance the law-enforcement skills of all rangers. In addition to the police officer training for new rangers at the basic school, a primary training objective was to provide comprehensive law-enforcement training to all members. This focus was required as rangers were granted police officer status in 2006.

The division's annual in-service training focused on the goal of police officer training for all rangers. The week-long curriculum covered courses in: criminal history record information requests, C form requirements, *Division Procedures Manual*, fingerprintable offenses, crime scene physical evidence handling, chain of custody, rules of arrest, search warrants, arrest warrants, warrantless search and seizures, consent search, interview and interrogations, Miranda Rights and rights of counsel and OPP dispatch procedures. The Division of Law Enforcement graciously provided a core group of instructors for this 36-hour session.

In January, five rangers from across the state attended a week-long snowmobile law-enforcement training program. The NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historical Preservation (OPRHP) course provided rangers with training in the laws regulating snowmobile operation, accident reporting, field operations and search-and-rescue operations.

In September, the division, as part of a continuing effort to improve ranger mobility and coverage on state land, expanded its bicycle program by adding two new mountain bikes. Rangers from regions 1 and 2 gathered at the Saratoga Tree Nursery to attend a two-day mountain-bike school. The school was led by Ranger Mark St. Claire with Ranger Tom Edmunds assisting. Course participants learned proper bike nomenclature, bike repair and maintenance, as well as slow- and high-speed operation of the mountain bike. The mountain bike has proven to be an effective tool in patrolling DEC public campgrounds during the popular summer camping season. Currently, the division has 43 mountain bikes assigned to rangers throughout the state.

### **WILDFIRE MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM**

In 2007, several training initiatives were undertaken in the wildfire program to further the development of wildfire-management resources. In January, the division sent six rangers to the Northeastern Forest Fire Protection Commission or "Compact" winter meeting in South Portland, Maine. This year,

the training agenda covered issues related to technology; e.g., fire-weather operations, GPS systems, communications, I-suite software application and Compact incident-management teams.

Also in January, Capt. Brooks and Ranger P. Liebig attended a course in I-Suite software application. This course introduces the software application to students and teaches how this valuable tool can be used by incident-management teams.

Throughout February and March, Captain Brooks and Ranger Joe Kennedy traveled to each region and provided a review of the fire plan and training entitled, "Gaining Understanding of the National Fire Danger Rating System". 95 rangers attended these sessions.

In May, the division provided instruction in Firefighter Training (S-130) and Introduction to Fire Behavior (S-190) at the College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Wanakena Campus. Twenty-six students participated in the training. The course was instructed by rangers B. Lomnitzer, B. Siskavich and J. Kennedy.

In June, rangers T. Carpenter and A. Perryman attended a Compact-sponsored a Followership to Leadership course (L-280) at Hubbard Brook Experiment Station, VT. In the same month, rangers J. Prunoske and J. Kennedy attended the Colorado Wildfire Academy as instructors for the Intermediate Fire Behavior Course (S-290). These rangers are recognized national leaders in this subject matter and have continued to support both the division and outside agencies in the delivery of this course.

Also in June, rangers R. Rogers and D. Kallen attended a Fireline Leadership (L-380) course in Waterville, ME. This course is designed to help develop the skills of first-line fire supervisors.

In October, the division once again participated in the New York Wildfire and Incident Management Academy at the Brookhaven National Laboratory in Suffolk County as both trainees and support staff. The division sent 14 trainees, 2 instructors, and 3

rangers to serve on the academy incident-management team. Students attended courses in crew boss (single resource), firefighter type 1, wildfire power saws, fire operations in the urban interface, situation unit leader and incident business management.

#### Wilderness First Responder Training Program

In January, the division sent two rangers to attend a Wilderness Medical Associates (WMA) Wilderness First Responder course in Ithaca, NY. In addition, the division hosted five annual refresher sessions of WMA Wilderness First Responder training for all lieutenants and rangers. This year marked the first one in which training was held at regional venues. The course locations were well received by instructors and students alike. Each ranger attending the training was required to pass an exam and perform satisfactorily in practical scenarios. The life-saving skills acquired in this training have been tested by rangers on numerous rescues throughout the state. The instructors who continue to admirably support this initiative are rangers Julie Harjung, David Meade, Suzanne Heare and Peter Evans.

#### OTHER NOTABLE TRAINING ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Several other training accomplishments were recognized over the years. A health-and-safety training session was held in Fulton for 16 lieutenants. The training focused on preventing slips, trips and falls, job-hazard analysis and accident investigations. The division sent three rangers to attend a department-sponsored ArcGIS training program. The course provided instruction on how to create maps, add data to maps and use available databases in making maps. Finally, each ranger received refresher training in the use of a respirator mask. Concurrently, they were required to be "fit tested" to ensure proper fit of the respirator. Rangers use respirators solely for defensive or escape purposes.

## DIVISION TRAINING SUMMARY

In 2007, forest rangers reported a total of 52,654 work hours dedicated to a variety of training events. Search-and-rescue training accounted for 9,952 hours or 19 percent of all training given and received. Wildfire training accounted for 7,534 hours or 14 percent of all training given and received. Police officer training accounted for 13,443 hours or 26 percent of all training given and received. Basic School training accounted for 17,805 work hours or 34 percent of all training given and received. All other training accounted for 3,920 work hours or 8 percent of all training. This year witnessed an increase of training by 43 percent from the previous year. This can be largely attributed to the administration and recruit participation in the 17th Basic School. The following annual comparison table and pie chart provides a breakdown of all training activity for the division in 2007 as reported by each employee.

| <b>ANNUAL COMPARISON OF TIME AND ACTIVITY FOR FOREST RANGERS</b> |                   |                   |                   |                   |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Description of Activity</b>                                   | <b>2004</b>       | <b>2005</b>       | <b>2006</b>       | <b>2007</b>       |
|  | <b>Time Hours</b> | <b>Time Hours</b> | <b>Time Hours</b> | <b>Time Hours</b> |
| Search & Rescue Training Given                                   | 4,745.75          | 2,765.50          | 4,915.25          | 4,359.25          |
| Search & Rescue Training Received                                | 5,038.50          | 6,340.00          | 5,419.00          | 5,592.50          |
| Wildfire Training Given  | 4,278.50          | 3,959.50          | 4,790.75          | 3,903.50          |
| Wildfire Training Received                                       | 7,268.50          | 4,566.00          | 4,221.25          | 3,631.00          |
| Police Officer Training Given                                    | 1,367.00          | 725.75            | 1,912.75          | 2,839.50          |
| Police Officer Training Received                                 | 2,857.25          | 6,289.75          | 4,546.50          | 10,603.25         |
| General Training Given   | 989.25            | 665.00            | 696.75            | 740.25            |
| General Training Received  | 3,392.50          | 2,181.75          | 3,242.75          | 3,084.75          |
| Basic Academy Administration                                     | 1,153.50          | 812.75            | 195.00            | 2,391.75          |
| Basic Academy Instruction  | 3,022.00          | 3,100.00          | 86.00             | 4,129.25          |
| Basic Academy Training Received                                  | N/A               | N/A               | N/A               | 11,283.75         |
| OSHA Health & Safety   | 597.50            | 209.50            | 91.75             | 95.50             |
| <b>Total Hours</b>   | <b>34,710.25</b>  | <b>31,615.5</b>   | <b>30,117.75</b>  | <b>52,654.25</b>  |





Office of Public Protection 17th Basic School, Fulton, NY, July 13, 2007

# 2007 Forest Ranger Training Summary

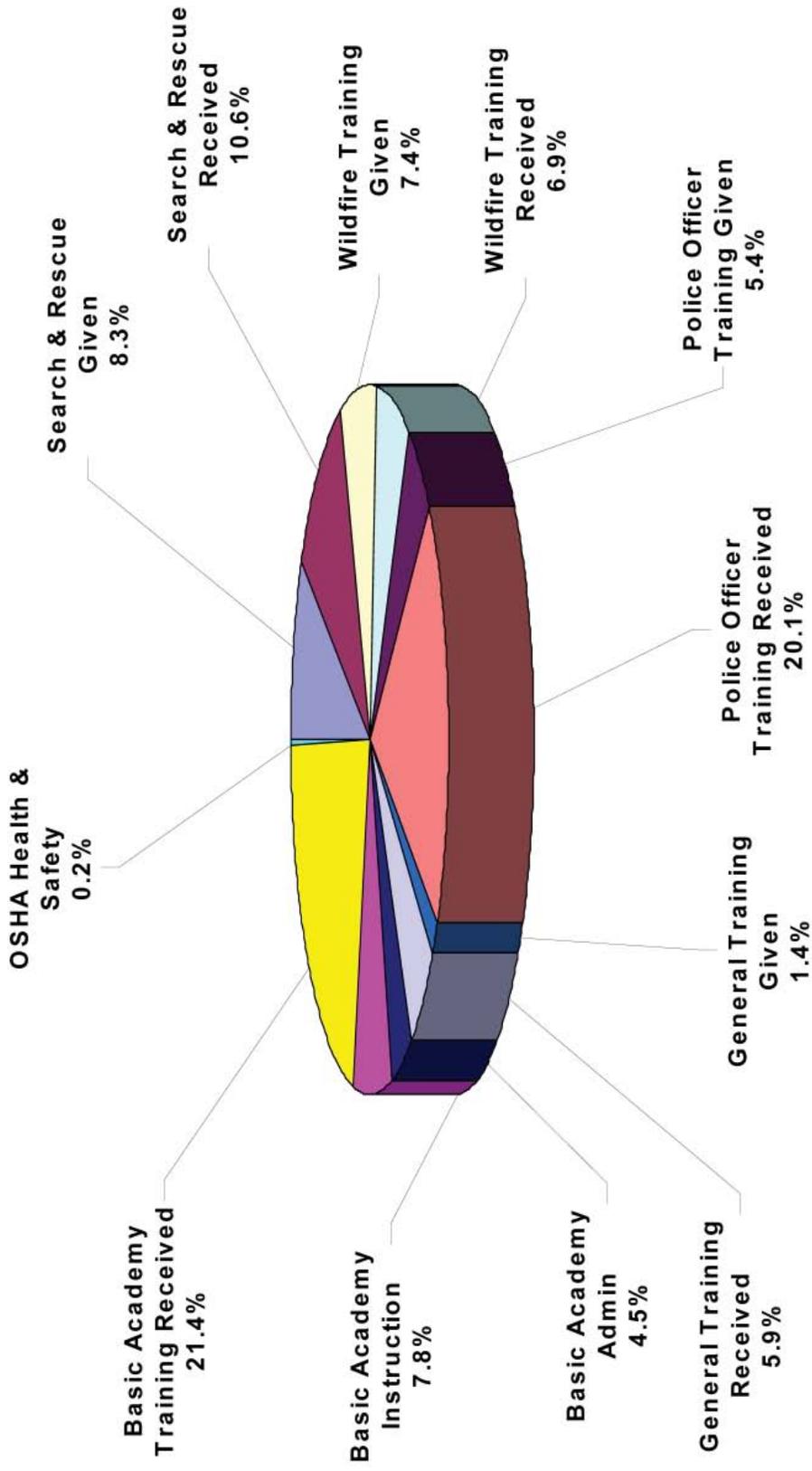


Figure 1

**2007 TOTAL TRAINING HOURS: 52,654.25**

**Training Given: 34.8%**

**Training Received: 65.1%**

## 2007 SUMMARY OF WILDFIRES REPORTED BY FOREST RANGERS

| Region & Zone                                | 1&2          | 3A        | 3B          | 4A        | 4B        | 5A        | 5B             | 5C          | 5D           | 5E           | 5F        | 6A        | 6B         | 6C       | 7          | 8           | 9        | TOTAL          |
|--|--------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|------------|----------|------------|-------------|----------|----------------|
| # of Debris Caused Fires                     |              | 4         |             | 3         | 1         |           | 7              |             | 1            | 1            | 5         |           | 1          | 2        | 11         | 12          | 1        | 49             |
| # of Campfire Caused Fires                   |              |           |             | 1         |           | 9         | 1              | 8           | 18           | 5            | 1         | 2         | 1          |          | 2          | 1           | 1        | 50             |
| # of Lightning Caused Fires                  |              |           |             |           |           | 3         | 8              | 2           | 4            | 9            | 1         | 1         | 1          |          |            |             |          | 29             |
| # of Arson Caused Fires                      | 1            | 1         |             | 2         |           |           | 25             |             |              | 1            |           |           |            |          |            |             |          | 30             |
| # of Other Caused Fires                      | 1            | 1         | 3           | 4         | 2         | 4         | 9              | 2           | 6            | 1            | 2         | 2         | 4          |          | 5          | 7           |          | 53             |
| <b>TOTAL # OF FIRES</b>                      | <b>2</b>     | <b>6</b>  | <b>3</b>    | <b>10</b> | <b>3</b>  | <b>16</b> | <b>50</b>      | <b>12</b>   | <b>29</b>    | <b>17</b>    | <b>9</b>  | <b>5</b>  | <b>7</b>   | <b>2</b> | <b>18</b>  | <b>20</b>   | <b>2</b> | <b>211</b>     |
|  |              |           |             |           |           |           |                |             |              |              |           |           |            |          |            |             |          | <b>0</b>       |
| # of Fires 0.1 to 0.9 Acres                  | 1            |           | 1           | 3         |           | 14        | 33             | 10          | 26           | 10           | 4         | 3         | 2          | 2        | 3          | 4           | 2        | 118            |
| # of Fires 1.0 to 9.9 Acres                  | 1            | 6         |             | 6         | 3         | 2         | 14             | 2           | 3            | 7            | 5         | 1         | 2          |          | 13         | 14          |          | 79             |
| # of Fires 10 to 99 Acres                    |              |           | 2           | 1         |           |           | 3              |             |              |              |           | 1         | 3          |          | 2          | 2           |          | 14             |
| # of Fires 100 Acres or larger               |              |           |             |           |           |           |                |             |              |              |           |           |            |          |            |             |          | 0              |
| <b>TOTAL ACRES OF FIRE</b>                   | <b>3</b>     | <b>16</b> | <b>153</b>  | <b>48</b> | <b>13</b> | <b>15</b> | <b>209</b>     | <b>6</b>    | <b>14</b>    | <b>43</b>    | <b>19</b> | <b>39</b> | <b>138</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>54</b>  | <b>85</b>   | <b>0</b> | <b>855</b>     |
|  |              |           |             |           |           |           |                |             |              |              |           |           |            |          |            |             |          | <b>0</b>       |
| # of State Land Fires                        | 1            |           | 1           | 1         |           | 11        | 7              | 9           | 21           | 3            | 3         | 2         | 4          |          | 2          | 1           | 2        | 68             |
| # of Private and Other Government Land Fires | 1            | 6         | 2           | 9         | 3         | 5         | 43             | 3           | 8            | 14           | 6         | 3         | 3          | 2        | 16         | 19          |          | 143            |
| # of Spring Fires                            |              | 6         | 2           | 9         | 3         | 7         | 36             | 2           | 7            | 7            | 7         | 3         | 4          | 2        | 16         | 19          | 1        | 131            |
| # of Summer Fires                            | 2            |           |             | 1         |           | 9         | 12             | 8           | 18           | 9            | 2         |           |            |          | 2          | 1           | 1        | 65             |
| # of Fall-Winter Fires                       |              |           | 1           |           |           |           | 2              | 2           | 4            | 1            |           | 2         | 3          |          |            |             |          | 15             |
| <b>TOTAL COST OF FIRES</b>                   | <b>\$148</b> |           | <b>\$99</b> |           |           |           | <b>\$3,343</b> | <b>\$83</b> | <b>\$150</b> | <b>\$177</b> |           |           |            |          | <b>\$6</b> | <b>\$36</b> |          | <b>\$4,042</b> |

**Wildland Fires and Acres Burned  
New York State - Selected Years 1955-2007**

| Year | Forest<br>Fire | Acres<br>Burned | Average<br>Acres Burned<br>Per Fire |
|------|----------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1955 | 1,720          | 23,127          | 13.4                                |
| 1960 | 714            | 5,065           | 7.1                                 |
| 1965 | 1,200          | 8,469           | 7.1                                 |
| 1970 | 631            | 2,262           | 3.6                                 |
| 1971 | 596            | 2,203           | 3.7                                 |
| 1972 | 508            | 2,693           | 5.1                                 |
| 1973 | 669            | 3,300           | 4.9                                 |
| 1974 | 558            | 2,268           | 4.1                                 |
| 1975 | 795            | 2,968           | 3.7                                 |
| 1976 | 484            | 6,140           | 12.7                                |
| 1977 | 895            | 7,016           | 7.8                                 |
| 1978 | 792            | 7,143           | 9.0                                 |
| 1979 | 552            | 2,593           | 4.7                                 |
| 1980 | 772            | 5,391           | 7.0                                 |
| 1981 | 655            | 5,540           | 8.4                                 |
| 1982 | 610            | 3,389           | 5.5                                 |
| 1983 | 356            | 1,585           | 4.5                                 |
| 1984 | 319            | 1,516           | 4.8                                 |
| 1985 | 644            | 3,666           | 5.7                                 |
| 1986 | 460            | 3,799           | 8.3                                 |
| 1987 | 267            | 1,072           | 4.0                                 |
| 1988 | 556            | 5,031           | 9.0                                 |
| 1989 | 603            | 11,730          | 19.5                                |
| 1990 | 322            | 1,589           | 4.9                                 |
| 1991 | 535            | 3,453           | 6.6                                 |
| 1992 | 292            | 2,014           | 6.9                                 |
| 1993 | 243            | 992             | 4.1                                 |
| 1994 | 129            | 1,177           | 9.1                                 |
| 1995 | 379            | 7,334           | 19.4                                |
| 1996 | 79             | 211             | 2.7                                 |
| 1997 | 309            | 1,218           | 3.9                                 |
| 1998 | 346            | 2,569           | 7.4                                 |
| 1999 | 629            | 5,557           | 9.3                                 |
| 2000 | 134            | 451             | 3.4                                 |
| 2001 | 460            | 4,545           | 9.9                                 |
| 2002 | 324            | 2,062           | 6.4                                 |
| 2003 | 106            | 594             | 5.6                                 |
| 2004 | 73             | 431             | 5.9                                 |
| 2005 | 208            | 669             | 3.2                                 |
| 2006 | 231            | 2,323           | 10.1                                |
| 2007 | 211            | 855             | 4.1                                 |

SOURCE: New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Forest Protection

**SUMMARY of ALL SEARCH & RESCUE MISSIONS  
Reported by  
FOREST RANGERS in 2007**

| Activity of Subject(s) | Total #    | % Total       | Searches   | Rescues   | Recoveries | Costs        |
|------------------------|------------|---------------|------------|-----------|------------|--------------|
| Airplane/ Flying       | 4          | 1.8%          | 2          | 2         |            |              |
| Biking                 | 3          | 1.3%          | 1          | 2         |            |              |
| Camping                | 6          | 2.7%          | 3          | 3         |            |              |
| Climbing (Rock/Ice)    | 1          | 0.4%          |            |           | 1          |              |
| Fishing                | 0          | 0.0%          |            |           |            |              |
| Hiking                 | 95         | 42.6%         | 50         | 45        |            |              |
| Hunting                | 26         | 11.7%         | 25         | 1         |            |              |
| Runaway/Fugitive       | 8          | 3.6%          | 8          |           |            | \$438        |
| Skiing/Snowshoeing     | 4          | 1.8%          | 1          | 3         |            |              |
| Snowmobile/ATV         | 14         | 6.3%          | 6          | 8         |            |              |
| Suicides               | 6          | 2.7%          | 6          |           |            | \$15         |
| Swimming               | 2          | 0.9%          | 1          |           | 1          |              |
| Walking/Walkaway       | 29         | 13.0%         | 26         | 2         | 1          | \$63         |
| Whitewater/Boating     | 7          | 3.1%          | 6          | 1         |            | \$240        |
| Other***               | 18         | 8.1%          | 18         |           |            | \$142        |
| <b>Totals</b>          | <b>223</b> | <b>100.0%</b> | <b>153</b> | <b>67</b> | <b>3</b>   | <b>\$898</b> |

\*\*\* Other incidents include geocaching, working, motorist, logging, homicide, playing, unknown and suspicious activity.

**Number of Incidents By Day Of Week**

| Event           | Monday    | Tuesday   | Wednesday | Thursday  | Friday    | Saturday  | Sunday    | TOTAL      |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| <b>Search</b>   | 20        | 23        | 21        | 25        | 17        | 27        | 20        | <b>153</b> |
| <b>Rescue</b>   | 8         | 5         | 3         | 9         | 6         | 24        | 12        | <b>67</b>  |
| <b>Recovery</b> |           | 1         |           |           |           |           | 2         | <b>3</b>   |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>28</b> | <b>29</b> | <b>24</b> | <b>34</b> | <b>23</b> | <b>51</b> | <b>34</b> | <b>223</b> |

**Number & Percentage of Incidents occurring by Month**

| MONTH    | # of Incidents | Percent of Total | MONTH        | # of Incidents | Percent of Total |
|----------|----------------|------------------|--------------|----------------|------------------|
| January  | 13             | 6%               | July         | 23             | 10%              |
| February | 14             | 6%               | August       | 29             | 13%              |
| March    | 13             | 6%               | September    | 22             | 10%              |
| April    | 4              | 2%               | October      | 28             | 13%              |
| May      | 19             | 9%               | November     | 21             | 9%               |
| June     | 19             | 9%               | December     | 18             | 8%               |
|          |                |                  | <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>223</b>     | <b>100%</b>      |

**2007 SUMMARY OF SEARCH & RESCUE INCIDENTS BY ZONE**

| <b>SEARCH INCIDENTS</b>     | <b>1&amp;2</b> | <b>3A</b>  | <b>3B</b>  | <b>4A</b>  | <b>4B</b>  | <b>5A</b>  | <b>5B</b>  | <b>5C</b>  | <b>5D</b>  | <b>5E</b>    | <b>5F</b>  | <b>6A</b>  | <b>6B</b>  | <b>6C</b>  | <b>7</b>     | <b>8</b>   | <b>9</b>   | <b>TOTAL</b> |
|-----------------------------|----------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| Camping/ Hiking/Skiing      |                | 8          | 4          | 8          |            |            |            | 9          | 6          | 5            | 8          | 2          |            | 1          | 1            | 3          | 2          | 57           |
| Fishing/Hunting /Trapping   |                | 1          | 2          | 2          |            |            |            | 1          | 3          | 1            | 1          | 2          | 2          | 1          | 1            | 1          | 7          | 25           |
| Walk-aways/Run-aways        |                | 4          | 1          | 3          | 1          | 1          | 1          |            |            |              | 2          |            |            | 2          | 8            | 2          |            | 25           |
| ATV/Snowmobile/Boat         |                |            |            | 1          |            |            |            |            | 3          | 2            |            | 4          |            |            | 1            |            |            | 11           |
| Other                       | 1              | 1          |            | 1          |            |            | 3          |            | 1          | 3            | 2          | 1          | 1          | 3          | 7            | 2          | 9          | 35           |
| <b>RESCUES INCIDENTS</b>    |                |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |              |            |            |            |            |              |            |            | <b>0</b>     |
| Ice or Rock Climbing        |                |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |              |            |            |            |            |              |            |            | 0            |
| Camping/ Hiking/Skiing      |                | 1          | 1          | 10         |            | 3          | 2          | 28         | 2          | 1            |            |            |            | 3          |              |            | 2          | 53           |
| ATV/Snowmobile/MV           |                |            | 1          |            | 1          | 2          |            |            | 1          | 1            |            |            | 2          |            |              |            |            | 8            |
| Boating/Water Rescues       |                |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |              |            |            |            |            |              |            | 1          | 1            |
| Other                       | 1              | 1          | 1          | 1          |            |            |            |            |            |              |            |            |            | 1          |              |            |            | 5            |
| <b>RECOVERIES</b>           |                |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |              |            |            |            |            |              |            |            | <b>0</b>     |
| Land Related                |                |            |            |            |            |            | 1          |            |            |              |            | 1          |            |            |              |            |            | 2            |
| ATV/Snowmobile/Boat         |                |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |              |            |            |            |            |              |            |            | 0            |
| Water Related               |                |            |            |            |            |            | 1          |            |            |              |            |            |            |            |              |            |            | 1            |
| Suicides                    |                |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |              |            |            |            |            |              |            |            | 0            |
| Other                       |                |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |              |            |            |            |            |              |            |            | 0            |
| <b>TOTAL # of INCIDENTS</b> | <b>2</b>       | <b>16</b>  | <b>10</b>  | <b>26</b>  | <b>2</b>   | <b>6</b>   | <b>8</b>   | <b>38</b>  | <b>16</b>  | <b>13</b>    | <b>13</b>  | <b>10</b>  | <b>5</b>   | <b>11</b>  | <b>18</b>    | <b>8</b>   | <b>21</b>  | <b>223</b>   |
| <b>STATE LAND INCIDENTS</b> | <b>2</b>       | <b>11</b>  | <b>8</b>   | <b>20</b>  | <b>1</b>   | <b>6</b>   | <b>3</b>   | <b>37</b>  | <b>14</b>  | <b>10</b>    | <b>11</b>  | <b>6</b>   | <b>4</b>   | <b>8</b>   | <b>2</b>     | <b>3</b>   | <b>4</b>   | <b>150</b>   |
| <b>TOTAL COST</b>           | <b>\$0</b>     | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$382</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$516</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$898</b> |

Table 0-18

## Search and Rescue Missions New York State - 1963-2007

| Year | Missions | Staff Time<br>(Hours) | Year  | Missions | Staff Time<br>(hours) |
|------|----------|-----------------------|-------|----------|-----------------------|
| 1963 | 76       | 1,296                 | 1985  | 201      | 5,698                 |
| 1964 | 53       | 816                   | 1986  | 211      | 5,730                 |
|      |          |                       | 1987  | 253      | 5,064                 |
| 1965 | 106      | 3,050                 | 1988  | 223      | 8,063                 |
| 1966 | 116      | 1,877                 | 1989  | 259      | 6,081                 |
| 1967 | 130      | 2,447                 |       |          |                       |
| 1968 | 100      | 1,805                 | 1990r | 259      | 7,804                 |
| 1969 | 113      | 4,028                 | 1991r | 252      | 4,290                 |
|      |          |                       | 1992  | 244      | 11,282                |
| 1970 | 116      | 1,320                 | 1993  | 241      | 8,907                 |
| 1971 | 104      | 9,255                 | 1994  | 208      | 5,100                 |
| 1972 | 138      | 8,604                 |       |          |                       |
| 1973 | 178      | 15,941a               | 1995  | 212      | 6,200                 |
| 1974 | 144      | 15,941a               | 1996  | 236      | 7,700                 |
|      |          |                       | 1997  | 251      | 6,494                 |
| 1975 | 162      | 4,049                 | 1998  | 209      | 7,049                 |
| 1976 | 211      | 6,741                 | 1999  | 228      | 4,130                 |
| 1977 | 202      | 5,324                 | 2000  | 286      | 10,725                |
| 1978 | 156      | 3,334                 | 2001  | 373      | 8,768                 |
| 1979 | 163      | 4,445                 | 2002  | 257      | 10,313                |
|      |          |                       | 2003  | 237      | 9,382                 |
| 1980 | 164      | 4,382                 | 2004  | 220      | 7,209                 |
| 1981 | 163      | 5,300                 | 2005  | 229      | 10,378                |
| 1982 | 184      | 6,858                 | 2006  | 226      | 15,708                |
| 1983 | 215      | 7,003                 | 2007  | 223      | 8,964                 |
| 1984 | 188      | 5,381                 |       |          |                       |

r Revised

a Reflects time spent by Environmental Conservation Officers as well as Department Foresters on several unusually large searches

1 Spent by Forest Rangers of the Department of Environmental Conservation

SOURCE: New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Forest Protection and Fire Management

## ANNUAL REPORT OF ACTIVITIES OF FOREST RANGERS IN 2007

| <b>DEC Region-Zone</b>                                      | <b>1&amp;2</b> | <b>3-A</b> | <b>3-B</b> | <b>4-A</b> | <b>4-B</b> | <b>5-A</b> | <b>5-B</b> | <b>5-C</b> | <b>5-D</b> | <b>5-E</b> | <b>5-F</b> | <b>6-A</b> | <b>6-B</b> | <b>6-C</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>8</b> | <b>9</b> | <b>ALL</b>    |
|---|----------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|----------|----------|----------|---------------|
| #of Assists to Other Agencies at Emergencies                | 29             | 31         | 13         | 32         | 19         | 21         | 39         | 21         | 59         | 7          | 27         | 17         | 21         | 50         | 25       | 34       | 41       | <b>486</b>    |
| # of defendants requiring Immediate Arraignment             | 71             | 16         | 6          |            |            | 6          | 3          | 19         | 16         | 1          | 10         |            | 2          | 5          | 2        |          |          | <b>157</b>    |
| # of Part 215 Burning Permit Inspections                    |                | 18         | 43         | 1          |            |            | 1          | 21         | 26         | 23         |            |            | 1          | 3          |          |          |          | <b>137</b>    |
| # of Article 9/191 Burning Permits Issued by Ranger         |                | 50         | 6          | 28         | 208        | 95         | 484        | 435        | 367        | 216        | 256        | 41         | 27         | 174        | 3        |          |          | <b>2,390</b>  |
| # of Article 9/191 Burning Permit Inspections               |                | 15         | 1          | 27         | 17         | 35         | 162        | 25         | 279        | 233        | 32         |            | 15         | 24         |          |          |          | <b>865</b>    |
| # of Article 9/191 BP's issued by Issuing Agent             |                | 5065       | 9648       | 483        | 122        | 1          | 608        | 1          | 111        | 369        | 250        | 1          |            | 6          |          |          |          | <b>16,665</b> |
| # of Camping Permits Issued                                 |                | 104        | 20         | 89         | 95         | 363        | 39         | 121        | 403        | 116        | 112        | 128        | 79         | 121        | 154      | 109      | 70       | <b>2,123</b>  |
| # of Occupied Camping Sites Inspected                       |                | 918        | 1130       | 202        | 365        | 1529       | 662        | 2328       | 1425       | 1223       | 515        | 385        | 291        | 1892       | 802      | 961      | 691      | <b>15,319</b> |
| # of Patrols of DEC Campgrounds                             |                | 336        | 58         | 61         | 194        | 462        | 159        | 91         | 673        | 148        | 16         | 78         | 2          | 101        |          |          |          | <b>2,379</b>  |
| # of Inspections of TRP's, Harvests, Adopt-A-Resource       | 3              | 1          | 24         | 25         | 300        | 8          | 7          | 2          | 16         | 3          | 1          | 22         | 31         | 297        | 174      | 172      | 37       | <b>1,123</b>  |
| # of responses to Wildlife Incidents (Car-Deer, etc.)       | 10             | 1          | 4          | 3          |            |            | 11         | 1          | 26         | 2          | 7          | 3          |            | 30         | 10       | 4        | 8        | <b>120</b>    |
| # of Guides Checked for License Compliance                  |                | 0          | 2          | 39         | 1          | 1          |            | 3          | 248        | 2          | 1          |            |            |            | 2        |          | 7        | <b>306</b>    |
| # of Stream Crossing Permits Issued                         |                | 12         | 1          | 2          | 17         | 4          | 19         | 7          | 33         | 11         | 24         | 3          | 11         | 21         |          | 3        | 20       | <b>188</b>    |
| # of Stream Crossing Inspections                            |                | 18         | 3          | 4          | 26         | 4          | 52         | 7          | 119        | 38         | 48         | 18         | 7          | 61         | 9        | 15       | 23       | <b>452</b>    |
| # of Other ECL Permit Inspections                           | 105            |            |            | 1          |            | 2          | 65         | 151        | 43         | 5          | 55         | 16         |            | 2          | 4        | 121      | 54       | <b>624</b>    |
| # of Trail Head or Access Point Inspections                 | 2264           | 6103       | 3511       | 2605       | 5384       | 1923       | 3309       | 3998       | 4852       | 2751       | 2804       | 4528       | 3212       | 9239       | 6749     | 6627     | 8,984    | <b>78,843</b> |
| Miles of Non-Roadside State Boundary Line Inspected         | 167            | 71         | 85         | 139        | 182        | 39         | 309        | 54         | 114        | 325        | 98         | 100        | 22         | 133        | 83       | 105      | 108      | <b>2,134</b>  |
| Miles of Trails or State Land Patrol by foot or paddle      | 757            | 1081       | 1150       | 1514       | 980        | 970        | 1131       | 3504       | 1721       | 1901       | 989        | 924        | 587        | 1209       | 671      | 485      | 824      | <b>20,398</b> |
| Miles of Trails or State Land Patrol by motorized equipment | 3406           | 572        | 514        | 19         | 112        | 1261       | 149        | 411        | 2266       | 117        | 163        | 1316       | 650        | 1292       | 559      | 539      | 657      | <b>14,003</b> |

**2007 ANNUAL REPORT OF PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS & TRAINING GIVEN BY FOREST RANGERS**

| <b>DEC Region-Zone</b>   | <b>1&amp;2</b> | <b>3-A</b> | <b>3-B</b> | <b>4-A</b> | <b>4-B</b> | <b>5-A</b> | <b>5-B</b> | <b>5-C</b> | <b>5-D</b> | <b>5-E</b> | <b>5-F</b> | <b>6-A</b> | <b>6-B</b> | <b>6-C</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>8</b> | <b>9</b> | <b>ALL</b> |
|--|----------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|----------|----------|----------|------------|
| <b>Number of S130/190 Training Events</b>                          | 1              |            |            | 1          |            |            |            |            | 1          |            |            | 1          |            |            |          |          |          | 4          |
| Total Number of Attendees at Events Above                          | 17             |            |            | 18         |            |            |            |            | 24         |            |            | 28         |            |            |          |          |          | 87         |
| <b>Number of NYS BWFS Training Events</b>                          |                | 2          | 3          | 1          | 3          | 1          | 1          |            |            |            | 3          |            | 2          | 2          | 4        | 3        | 1        | 26         |
| Total Number of Attendees at Events Above                          |                | 24         | 105        | 18         | 35         | 25         | 11         |            |            |            | 103        |            | 25         | 67         | 86       | 61       | 16       | 576        |
| <b>Number of 4-Hour DOCS Inmate Training Events</b>                |                |            | 1          |            | 2          |            | 1          |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |          | 1        |          | 5          |
| Total Number of Attendees at Events Above                          |                |            | 44         |            | 69         |            | 125        |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |          | 15       |          | 253        |
| <b>Number of Other Fire or ICS Training Events</b>                 | 8              | 1          |            | 4          | 5          | 1          | 2          | 1          | 1          | 3          | 7          | 1          |            | 1          | 7        | 8        | 6        | 56         |
| Total Number of Attendees at Events Above                          | 111            | 27         |            | 26         | 141        | 30         | 80         | 10         | 32         | 280        | 145        | 51         |            | 30         | 128      | 130      | 150      | 1,371      |
| <b>Number of Fire Prevention Events</b>                            | 8              | 4          | 5          | 13         | 13         | 2          | 3          | 1          | 3          | 6          | 8          | 4          | 8          | 2          | 11       | 6        | 15       | 112        |
| Total Number of Attendees at Events Above                          | 2780           | 330        | 505        | 1990       | 3835       | 180        | 525        | 50         | 2560       | 615        | 2727       | 315        | 7354       | 9200       | 49872    | 1556     | 4694     | 89,088     |
| <b>Number of Basic Wildland Search Course Events</b>               | 3              | 4          | 6          |            | 3          | 1          | 2          |            | 2          |            | 4          | 1          | 1          | 1          | 3        | 2        | 3        | 36         |
| Total Number of Attendees at Events Above                          | 66             | 45         | 120        |            | 45         | 30         | 17         |            | 49         |            | 127        | 21         | 16         | 30         | 46       | 46       | 78       | 736        |
| <b>Number of Other S&amp;R or 1<sup>st</sup> Aid Course Events</b> |                | 6          | 4          | 9          | 4          | 8          | 6          | 13         | 18         | 3          | 4          |            | 6          | 1          | 16       | 7        | 6        | 111        |
| Total Number of Attendees at Events Above                          |                | 105        | 78         | 177        | 161        | 177        | 75         | 136        | 412        | 63         | 4          |            | 92         | 24         | 223      | 237      | 167      | 2,131      |
| <b># of State Land or Outdoor Use Presentations</b>                | 4              | 5          | 5          | 10         | 6          | 9          | 1          | 3          | 6          | 9          | 5          | 6          | 7          | 9          |          | 10       | 14       | 109        |
| Total Number of Attendees at Events Above                          | 218            | 79         | 250        | 382        | 960        | 222        | 500        | 44         | 267        | 1069       | 4092       | 673        | 1856       | 629        |          | 1313     | 275      | 12,829     |
| <b>Number of Career Information Events</b>                         | 2              | 2          | 2          | 13         | 9          |            |            |            | 4          | 4          | 8          | 1          | 2          | 4          | 6        | 10       | 2        | 79         |
| Total Number of Attendees at Events Above                          | 1010           | 324        | 2300       | 3125       | 332        |            |            |            | 128        | 377        | 620        | 20         | 193        | 307        | 379      | 835      | 185      | 1443       |
| <b>Number of Other Presentations or Training Events</b>            |                |            |            | 1          | 1          |            | 2          |            | 1          |            | 1          |            | 1          |            | 3        |          | 3        | 13         |
| Total Number of Attendees at Events Above                          |                |            |            | 20         | 19         |            | 42         |            | 35         |            | 40         |            | 7          |            | 50       |          | 21       | 234        |
| <b>Total # of Presentations &amp; Training Events</b>              | 26             | 24         | 26         | 52         | 46         | 22         | 18         | 22         | 36         | 29         | 33         | 15         | 29         | 22         | 54       | 39       | 58       | 551        |
| <b>Total Hours of Presentations &amp; Training Events</b>          | 157            | 129        | 164        | 221        | 231        | 98         | 86         | 104        | 119        | 118        | 177        | 59         | 88         | 114        | 342      | 226      | 137      | 2570       |
| <b>Total Number of Attendees at Events</b>                         | 4202           | 934        | 3402       | 5756       | 5597       | 664        | 1375       | 368        | 3756       | 2647       | 7258       | 1281       | 9657       | 10359      | 51240    | 3543     | 6844     | 113052     |

**SUMMARY OF TICKETS OR ARRESTS MADE BY FOREST RANGERS BY REGION & ZONE FOR 2007**

| DEC REGION-ZONE                                       | 1& 2       | 3-A        | 3-B        | 4-A        | 4-B        | 5-A        | 5-B       | 5-C       | 5-D        | 5-E        | 5-F        | 6-A        | 6-B        | 6-C       | 7          | 8         | 9          | ALL         |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-------------|
| <b>Total Number of Tickets or Arrests</b>             | <b>217</b> | <b>175</b> | <b>139</b> | <b>113</b> | <b>143</b> | <b>123</b> | <b>52</b> | <b>90</b> | <b>111</b> | <b>129</b> | <b>101</b> | <b>386</b> | <b>164</b> | <b>88</b> | <b>207</b> | <b>67</b> | <b>270</b> | <b>2575</b> |
| Environmental Conservation Law Rules and Regulations  | 137        | 138        | 103        | 66         | 78         | 63         | 36        | 39        | 48         | 92         | 32         | 155        | 59         | 55        | 123        | 50        | 134        | <b>1408</b> |
| NYS Vehicle & Traffic Offenses                        | 43         | 35         | 31         | 47         | 63         | 4          | 2         |           | 21         | 24         | 51         | 163        | 98         | 17        | 80         | 15        | 107        | <b>801</b>  |
| Parks & Recreation (Snowmobile & Navigation)          |            |            | 2          |            | 2          | 26         | 1         | 26        | 27         | 2          | 9          | 68         | 7          | 16        | 1          | 2         | 16         | <b>205</b>  |
| Arrests Turned over to Another Agency                 | 9          | 1          | 3          |            |            | 30         | 13        | 16        | 10         | 7          | 7          |            |            |           | 3          |           | 12         | <b>111</b>  |
| Other (Appearance Tickets or Arrests )                | 28         | 1          |            |            |            |            |           | 9         | 5          | 4          | 2          |            |            |           |            |           | 1          | <b>50</b>   |
|   |            |            |            |            |            |            |           |           |            |            |            |            |            |           |            |           |            | <b>0</b>    |
| Offenses Related to State Land Use                    | 38         | 101        | 64         | 34         | 26         | 39         | 8         | 25        | 27         | 32         | 13         | 88         | 20         | 23        | 62         | 24        | 70         | <b>694</b>  |
| Offenses Related to Fire Laws                         |            | 4          | 2          | 8          | 13         | 7          | 15        | 1         | 4          | 7          | 4          | 11         | 4          | 6         | 11         | 10        | 2          | <b>109</b>  |
| Offenses Related to Fish & Wildlife Laws              | 51         | 8          | 26         | 14         | 20         | 40         | 18        | 10        |            | 17         | 1          | 37         | 18         | 4         | 20         | 9         | 23         | <b>316</b>  |
| Offenses of High Peaks Rules and Regulations          |            |            |            |            |            |            |           | 16        |            |            |            |            |            |           |            |           |            | <b>16</b>   |
| Offenses Related to Illegal ATV Operation             | 65         | 33         | 29         | 35         | 62         | 8          | 1         | 2         | 16         | 15         | 57         | 150        | 95         | 14        | 69         | 6         | 88         | <b>745</b>  |
| Offenses Related to Illegal Motor Vehicles on State   | 19         | 8          | 11         | 6          | 8          |            | 2         |           | 2          | 26         |            | 11         | 8          |           | 11         | 12        | 8          | <b>132</b>  |
| Offenses Related to DEC Campgrounds                   |            | 4          |            | 2          | 2          |            | 1         |           | 4          |            |            |            | 5          | 18        |            |           |            | <b>36</b>   |
| Offenses Related to Air Pollution                     |            | 1          | 1          |            |            |            | 1         |           |            |            | 2          |            |            |           | 1          |           |            | <b>6</b>    |
| Offenses Related to Under-age Drinking on State lands |            | 12         |            | 1          |            | 1          |           | 3         | 5          | 17         | 5          | 23         | 7          | 6         | 18         | 2         | 28         | <b>128</b>  |
| Offenses Related to other ECL or R&R                  | 28         | 1          |            | 1          | 2          |            | 3         | 1         | 13         |            | 2          |            |            |           | 2          |           | 1          | <b>54</b>   |
| Offenses related to Other Laws, Rules or Regulations  | 16         | 3          | 6          | 10         |            | 5          | 3         | 24        | 10         | 12         | 7          |            |            | 1         | 13         | 4         | 33         | <b>147</b>  |
| Offenses Related to Illegal Snowmobile Operation      |            |            |            | 2          | 10         | 23         |           | 8         | 30         | 3          | 10         | 66         | 7          | 16        |            |           | 17         | <b>192</b>  |
| <b>Total Number of Tickets or Arrests as Reported</b> | <b>217</b> | <b>175</b> | <b>139</b> | <b>113</b> | <b>143</b> | <b>123</b> | <b>52</b> | <b>90</b> | <b>111</b> | <b>129</b> | <b>101</b> | <b>386</b> | <b>164</b> | <b>88</b> | <b>207</b> | <b>67</b> | <b>270</b> | <b>2575</b> |