

Forest Health Improvement Project

Improving Forest Health at Greenfield State Park

The growth of the trees and overall health of the forest in the Park is declining. The park is 50 years old and many of the trees are now over 80 years old. The fastest growing and healthiest trees have dominated the forest canopy while the slower, weaker trees have become suppressed in the understory. Over time these suppressed trees have become starved for sunlight and other resources and slowly deteriorate and die. In addition many of the dominate trees have suffered damage from multiple ice and wind storms. Another factor that has had an adverse affect on the health and vigor of the forest is the direct damage caused by campers pounding nails into trees or hacking trees with axes and knives. Multiple wounds that damage the bark of a tree allow fungal infections to enter, causing heart and root rot that eventually lead to the death of the tree.

In order to provide a safe recreational environment for campers to enjoy, and to promote a healthy forest and encourage new trees to grow, many of the damaged and declining trees in the Park will need to be removed. Trees will be chosen by New Hampshire Division of Forests and Lands Foresters and marked with blue paint for removal. During the winters of 2012 and 2013 the trees will be harvested and utilized for forest products such as lumber, paper and wood chips to generate electricity. While this operation will result in a significant visual change to the Park it is important to remember that it is temporary and necessary. The remaining trees will have more room to grow and develop while openings in the forest canopy will allow more light to reach the forest floor for new tree seedlings to become established and grow between campsites.

For more information contact: Department of Resources and Economic Development, New Hampshire Division of Forests and Lands at (603) 271-2214 or visit nhdffl.org

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