

The Forest Speaks

Harvesting news from the McIlvaine Town Forest

The long anticipated forest management harvest on the McIlvaine Town Forest is expected to begin on 11/12/2015. The harvesting equipment will be accessing the property by way of the road into the former Windham landfill site on Marblehead Road. Approximately 100 acres of the 200 acre property will be selectively thinned. The harvest is expected to take approximately 6 to 8 weeks barring inclement weather or equipment malfunctions.

While the harvest is ongoing, please avoid areas being actively harvested. Present day logging uses large machinery and is highly mechanized. It is not always easy for machine operators to see unexpected pedestrians approaching them in the woods. Deer hunters are asked not to install tree stands in the forest during the harvest due to safety concerns. The Windham Forestry Committee would also like to remind the public that wheeled, motorized OHRV use is not allowed on the McIlvaine Town Forest. We appreciate everyone's cooperation during this temporary activity.

The emphasis of the harvest will be on removing mature and low quality trees, leaving higher quality trees to take advantage of the increased growing space. Opening some space in the forest will also encourage tree seedlings to take root and thrive, creating more age structure within the forest. The Committee is particularly excited to have the harvest take place this fall due to a large acorn crop this year. We hope that exposing some of the soil on the forest floor and allowing in more sunlight will encourage some of these acorns to sprout new oaks. We expect many different wildlife species to benefit from the creation of a more bio-diverse habitat in the forest.

Income from the timber sale will be set aside in a Windham Forestry Fund to be utilized for town forest management and improvement. Through future warrant articles that will require approval by town vote, we hope to greatly increase and improve the recreational trail network, address specific wildlife management needs, maintain and manage the historic McIlvaine cellar hole, perform boundary maintenance, and continue to provide ongoing professional stewardship of the McIlvaine Town Forest timber and wildlife resources.

Submitted by the Windham Forestry Committee