

Monthly Newsletter***FRIENDS OF PACHAUG FOREST***<http://www.friendsofpachaugforest.org>

**DEDICATION & UNVEILING THE CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS WORKER STATUE**

*Rain or Shine*

All are Welcome | Free Event | Food Trucks | Live Music

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2019**  
**10:00AM - 2:00PM**  
**CCC YOUTH FIELD,**  
**PACHAUG STATE FOREST, VOLUNTOWN, CT**  
**GPS: [HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/PACHAUGCCC](https://tinyurl.com/pachaugccc)**

Join us to honor the legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corps and commemorate those that were of service at Camp Lonegren, Voluntown, CT. #FillThePark for the 2 Vets in attendance on September 21, 2019

On September 21st 2019 at noon, we will be unveiling the long-awaited statue honoring the work of the men and boys who labored in the Civilian Conservation Corps from 1933-1942. This is to be a grand celebration of the people who made Pachaug State Forest possible. On hand will be speakers, including the honorable Congressman Joe Courtney, Senator Heather Somers, State Representative Brian Lanoue, and two former CCC boys and WWII Veterans. There will be music, food vendors, artists and craftspersons on hand to entertain and sustain the crowd. Parking will be available in

Chapman Field easily accessed via the Route 49 entrance in Voluntown. This family friendly free event will take place rain or shine, so come one, come all, and tell your neighbors!

**See if you can find me in the Forest on our Scavenger Hunt September 7!**



# Moonlight Paddle August 17 2019



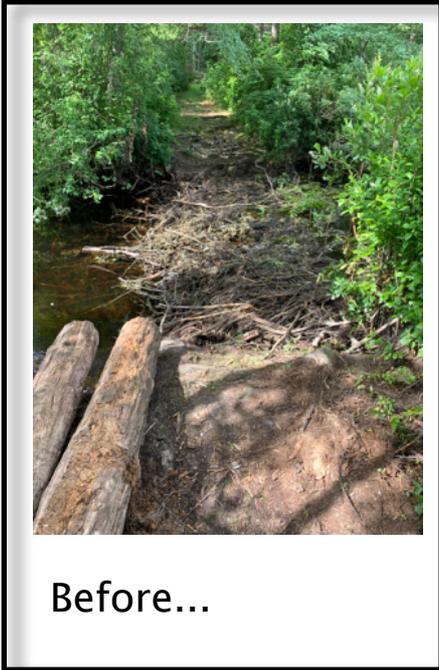
We had a total of 26 folks who came out to paddle with FOPF at our Moonlight Paddle sans the moonlight. In addition to the paddlers, 4 members also attended to assist with set up, sign in and paperwork. Unfortunately the EEE mosquito reports and inclement weather caused a number of folks who had registered for the event to cancel on this date (40 people had signed up originally).



Just as the kayaks and canoes were departing the dock it started to rain lightly, the sky was overcast and it was a dark paddle with no moon to be seen. The fog started rolling in quite heavily later in the paddle so the group started to head back to shore a bit earlier than anticipated. All who attended the paddle were excited and look forward to other moonlight and group paddles with FOPF.



# Bridge Repair near Hazard Pond off Bailey Pond Rd.



Before...



**Your Friends at Work!**  
This month, several members assisted President Ryan Snide in the creation of a bridge on an unmarked trail off Bailey Pond Rd. in Voluntown, where a beaver dam used to be.



After!

## Article by Dan Evans, Eastern District, Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

Visitors enjoying Pachaug State Forest over the past three years have likely noticed an increase in forestry activity taking place on State Land. While active forest management carried out by the DEEP Division of Forestry is a common occurrence within State Forests, the objectives behind some of the recent and ongoing harvesting are unique to the insect and disease outbreaks of recent years.



*Figure 1 - Defoliation north of Greenfalls Pond. Image courtesy of CAES*

Portions of Pachaug State Forest have experienced three-years of variable-intensity defoliation by gypsy moth caterpillar from 2015 to 2017. In 2015 and 2016 defoliation was coupled with an increasingly severe drought. In 2017 defoliation was timed with moderate late-season drought. The impact of multiple stressors (defoliation and drought) on trees of advanced age, growing on nutrient-deficient growing sites has led to significant and widespread tree mortality throughout the forest. Subsequently, increasing populations of secondary stressors like two-lined chestnut borer, and armillaria root-rot have attacked trees previously weakened by gypsy moth defoliation and contributed to additional mortality across the forest and the greater landscape. Though gypsy moth pressure has been locally low since its population crash in the early summer of 2017, there is considerable tree mortality on the landscape, and additional mortality is likely to surface as secondary stressor populations are still high.

During the summer of 2016 foresters from the Division of Forestry and The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station identified sharp decline in certain oak stands throughout Pachaug State Forest. Being a family of trees which is ecologically, economically, and culturally important, foresters turned their attention to the oak decline issue and planned a series of harvesting treatments to create conditions to benefit reproduction of the oak forest type. Simultaneously, given the public exposure to dead trees threatening State Forest access roads, plans were made to address hazardous trees on gravel road frontage as a component of all planned commercial forest product harvesting.

In early 2017 an 81-acre salvage harvest was sold to an independent logging contractor. These licensed supervisory forest product harvesters have been working in the Lawrence Road / Trail 2 area of the forest to remove dead hazard trees from the roadside, and create conditions which will result in vigorous forest re-growth from the understory. As part of this work over 500 dead hazard trees have been removed from the edges of forest roads and trails. This work has taken place at no expense to the taxpayers. In fact, DEEP Forestry earned revenue from this activity which is re-invested in forest management on State Lands.



*Figure 2 - Salvage harvesting on Lawrence Road in Pachaug was designed to create conditions for oak*



*Figure 3 - A prescribed burn was implemented in spring 2019 to reduce fuels and benefit conditions for tree reproduction*

Late 2018 ushered-in an Agency-wide, comprehensive assessment of hazard trees threatening high-use recreational areas on State Land. In Pachaug State Forest alone, 3,775 trees posing a public hazard were identified. To date the DEEP has overseen the removal of 1,230 hazard trees in Pachaug State Forest – not accounting for the remarkable number of hazard trees removed by commercial loggers prior to the onset of the formal hazard tree assessment and removal-tracking process.

In addition to the trees removed as part of commercial salvage logging operations the Agency has employed a piece of mechanized harvesting equipment to remove roadside hazard trees at an hourly rate. Using equipment available for hire on State contract a Sterling-based logging company has implemented roadside hazard tree removal at several sites around Pachaug State Forest, and even more sites around eastern Connecticut. One such noticeable project occurred on Hell Hollow Road and Trail 1 in Voluntown and Griswold. During a seasonal road closure a mechanized piece of harvesting equipment working directly on the roadbed felled and lopped over 375-hazardous trees which threatened public safety on Hell Hollow Road – a well-used east-west cut-through to interstate 395. Since implementation on Hell Hollow, the crew has successfully completed additional projects at Green Falls Campground, Hopeville Pond State Park, Green Falls' East Road, Green Falls Campground Road and numerous other DEEP sites throughout eastern Connecticut. Based on contract rates and the Agency's ability to recoup value by selling logs and firewood from harvested trees, the hazard tree removal work has occurred at minimal expense to the State. The process has yielded forest product material which has been utilized by private businesses, and DEEP alike. Where practical

A second, 44-acre salvage harvest was sold in late 2017 in the same area of the forest. Operated over 2018, the logging work is now complete and we're witnessing the process of understory re-initiation following the defoliation, logging, and a subsequent prescribed burn. The burn was implemented in spring 2019 to reduce the wildfire risk, consume woody fuels, and prepare the site for tree regeneration. With first-year cone development in the residual white pine trees, we expect a new cohort of white pine seedlings to occupy suitable portions of the site in 2020.



*Figure 4 - A cut-to-length harvester has been working on State Land to mitigate thousands of dead oaks killed by gypsy moth, drought, and secondary stressors.*

the Agency has utilized the salvaged saw-logs at the DEEP Portland sawmill, producing picnic table stock for maintenance and replacement of tables provided at State Parks and campgrounds. Despite the progress made given the work described, we're not out of the woods yet, and there will be additional and significant tree removal occurring at Pachaug State Forest over the coming years. Four additional salvage harvests are currently under contract and awaiting action by the buyers. These projects will remove additional hazard trees along Firetower Road, Greenfalls Road, Trail 2, Cutoff Road, and Lawrence Road. The harvesting will simultaneously create conditions for desirable forest reproduction and create valuable young-forest habitat for a suite of declining wildlife species. While salvage logging is not a forestry-norm, and by all opinions less preferable than traditional healthy-forest management, it's one of the most effective tools to stimulate re-growth of shade-intolerant forest communities. Communities which are not self-sustaining under current conditions, yet of great ecological importance in our region.



*Figure 5 - Logs and firewood produced from hazard tree removal are sold commercially to recoup value from the wood and offset costs to DEEP.*

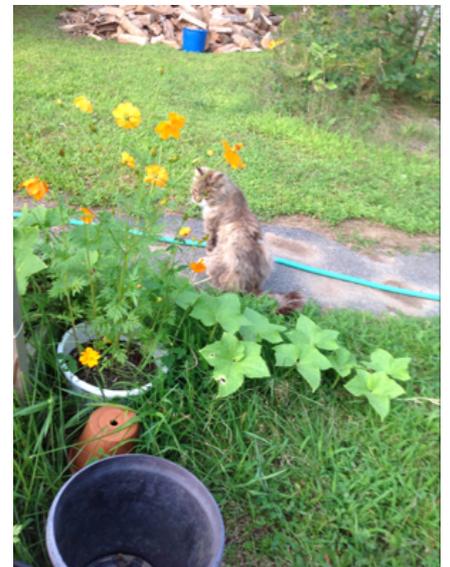
A recent Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant awarded to DEEP by the US Forest Service will be used to mitigate thousands of additional dead trees which would threaten firefighter safety in the event of a wildfire in the forest. An occurrence of increased likelihood given tree mortality and fuel loading in the forest understory. The grant will also support fuel reduction treatments and

public outreach regarding wildfire preparedness in the local fire departments and greater communities. Although all of this work is a temporary disturbance to the environment, our forests are highly resilient and will respond to tree cutting with a new flush of vigorous tree and shrub growth.

All of the work occurring in the forest is overseen by DEEP-employed, licensed foresters who routinely inspect active cutting areas to ensure residual site impacts are minimal, and best management practices for preserving water-quality are adequately employed. The hazard tree removal and oak salvage cutting which is occurring will result in safer conditions for visitors of the forest, less dead-tree exposure for local firefighters, more robust habitat for underrepresented wildlife, and a broader mixture of tree species and age-classes for long-term forest sustainability. Friends of Pachaug State Forest have a great opportunity to partner with DEEP on this work and spread the message of forest health and safety within our local communities

## Growing Season

At the peak of harvest season, we now are beginning to experience the slow decrease of light which brings us into the autumn season and the subsequent decline of growing things. It is a joyful time in spite of this. After all we are enjoying the fruit of our labors, and there is still some time to go to the beach. Things may be looking a bit shaggy in the garden as the energy we expended to rid it of 'weeds' is challenged when a few triumphant stragglers make it through to come to seed. It is a good time to contemplate who the real heroes and villains are in the garden. Do get rid of Bittersweet vines and Japanese Barberry. Consider allowing the Mullein and Milkweed to have a modest presence. They are medicinal as well as a food source. On the DEEP website, you can find a list of 'invasive species' to guide you as to what really might be detrimental. I don't always agree with their choices. Mugwort for instance, a plant that grows in profusion along the sides of our roads, is cultivated and used in Chinese Medicine. Keep in mind that what we may consider 'weeds' are really nature's way to fill space that we have disturbed.





## Upcoming Programs for September–November 2019

### September

- **7 - Scavenger Hunt: 10:30am-1:30pm, Green Falls Swimming Area.** Join FOPF for a scavenger hunt which has been organized and will be run by two of our youngest members! They are passionate about sharing their love of the great outdoors and are anxious to share their knowledge with other youngsters while having fun too! Cold water will be provided remember to wear your bug repellent!
- **14 - 2nd Annual Member's Picnic/3rd Quarterly meeting: 12 noon,** Hopeville Pond Pavilion, Route 201, Griswold. Food, Fun & Games and Live Music! If you have a favorite dish you would like to share, please feel free to bring it along! We would like to invite your friends or neighbors who would like to become members on the day of our picnic to please join us. We look forward to seeing you and celebrating with you!

*We ask you to please RSVP on or before September 7<sup>th</sup> to: [susan.fopf@outlook.com](mailto:susan.fopf@outlook.com)*

- **21 -Unveiling and Dedication of CCC Memorial Statue, 10:00am-2:00pm, Camp Lonergan, Pachaug State Forest.** Look for Smokey the Bear at the park entrance on Rte. 49, then follow signs. Unveiling & Dedication will take place at Noon. At this long-awaited installation, we will be joined by other interested groups as we honor the legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corps. Guest speakers, former CCC workers, dignitaries and vendors will be on site. This is a free public event hosted by Friends of Pachaug Forest, Inc. Let's fill the forest and show our support for the CCC Workers who were so instrumental in creating this great forest!
- **23 - Rock Painting: Noon - 2pm, Hopeville Pond Pavilion, Route 201.** Let's make some more treasures to find in the forest! This is a fun crafting event open to all ages! A light lunch and cold water will be provided; remember to wear your bug repellent! *Registration required, contact Sue by email: [susan.fopf@outlook.com](mailto:susan.fopf@outlook.com)*

### October

- **5 - Kayak Excursion\*\*: 10 am, Wood River Management Area, Exeter RI, Route 165** (dependent on water level). The Upper Wood River offers the most impressive natural experience of any river in RI. For almost four miles you will enjoy the serenity of the forest before it snakes through wetlands, winding continuously. Bring bug repellent and snacks. Free for members. Suggested \$5 donation for non-members. **To register, contact Sue at: [susan.fopf@outlook.com](mailto:susan.fopf@outlook.com)**  
*\*\*It is mandatory all participants wear an approved Life Vest. Life Vests must be Type I, II, III, V or V- Hybrid. Attach a whistle to your life jacket the sound of a whistle will travel farther than your voice and attract attention. Connecticut and federal laws require a sound producing device onboard at all times.*
- **6 - Plein Aire Painting at Heron Marsh: 9 am - 12 Noon.** Join us as we revisit our old watering hole from the Summer and see if we can capture the colors of Autumn! Suggested \$10 donation for Non-Members. **RSVP to [lauren.b.churchill@gmail.com](mailto:lauren.b.churchill@gmail.com) and for more information**
- **13 - Walktober- Mt. Misery Hike: 10am - 1pm.** Look for Smokey the Bear at the park entrance on Rte. 49, and then follow signs to Chapman Field. Join retired US National Park Service Rangers Bob and Jen Panko and Plant Ecologist Rebecca Panko on a fall hike up Mt. Misery. The leaders will identify a variety of trees, shrubs and other plants along the way as well as discuss habitats and current/future changes due to both natural and human influences. 2.5 miles, moderately difficult.
- **13 - Paint a Pumpkin-Chapman Field, Pachaug State Forest (See above event for directions) 1:00 pm -2:30 pm.** Join FOPF as we paint designs on pumpkins with acrylic paint. Aprons, paint, paint brushes, gloves, pumpkins and fun will be provided! Suggested donation \$5/ per pumpkin. Please register to attend and reserve your spot and pumpkin. **To register contact Sue at: [susan.fopf@outlook.com](mailto:susan.fopf@outlook.com)**

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