

UPCOMING EVENTS

- OCT. 11 - Fall Hike—Tusten Mountain Trail**
Tusten, NY, 10am-12pm
- OCT. 18 - Annual General Meeting**
Hawley, PA, 10am-12pm
- NOV. 9 - Little Sparrow and the Eagles—Live Music and Live Birds of Prey with the Delaware Valley Raptor Center**
Hurleyville, NY, 2pm-4:30pm
- NOV. 22 - **Peace, Love, Land: 20th Anniversary Celebration****
Bethel, NY, 5pm-10pm
- DEC. 6 - Eagle Watch Volunteer Training**
Lackawaxen, PA, 9:30am-12pm
- JAN. 17 - Eagle Bus Tour-First of the Season!**
Lackawaxen, PA, 10am-1pm

Visit www.DelawareHighlands.org, or call 570-226-3164/845-583-1010 for more information on these events and others, and to register.

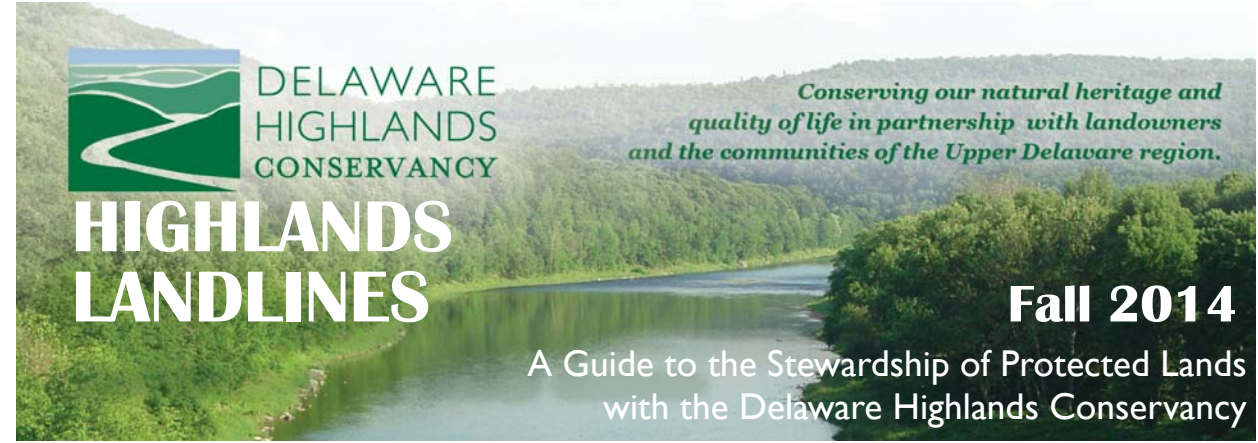
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- **INSIDE**
- **ATV Trespass Issues**
- **Home for the New England Cottontail**
- **20th Anniversary Celebration**
- **Participate in Research with Lacawac**
- **Native and Invasive Species Corner**



ATV Trespass: Tips for Landowners

By Carol Smith

When I initially proposed the idea of writing an article about ATV trespassing for our landowners, I had no idea that the scope of the problem would span 30 years and go all the way to the State Supreme Courts. Having now read 15 or 20 articles on the subject, the first thing I would like to say to landowners with trespass problems is that you are not alone.

The sale of ATVs is big business. The Governmental Accountability Office estimated that there were 10.2 million ATVs in operation in U.S. in 2008, up from 3.6 million in 1999. Estimates are that there are more than a quarter million ATVs in New York alone.

Many people who purchase ATVs don't have a suitable place to ride them. The response of ATV enthusiasts to this predicament has been that riders pressure local and state officials to open public roads and public lands, or they trespass.



Yellowstone Park was lobbied successfully by the ATV industry to open trails for off road vehicles. They now have enormous problems with soil erosion, trail degradation, water and air quality; noise; wildlife and fish habitat destruction, and social conflicts among different types of recreation users.

So, suggestions? Well yes there are some. But the first thing to know is that there is no easy answer. What may work for one landowner will not work for another. In many cases the solution is a process that requires time, patience and perseverance, and then probably a little more patience. And always keep in mind that young people and alcohol can be involved.

So that being said, here are some suggestions:

Most importantly, **POST YOUR LAND** using signs, paint, or whatever is used in your area. You must be diligent and repeatedly replace any signs that are removed so that the ATV operators **KNOW** that

The Delaware Highlands Conservancy is a land trust dedicated to conserving our natural heritage and quality of life in partnership with landowners and the communities of the Upper Delaware River region.

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Highlands Landlines is a semi-annual newsletter created by the Conservancy for landowners who have a conservation easement with the Conservancy. This publication is also available electronically.



What is Highlands LandLines?

You probably already receive the Delaware Highlands Conservancy's biannual newsletter, *Highlands Journal*. Our newsletter is distributed to all of our landowners, members, and other like-minded folks who are interested in the Conservancy's activities, accomplishments, and conservation goals.

This publication, *Highlands LandLines*, comes to you twice a year and is dedicated to landowners. *LandLines* provides you, the landowner, with useful information and tips for the stewardship of your land and conservation easement.

Participate in LandLines!

We are interested in your ideas for future articles and features, or your comments on the publication in general.

We'd love to know what you think!



Website for Women Forest Landowners

www.WomenOwningWoodlands.net strives to bring topical, accessible, and current forestry information to women woodland owners and forest practitioners through news articles, blogs, events, resources, and personal stories. We support women in forest leadership, women who manage their own woodlands, and all who facilitate the stewardship of forests.

(Continued from page 4)

The New York goal is to have 10,000 acres of habitat running along the east side of the Hudson River as far north as Rensselaer and Columbia counties.

The rabbit is also found in Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island. In 2013, Connecticut cleared 57 acres of state land in Litchfield County for cottontail habitat.

In the Capital Region, small brown rabbits commonly seen in open fields are most likely eastern cottontails, a nearly identical species from the Appalachians that was introduced to New England in the 1920s for hunting purposes, he said. The eastern cottontail moves through more open areas, making it easier to hunt, while the New England prefers to stay in the brush while on the move, making it harder to spot.

Kendziora said it is not clear whether there are currently any New England cottontails in Rensselaer County, but "I cannot say they are not there already ... part of our project is to look for where they might be."

Landowners who agree to have property converted to cottontail habitat sign 10-year agreements with USFW. Parcels covering a total of about 20 acres or more — not necessarily all of that in one piece — are needed for enough habitat to provide for a stable population of rabbits, said Kendziora. "I like to talk with landowners, to see what their plans are for a property," he said.

Students from the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry are working in Putnam County to trap and band cottontails to learn more about their numbers and movements.

While federal officials are creating habitat in hopes that any cottontail in the area might move into it, a captive breeding program is also under way, so rabbits can be imported into new habitat that has no nearby rabbits to populate it, he added. Several dozen rabbits bred at Roger Williams Park Zoo in Rhode Island have been placed into new habitat in Rhode Island and New Hampshire.

Property owners interested in taking part in the habitat project can contact Kendziora at ted_kendziora@fws.gov or at (603) 223-2541, Ext. 13.

More information on the project is also available at <http://www.newenglandcottontail.org>. The project is also being supported by the National Wild Turkey Federation and Wildlife Management Institute.

Story and photos reprinted from www.TimesUnion.com; Albany, NY; published May 25, 2014.



(Continued from page 1) an active landowner is somewhere nearby. Very visible active land management will cure a significant number of trespasses (the Conservancy has 'protected property' signs to provide for you as well). Mowing the grass or moving the signs near where they enter sends a message that you are watching them and can call the law at any moment.

ATV riders often follow the visible tracks of ATVs that have gone before them...ruts, bent grass, etc. If you can camouflage the tracks just as hikers do when they relocate a worn out hiking trail, you may discover that you will have less or no more ATV traffic because they will have to find a new way onto your land.

Put up gates and fences at the entrance points as a deterrent. Heavy logging chain connected to cemented iron posts is one solution. Snow fencing is another. Just be prepared if it gets torn down. This is where you will need the patience...

Install signs that say "Smile, you're being videotaped." Is there actually a video camera? Well, maybe not. But signs throughout the property may help. Reinforced planters, light posts and benches can increase visibility and create a human presence that is a deterrent.

Also, some trees and shrubs are, in fact, quite useful for reinforcing security. Check with your local service or consulting forester for ideas on the best plants to use, and remember to check with the Conservancy to determine if those plants are permitted by your easement.

And finally, think outside the box...you just might be the one to come up with a solution for everyone!

Participate in Environmental Research with the Lacawac Environmental Research and Education Consortium (LEREC) and the Conservancy



The Conservancy has partnered with the Lacawac Environmental Research and Education Consortium (LEREC) to contribute to environmental research projects in our region. Though Lacawac Sanctuary itself (a 545-acre forest and glacial lake preserve and a biological field station with laboratories and a lodge located in Lake Ariel, Pennsylvania) is a research site, the Consortium is also seeking other sites throughout our region to conduct collaborative environmental research.

Your conserved lands, both in Pennsylvania and New York, could serve as research sites for this important work, and the information collected will be used to help educate the public on environmental issues and conservation of our natural resources. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Amanda Subjin at 570-226-3164 x 2.



Native Species Spotlight

Black Gum Tree (*Nyssa sylvatica*)



This deciduous tree, also referred to as black tupelo, has glossy, dark green leaves in the summer and beautiful, bright fall foliage in varying shades of orange, red, and purple that appear in very early autumn. It typically grows between 30 and 80 feet tall and in North America may live for more than 650 years. It is found widely across the eastern United States.



Small white flowers—a great source of honey—appear in May and June, and a few months later, the bluish-black fruit is popular with many bird species and is an important food source for robins, cardinals, blue jays, woodpeckers, bluebirds, catbirds, and more. Mammals such as deer, black bear, raccoons, and foxes also eat the berries.

It grows in upland or wetland habitats and is often used as a landscaping tree. The wood has a variety of uses including furniture, veneer, plywood, and lumber for boxes or crates.

Photos and information from the Arbor Day Foundation (www.arborday.org).

Invasive Species Corner

Mile-a-Minute Vine (*Persicaria perfoliata*)

This invasive species, as its name implies, grows very quickly—up to 6 inches per day—as it forms barbed vines that densely cover other plants. These plants cannot get the sunlight they need to thrive, and mile-a-minute progressively stresses and weakens them until it kills them.

Mile-a-minute is native to India and was accidentally introduced to New York in 1930. Though it is not currently in the Upper Delaware River region, it is in both New York and Pennsylvania, and is continuing to spread. It prefers open areas such as along the edges of woods, meadows, and roadsides as well as wetlands and stream banks.

If you catch it early, hand removal of the small seedlings during the growing season can be an effective control.

Photos and information from the New York Invasive Species Clearinghouse (www.nyis.info).



Helping Find Home for the New England Cottontail

By Brian Nearing

That little brown rabbit with the white tail that inspired Peter Cottontail needs places to live and the federal government is looking for landowners willing to help out.

Immortalized in the popular Easter song, the New England cottontail has been in decline for years throughout the northeast and its habitat —so-called young forest of shrubs, brush and small trees — has disappeared as former farmlands reverted to mature forests.

With the native rabbit now uncommon enough to be listed as a candidate for the federal endangered species list, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working to reverse its decline by encouraging creation of more young forest where the cottontail can thrive, said Ted Kendziora, a biologist with the New England Cottontail Project.

As neglected farmlands regrew into forests and those forests matured, the population of New England cottontails thinned. More than 80 percent of their habitat disappeared over the past 50 years, according to the nonprofit Wildlife Management Institute.

"We convinced people back in the day to save the forest, and not to cut trees," said Kendziora. "But we never gave the speech on saving the young, transitional forest."

The project's goal is to create about 27,000 acres of new cottontail habitat across New England and eastern New York by tree cutting, native shrub planting and prescribed burns. So far, about 8,700 acres have been converted, including 13 acres at Cranberry Mountain Management Area in Putnam County, but more is needed, said Kendziora.



(Continued on page 7)



Landowner Perspective This newsletter is YOUR space!

Share your connections to the land with other LandLines newsletter readers. Send Amanda an email at conserve@delawarehighlands.org with your photos, journal entries, drawings, other artwork, or stories, and we'll share it here.

You'll be entered to **WIN** this stack of books to help you steward your lands.

Drawing December 1!



You're Invited!

Mark your calendar and please plan to join us for a very special event this November as we celebrate twenty years of conservation and education in the Upper Delaware River region. The Peace, Love, Land celebration and concert will feature a delicious farm-to-table dinner and cocktails, live music with local Americana band Little Sparrow with very special guests, an exciting raffle, and an optional complimentary visit to the Museum at Bethel Woods.

You—our landowners and conservation easement holders—are the heart of our organization and our community, and the evening would not be complete without you there to celebrate all that we have accomplished together for the lands and waters of our region.

Learn more and purchase your tickets at www.DelawareHighlands.org/newsevents.

Annual Property Visits

Monitoring all of your beautiful protected properties went smoothly this year, with the help of our dedicated volunteers (and their families)!

If you are interested in getting outdoors and helping out with monitoring visits next summer, send an email to monitor@delawarehighlands.org or call 570-226-3164 ext. 4 to reach our Monitoring Coordinator Jamie Bartholomew.

Thank you to all our volunteers for their assistance!



Keep in touch! Find us at <http://www.facebook.com/DelawareHighlandsConservancy>, www.DelawareHighlands.org, and on Twitter @DHConservancy.

