

RGS SKYLANDS CHAPTER NEWSLETTER---njgrouse.com

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Work Days, & Banquet meetings

On Sunday October 23 we held a work day at the flatbrook Wildlife Management Area in Walpack. It was good to see some new faces as well as an excellent turnout from those chapter members that regularly attend meetings. We dodged a bullet, several days of rain ended the night before the work day giving us a beautiful breezy autumn day in which to work. With the help available we made short work of 300 trees placed in cut areas to provide winter cover and food source. By continuing this practice we will hopefully encourage the desired species for a healthy forest to take hold while minimizing the effect of invasive species which can have negative impacts on forest wildlife. After finishing we enjoyed a great cookout put on by Jen DeSaye and Jean Funghini complete with London broil and sausage and peppers. Even though Jean couldn't attend personally she should receive a little extra credit as she got in from work at midnight and stayed up until 4 AM preparing food to send with her husband John. Thanks Jean . In a related topic to the workday, I have spent some time walking the areas we have planted with trees in the past, and although the results are mixed I have found that evergreens, Dogwoods, sumac, and Aspen seem to be achieving the most success as far as taking hold once planted. Aspen planted at Hainseville WMA are growing very well. I am sure some of the other species planted have been browsed down by deer, and others are difficult to identify buried in the brush a year later.

I have gone out grouse and Woodcock hunting a few times so far only pushing one grouse covert where I expected to find birds, resulting in 4 different grouse flushes in two hours. The other time was spent chasing woodcock which are now present in substantial numbers. It seems all the rain did not have the negative effect we all thought it might . Its too early to get a feel on grouse numbers I don't expect a huge difference from last years improvement but at high elevations severe winter storms of the last several years are starting to have some effect, with many down trees brush is beginning to grow where there was none and this can only mean good things for wildlife.

Our next meeting is Thursday Nov, 10th at the Lafayette house at 700 PM concerning the upcoming banquet and work days. Anyone may attend. I would like to remind all committee members to try to get donations for the banquet anywhere possible. There are many things to cover so if you want a voice you have to attend.