

RGS SKYLANDS CHAPTER NEWSLETTER---njgrouse.com

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LAST WEEK-I took an all day class to operate farm equipment on federal land. Like everything when dealing with US fish and Wildlife you must be certified before they will let you proceed. The result of this class will be that by the time woodcock season starts I will have cleared areas in front of all three Aspen regeneration areas located on the Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge. And although this will make it easier for hunters to get around the areas the work is not being done for that specific reason. The areas immediately surrounding the Aspen are heavily weeded matted and choked off from sunlight. Cutting these areas will provide shorter grasses to take hold giving woodcock a better area to both breed and feed in. it is also possible that by opening this area we may be able to expand the actual area covered by aspen. It is evident that the area covered by aspen ends abruptly where we laid down the old trees keeping vegetation down. Any area left untouched regenerated with weeds so thick and high aspen were not able to penetrate.

We will be conducting a chainsaw training course at the Wallkill River Nat. Wildlife Refuge sometime within the next several weeks. Anyone wishing to use a chain saw on federal land including the upcoming project at the Delaware Water Gap must have the certificate. I was told the class will be held on a weekend day so that as many people as possible can attend. We will have more information on this at our next meeting. I walked the Aspen cut we did last winter and regeneration has been very impressive. the results are Similar to the other cuts with clones several feet high.

The chapter has purchased safety gear to be used on workdays by anyone who needs to use it. We purchased 10 helmets 5 pairs of chaps 10 pairs of eyewear and a case of hearing protectors. The total spent was approximately 325.00 dollars. I recently walked the field in Hainseville WMA where we planted this past spring and it appears the majority of the trees did well. However the field is beginning to be over run by invasives and I would like to address getting rid of some of them with state officials. We will be using a new source for our seedlings from now on. The NJ State forest service has the seedlings we need to plant on public ground and I will be meeting with them to discuss this as soon as possible. If we pick up the trees in Jackson we should have better survival as opposed to having them shipped and sitting around for up to a week waiting to be planted. Our next meeting is Thursday October 11, at 7:00PM at the Lafayette house we will begin putting together the banquet, discuss where we can do better this year, make any changes, and pick dates for work days.

Thank You Jim DeSaye