

Kunjamuk Young Forest

Demonstration Project



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The Kunjamuk Young Forest Demonstration Project represents a unique interpretive opportunity, demonstrating how commercial timber harvesting can create young forest habitat for wildlife in a carefully planned, science-based, sustainable manner over many decades.

The Project area will be a place where people can visit, attend workshops, and learn how timber harvests can provide an ongoing supply of the young forest habitat required by many kinds of wildlife, including many Species of Greatest Conservation Need identified in New York's State Wildlife Action Plan.

Partners will install information kiosks and reach out to conservation groups and organizations with messages about young forest and how the habitat-creation effort in the Kunjamuk River corridor will be conducted.

About the Project

Lyme Adirondack Forest Company (an affiliate of the Lyme Timber Company) and the Wildlife Management Institute are cooperatively developing this demonstration project on a portion of Lyme's 239,000-acre ownership in the Adirondack region of New York. The project aims to show that a private timber company can achieve wildlife habitat goals through the use of traditional forest management practices without compromising economic returns.

Project timber harvests began in December 2015 on a 3,373-acre area along the Kunjamuk River on Lyme's 39,600-acre Speculator Tree Farm and Perkins Clearing tracts, north of the village of Speculator. By spring 2016 loggers will

Young forest is an important and ephemeral wildlife habitat that has been dwindling in New York State and across the entire Northeast for the last 50 years.

have harvested trees on approximately 100 acres. All harvest openings will be between 1 and 8 acres. Their shapes will vary and will tend to follow terrain features and forest stand boundaries. Streams, wetlands, vernal pools, and unique habitat features such as rock outcrops and large snag and den trees will be protected.

The harvest design complies with Adirondack Park Agency and state Wild and Scenic River requirements. The project area will be open for hiking, hunting, canoeing, fishing, wildlife viewing, snowmobiling, and mountain biking

The ongoing timber harvests will set the stage for the lush regrowth of young forest, including trees, shrubs, and other plants that offer enhanced food and cover to wildlife.

Lyme will harvest timber on approximately 375 acres in the project area every 10 years. Over the next 70 years, ongoing harvests will result in 10 percent of the area being in a young forest growth stage at all times. Individual harvest areas will remain as young forest for approximately 10 years, after which they will naturally become older forest, which no longer has the dense structure needed by many kinds of wildlife. After 70 years, trees in the first cuts will have grown to a size where they can be harvested again.

Map to be inserted

The 10 percent young forest goal parallels the NYS Department of Conservation's Young Forest Initiative (<http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/104218.html>), in which NYS-DEC plans to transform 10 percent of the forested acres on select Wildlife Management Areas into young forest, primarily through commercial timber harvesting. NYS-DEC is also a partner in the Kunjamuk Young Forest Demonstration Project. The Speculator Tree Farm and Perkins Clearings tracts are open and accessible to the public thanks to a conservation easement purchased by NYS-DEC.

In this living laboratory, biologists will monitor wildlife populations to learn how they respond to the increase in young forest in the Kunjamuk River corridor.

Timber harvesting on the project will support the region's economy by providing jobs for loggers and truckers and raw materials for wood-consuming mills. The harvests will create age and tree-species diversity, helping to keep the forest healthy and resilient.

Timbering operation on all Lyme Adirondack properties are certified to standards of both the Sustainable Forestry Initiative and the Forest Stewardship Council. Sustainable forestry operations protect water quality and wildlife habitat and ensure the long-term maintenance of the forest resource in an environmentally sound manner.

Wildlife Needs Young Forest

Many species of wildlife need young forest. (See www.youngforest.org for more information.) Birds that nest in young forest include the American woodcock, ruffed grouse, alder flycatcher, Canada warbler, whip-poor-will, and white-throated sparrow, all Species of Greatest Conservation Need in New York.

Many birds that nest in more-mature forests, such as scarlet tanagers and wood thrushes, take their fledglings into young forest in late summer. Young forest is generally less than 10 feet tall, and amply stocked with insects and fruits. The density of the habitat, with its many upright stems, protects the young, inexperienced birds from aerial predators such as hawks. Other wildlife that will use the young forest habitat include snowshoe hares, deer, bobcats, black bears, and wild turkeys.



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