

ESF F.O.R.C.E.S.

A Model For Engaging College Students in Natural Resource Stewardship Projects



Northeast Natural History Conference
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Central & Finger Lakes Regions



Overview

- Natural Resource Stewardship in NYS Parks
- Volunteer F.O.R.C.E.S. as a model program
- Review of program accomplishments
- What are the keys to success with student volunteer projects?
- Future projects and program vision...

What is Natural Resource Stewardship?

- Resource protection and restoration
- Monitoring of natural resource conditions
- Research and habitat management
- Environmental education and outreach



Natural Resource Stewardship in NYS Parks

Protecting our native species



Photo – Steven Campbell

Chittenango ovate amber snail



American hart's-tongue fern

Federally threatened species are found in both Chittenango Falls and Clark Reservation State Parks.

Natural Resource Stewardship in NYS Parks

Defending our parks against non-native species



Invasive plant removals make excellent volunteer service projects.

Natural Resource Stewardship in NYS Parks

Sharing knowledge with the next generation



Volunteer F.O.R.C.E.S.

- Friends Of Recreation, Conservation and Environmental Stewardship
- Model for engaging park patrons and partners in volunteer service projects
- Does not replace park staff but rather enhances our current services and programs
- ESF F.O.R.C.E.S. recognizes the contributions of SUNY-ESF community to our NYS Parks

Thanks to generous contributions of the John Marsellus Family for funding this program!!!



Creating Opportunities for Students



Current and future employees at NYS Parks!



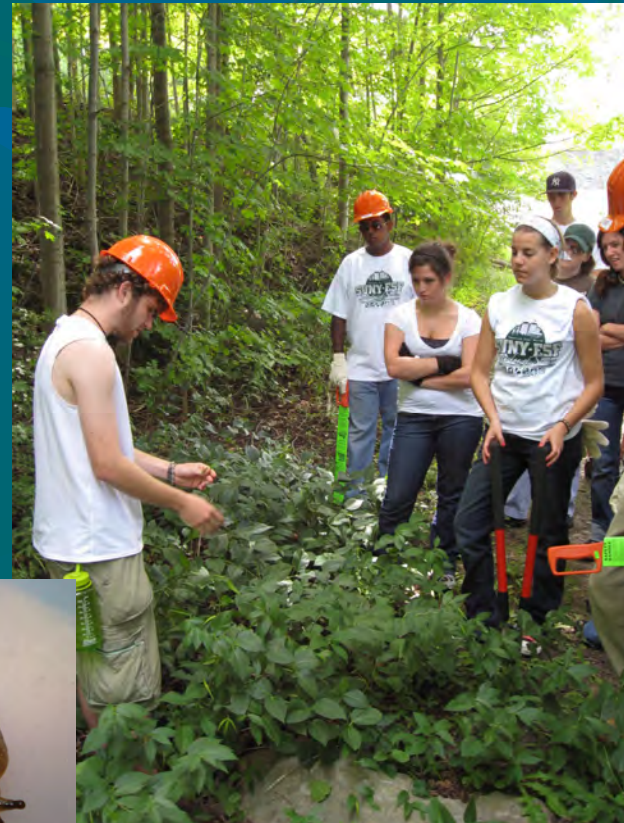
Providing outdoor classrooms



***Saturday of Service* for incoming ESF freshmen**

ESF F.O.R.C.E.S. Projects

Swallow-wort control at Chittenango Falls to protect
Chittenango ovate amber snail (COAS)

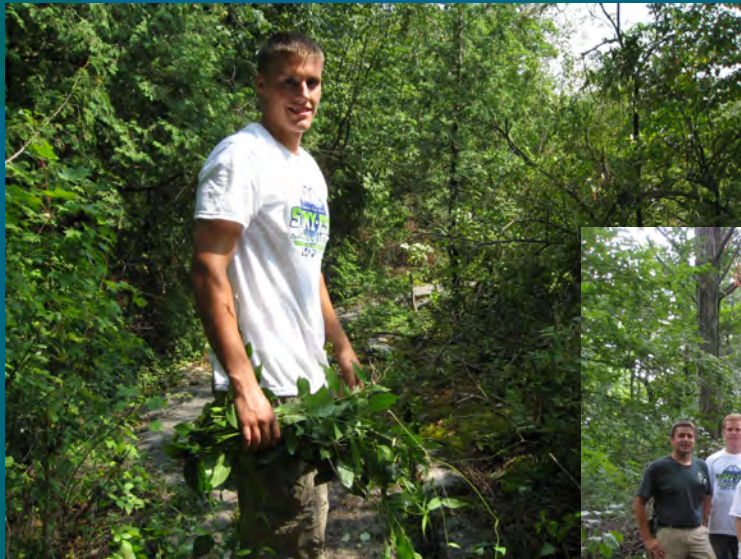


Only known population
of COAS in the world!



ESF F.O.R.C.E.S. Projects

Swallow-wort and buckthorn control at Clark Reservation to protect the American hart's-tongue fern (AHTF)



Invasive Species Removal Projects

ESF Saturday of Service – 3 years ... 3 parks!



ESF F.O.R.C.E.S. Projects

Week of Service with Stewards of Syracuse, ESF Outreach



ESF F.O.R.C.E.S. Projects

Spreading the word about invasive insects at the NYS Fair



Making bug masks
with the kids – little
and big...



In 2010, 30 students from both ESF and SU participated!!!



ESF F.O.R.C.E.S. Projects

Removal of Japanese stiltgrass and swallow-wort at Selkirk Shores

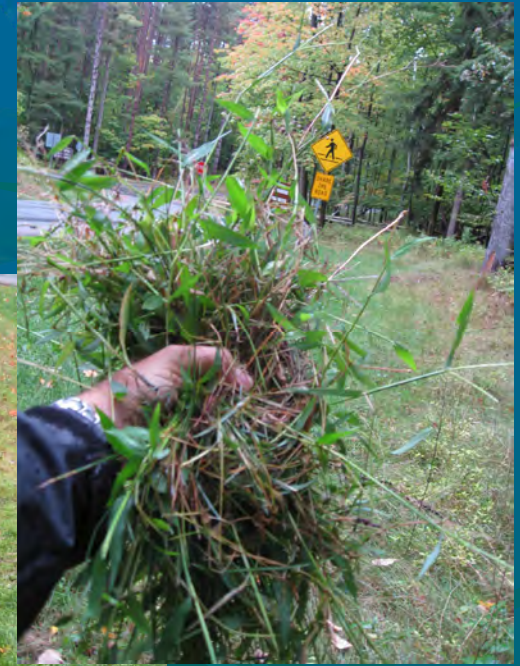


Year 1

Our fearless
leader Sandy
Bonanno



Removal of Japanese stiltgrass and swallow-wort at Selkirk Shores



Year 2

Thank you! – from Gordon Betts, Park Manager

Removal of Japanese stiltgrass and swallow-wort at Selkirk Shores



Over 80 % reduction in swallow-wort since 2008 and one major patch of stiltgrass is nearly completely gone...it is working!!!

Year 3

ESF F.O.R.C.E.S. Projects

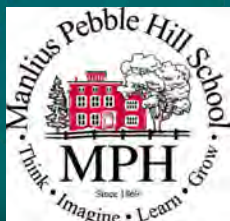
Environmental Field Days at Green Lakes



Over 900 students from 14 different schools attended!

Manlius Pebble Hill School Stewardship Days

- Invasive plant removal
- Native plant garden



Manlius Pebble Hill School Stewardship Days



- Composting
- Recycling



ESF F.O.R.C.E.S. Projects

ESF Woodsmen's Team at Beechwood State Park



In an effort to mitigate insect pest problem, over 150 orchard trees were cut down in just one day!!!



Celebration!!!

Wint Aldrich, OPRHP
Deputy Commissioner for
Historic Preservation, was
our guest speaker.



Since 2008, over
300 students have
participated!!!



- At the February 2010 recognition event—Erica Brown, (center right) was named the Outstanding Undergraduate Volunteer and Matt Brincka (center left) was named the Outstanding Graduate Student Volunteer for 2009.
- For 2011- Jill Trunko (undergraduate) & Carrie Oberholtzer (graduate)

ESF F.O.R.C.E.S. – 2011 Projects

- Continue educational programs - Manlius Pebble Hill School Stewardship Days and Environmental Field Days at Green Lakes
- Firewood outreach and bluebird houses at NYS Park at the Fair
- Year 4 of Japanese stiltgrass and swallow-wort control at Selkirk Shores
- Year 4 of *Saturday of Service* & swallow-wort control to protect COAS at Chittenango Falls
- Continue to grow and involve more students and partners...
- More student-led initiatives
e.g., promotional brochures, displays and events

**What does
F.O.R.C.E.S.
stand for?**

Friends of Recreation,
Conservation and
Environmental Stewardship



A model for engaging park patrons and partners in volunteer service projects.

We will never replace our park staff members, but rather work with them to enhance our current park services and programs.



State University of New York
College of Environmental Science and Forestry

Do you love New York State parks and wish to keep them looking this beautiful?



Get yourself involved in Natural Resource Stewardship!

What does that entail?

- Resource Protection and Restoration
- Monitoring of Natural Resource Conditions
- Research and Habitat Management
- Environmental Education and Outreach



**Volunteer
with
F.O.R.C.E.S.
through
SUNY ESF**



A great way to get more involved with your school, receive volunteer hours and help protect the surrounding natural communities!



Brochure created by students in
EFB 417 – Interpretive Design



Keys to a Successful Program

- Support from your organization's leadership and employees
- Designating a coordinator
- Match student interests with your projects
- Identify student leaders and those capable of long-term involvement
- Identify the key person (e.g., service learning coordinator) at students' institution
- Seek outside funding – be creative!
- “Ooze” enthusiasm for your projects and mentoring your student participants!!!

Vision for the future...

- Expand to more SUNY and other academic institutions in Central & Finger Lakes regions
- Project coordination by students and institutional staff/faculty working directly with Park Managers
- Create network of student “ambassadors” and promote resource sharing and partnership
- Seek additional funding and contributions from other partners
- Explore agency’s capacity to support F.O.R.C.E.S. program in other regions

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*Be a part of our **FORCES!!!***