

# FISH CREEK UPDATE

## Molpus Active on Property Since Acquisition Last Summer

In 2008, Molpus Timberlands Management, LLC. harvested approximately 800 acres, cutting about 420,000 board feet of saw logs and 11,400 cords of pulpwood in the area adjacent to the Camp Four Road on the south end of their property.

Recreation leases have been sent out and were due prior to the new lease year of July 1. Nearly 95% of the available land to be leased is being hunted by organized hunt clubs this year. There are two small parcels available for leasing for any people who are interested.

Forty Deer Management Assistant Permits (DMAPs) were issued this past hunting season in an effort to regulate the unbalanced buck to doe ratio quite evident on the property. Many clubs have committed themselves to the philosophy of Quality Deer Management (QDM), the primary goal being to grow a healthier deer herd and, specifically, improve the quality of the bucks taken from the area. Thirty-two of these tags were filled this past season. An upcoming New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) report will detail the impact that this program and the deep snows had on the Tug Hill deer herd.

Molpus Timberlands Mgt, LLC. is cooperating with DEC on locating new gates and parking areas in compliance with the "Draft" Recreation Plan for the "Hill".



## Signage Information for Lessees

Many club representatives leasing hunting rights from Molpus Timberlands Management, LLC or The Nature Conservancy within the East Branch of Fish Creek Conservation Easement lands have expressed an interest in posting their club's leased land boundaries with signs conforming to the easements. Here is an example of the minimum wording that might be used on an 11" x 11" sign along the boundary of a leased area:

**POSTED**  
**No Hunting**  
**No Trespassing**  
**From the Next to Last Saturday in October**  
**Through**  
**the First Sunday in December**  
**(Big Game (Rifle) Season)**

### CLUB'S NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION

The wording must cover a minimum of 80 square inches (about 9" x 9") of the sign. To be legally posted, signs should be posted at no more than 660 feet apart and on each side of each corner. They should be high enough to be seen in winter.

Special use restrictions that are listed on the TNC/DEC Mad River Headwaters and Page Pond Compartments' signs may be listed, should the club so choose. The special use restrictions listed on the Mad River Headwaters and Page Pond Compartments' sign are:

- No Public Hunting or Trapping
- No Public Access During Big Game (Rifle) Season
- Public Motor Vehicle Use on Designated Routes Only
- No Public Snowmobiling
- No Public Use of ATVs
- No Use of Horses or Similar Animals
- Designated Zones May Be Closed During Logging

Signs that are inappropriate, restricting public recreational rights during the wrong time of year or in the wrong area will be removed if observed. An example of an inappropriate sign, restricting public recreational rights would be one that states, "Trespassing for any purpose at any time of year is strictly forbidden," placed in such a manner as to restrict access on roads or trails designated for public use.

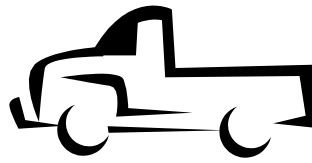
Clubs are allowed to post a five acre area around their camp structure to prevent trespassing for any purpose whatsoever. The location of the five acre camp envelopes cannot be configured to restrict access to roads or trails that are otherwise available for DEC and/or public use. The final camp and five acre envelope locations must be agreed to by both DEC and Molpus or TNC respectively.

For more information, or if you have any questions about signage, please contact the landowner from whom you lease the property, or the NYSDEC.

### Nature Conservancy Continues Payments to Municipalities

Early each calendar year, The Nature Conservancy contacts East Branch of Fish Creek watershed towns to review the payments municipalities can expect in lieu of taxes each year pertaining to TNC's properties in the watershed. Payments are determined using a formula agreed upon after TNC took ownership of its properties. The most TNC's property tax exemption may impact a town is 0.5%, after which TNC pays full taxes on any additional properties it may acquire.

As every year, TNC sent a letter early in 2009 to each town supervisor detailing the calculated amounts they can expect to receive, offering to meet so as to discuss any issues or concerns. All payments have been agreed upon for 2009.



### Road Work Update for Summer 2009

Molpus Timberlands Management, LLC reports that road work will begin shortly on the **Camp Four Road beginning at the Gallo Road and continuing north four miles to above Camp Five. Expect delays!** Everything that can be done will be done to keep the road open, yet in some instances there may be long delays when replacing culverts or bridge decking, so be prepared.

The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation plans to continue rehabilitating the **G&W road**, as funding becomes available. In fall of 2008, work was done on the first section of the road from Tabolt's Corners to the start of the East Branch of Fish Creek Conservation Easement Lands.

In 2009, the season's work will have two different components. In order to facilitate expected future work, the **bridge going over the tributary stream of the East Branch of Fish Creek** will be rebuilt to allow for construction equipment passage. Work will be done rehabilitating the road from where the project ended last fall to the bridge. **The road will be temporarily closed past the North-South Road when bridge work is being completed.** It will remain open during the rest of the road work, but there may be some delays when culverts are being replaced.

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*As you probably well know,  
the roads need this work desperately.*

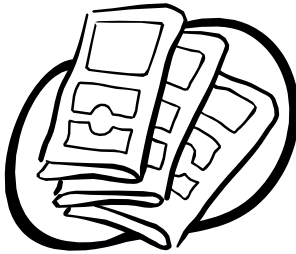
**Thank you in advance for your patience!**

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## Recreation Access Maps Available from Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust

Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust worked with the State, TNC and GMO Renewable Resources in 2007 to produce a guide for those wishing to use the East Branch of Fish Creek Easement Lands and East Branch of Fish Creek State Forest. The publication contains color maps, and provides information about what road access and types of activities are allowed where, by whom, and at what times of year. Free copies are available from Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust, P.O. Box 6063, Watertown, NY 13601, phone: 315-779-8240, email: [thtomorr@northnet.org](mailto:thtomorr@northnet.org).



## Organization/Agency Contacts

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### ***The Nature Conservancy***

**Central & Western NY Chapter Office**

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### ***NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation***

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### ***Tug Hill Commission***

Linda Gibbs and/or Katie Malinowski, Watertown

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### ***Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust***

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315-779-8240

## Staff Changes at The Nature Conservancy

Michelle Peach Lang, Tug Hill Project Director for The Nature Conservancy's Central and Western NY Chapter, is leaving her position to pursue a Ph.D. at S.U.N.Y. College of Environmental Science and Forestry this fall. The Nature Conservancy has posted the opening, and is undergoing a process to find a successor soon. We wish Michelle much success in her future endeavors.

### **Shared Goals of the East Branch of Fish Creek Working Group** **(From April 1997 Report)**

1. To maintain a high-quality, sustainable environment for the health, safety and enjoyment of our children, our children's children, and successive generations.
2. To provide for the protection of the core forest's long-term timber productivity, water quality, and overall natural resource and habitat health, as well as traditional hunting, trapping, fishing and recreational uses.
3. To provide for resource protection in a way that avoids a shift in the property tax burden to local taxpayers, prevents a negative impact on local job availability, and sustains the economic viability of area communities.
4. To help spread the costs of protection over the many beneficiaries at the local, regional and state level.
5. To maintain mixed ownership of most of the eastern core forest, and find ways to provide for recreational access in a way that does not threaten natural resource quality or adversely affect private property rights.
6. To encourage continued private land stewardship through voluntary compliance with environmental standards and methods, such as timber harvest guideline

