



# New England News

Fall 2009

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## National News

### *Shawnee State Forest Uses RGS Trail Mix for Forest Trails*

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry recently re-opened recreation trails on the Shawnee State Forest lands. RGS donated our wildlife seed mix, *Trail Mix*, for use in reseeded some of the trails.

Seeding of the trails was accomplished in order to rehabilitate areas impacted by an April wildfire in the forest.

### *New Equipment Will Enhance RGS Habitat Work*

RGS recently purchased two trucks and two trailers for use with the ASV/Terex PT-100 forestry loaders in the Midwest and the CAT loader in the Northeast. The new trucks and trailer will allow for the transport of the equipment to various locations for habitat work.

One truck and trailer will be used in the Midwest and the other in the Northeast. An additional truck is being supplied by the US Fish and Wildlife Service for use in Wisconsin. The remaining truck is also for use in the Northeast, and an additional trailer will be purchased very soon.

The new equipment was purchased with funds from several recently obtained grants.

### *California Lawsuit Ends in Settlement Unfavorable for Healthy Forest Management*

A recent Northern California lawsuit ended with a settlement by the Pacific Gas and Electric Company agreeing to pay \$14.75 million as recompense for the 1999 Pendola fire in Plumas and Tahoe National Forests. The fire started due to a pine tree that fell onto a power distribution line.

Allegations that the fire caused damage to the lands, harm to the ecological habitat and loss of timber ended in the resulting settlement.

The decision is viewed by many to be a blow to conservation groups because fire, which is a natural act of nature that allows for forest renewal, was viewed as destructive.

## ***Wildlife Bill Introduced to Congress***

### **Bill requires lengthy species monitoring, may be unrealistic**

In June this year Wisconsin Representative Ron Kind presented “American’s Wildlife Heritage Act” (HR 2807) to Congress. The bill, though ostentatiously written to sustain wildlife and plants on federal public lands, may actually prove too cumbersome to be effective.

Requirements in the bill include overwhelming obligations placed upon federal land management agencies to monitor every species that may be impacted by a proposed activity. The manpower necessary to implement this requirement is beyond the current expertise available to these agencies, and there is no provision for additional funding. The large quantities of money that would be spent attempting to follow these guidelines would, perhaps, be better spent in accomplishing much needed habitat work on federal lands.

RGS intends to work with Representative Kind and other members of Congress to modify the language of the bill to better reflect more reasonable expectations.

## ***Regional News***

I hope everyone has had an enjoyable summer or, as a minimum, have not been washed away or rusted.

I closed my last newsletter by asking you to consider joining us at the annual Ruffed Grouse Society New England Sporting Clays Championship at Addieville East Farm in Rhode Island on the 31<sup>st</sup> of May. Many of you did join us, not necessarily at my urging, and we had a great turnout, 95 shooters, and a great time. I might add that the shoot day was the last dry day that I remember this year! Please keep it in mind to join us for an even bigger event next year. The shoot was made immensely successful by the contributions and active participation of two of our board members, Steve Quill and John Oliver, several RGS Life Sponsors in the region and the management and staff of Addieville. I believe that Master Sporting Clays Designer and manager Jack O’Brien probably doubled our attendance by reaching out to his contacts. I would like to thank as well Ed McGovern, president of the RI chapter, and his group of volunteers for their help in making the event a success. For those of you thinking of attending that event next year, don’t worry that we are going to overwhelm the facility; I stopped by a few weeks ago on Friday of a three day shoot and Jack told me they had 360 shooters registered for Saturday. That said, I’d sure like to try to overwhelm them next year!! The date is not yet firm, but will likely be the last Sunday in May. Mark your calendars!!!

We are making progress on rejuvenating RGS presence in Connecticut and establishing at least one more chapter in Maine. In addition, there is not a chapter in New England that would not welcome more active participants. If you would like to participate in any manner, please contact me and I will put you in touch with those leading the charge in your area. I think we have become somewhat staid in our approach to RGS goals in our region. It is more than banquets and other forms of fundraisers. It is even more than habitat projects that RGS, nationally and locally, can implement. We REALLY need to raise the awareness of the entire New England population to the need for SOUND FOREST MANAGEMENT as it relates to habitat issues. Fundraisers are certainly a necessary part and banquets are a cornerstone there. We also need to look at any chapter activities as opportunities for raising awareness to habitat needs. At banquets, we often have presentations on habitat related issues. That is good, but to

some extent, we're "preaching to the choir." We also need to reach out to those who have no knowledge of RGS and our goals. Publicity to promote events will, in some cases, provide an opportunity to promote habitat awareness as well. That would be even more likely if we were promoting a habitat demonstration or a habitat project field day/work day. This, of course brings us around to local habitat projects.

RGS is currently reviewing our business model with an eye toward revisions that may be required to carry us forward. One of the key issues is maintaining and improving the ability of chapters to raise funds for local projects including habitat projects. While it is recognized that many such projects will be of a scale such that they are not likely to have a significant impact on the overall ruffed grouse or woodcock population on their own merit, their greatest value may be as a vehicle to raise habitat awareness in the community.

October is right around the corner. I wish all of you a wonderful hunting season.

Boyd Cooke

[rgs@ruffedgrousesociety.org](mailto:rgs@ruffedgrousesociety.org)

***Welcome to new RGS Corporate Sponsor Connecticut Shotgun. They donated a 28-gauge RBL that will be used in an upcoming raffle or banquet.***

***Congratulations to our three 2009 National Raffle Winners: Jim Farrell from Altoona, Pennsylvania won the Dream Hunt, Andrew Lukashuk of Sussex, New York won a \$1000 Cabela's gift certificate and Kristin Dew of Elgin, Illinois won a pair of custom Russell Moccasin boots.***