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NEWS FROM THE PEQUANNOCK RIVER COALITION

Logging Debate Continues

January 4, 2012 - Below are a pair of articles on the continuing debate over the logging bill. We are pleased but not surprised that the New Jersey Audubon Society shares our views on this bill, since they are the most level-headed and knowledgeable group on regional conservation. PRC did not set out to be controversial on this, but we have to speak from knowledge, not sentiment.

The so-called experts like the professor who said "There is no shortage of open habitats in and around the forests of northern and central New Jersey" should visit our watershed. Open habitats are quite rare here. Even in areas of the state where agricultural land is more common, there is a huge difference between a cornfield and a grove of young aspen.

Folks who spend a lot of time in our woodland note the serious decline in those species that need young forest and open areas, while seeing abundance in others that require mature forest. Of the 31 species of birds listed as threatened or endangered in NJ, only 4 prefer older forest while 10 species need open country or young forest. In a recent study the US Forest Service noted that these young forests decreased from 54 percent of timberland in 1972 to just 13 percent in 1999. And in the 12 years since then the trend has continued.

In summary, there needs to be more balance. The knee-jerk opposition to carefully managed cutting is a backward attitude and one that will cost us in the long run. We see this as habitat restoration that pays for itself. In this economic climate, what could be better?

The Record Article:

http://www.northjersey.com/news/136566708_Plan_for_logging_in_N_J_spurs_heated_debate.html?page=all

Suburban Trends Article:

http://www.northjersey.com/recreation/136519463_Logging_on_state_lands_stirs_up_passion_throughout_region.html?page=all

Thanks,

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