

Somers Land Trust Angle Fly Live Tree Management Strategy January 3, 2010

The Somers Land Trust (SLT) Tree Management Strategy is designed to preserve trees that are native to the northeast United States or are considered specimen trees in the Angle Fly Preserve. This strategy was developed using the forest management guidance received from Mr. Andy Hubbard, DEP / Watershed Agricultural Council [WAC] Forester for the east-of-Hudson Region. This strategy focuses on protecting existing native and specimen trees, the cutting of selected trees to promote the growth of the most desirable native and specimen trees, the cutting of diseased, insect or weather weakened trees and the removal of hazardous trees. All cutting will be part of a WAC-approved and funded forestry project.

Where appropriate, cut trees will be left on the ground to provide habitat and maintain natural forest conditions. Some of the cut wood may be used for other purposes on the property for trail building and benches. No wood will be removed from the property.

Protection and health of the native trees is critical to the successful management of the Angle Fly Preserve. Native trees help maintain the biodiversity of the animal, insect and bird populations at Angle Fly. Healthy native forests also provide important ecosystem services such as water filtration and mitigation of storm-water runoff.

Cutting alien invasive trees:

The most abundant and pernicious invasive tree at the Angle Fly Preserve is the Norway Maple. There will be a large-scale effort to cut as many Norway Maples as possible. Norway Maples are particularly damaging to the native tree population because they grow rapidly, leaf out early in the spring and retain their leaves late into the fall, creating a dense canopy that prevents light from getting to the other native trees. Mr. Hubbard has indicated that we should cut as many Norway Maples as possible to protect the other Angle Fly Preserve trees and provide an improved environment for new native trees to germinate. In addition other varieties of non native or non specimen alien trees will be cut when they pose a treat to the native tree population.

Protection of most desirable trees:

Mr. Hubbard has indicated we should cut and remove selected less desirable trees when they encroach on a more desirable tree. A more desirable tree would be identified as one that provides the greatest benefit to support the forest ecosystem, for example native sugar maple. Selection would be based on type of tree, size of tree, expected longevity of the tree and the forest transition stage. The least desirable tree would be removed.

Diseased, insect or weather weakened trees:

The trees in Angle Fly are constantly under attack from disease, insects, weather, deer and humans. The life expectancy of severely distressed trees is limited and could damage other native trees. These trees will be selectively cut and when needed removed.

Hazardous trees:

From time to time trees may become a hazard to visitors or workers at Angle Fly Preserve. These trees will be cut and when necessary removed.

Tree cutting and removal process:

To protect the trees at Angle Fly Preserve tree cutting and removal will be done under the guidance of one of the following people, SLT President (currently Michael Barnhart), the SLT Director of Operation (currently Bob MacGregor) or the Somers Superintendent of Parks and Recreation (currently Steve Ralston) or his designee. Most cutting will be done by a selected group of SLT volunteers but in selected situation were safety or protection of other property is required, professional volunteer tree services will be used. This work will be done under the guidance of the above listed people.

Re-planting native trees:

Plans will be developed to replace cut trees with native sapling trees and shrubs were appropriate. Special attention will be made to protect the new sapling trees from deer whenever possible. The re-planting effort will improve the overall health of the forest.