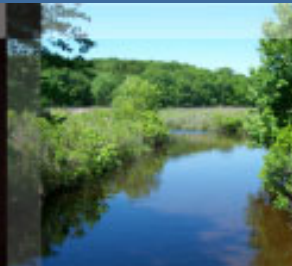




# Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection



Connecticut Department of  
**ENERGY &  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION**

# Housatonic Meadows State Park

January 6, 2022  
Housatonic Meadows State Park  
Virtual Public Meeting



Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

# Meeting Outline

- Hazard Tree Removal Background
- Forestry Assessment
- Plans for Park Enhancements
- Lessons Learned
- Public Comments



# Hazard Tree Removal: Statewide

DEEP has the responsibility to manage state lands across Connecticut

- We welcome an estimated 13 million annual visitors including 280,000 campers
- Significant increase in visitation across the state as a result of COVID, including increases in visitation to Housatonic Meadows State Park particularly during the summer

Why we work to mitigate hazard trees on state-owned lands

- Various stressors have contributed to many hazards among the tens of millions of trees on state land.
- Fatalities and other injuries due to falling trees have taken place
- 2018, statewide initiative began to identify and remediate hazard trees, particularly from high use areas
- Hazard tree evaluation and identification criteria were developed to be implemented by agency field staff, who have been trained in the use of these criteria.
- Conservative approach to hazard tree identification developed
- As of December 2021, over 18,000 hazard trees have been removed of an estimated 23,000 identified thus far across DEEP properties.



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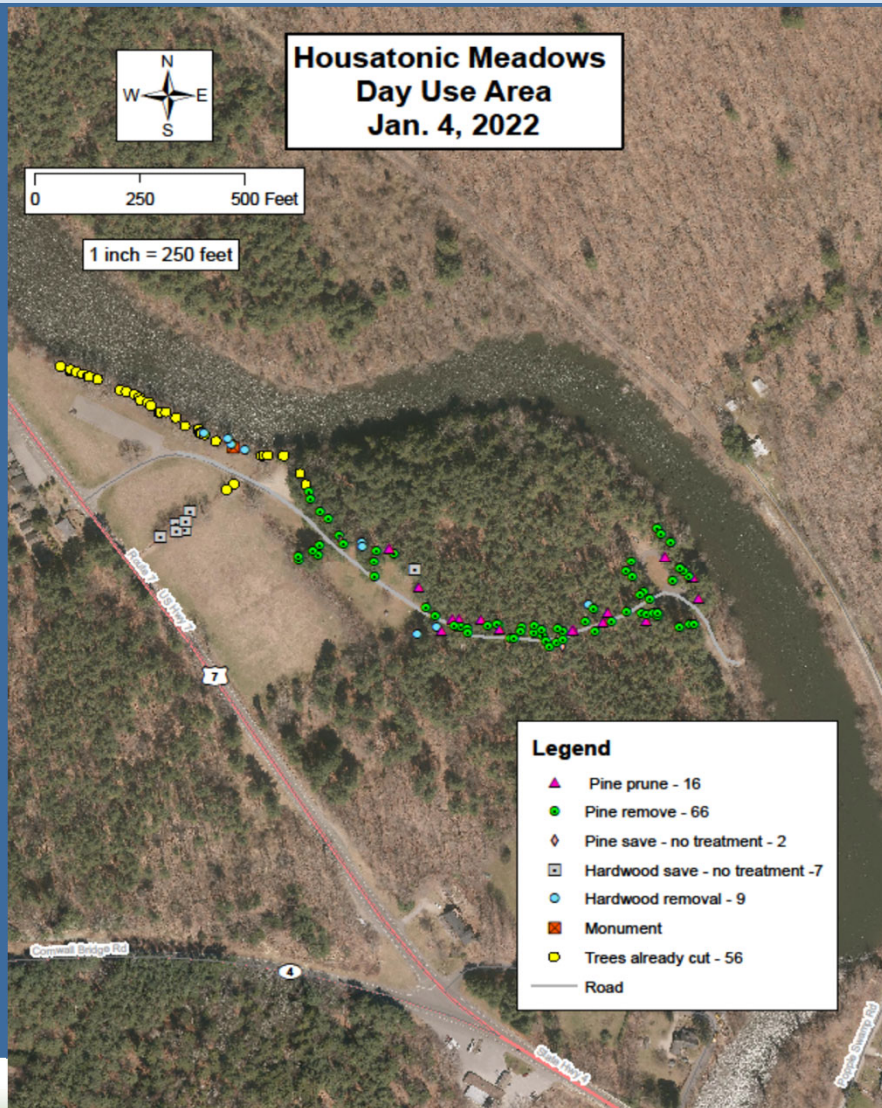
# Hazard Tree Removal: Housatonic Meadows

## Marking and removal of hazard trees at Housatonic Meadows SP

- Fall of 2021 - the Park Supervisor marked the hazard trees utilizing the evaluation criteria that had been established by the Department.
- Current procedures do not include public notice or outreach, and none took place in this instance
  - Evaluating this issue closely and intend to amend our procedures to provide greater transparency regarding our work related to hazard trees
- November 11, a state contractor began removal of marked hazard trees .
- November 15, work paused following public concern and outreach from public officials
- DEEP committed to a further evaluation of the remaining marked trees prior to continuation of the removal effort.



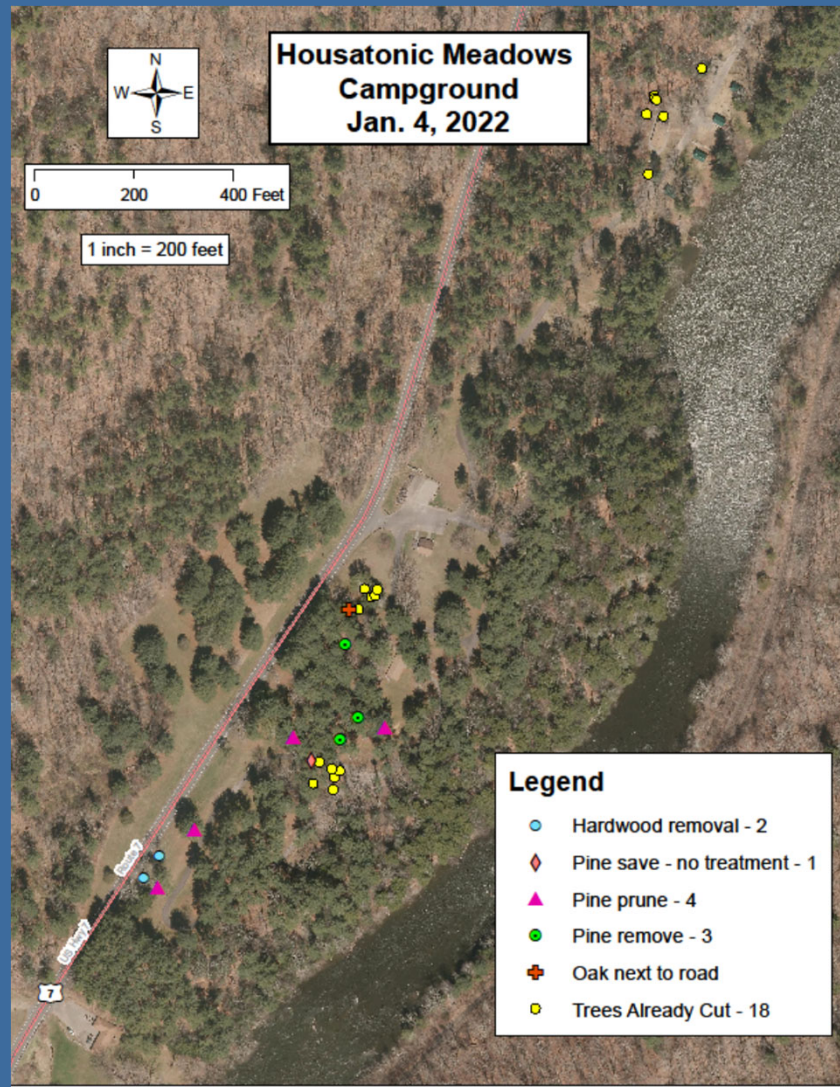
# Hazard Tree Removal: Re-Assessment



Pine prune - 16  
Pine remove - 66  
Pine save - no treatment - 2  
Hardwood save - no treatment - 7  
Hardwood removal - 9  
Trees already cut - 56



# Hazard Tree Removal – Re-Assessment & Next Steps



Pine save - no treatment - 1  
Pine prune - 4  
Pine remove - 3  
Hardwood removal - 2  
Trees Already Cut - 18



# White Oak by Entrance to Campground



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# Riparian Zone Restoration

- Riparian zone reviewed by an EP Fisheries Biologist 2 from the Habitat Conservation and Enhancement Program
- Simplicity of the channel alignment and remaining vegetation, the bank is sufficiently stable to negate need for intrusive stabilization
  - Retain trees/root masses adjacent to the streambank to deflect lateral energy and provide structure for holding/supporting fishes
  - Consider installing engineered log structure from repurposed logs for habitat enhancement
- Riparian zone (area of removed oaks) would benefit from:
  - Re-Planting with native trees (e.g., Red Oak, Red Maple, Sycamore)
  - Install wildlife plantings to enhance riparian buffer and discourage unsustainable footpaths to the river
  - Install sustainable access points to river channel
  - Control invasive species



# Summary & Lesson Learned

- Communication
- Process Improvements
- Enhancements to Park



# Public Comment – One Hour

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Raise your hand using the emoji icon.
- You will be in a queue and called upon.
- You will be unmuted and given 3 min to comment.
- You may also submit your comments to: [deep.hmsp.comments@ct.gov](mailto:deep.hmsp.comments@ct.gov)

