

White Pine Tour (en français) at the Canadian Ecology Centre

By John Pineau

From December 7th to 9th, the Canadian Ecology Centre – Forestry Research Partnership, with plenty of help from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources - Southern Science and Information Section hosted a special tour focusing on the regeneration and management of white pine. In total,



22 people participated, including six representatives from both regional and provincial levels of the Quebec Ministry of Natural Resources (Ministère des Ressources Naturelles de la Faune et des Parcs). The tour was delivered entirely in French, and spanned sites in Quebec and Ontario, with visits to several locations in the Nipissing Forest near Mattawa. A stop at the Petawawa Research Forest was also included. The purpose of the tour was to bring about a better understanding of the forestry practices available to successfully regenerate and manage white pine. Specific objectives included providing field visits to white pine management and research sites, allowing interaction between the practitioners and scientists involved with white pine management and research, and facilitating discussion of specific white pine management practices, the rationale behind these practices, and their relative success.

“Our tour allowed for comparison of the different guidelines and approaches for white pine management in Ontario and Quebec,” said Annie Morin, Extension Biologist with the Forestry Research Partnership. “Ontario is successfully regenerating white pine in many jurisdictions, and people from Quebec industry and government are excited by what they saw. They may want to be able to have more options in their guidelines in Quebec.”

Eastern white pine is a socially important native tree species in Ontario and Quebec. Its wide ecological niche allows it to dominate a range of sites. White pine growth rates and high quality wood fibre make it a valuable timber species and white pine habitats host a great variety of animals and plants. These forests are also an important component of outdoor recreation. Past over-cutting and poor regeneration efforts have generally decimated white pine dominated ecosystems across its range. Subsequent fire suppression policies decreased white pine's competitive advantage over other tree species by removing the catalyst for pine reproduction. The accidental introduction of blister rust to



North America about 100 years ago further limited survival. As a result of this history, various management approaches for white pine have evolved; however recent research initiatives are beginning to demonstrate what methods work best for successfully regenerating and restoring white pine forests.

“There is some excellent white pine research taking place in Ontario and Quebec,” said Annie. “The Canadian Ecology Centre – Forestry Research Partnership is particularly proud of our involvement in the White Pine Competition Study at McConnell Lake with Dr. Doug Pitt of the Canadian Forest Service, and of the work being done on Meridian Road in the Petawawa Research Forest with our own Dr. Darwin Burgess. The tour included these sites, and this helped the participants to really see what works and what doesn’t work for regenerating white pine.”