

Forestry Field Camps at the CEC
By Nancy Young and John Wright

During this fall season the FRP and CEC staff were kept busy with the various college and university field camps coming through to learn about forestry, geomatics, and environmental protection. The CEC is a great location for all of these students to learn about the Great Lakes St. Lawrence forest and the management practices that occur within it. The FRP promotes forestry education and initiatives to increase forestry enrollment by providing in-kind contributions to the CEC for these field camps and assistance in organizing the annual Teachers' Tours.

The Sir Sandford Fleming College forestry technician students were the first to arrive in late August/ early September for their 3rd annual fall field camp at the CEC. This year over 80 students in their second year of the technician program took part in the week long field camps. During the action packed days they did a lot of field work/training with chainsaws, brushsaws, and other forestry equipment, as well as field sampling, tool maintenance, forest measurements, tree marking, etc. The CEC even got a new carved wooden bear out of the deal!

Next up were the 23 students in their 4th year of the Forestry degree program at Lakehead University. This is the 3rd year that this group has come down from Thunder Bay to learn about forestry field practices, policies, and management in the Great Lakes St. Lawrence. During the week they took in a forest management planning seminar, learned about forest certification, tree marking, and native involvement in forestry, as well as field tours in Algonquin Park, the Petawawa Research Forest, and FRP project sites on Olig rd. As a student in the first year of this program myself, it was great to finally appreciate the amount of effort the FRP, CEC, and all of the partners put into these important educational opportunities.

In early October the Geomatics students from Sir Sandford Fleming took their turn at the CEC – also for the 3rd time. At this camp the students learned primarily about GPS and GIS with respect to natural resources. Not only did the students receive their Green Check GPS certification for recreational GPS units, they were also afforded the opportunity to become proficient with sub-metre accuracy, high-end GPS units. These are equipped with ESRI's ArcPad software, enabling the students to capture, analyze and display geographic data in the field, and seamlessly migrate it to a desktop GIS where they were able to create GIS databases and products from the data collected in the field. The data collected by the students will be used as part of the Samuel de Champlain Mapping Project currently underway.

The newest addition to the CEC's post-secondary field camps was the Canadore College Environmental Protection Technician program from North Bay. 30 first and second year students from this two year program spent a week at the CEC learning about the various environmental guidelines in forestry, field and stream sampling, GPS and GIS applications. Hopefully this will be added to the roster as another annual event!