



Susan J. Keister, L.L.C.

NYS Certified- WBE (Woman-Owned Business Enterprise)
Society of American Foresters, Certified Forester

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February 21, 2014

The recent inventory data prepared by the U.S. Forest Service as well as my own personnel experience and observations corroborate the need for this type of work which I have been conducting and promoting since the early 2000's.

I am the Principal in my consulting forestry and environmental resource management firm which I have been operating since 1996. My husband, a retired NYS-DEC forester, is a minority partner. I employ an Office Administrator, a part-time GIS staff person and itinerant forestry technician staff as needed.

My certifications and professional associations are summarized below:

1. I am a Society of American Foresters Certified Forester. The requirements and details of this program can be found at: <https://www.safnet.org/certifiedforester/index.cfm>;

2. I am on the Board of Directors for the Empire State Forest Products Association. As a Board member, I am constantly kept up to date regarding regulatory, market, and resource trends both through the Association office located in Albany, N.Y. and other Board and Association members;

3. I am an NRCS Technical Service Provider. This means I have received training regarding the requirements and procedures for U.S. Agricultural Department Programs and can access and promote the same;

4. Both my husband and I are trained in SILVAH, the inventory and modeling program developed by the U.S. Forest Service for the management of forests typically located in western, N.Y. Regeneration concerns and issues are a part of this management model;

5. My company is included on the NYS-DEC's of Cooperating Consulting Foresters and I have been active in the American Tree Farm System for over 20 years.

My firm's focus over the past ten years has been on projects on which target low grade material. It should be noted, however, that some grade material is always included in these harvests due to spacing, and/or growth potential risk factors. The amount of material removed in these harvests creates openings in which natural regeneration can occur. As part of this process we have developed liaisons with markets, developed a proprietary scaled sale system which promotes and encourages utilization while still providing protection for landowner's economic interests, and utilized the services of a commercial pesticides applicator typically with the assistance of NRCS funding to spray the interfering vegetation when it exists. We do not do planting as, in our combined experience, hardwood planting does not work and softwood planting typically makes no sense for long term landowner value or benefit. Understanding the needs, timing, and resource requirements of low grade markets is the key to a successful low grade harvest operation (i.e. not low grade markets are created equal, variables include species composition, diameter, access, property size, and location).