

New York Forest Owners Association Capital District Chapter Newsletter

Volume 26, Issue 1

January 2016

Chair's Message



Hello Members,

I hope the holiday went well for everyone. The joyous season isn't so joyous for logging, though. ... No frost. Wet, muddy, damp weather, makes for slow and messy work in the woods. Many logging jobs have been shut down, due to the mud, and production has slowed. This is good, in a way, since low log inventories will keep pricing stable. But, of course, not so good when you need log production to help pay the bills. A good solid freeze is welcomed.

According to Joe, demand over all is stable, and prices are still strong, especially on the ash, hickory and white oak species. There has been no letting up on the inquiries coming in for these items. The first quarter of 2016 shows no sign of change. Red Oak, Walnut and Birch are still doing well. Inventories in Canada are low, keeping the demand up on these items, as well. Sugar Maple has not yet sparked much interest. Warm weather, again, is the factor here. The buyers simply want the "winter white" color. With the daily temps in the 50's and 60's, I wouldn't be surprised, if someone told me the "sap was running". Cherry and Red Maple also have no price changes. Canadian mills are happy to take these items, if it helps get other species in the door for their inventory.

As for our CDC programs, The Timber Talk we held was a great success, and we plan to hold more. It is an extremely informative group session with landowners and professionals engaged in conversation. We have people on the waiting list already for the next Talk. Please look for the next date and place and consider attending. GOL Level 1 classes will also be scheduled early on, in 2016. We will inform you of the dates and places. I know quite a few of you have been waiting patiently for these classes to come about, but we lost a few dates last fall, due to instructor Bill Linloff's shoulder surgery. He has recovered

nice, I've heard, and will be scheduling soon. Along with Woodswalks and Tours in the spring, we will have a good line up of activities for you in 2016.

If any members have an experience to share, recommendations for the Chapter, or need information on a specific subject, please write in to us. We welcome your interaction.

Jason

"Sustainable forests are the beginning of a future, exploited forests are the beginning of an end"



Welcome New Members!

Neil Brandmaier, Brant Lake, New York
Michael Moser, East Durham, New York
Jon & Margie Prasek, Middle Grove, New York

Upcoming Events in 2016

Woodlot Owners Can Learn More, Earn More

Free seminars to help landowners realize more benefits from their woodlots will be presented each day during the NYS Farm Show by the Forest Owners Association. The show will be held February 25 - 27, 2016 at the State Fairgrounds - Syracuse, New York. It is a great opportunity to see interesting displays, farm related equipment of all types, and hundreds of vendors and organizations who have booths at the show – including NYFOA.



Farm Equipment Displays at the Show

Attendees will have an opportunity to meet with a forester from the State Department of Environmental Conservation or speak with a Cornell trained volunteer. Visitors are encouraged to bring their questions and pause at the booth area before or after attending a seminar program. The DEC foresters and trained volunteers are there to help with resource materials, displays and offer expert advice.

Learn More, Earn More seminars are open to all. Topics include federal cost sharing for woodlot improvement, working with foresters, improving bird habitat, heating with wood, and forest farming.

Holiday Gathering Menands

Please join us! Chapter members, family, and friends are invited to attend the annual Holiday Gathering covered dish supper. If you have never participated before – bring a dish to pass and find out what you have been missing. This is a friendly, informal group of chapter members from across the region. Our covered dish supper will be held on Saturday, January 16, 2016 at the Bethany Presbyterian Church in Menands starting at 4:00 p.m.

Our special guest speaker is Carl Herzog. Carl is a wildlife biologist with the NY State Department of Environmental Conservation. He specializes in mammals and coordinates most of the bat-related work for the Department throughout the State.



2016 Statewide Membership Meeting

The annual member meeting is traditionally a winter event held on the ESF Campus in Syracuse, a city not noted for pleasant February weather. For that reason the decision was made to move the meeting date to Saturday April 16. Three great speakers have been engaged and the food is being planned. This year there will also be several door prizes including a Dolmar PS-5105 chainsaw (worth nearly \$500). So reserve that date - April 16th - on your calendar, and send in the registration form to be printed in the March/April issue of the Forest Owner.

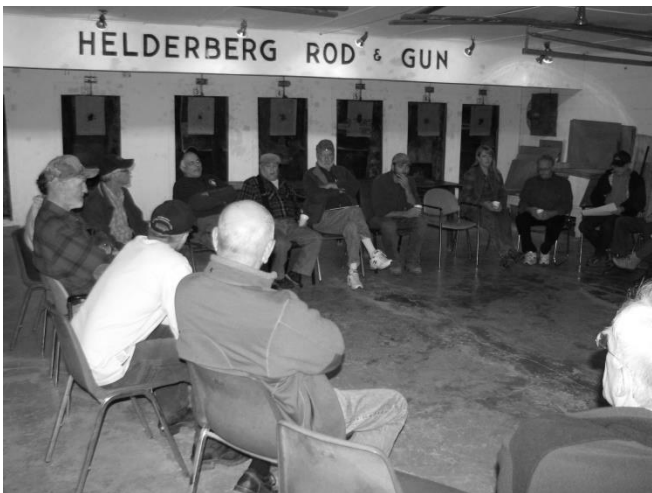
Chapter Events Last Fall

Hudson River Hardwoods held an open house at the log yard in Leeds in October hosted by owner, Jason Post. This was a wonderful opportunity to see how tree length hardwood stems are cut into logs in order to maximize the timber value of individual trees. Jason sells hardwood logs for export and to mills in the US and Canada. Jason's knowledge of the markets helps landowners get the best price for their timber.



Jason Post Describes Lumber Defects

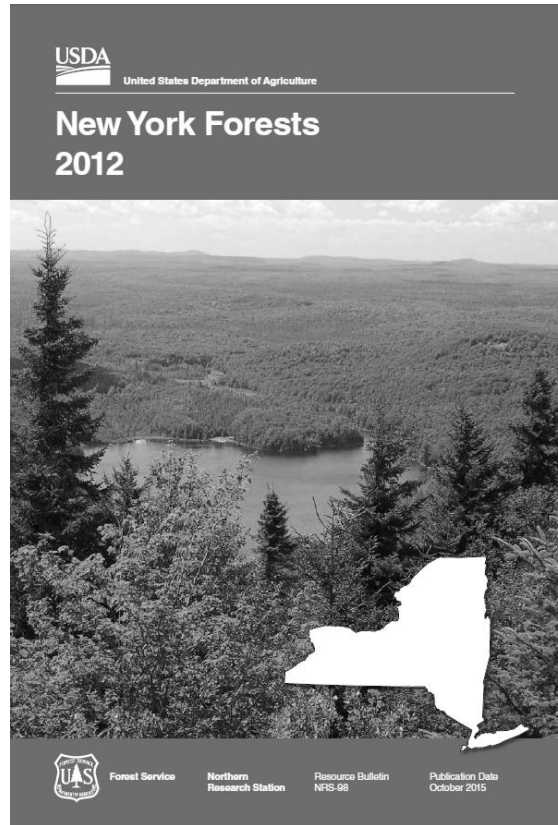
The Chapter also sponsored a "Timber Talk" workshop at the Helderberg Rod and Gun Club in Knox on Thursday evening, November 5th. The event gave local landowners a chance to discuss selling timber experiences with other attendees including a professional logger and a professional forester. The event was well attended with a good discussion about various forestry concerns.



Attendees at the Timber Talk Workshop

New York's Forest Resource

The US Forest Service recently released the 2012 report on forest conditions in New York State. Forest resource inventories have been conducted periodically since the 1950's. The 2012 report is the most recent. Important trends in forest acreage, conditions and invasive pests are documented in the report.



Many important trends are documented including the likelihood that forest cover has now peaked at 63% of total land area. Forest acreage has been increasing for over a century as unused farmland reverted back to trees. However gains in forested land have slowed considerably in the past 25 years. The area of forest land has only increased by two percent since 1993. Meanwhile, less farmland is being abandoned, and population increases mean increased conversion of forest land for non-forest uses, such as roads, housing developments and shopping centers. Consequently, additional increases in total forest acreage seem unlikely.

Researchers also looked at the condition of the forest and identified future threats. For example, emerald ash borer is threatening the state's ash trees

while hemlock trees are facing an invasion by the hemlock woolly adelgid and may fade from the landscape over the next two decades.

The future of the state's forests is largely in the hands of private forest owners, who collectively own 14.2 million acres, or 75 percent, of the state's total forest land. Of this, family forest owners own 57 percent of the state's forest land. A quarter of New York forest land is owned by public owners, with the state owning most of the publically owned forest land.

According to Richard Widman, lead author of the report: **"Decisions by forest owners today will shape the future of New York's forests and forest sustainability will depend on owners practicing stewardship and conservation."**

The report documents many positive trends. These include the following:

- New York's forest land area increased slightly in this inventory period to 19 million acres. The State is 63 percent forested.
- Timber volume has increased since 2007.
- A combination of public and private ownerships enhances the benefits and ecological services provided by New York's forests.
- Ninety percent of family forest owners with 10 acres or more want to keep their wooded land wooded and at least two-thirds of owners rank protecting biological diversity, water resources, and wildlife habitat as very important or important.
- New York's forests are a rich mix of stands of varying sizes, ages, and stocking levels. The continued shift to larger trees and the increase in area of sawtimber-size stands indicates that New York's forests are maturing.
- On timberland, red maple and sugar maple are the most numerous trees 5 inches and larger in diameter at breast height, followed by hemlock, ash, and beech.
- Volume has continued to shift toward the larger diameter classes.
- Average annual change components as a percentage of current inventory indicates that gross growth was 3.2 percent; mortality, 1.1 percent; net growth, 2.1 percent; and

removals, 1.0 percent for an average annual net increase in volume of 1.1 percent.

Forest conditions are not all positive. The following concerns were identified:

- The area in sapling/seedling size stands, or early successional forest, has been declining. This results in a decline of wildlife species that require early-successional habitats.
- Fragmentation diminishes the benefits and services forests provide and makes forest management more difficult.
- Forty-seven percent of forest land is less than fully stocked and represents a loss of potential growth. The increase in stands that are poorly stocked is a threat to the long-term sustainability of harvesting quality timber from New York's forests.
- The proliferation of small beech saplings in some areas are interfering with the regeneration of other species. These other species include sugar maple, red maple, and white pine.
- Beech and ash seedlings collectively represent 35 percent of all seedling-size trees. Despite the many small beech and ash trees, it is unlikely that they will reach a large size because of insects and diseases.
- Emerald ash borer is expected to cause significant costs to municipalities, property owners, and the forest products industries in the State.
- New York has more hemlock volume than any other state. Hemlock woolly adelgid (which kills hemlocks) is expected to continue to spread north and west from the Catskill-Lower Hudson areas into the rest of the State over the next two decades.
- Much of the timber growing is of low value because of species and quality. This represents a loss in potential resource value. The increasing percentage of low value timber is a threat to the long-term sustainability of harvesting high value timber from New York's forests.

The report, New York Forests 2012, can be found online: <http://www.nrs.fs.fed.us/pubs/49753>.

Family Forest Landowners in New York

The New York Forests 2012 report includes information about family forest owners which provides some insight into the challenge of promoting sustainable forestry practices and improved stewardship on privately owned woodlands (NYFOA's mission). An estimated 200,000 family forest owners own at least ten acres or more. This represents half of the forest land in New York State.

Most landowners have not received forest management advice and don't have a management plan. Most would like information on forestry tax programs, but 86% are apparently unfamiliar with the NYS forest tax law. Furthermore, more than half have sold or plan to sell timber in the next five years. Unfortunately, less than 1% of these landowners are members of NYFOA.

Some Key Findings

72% use woodland property as primary residence

19% use woodland property as vacation home

40% are retired

67% are 55 years old or older

35% are 65 years old or older

37% have owned land for more than 25 years

75% have an annual income below \$100,000

47% plan to improve wildlife habitat in next 5 years

90% want their wooded land to stay wooded

16% are likely or extremely likely to give away land in the next 5 years

40% feel advice on transferring land to next generation would be helpful

24% feel timber production is an important reason for owning forest land

63% have cut trees for personal use

41% have cut trees for commercial reasons

53% have cut or removed trees for own use in past 5 years

17% have cut or removed trees for sale in past 5 years

56% plan to cut trees for own use in next 5 years

17% plan to cut trees for sale in next 5 years.

84% have not received forest management advice

9% have a written management plan

75% are not familiar with cost share programs

86% are not familiar with forestry related tax programs

54% feel getting advice on woodland management would be helpful

64% feel getting advice on more favorable tax policies would be helpful



Steering Committee

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*Director – member of the NYFOA state board of directors

Steering Committee Meeting Schedule

Tuesday, January 12, 2016 @ 6:30 – Colonie Library
Tuesday, April 12, 2016 @ 6:30 – Colonie Library
Tuesday, July 12, 2016 @ 6:30 – Colonie Library
Tuesday, October 11, 2016 @ 6:30 – Colonie Library



A recent CDC steering committee meeting

The steering committee is an informal group of members who meet four times each year to plan and implement activities for members of the Capital District Chapter. These activities include a chapter picnic, a winter holiday gathering which usually includes a speaker, woodswalks and workshops. For public outreach, the chapter has an information booth at the Altamont and Schaghticoke Fairs. The chapter has also co-sponsored various programs with Cooperative Extension and the Rensselaer Plateau Alliance.

Interested in participating? Any member of the chapter is welcome to join the steering committee simply by showing up. We welcome your ideas!

A Miraculous Recovery

A man was involved in a saw milling accident. It sawed off the left side of his body. He's all right now.

The Lighter Side of Forest Recreation



Comments left on registration sheets by hikers and overnight campers in wilderness areas:

"A small deer came into my camp and stole my bag of pickles. Is there a way I can get reimbursed? Please call."

"Escalators would help on steep uphill sections."

"Instead of a permit system or regulations, the Forest Service needs to reduce worldwide population growth to limit the number of visitors to wilderness."

"Trails need to be wider so people can walk while holding hands."

"Ban walking sticks in wilderness. Hikers that use walking sticks are more likely to chase animals."

"All the mile markers are missing this year."

"Too many rocks in the mountains."

"Need more signs to keep area pristine."

"Trails need to be reconstructed. Please avoid building trails that go uphill."

"Too many bugs and leeches and spiders and spider webs. Please spray the wilderness to rid the area of these pests."

"Please pave the trails so they can be plowed of snow in the winter."

"Chairlifts need to be in some places so that we can get to wonderful views without having to hike to them."

"The coyotes made too much noise last night and kept me awake. Please eradicate these annoying animals."

"Reflectors need to be placed on trees every 50 feet so people can hike at night with flashlights."

"A McDonald's would be nice at the trailhead."

"The places where trails do not exist are not well marked."

Join NYFOA

Help Support Sustainable Forestry

The New York Forest Owners Association is a not-for-profit organization established to encourage sustainable forestry practices and sound management of privately owned woodlands. Members include woodland owners and all others who care about the future of New York's trees and forests. Please consider joining because your support helps make a difference. Regular annual dues are just \$45.00 for an individual or family.

Contact: NYFOA, P.O. Box 541, Lima, New York 14485 1-800-836-3566 www.nyfoa.org
