

New York Forest Owners Association Capital District Chapter Newsletter

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Message from the Chairman



Jason Post

Hello! I would like to introduce myself, Jason Post, as the new chair of the New York Forest Owners Association Capital District Chapter. I attended the National Hardwood Lumber Association School in Memphis, Tennessee and received my certificate for inspections of hardwood lumber in 1979. Ever since I have worked as a lumber inspector and log buyer, and I am currently the owner of Hudson River Hardwoods, a log brokering company in Leeds, New York.

I would also like to introduce our new officers,



Jeff Kehoe

Jeff Kehoe, (Vice Chair) and Mary Spring (Secretary). Jeff is currently the nursery manager for Ace Hardware in Slingerlands, NY and also still acts as a consulting forester. He has two Masters degrees, one in Regional Planning and one in Forestry.

Mary Spring is a graduate of SUNY CESF with a dual degree in Forest Biology and Forest Resources Management. She currently works as an independent consulting forester in the eight NYFOA-CDC counties, among others, specializing in 480a tax law programs and forest management plans. I would also like to acknowledge Carl Wiedemann, our editor, and well as Phil Walton, Ron Pedersen, and Rene Bouplon our state board directors from the chapter.



Mary Spring

This year we have a great lineup of activities for our NYFOA-CDC members and we encourage you to join us! Sign up for a chapter sponsored Woods Walk with a professional forester and gain a better

understanding of sustainable management options for your property. Come to one of our many programs that will feature a variety of topics such as maple sugar production, mushroom growing, or bird census. Or attend a Game of Logging course, a day of professional training for landowners (novices welcome) on felling trees. This will be co-sponsored by the Rensselaer Plateau Alliance and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Columbia and Greene Counties. With these free or low cost educational activities, along with the Master Forest Owners Program, the Master Gardener's Program, the new Rensselaer Plateau Community Forest in Poestenkill, and the Siuslaw Model Forest in Acra, every NYFOA member could develop some serious forestry expertise! Visit our website to keep up-to-date on what's coming up next.

I would also like to encourage our members to share their comments, questions, or ideas by contacting a member of our steering committee (names and contact info available in our newsletters or on our website). Currently our Capital District Chapter steering committee meetings are held at the Colonie Library on the second Tuesday of January, April, July, and October. In order to better engage our members, we are interested in holding at least one of these meetings at a different venue. If you are interested, and know of a venue that can accommodate approximately a dozen people, please get in touch. We are encouraging greater member involvement and look forward to finding out what's on your mind.

Jason Post

Welcome New Members!

The following members joined the Capital District Chapter since our last newsletter. Welcome all!

Richard & Adriana Cahill
Ed Downey
Tom & Laura Gouveia
David Messier
Angela & Nick Peitti
William Thorn

New City, NY
Guilderland, NY
Loudenville, NY
Salem, NY
Slingerlands, NY
Middleburgh, NY

Maple “Sugerin” With Larry

On Saturday March 21st attendees visited a small scale maple sugaring operation in Wynantskill run by Larry and Kathy Skinner.

Even though it was too cold for the sap to flow, it was a multifaceted sugar bush woods walk that everyone in attendance found interesting. Larry has about 200 taps with collection lines including a modest vacuum system. He discussed his many “lessons learned” over a many year period spanning collection in pails up to the current operation. Some years he has produced about 100 gallons of finished syrup. His experience in growth and operation including costs and changes in technology and sap production records was an invaluable source of knowledge for any thinking of starting a small-level operation.



Sap spile and tubing on a tree



Larry explains different types of sap spiles



The sap house and evaporator

Jeff Kehoe offered a professional forester’s perspective on managing a woodlot for sap production vs timber. We then drove to Larry and Kathy’s evaporating facility and learned a great deal about moving from sap to syrup production, and ended up the tour in their house where samples of different syrups were available to taste and purchase.



Installation and operation of the tubing system



Discussing collection lines and management options
In the sugar bush

Winter Gathering Potluck

by Phil Walton

Winter's fury gave us a break on January 17 when 32 came for the chapter winter gathering and annual member meeting in Menands. The agenda was full but left plenty of time to converse with friends, both familiar and new.

The very brief annual meeting was held to elect officers. They are: Jason Post, chair, Jeff Kehoe, vice chair, Mary Spring, secretary, and Phil Walton carries on as treasurer. A special award of appreciation, the first in the history of the chapter, went to Jim and Phyllis House for the years they generously brought good fun and cheer to our programs. A simple wooden plaque fails to fully express the gratitude we feel for the good they did for the spirit of our activities, and for the woods knowledge and experience Jim always shared with us. Congratulations, Jim and Phyllis!



Rulison Honey Display



Dick Gibbs with Jim and Phyllis House

Our speakers for the evening were Lori and Mark Rulison of Rulison Honey Farms, a family business in Amsterdam involving four generations. Bee colonies are essential for successful agricultural crops, performing the important function of pollinating flowers in orchards, and many vegetables and grains in fields. As a commercial apiary, the Rulisons deliver hives to the cropland just as the flowers are opening so the bees can perform their vital function, and in turn produce honey and other products to be extracted from the hive. Mark and Lori shared their extensive knowledge of beekeeping and the processes involved in a successful commercial operation. All of what they told us applies as well to the hobby beekeeper except at a different scale. We thank Lori and Mark for their informative presentation and for bringing honey products for us to sample and buy.



Rulison Honey

Let's not forget the great potluck dishes shared by all the talented chefs in our chapter. Everything was outstanding, from the appetizers, to the soup, main dishes and desserts. Thanks to all the great cooks, and to Ron and Peggy Pedersen for being our hosts at the Bethany Presbyterian Church.

Jason and I are still wondering what was all the laughing about at the ladies' table! I don't think the levity was from too much punch, but what was so funny?

Won't you join us next year?

Forest Management Plan

By Dick and Shari Gibbs

For us, a Forest Management Plan [FMP] is akin to a “living will” as a person. I know one can go through life and not have either of these, but both help us take care of life’s issues now and leave the forest land in better shape than we found it when we bought it some 30 years ago. We always did what we thought would be the best thing with the trees in the woodlot, but our personal growth in forest knowledge has advanced just as we are approaching old age, and we realize how limited our time is in comparison to the life-cycle of the forest. Becoming more engaged in a FMP at this stage of our lives seems entirely sensible way to plan for the future forest beyond our own horizon.

We started out cutting only dead trees as we had [and still have] many of them, and that seemed a “no-harm” approach to cutting firewood and not damaging the remaining trees. Mike Greason disabused us of that “plan” and brought us to the point of knowing that our woodlot is, like a garden, in need of weeding. While we only have about 70 acres of woodland, we have a variety of different “stands”, not only different soils, species, and history of abuse and benign neglect. We were able, through the grants that are available from time to time in the NRCS, to receive Federal support to hire a consulting forester specifically for a contract to create a detailed management plan. The final product will include an inventory of exactly what we have—from high quality timber [some] to an old overgrown pasture that is filled with junk and vines. We have a small high-producing sugar bush that will require different selective cutting than our small stand of cherished hemlocks where we hold Thanksgiving in the Woods.

Having a FMP is just another step in active engagement with details for each stand. We may never do everything that is in the FMP, but we will be better able to select steps we can take as first priority and hopefully leave the whole of the woodlot in sufficiently good shape that 50 years down the road, when we are gone, it will still be thriving.

My Land Plan

The American Forest Foundation offers an online management plan template to help woodland owners get the most out of their property. My Land Plan can help you explore and discover how to manage your woodlands. Easy to use tools guide you to map your land, set goals, keep a journal and connect with woodland owners and foresters. This program is available at: <http://mylandplan.org/>

Healthy Hemlock Trees in the Catskills Harder to Find

Hemlock trees in New York’s Catskill region are rapidly declining, a recent study found. U.S. Forest Service and University of Vermont scientists used high-tech aerial imaging and ground-based surveys to examine a 274-square-mile area there in 2012. They found only 16 percent of hemlocks in the study area were healthy, a rapid drop from 59 percent of only a decade earlier. Forest Service Forest Entomologist Ryan Hanavan said the decline is due almost exclusively to an ongoing infestation of hemlock woolly adelgid (*Adelges tsugae*).

HWA is an invasive insect and major forest pest in the Eastern United States that attacks Eastern and Carolina hemlocks, two important tree species in Eastern forests. Dying hemlocks affect water quality and soil erosion in native ecosystems. A loss of hemlock trees to Northeast forests could affect a variety of other species.

Elongate hemlock scale (*Fiorinia externa*) is also infesting hemlocks in the study area, but is apparently only a minor contributor to the hemlock decline.

“The hyperspectral imaging system helps us to identify tree species and detect stress related to insect and disease activity. It uses vegetation-specific spectral band combinations in the visible and near-infrared spectrum,” added Hanavan.

“These band combinations called ‘vegetation indices’ can measure specific health indicators that allow us to categorize hemlock damage,” he said. “Our plot-level measurements help us to build large-scale health assessments using hyperspectral imagery that covers large areas across a landscape.”

The report also recommends using optimal biological control release sites based on current hemlock condition and other landscape attributes. The Forest Service is working with other state forestry and agriculture agencies in the HWA Initiative. Significant Forest Service resources are being focused on establishing biocontrol agents to manage HWA-impacted areas, including in New York.

The study was published in the *Journal of Economic Entomology*, Jan. 28, and it is available at: <http://bit.ly/1zcsibM>.

“The Future of New York Forests at Risk - Working Toward a Comprehensive Solution”

Saturday, April 25, 2015 - SUNY CESF Syracuse

Forests cover 63% of New York State's land area and provide critical environmental, economic and quality-of-life benefits to society. Most of our current forests are entering the final third of their natural life cycles but, in many parts of the state, are not regenerating the desirable tree species and native understory vegetation that will serve the needs of citizens, wildlife or the forest products industry in the future. Participants and speakers, through discussion and interaction, will assess the capacity of current knowledge, techniques and policies to assure the regeneration of native New York forests.

Who Should Attend?

Any business associated with the forest products industry, environmental organizations, land trusts, maple syrup producers, consulting foresters, farmers whose agricultural interests are impacted by deer, those who value healthy & diverse woodlands as bird and wildlife habitat, organizations interested in forest recreation, including hunting, businesses dependent on tourism, state, county and municipal park authorities, state legislators and the media.

Registration

Registration fee is \$15, which includes refreshments, lunch and handout materials.

Register online by going to: www.esf.edu/outreach/pd/2015/nyfoa/

To register by mail, send a check for \$15, payable to: SUNY Research Foundation and mail to: SUNY, ESF Outreach, Attn. Terry Webb, 1 Forestry Drive, 235 Gateway Center, Syracuse, NY 13210. Please include your name, affiliation and email address with the check.

For more a full schedule and more details:
http://www.nyfoa.org/time_sensitive/rnyw_symposium_flyer.pdf

National Firewood Workshop – May 7, 2015

This is a one day nationally focused workshop that attracts all the involved segments of the firewood industry in processing, kiln drying and marketing of firewood. Several firewood processors will be giving demonstrations of their equipment in the parking lot. It will be held on Thursday, May 7, 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM. at the Rice Extension Center in Voorheesville, NY. There is a registration fee of \$25 per attendee which includes lunch.

- Scott Salveson of the National Firewood Association will be promoting the benefits of an association that promotes the interests of the firewood industry.
- Brian Madden of Madden Brothers will explain cutting edge marketing techniques for firewood businesses. Brian is currently writing a book of superior marketing techniques for firewood.
- Niels Jorgenson of Kiln-Direct that manufacturers firewood dry kilns will discuss the design and performance issues of firewood dry kilns and how producers can grow their dry kiln capacity as their business grows. Niels will also discuss heating systems for firewood dry kilns.
- Paul Chaloux of the US Animal Insect Plant Health Service will discuss the current state of firewood insect quarantines and how producers can assist the efforts to retard the spread of damaging insects.
- Additional speakers will discuss the experiences of firewood processors as they operate firewood processing businesses.

Contact: Phil Mitchell
phil_mitchell@ncsu.edu
919-515-5581

Workshop Location:
24 Martin Road
Voorheesville, NY 12186

See more at:
<http://albany.cce.cornell.edu/events/2015/05/07/national-firewood-workshop#sthash.EucEXtQs.dpuf>

New Standards for Wood Stoves and Boilers

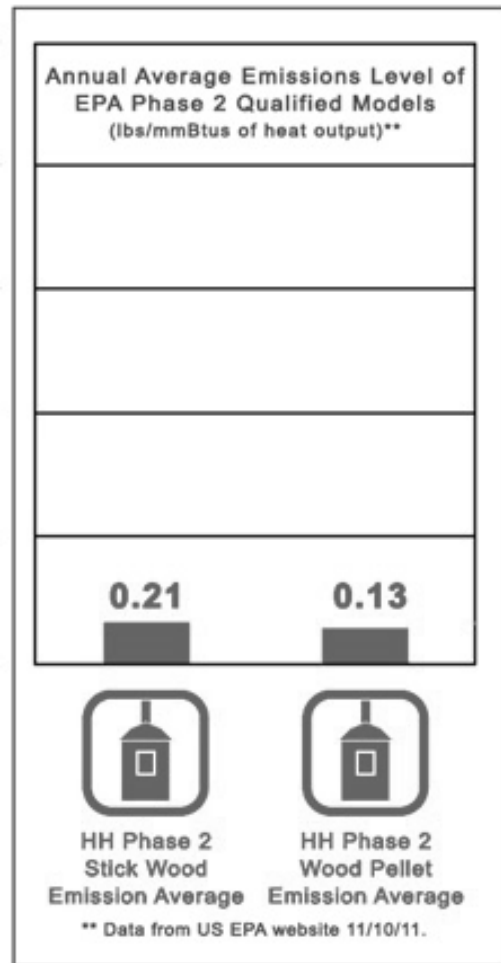
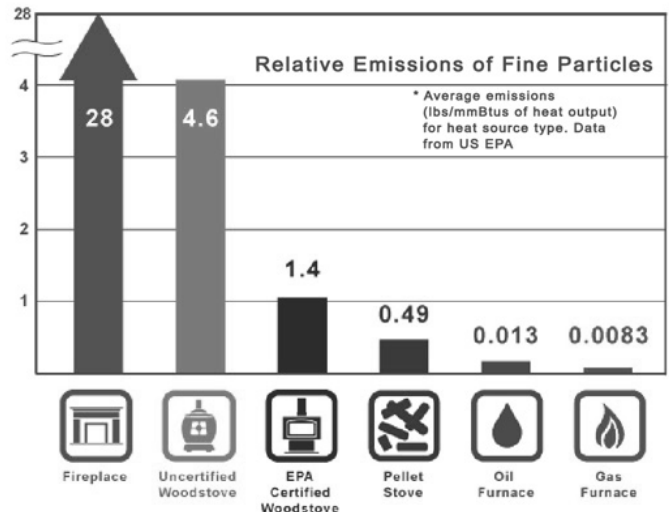
On February 3, 2015, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) strengthened its clean air standards for residential wood heaters to make new heaters significantly cleaner and improve air quality in communities where people burn wood for heat. The updates, which are based on improved wood heater technology, strengthen the emissions standards for new woodstoves, while establishing the first ever federal air standards for several types of previously unregulated new wood heaters, including outdoor and indoor wood-fired boilers (also known as hydronic heaters), and indoor wood-burning forced air furnaces.

Wood heaters, which are used around the clock in some areas, can increase particle pollution, (soot) to levels that pose serious health concerns. Particle pollution is linked to a wide range of serious health effects, including heart attacks, strokes and asthma attacks. People with heart, vascular or lung disease, older adults and children are the most at risk from particle pollution exposure. Smoke from wood heaters also includes volatile organic compounds, carbon monoxide and air toxics. EPA's updated standards will build on the work that states and local communities have done to improve air quality in these communities and are based on significant improvements in technology.

The final rule allows retailers to sell woodstoves that meet 1988 requirements and for hydronic heaters through the end of the year. After that date, new woodstoves and hydronic heaters sold at retail must meet the step one emissions limit.

The rule will not affect existing woodstoves and other wood-burning heaters currently in use in people's homes.

More information on the EPA website:
<http://www2.epa.gov/residential-wood-heaters/final-new-source-performance-standards-residential-wood-heaters>



Chapter Events

What: Game of Logging
When: Saturday July 16 & 17, 2015
Where: Hoyt Property
Dyken Pond Road
Cropseyville, NY 12052

There will be two days of Game of Logging Training on the Rensselaer Plateau, July 16 and 17. Participants will learn how to fell trees safely using a chainsaw and wedges. Both of these classes will be held at the Hoyt property which is near the Dyken Pond Environmental Center in Rensselaer County. The property has timber stand improvement work going on and marked trees. Both of these classes are jointly co-sponsored by the Rensselaer Plateau Alliance and CDC-NYFOA. For more information contact Lisa Hoyt at (518) 658-2055

What: Capital District Chapter Picnic
When: July 26, 2015 11:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Where: John Boyd Thacher State Park, Glen Doone picnic shelter

Our annual chapter picnic is being held at the Glen Doone shelter. The site has spectacular views of the capital district from the Helderberg escarpment. The BBQ chicken will be served around 12:30 or so. Please bring a dish of your favorite picnic accompaniment to share with others. The \$6 per adult includes the park admission, a BBQ chicken half, drinks and “dinnerware”. Take a hike on one of the many trails, or challenge someone in pitching horseshoes. This is a great place to relax on a hot summer afternoon.

What: Grafton Tree Farm Tour
When: Saturday August 29, 2015 9:30 a.m. - noon
Where: Grafton Tree Farm
99 Old Road
Cropseyville, NY 12052

This eighty acre woodlot has been in the Tree Farm program since 1980. During this woods walk you'll see mixed hardwoods that are being managed for sawlog production as a long term investment. We'll discuss land use history, how to profitably manage the trees in a woodlot for sustainable timber production, and financial aspects of growing and selling firewood and timber. Learn about the pros and cons of New York's Forest Tax Law – 480a. Note: access to the property is over a 1/3rd mile long dirt woods road that requires four wheel drive and/or a high clearance vehicle. For more information and directions contact Carl Wiedemann at (518) 895-1028

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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
