

# THE OVERSTORY

## SE ADIRONDACK CHAPTER NEWSLETTER



Volume 18 No. 1

Spring 2008

*From the Editor's Desk...My name is Bob Morrison, and, like many other members of our NYFOA chapter, I work hard at splitting time and commitments between a "home" community (for me, the Village of Voorheesville, in Albany County); and my life-long association with the Adirondacks. I'm honored at this chance to edit The Overstory, following in the capable footsteps of Dan Gillmore. I hope you find this first issue interesting and informative, and look forward to your contributions, comments and ideas for improvement. You can reach me at [morrison15@verizon.net](mailto:morrison15@verizon.net); (518) 765-4121; or write to me at 15 Voorheesville Ave, Voorheesville NY 12186. I look forward to hearing from you!*

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### **FORESTRY AWARENESS DAY: YOUR DAY TO BE HEARD**

On Monday, March 10, representative of New York's diverse forestry community--from foresters and landowners to loggers and lumber producers – everyone associated with the state's forest products industry – will gather in Albany for Forestry Awareness Day. This is our chance to meet members of the legislature and discuss our concerns: *high taxes and other economic burdens, flaccid rural economics, climate change and the growing threat of invasive species*. If you can, please be there. Registration information is listed at the end of this article.

If you can't attend, or if you are reading this after March 10, you still have a chance to influence key legislation, by calling, writing or e-mailing your State assembly member or senator. (You can reach the Assembly at 518-455-4100, or at [www.assembly.state.ny.us](http://www.assembly.state.ny.us). For the Senate, call 518-455-2800, or type in [www.senate.state.ny.us](http://www.senate.state.ny.us). To locate your senator or assembly member, simply enter your ZIP Code at the appropriate site.) *Please let your voice be heard. This is an election year, and they will listen.*

In preparing for Forestry Awareness Day, NYFOA and other forest resource organizations have developed "The Healthy Forests Agenda", a four-point program designed to maintain the size, health and productivity of New York's 18.5 million acres of forests. These are the points:

1. *Expand state efforts to combat destructive invasive species.* DEC's new Office of Invasive Species (see related article) needs adequate funding. The eradication efforts aimed at the Asian Long-Horned Beetle (which could wipe out the sugar maple, our state tree) need to be stepped up, as do efforts to contain three other main predators: the Emerald Ash Borer, Hemlock Woolly Adelgid and Sirex Wood Wasp.
2. *Ease the economic strain of increasing taxes on forest owners.* These taxes encourage premature harvests, subdivision and woodland fragmentation.

3. *Reinvigorate the role of managed forests in the economy, especially in rural areas.* The forest products industry is changing, and all agencies of the state must work together to enhance present markets and encourage new activities to meet today's needs.
4. *Recognize the role of managed forests in combating the effects of climate change.* One thing that can be done is to include forest management as a carbon offset strategy in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, providing some income to help offset the costs of forest ownership.

To take part in Forestry Awareness Day you must pre-register. It's free to any member of NYFOA or Tree Farm. Call Muriel Church of the Empire State Forest Products Association, at 518-330-7684.

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### ***GETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR WOODS: A LANDOWNER WORKSHOP***

Are you happy with your woodlot? Are you getting the return you expect – whether financial, recreational or aesthetic? Do you have a neighbor or friend who doesn't really have an answer when asked, "So...what do you DO with all those trees?" Do YOU have an answer to that one?

Help is at hand for all forest landowners, happy or not. NYFOA's Southern Adirondack Chapter, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Warren County and the New York Tree Farm Committee are sponsoring a comprehensive, one-day workshop for rural landowners called *Getting the Most from Your Woods*, and you're invited

Date: Saturday, May 3, 2008  
Place: Roaring Brook Ranch & Conference Center, Rt. 9N, Lake George  
Time: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Cost: \$20, including lunch, coffee, snacks, a workbook and resource CD.  
\$15 for NYFOA members *who bring a non-member with them*. The non-member also pays \$15.

The keynote speaker will be *Dr. Peter Smallidge* of Cornell Cooperative Extension. Drawing on his extensive experience in forest management, ecology and landowner education, Dr. Smallidge heads Cornell's State-wide programs in these areas. He also directs the University's Arnot Teaching and Research Forest, while providing statewide leadership for educational efforts to support productive, sustainable management among private forest owners.

Dr. Smallidge will conduct two general discussions – an opening session on goal-setting and the importance of management plans; and a second devoted to strategies for reducing taxes. There will also be six concurrent sessions on topics ranging from forest health and timber trespass to finding a forester, timber harvesting and agro-forestry.

The New York Tree Farm Committee will provide two valuable take-home resources for participants: a loose-leaf workbook containing background material; and a CD with information gleaned from the many available forestry-related websites, and from other educational resources. There will also be exhibits of services and equipment of interest to forest owners by workshop suppliers.

*The workshop is limited to 50 people, and pre-registration is essential.* Sign up now by calling the Warren County Cooperative Extension, (518-623-3291) or SAC Chair John Sullivan at 518-494-3292; or pre-register by e-mail, at [lrg6@cornell.edu](mailto:lrg6@cornell.edu).

*Call for volunteers:* Although we have help and funding from Tree Farm and CCE, we need more of both. You can help in assembling the details, contacting sponsors and promoting this important event. Call or e-mail John Sullivan, at 494-3292 ([sullivan1@frontiernet.net](mailto:sullivan1@frontiernet.net)).

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### **CORNELL PROGRAM BLENDS TECHNOLOGY & TRADITION**

The vitally important work of managing privately owned woodlands has received a major boost in recent months, through a happy combination of modern computer technology and professional forestry expertise. Known as *ForestConnect* and presented through Cornell University's Cooperative Extension Service, this monthly on-line seminar series aims to make cutting edge forest technology available, via the internet, to landowners, forest enthusiasts and others who need the knowledge but often can't get it through classroom-based workshops, walking tours and other traditional means. Certified forestry professionals will also find the *ForestConnect* series interesting and beneficial, and can receive continuing education credits through the Society of American Foresters by participating in the Cornell program.

The *ForestConnect* series draws on a variety of topics, from timber sale arrangements and contracts to improvement cuttings and firewood production. Recent offerings have included strategies for restoring old growth characteristics in today's woodlands, and accepted techniques for enhancing forest land biodiversity. Each seminar deals with a new topic, through real-time, interactive presentations aired twice on the third Wednesday of each month, initially at noon and again at 7:00 pm. Each broadcast generally runs about one hour. The noon presentation is recorded, for later access through the University's Internet conference website. Seminars typically feature a power point presentation and audio commentary. An online "chat room" runs concurrently, enabling the audience to submit questions and comments to the host instructor.

*ForestConnect* seminars are offered at no charge, but do require advance registration. This is a simple, one-time process, available through the Forest Connect website. Just warm up your computer and select [www.ForestConnect.info](http://www.ForestConnect.info), where you will find detailed information on registration, computer system requirements and seminar topics, past and planned. Basically, all you will need is an internet web browser, such as Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox; a "flash" player, found on virtually all systems today; and a set of speakers for hearing the instructor's remarks. Information about computer linkages and other details is forwarded to all registrants a few days before each workshop. *Remember: You must pre-register in order to get this information, and to participate in ForestConnect.* Hope to meet you in the chat room soon!

### **AERIAL SURVEY TRACKS FOREST HEALTH**

How'd you like to receive a fly-over survey of New York's forests, updated each June and covering some 26 million acres stretching from the lower Hudson Valley, near Newburg, to the St. Lawrence Lowlands near Plattsburg? Just such a survey is now available, free of charge, to forest landowners and state regional foresters, through a team effort by DEC and the State Police Aviation Unit. The goal is to support forest management and monitoring at the state level, while helping to track potentially harmful disease and insect agents nationally. The 2007 survey results, including aerial maps and an annual report, are now available on CD. To request a copy, send an email to [lflands@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:lflands@gw.dec.state.ny.us), or write to the NYS DEC, Division of Lands and Forests, Forest Health Section, 625 Broadway, Albany New York 12233-4253. You will need an Adobe Acrobat Reader, a free download from Adobe, to view the CD.

## ***MFO COORDINATORS NAMED***

New York's Master Forester Owner Program recently received a major boost in leadership strength, based on a corps of Regional Coordinators who will head up MFO activities in each of 12 areas of the State. Program management, volunteer recruitment and promotion of MFO services are among the functions expected to benefit from the new coordinator role, announced last month by a newly established MFO Advisory Committee. The latter includes NYFOA members, cooperative extension educators, and MFO volunteers.

Founded in 1991, the MFO program is designed to offer landowners the encouragement, motivation and information they need in order to make the best use of available forest management resources. The program is based on a cadre of trained volunteers who work with neighboring forest owners, helping them link up with professional foresters, governmental agencies and other resources they can use to get started on a well-crafted, responsible plan for managing and enjoying their properties. While they aren't professional foresters, the MFO volunteers are an effective catalyst for bringing about this vitally important linkage.

Currently, more than 135 experienced, highly motivated volunteer MFO's are available State-wide, ready to assist neighboring forest owners in getting started toward good forest stewardship. All are graduates of an intensive, hands-on training program conducted annually by the Cornell Extension Service. Training topics range from sustainable forestry to wildlife management and forest economics, with emphasis on practical skills and knowledge applicable to small landowner interests.

Forest owners may obtain a list of MFO volunteers in their area by visiting the MFO website ([www.cornellmfo.info](http://www.cornellmfo.info)), or by contacting their local Cornell Cooperative Extension Office. The Office serving the NYFOA Southern Adirondack Chapter's Region is located at 377 Schroon River Road, Warrensburg New York 12885-4807. The office may be reached at 518-623-3291, or at [warren@cornell.edu](mailto:warren@cornell.edu). Those interested in becoming a MFO volunteer for the Southern Adirondack Region may contact Regional Coordinator Laurel Gailor, at the same number and location.

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## ***EAB IN RETREAT?? HOPEFUL NEWS FROM THE PENINSULA STATE!***

DEC has just released preliminary results of a University of Michigan research study which hopefully signals real progress in the fight against the Emerald Ash Borer, one the four "most wanted" woodland pests referred to elsewhere in this issue ("State Takes Aim at Invasive Pests"), and the subject of many recent forest health warnings. Undertaken in 2007, the Michigan study cites a two-pronged attack on this highly destructive insect, including a new chemical pesticide that appears to be nearly 100% effective in killing adult EAB's ; and a tiny wasp that may destroy up to 80% of their larvae.

While recognizing the new chemical's high lethality for EAB's, the researchers point out that such pesticides are only practical for treating individual trees, in "landscape" settings. The hope is that the larvae-attacking wasp will be an effective complementary weapon, chiefly in forests and other natural areas. The Michigan group was encouraged but cautionary about the wasp's potency as a natural EAB enemy, because of the need for more data on wasp and EAB life cycles, and related environmental factors. Funding is being vigorously sought to continue the research, one of the few bright spots in the nationwide effort to stop the beetle's destructive spread.

Stay tuned for further developments, and help cheer on our Michigan brethren!

## STATE TAKES AIM AT INVASIVE PESTS

Invasive plants, animals and insects are rapidly expanding their range, impact and variety in New York State, and the Department of Environmental Conservation has set up a special unit to deal with the problem. In announcing the *Office of Invasive Species* last December, DEC Commissioner Pete Grannis said the new unit will coordinate the efforts of DEC biologists, foresters and other specialists, who will work with universities, other state agencies and nonprofit organizations to support related research, raise public awareness and coordinate specific eradication efforts. A New York State Invasive Species Council was established at about the same time, representing a cross section of business, academic and environmental interests. Plans also call for the creation of an Institute of Invasive Species Research at Cornell University.

While far reaching in scope, these initiatives have specific, vitally important meaning for forest owners, forestry professionals and others concerned with forest health in New York State. Our readers will quickly recognize the following short list of “most wanted” woodland insect pests, included here with their related DEC computer link(s). Each has assumed increasing importance in recent years, and each will hopefully be pursued aggressively under the State’s new invasive species program. You are urged to track related developments, and to make your concerns known to DEC and to your elected representatives (see related story: *Forestry Awareness Day*). Address DEC correspondence to Steve J. Sanford, Director, Office of Invasive Species Coordination, Department of Environmental Conservation, 625 Broadway, Albany NY 12233-1016.

The infamous forest pests, each carrying a biological name stranger than its appearance and habits are, alphabetically, the Asian Longhorn Beetle; Emerald Ash Borer; Hemlock Woody Adelgid; and Sirex Woodwasp. They are featured on a DEC website aptly called “Nuisance and Invasive Species” ([www.dec.ny.gov/animals](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals)). See “Invasive Insects”, under “More about Nuisance & Invasive Species”. Then look for the culprits listed above, under “More about Invasive Insects”. Additional links are found under the individual descriptions. The Emerald Ash Borer has a second State-sponsored site, titled “Insect Invasion” ([www.lflands@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:lflands@gw.dec.state.ny.us)).



**2007 SAC Service Award Presented**

**Laurel Gailor**, Natural Resource Educator for the Cornell Cooperative Extension’s Warrensburg Office, is shown here receiving SAC’s annual Chapter Service Award, at its January 12th annual meeting. Presenting the Award is SAC Chair John Sullivan. Ms Gailor also received the NYFOA Chapter Activity award, at the NYFOA annual meeting in Syracuse on February 23.

**WIDE-RANGING AGREEMENT PROPOSED FOR  
FORMER FINCH LANDS**

By now, our readers are undoubtedly well aware of the “conceptual agreement” announced recently between DEC and the Nature Conservancy for disposition of lands formerly owned by timber giant Finch, Pruyn & Co. and purchased by the Conservancy in June 2007. In brief, the accord’s major provisions are as follows:

- Affects about 134,000 acres of the 2007 TNC purchase, referred to as FP’s “northern holdings” and concentrated in the Towns of Indian Lake, Long Lake, Minerva, Newcomb and North Hudson .
- Earmarks about 57,700 acres (44%) of this property for eventual addition to the Forest Preserve, to be governed by the same “Forever Wild” provisions against development and timber harvesting applicable to other Preserve lands.
- Provides for State acquisition of conservation easements on the balance of about 73,000 acres (56%), permitting continued recreational leasing by hunting and fishing clubs, with managed timber production. TNC would ultimately sell these holdings to a private forest products or investment company.
- Grants a 10-year “transition period” to lease holders whose lands are within the proposed Forest Preserve acquisition area. The lessors would have exclusive use of the property for three years; two subsequent years of exclusive use during hunting and fishing seasons; and five more years of “camp use” with “shared public recreation”. Private camps would then be removed.
- Provides for linkage and expansion of snowmobile trails among the communities involved, using state and private property.
- Provides for dedication of up to 1,100 acres of the northern FP holdings to various community uses, including public housing and recreational facilities.

In publicizing the proposed agreement, State and Conservancy officials were uniformly enthusiastic about its anticipated human and environmental impact. As the saying goes, however, “The devil is in the details,” and indeed officials and residents in the affected Adirondack towns, as well as various “outsiders”, are already weighing in strongly on those details. The mini “land grants” for localities, and the expanded, beefed up snowmobile network, have drawn largely favorable reviews, but are tempered by the prospect of major reductions in working forest lands likely to flow from the proposed Forest Preserve and conservation easement designations. Potential loss of jobs in the timber industry is the feared economic consequence. Concern about prospective forced removal of long-standing hunting clubs and other private holdings, in areas designated to become Forest Preserve, is another key issue, both emotional and economic.

Without question, the DEC/TNC agreement has vitally important long and short-term implications for all of us. The issues are complex and far-reaching, with many key decisions yet to be made, choices that will affect the Adirondack environment, both built and natural, for many years to come. ***This is another area where your voice should be heard, by legislators and by other state and local officials.*** We will do our best to keep you advised of developments in future issues, and welcome your comments.

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***Editor’s Note:*** Remember that you have the option of receiving your copy of *The Overstory* by electronic rather than regular mail. To do so, simply e-mail Bob Manning, at [bobmanning@frontiernet.net](mailto:bobmanning@frontiernet.net). We’ll save mailing costs if this method works for you!

## DEC ANNOUNCES ANNUAL TREE & SHRUB SALE

DEC's annual spring tree sale is under way and will continue through May, covering more than 50 species, many native to New York. Designed to help New Yorkers enhance their environment for present and future generations at low cost, the program includes planting advice, lists of available species and prices, available through the Saratoga Springs Nursery at 518-581-1439 or at [www.dec.ny.gov/animal](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animal)

### *Upcoming Chapter Events*

- March 10 Forestry Awareness Day – Legislative Office Bldg. – Albany\*
- April 5-6 Woodworkers' Show – Saratoga Springs City Center, Broadway, Saratoga  
[www.nwawoodworkingshow.org](http://www.nwawoodworkingshow.org)
- April 15 SAC-NYFOA Steering Committee Meeting – 6pm, Warrensburg CCE Office, 377 Schroon River Rd., Warrensburg, NY 518-623-3291,  
[www.warren@cornell.edu](http://www.warren@cornell.edu)
- May 3 “Getting the Most from Your Woods”\*  
SAC NYFOA Workshop – Roaring Brook Ranch & Conference Center, Lake George; contact John Sullivan, [sullivan1@frontiernet.net](mailto:sullivan1@frontiernet.net) phone: 518-494-3292
- May 18 Spring Woodswalk – 10am, Burt Morehouse, Diamond Point. Directions: Northway to Exit 23 (Warrensburg). At exit, drive east toward Diamond Point, then make first left onto East Schroon River Rd. Drive 0.6 miles to a right on Wall St., then 2.8 miles to Burt's driveway on the right.
- July 15-20 Saratoga County Fair [www.saratogacountyfair.org](http://www.saratogacountyfair.org). (Dates tentative)
- August 18-24 Washington County Fair [www.washingtoncountyfair.com/index](http://www.washingtoncountyfair.com/index)
- September 21 Fall Woodswalk – Peter & Betty Gregory's – Shushan. Fall picnic to follow

\*See accompanying newsletter articles

### *SAC Officers:*

Chair: John Sullivan [sullivan1@frontiernet.net](mailto:sullivan1@frontiernet.net) phone: 518-494-3292  
Vice Chair: Ed Welch [trautwei@nycap.rr.com](mailto:trautwei@nycap.rr.com)  
Secretary: Barbara Hennig [bhennig@capital.net](mailto:bhennig@capital.net) phone: 518-587-1413  
Treasurer: Gretchen McHugh [gmchugh@capital.net](mailto:gmchugh@capital.net) phone: 518-642-0636

### *County Directors:*

Washington County.: Ron DeWitt [newtwood@wildblue.net](mailto:newtwood@wildblue.net)  
Warren County.: Bob Manning [bobmanning@frontiernet.net](mailto:bobmanning@frontiernet.net) phone: 518-251-4638  
Fulton & Hamilton Counties: Rod Nielsen, phone: 518-863-8792  
Saratoga County: Brian Clothier, phone: 518-654-6620

Southern Adirondack Chapter  
New York Forest Owners' Association.

## ***DON'T FORGET TO...***

- ❖ ***SIGN UP NOW FOR FORESTRY AWARENESS DAY - MONDAY, MARCH 10TH***
  
- ❖ ***PRE-REGISTER FOR THE SATURDAY, MAY 3<sup>RD</sup> LANDOWNER WORKSHOP***
  
- ❖ ***BUY AND PLANT YOUR FAVORITE TREES, THROUGH THE DEC SALE***