

POSITION STATEMENT
NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION

Invasive Species

The Situation

Invasive species have caused significant losses in forests over the past century. Dutch elm disease and chestnut blight were introduced over 100 years ago and essentially eliminated these two species. Gypsy moth outbreaks caused extensive defoliation of millions of acres of forest land and contributed to the death of an equal number of trees before, after seventy years of effort, this non-native insect was brought under control using natural agents. Today introduced pests such as the emerald ash borer and hemlock wooly adelgid are inflicting similar long-term damage. Invasive species including plants, animals, insects and pathogens continue to be introduced into forest ecosystems throughout New York State.

Our Position

The New York Forest Owners Association (NYFOA) advocates identification, control, and responsible eradication (where warranted) of pests and diseases that threaten both public and private New York State woodlands. As a non-profit organization that seeks to educate citizens about all aspects of the woods, NYFOA recommends education, networking and alertness by members and the general public.

- 1) NYFOA will continue to network with the groups that form the NYS Council on Invasive Species.
- 2) NYFOA will bring timely, relevant information to our members through our website nyfoa.org, newsletters, woods walks and other programs and channels.
- 3) NYFOA will encourage our members to visit their woodlots frequently, look for problems or unusual events, report their findings, and seek more information from varied sources.
- 4) NYFOA will cooperate with other groups such as the DEC, Cornell Cooperative Extension, USDA/NRCS and others to educate the public concerning invasive species.
- 5) It is impossible to predict future invasive species threats. As new discoveries and methods are available, NYFOA will continue to inform its members on the latest threats and countermeasures.

New York Forests

Forests and open spaces cover almost 65% of New York State (19 million acres). Over 200,000 private owners hold 75% of the state's forests. An additional 500,000 private owners have small wooded parcels ranging from 1-10 acres. All wooded areas contribute greatly to the economy and healthy

environment of New York and provide essential needs such as wood products, food supplies, wildlife habitat, watershed retention values, carbon sequestration, and more. The forests across New York are also essential to creating a renewable carbon-neutral energy supply through biofuel production, and a welcome natural area free from the bustle of urban living. The future of our woods and forests rests largely with the private owners who sustainably manage these forests while bringing the many forest values to all New Yorkers. Each year, New York forests produce \$10 billion of wood products (for the year 2016), provide safe water supply for 16 million people, support an outdoor recreation economy of \$3.8 billion, contain essential wildlife habitat, biodiversity and vital oxygen-producing and carbon sink areas to ameliorate climate change.

The New York Forest Owners Association

The New York Forest Owners Association (NYFOA) promotes sustainable forestry practices and enhanced stewardship on privately owned woodlands in New York State. Through local chapter and statewide activities such as woods walks and tours, the bi-monthly *New York Forest Owner* magazine, and cooperation with similar organizations, NYFOA helps woodland owners achieve sustainable management objectives and heightened appreciation of the unique qualities and importance of New York's forests.

Original Position Statement Adopted June 9, 2007

Revised Position Statement Adopted April 6, 2020