



New York

Forest Owner

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Vol. 21, No. 5

THE NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION

Editor
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5756 Ike Dixon Rd.
Camillus, NY 13031



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NYFOA Board of Directors: Front row, from left to right, Linda Thorington, Bill Lynch, Mary McCarty, Vice President, Paul Steinfeld, President, Nancy Finegan. Back row: Dave Hanaburgh, Lewis DuMond, Secretary, Allan Knight, Al Roberts, 2nd Vice President, Stuart McCarty, Treasurer, Bob Demeree, Ken Eberley, Bob Sand, present at this meeting.



Front Cover:
Laurie Stevenson

After completing a two year apprenticeship with Robert E. Stevenson and studying with nationally known photographers, Richard Turner, M. Photog. Cr. of Florida, and Sandi Poutala of Oregon, Laurie Stevenson has joined Stevenson Studios as an associate. In addition to her photographic studies, she completed two and a half years at Ithaca College and Syracuse University. At the 1982 Professional Photographers Society of New York Annual Conference, Laurie was awarded the Court of Honor for one of her photographs. The Court of Honor is the highest award given by the Society.

Welcome Our New Members

Joseph H. Aronson
P.O. Box 576
Pine Hill, NY 12465

Robert F. Hunt & Sons
146 Blackman Hill Rd.
Berkshire, NY 13736

Norbert L. Gazin
304 First St.
Liverpool, NY 13088

William J. Moroney
RD 1, Moroney Rd.
Sterling, NY 13156

Stanley H. Siegel
414 Mountainview Rd.
Englewood, NJ 07631

GEORGE MITCHELL
Membership Secretary

P.O. Box 69
Old Forge, New York 13420

Individual Memberships	\$10.00
Family Memberships	15.00
1 Yr. Gift Memberships	7.50



The President's Message

The SUNY College of Forestry is planning the second Statewide Forestry Congress in June, 1984. The theme of this Congress will be "Managing Conflict in Forestry," and NYFOA is asked to participate now in the planning, and next year in the Congress sessions. Our invitation from Dean Berglund indicates that arbitration specialists will lead discussions "in the art of resolving dispute, conflict, and opposing points of view." Attempts will be made to apply this art to major forestry issues; to find ways of avoiding some past confrontations, and achieving reasonable solutions with better feelings on both sides.

Here in the Catskills, controversies related to forestry and the environment abound, and lines are often sharply drawn between "environmentalists," (presumably a wealthy group of people not native to the area, not dependent on local jobs) and the native population whose employment depends on use of land and water for non-recreational purposes. One current legal controversy is

about development of a pumped impoundment of Schoharie River water for hydroelectricity, and discharge of the water into the Esopus River. This project has been advocated by the Power Authority of the State of New York (PASNY), construction workers, and others seeking local employment and regional economic development. It is opposed by organized fly fishermen, the Catskill Center for Conservation and Development, and some local people whose businesses relate to tourism. These people regard the PASNY project as at least a threat to the Esopus trout fishery, if not its death knell. More closely related to forestry are perennial conflicts about use of timber in the Catskill Forest Preserve; reducing or expanding the number of deer; selective or uncontrolled timber harvesting — and many other issues often brought to the courts. The pumped power-storage issue has long been in the courts, and the end of legal maneuvers is not in sight.

If we could use our experience as forest owners, as people concerned with wise and productive use of a natural resource, to minimize litigation; to avoid adversary procedures which polarize issues; to save money and time; to lessen human conflict — we will have made a vital contribution to our whole society. More and more, our society has been loading onto judges and lawyers issues which cannot be solved in courts. They are rather symptoms of our changing values, our difficulties in learning to live harmoniously within our environment, with our neighbors, and with those from other neighborhoods.

What experience have you had in seeking a solution to a problem related to forestry or the use of your land? Have you managed to resolve such a problem without resorting to the courts? What enabled you to achieve this? Based on your experience, what advice could you offer to state agencies to help them avoid controversy or legal action with individuals or corporations? We would welcome your written comments to the Editor of the *Forest Owner* on this subject. Your experience could be helpful to other forest owners, to the Forestry Congress, and to our whole society.

Gilead Tree Farm
August, 1983



September was the seventh month of the Roman calendar, but is the ninth according to our reckoning. The Anglo-Saxons called it 'gerst-monath — Barley month.'

*Fair on September first, fair for the month.
Plant trees at Michaelmas
(September 29th) and command
them to grow
September blows soft,
Till the fruits' in the loft,
Then came October,
full of merry glee.*

—Spenser



*'Best I love September's yellow,
Morns of dew-strung gossamer,
Thoughtful days without a stir,
Rooky clamours, brazen leaves,
Stubble dotted o'er with sheaves —
More than Spring's bright uncontrol
Suit the Autumn of my soul.*

—Alex. Smith

**Minutes of the
141st Board Meeting
NEW YORK FOREST
OWNERS ASSOCIATION
D.E.C. Building
Cortland, New York
July 14, 1983 — 2 p.m.**

President, Paul Steinfeld, presided.

The following were present: Robert Demeree, Kenneth Eberley, Richard Garrett, John Kelley, James Lassoie, George Mitchell, A.W. Roberts, Jr., Paul Steinfeld, Linda Thorington, Lewis DuMond, Nancy Finegan, David Hanaburgh, Alan Knight, Mary McCarty, Douglas Monteith, Robert Sand, and Evelyn Stock.

The minutes of the May 14th meeting were read and approved upon motion of Sand, seconded by Eberley.

Mary McCarty gave the treasurer's report for Stuart McCarty who was unable to be present. She reported the net assets to be \$8461.41. This report is attached to the minutes.

Mary McCarty reported on the Fall meeting to be held at the Cumming Nature Center in western New York. The date is September 30 and October 1. It is to start with a dinner at 6 p.m. on September 30. There will be a program in the evening with a meeting of the directors following. The check-in time on Saturday is to be 9 a.m.

Bob Sand reported for the Woods Walk committee. Lewis DuMond is to host a walk on September 24, and Dick Garrett on October 15.

Sand also reported that he had been with a committee to meet Commissioner Williams and that there is to be another meeting in two months.

The date of the Annual Meeting is April 21, 1984. It is to be at Cornell with John Kelley, chairman, and Doug Monteith, vice-chairman.

The liability insurance coverage of the Association was discussed and Knight moved, seconded by Garrett, that the limits be increased to 1,000,000. bodily injury and 100,000. property damage. Upon voting this motion was defeated 7-6.

Demeree reported that there has been no progress on liability insurance for members from the agent.

A letter was read from the Dean of Forestry stating that a statewide Forestry Congress is planned for June 5-6-7, 1984. He would like a Director's meeting scheduled during that time, and our cooperation. This was referred

to the Long Range Planning Committee.

The next meeting is to be at 9 p.m. on September 30, at the Cumming Nature Center.

On December 10, 1983 and March 10, 1984, it is to be at the Farm and Home Center in Binghamton at 11 a.m.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
J. Lewis DuMond
Secretary

On The Calendar

Tree Measurement and Timber Estimating Workshop I. September 10, 1983, Pack Demonstration Forest, Warrensburg, New York. Registration fee: \$30.00.

September 18-23

New England Trip

September 30-October 1

Fall Meeting at Cumming Nature Center, Naples, N.Y.

Tree Measurement and Timber Estimating Workshop II. October 8, 1983, Heiberg Memorial Forest, Tully, New York. Registration fee: \$30.00.

Hardwood Lumber Grading Workshop. October 31 to November 4, 1983, SUNY-ESF campus, Syracuse, New York. Registration fee: \$145.00.

Fast Growing Hardwood Plantation Workshop. November 15, 1983, Syracuse, New York. Registration fee: \$10.00.

Below are the descriptions of these workshops that will appear in our Fall credit and noncredit course brochure.

Any inquiries regarding these workshops should be directed to: **School of Continuing Education, SUNY-ESF, Syracuse, NY 13210, phone (315) 470-6891.**

Fast Growing Hardwood Plantations

This is a state-of-the-art technology transfer workshop designed to review current knowledge regarding establishment of fast-growing hardwood plantations in the northeast. Primary emphasis will be placed on hybrid poplars: tree improvement programs, nursery practices, insects and diseases, and utilization.

FOREST Bookshelf

Timber Training Booklets

Two new TI-59 training booklets are now available. The "10 BAF Variable Plot Cruising with the TI-59" booklet includes programs that convert basal area data from variable plots to volume estimates and number of trees by DBH for individual stands. It also calculates basal area/acre, number of trees/acre, and mean stand diameter. This program is useful for prescription and planning.

The booklet "Growth and Yield Predictions for Upland Oaks" contains a program that projects the growth and yield of even-aged oak stands. The volume estimates are output as total cu. ft., merchantable cu. ft., and merchantable BF. This is Martin Dale's GROAK program written for the TI-59.

The above two programs along with "Sample Tree Measurement Cruising" and "Investment Analysis for Timber Management" make a handy package for TI-50 foresters.

Persons desiring a copy of one or both of the above booklets should clip off the following order and send it to one of the following addresses.

NEW ENGLAND AND
NEW YORK RESPONDENTS
Nancy Voorhis, Forester
USDA-Forest Service
P.O. Box 640
Durham, NH 03824

OTHER RESPONDENTS
Arlyn W. Perkey, Forester
USDA-Forest Service
180 Canfield St.
Morgantown, WV 26505

PLEASE SEND ME A COPY OF:

10 BAF Variable Plot Cruising
with the TI-59

by Arlyn W. Perkey _____

Growth and Yield Predictions
for Upland Oaks

by Nancy Voorhis _____

Forestry Facts

A wood wall four inches thick provides nearly as much insulation as a concrete wall five feet thick.



NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS
 FALL MEETING
 CUMMING NATURE CENTER

SEPTEMBER 30 - OCTOBER 1, 1983

AGENDA

FRIDAY - SEPTEMBER 30, 1983



- 5:00-5:30 Registration at the Cumming Nature Center, Gulick Road, Naples, N.Y.
 Informal overview of the Center -- beer and wine.
- 7:00 PM Dinner - Roasted half chicken, Tossed Salad, Potato, Vegetable, Bread and Butter, Dessert, Coffee, Tea, or milk
- 8:00 PM Program - Slide show in the Riedman Theater.
- 9:00 PM Board Meeting

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1983

- 9:00-9:20 AM Cumming Nature Center Visitor Building - registration.
- 9:20 AM Introduction in the Riedman Theater - Karl VonBerg, Forester.
- 9:30 AM "Forest Cover Types of the Bristol Hills Area" - Dr. Franz Seischab, Ecology Professor, Rochester Institute of Technology.
- 10:00 AM Building Tour - stressing the heating system.
- 10:30 AM Log homestead on the Pioneer Trail. "Old time harvesting and wood use." This will involve tools on display as well as activities:
 Log pulling, sugaring equipment, Potash making, shingle making, splint chair construction.
- 12:00 Noon A cookout with hotdogs, salads, chips, beverage and dessert.
- 1:00 PM Riedman Theater - Review management at Cumming Nature Center - Hike to Management Area. Review objectives, as well as statistics. Review future possibilities which are not yet manipulated.
- 3:30 PM Return to Visitors Building.

RETURN FORM WITH REGISTRATION AND MONEY BY SEPTEMBER 15, 1983

REGISTRATION FORM

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

FRIDAY - Dinner and Program - \$10 per person _____ @ \$ _____

SATURDAY - Program & Luncheon - \$5 per person _____ @ \$ _____

Money and Reservations MUST be received by September 15, 1983.

Make checks payable to NYFOA

Send to: Stuart McCarty, 4300 East Avenue, Rochester, New York 14618 (716) 381-6373

Meeting limited to 100 people, so send in your reservation promptly.



Dick Garrett mans the NYFOA booth at the Woodsmans Field Days in Boonville.

HELP!!

Here it is Fall again and we want to help more forest owners or would be forest owners get more benefit from their forests. What can you do to help us find out who they are?

Would you be willing to put a notice in your local paper of the upcoming fall meeting to be held October one at Cumming Nature Center in Naples? It's fun, it's informative, and you get to meet a lot of interesting people.

The program includes a demonstration of logging and wood uses the "old way"; a demonstration by a team of oxen; an analysis of property in the Finger Lakes Region, soil-vegetation-slopes; a tour of the new building; an excellent photographic exhibit; and a picnic lunch. Then into the woods for some interesting observations.

You could tell your fellow forest owners that the organization had its first fall meeting just twenty years ago (September, 1963). At this time they had a bank account of \$175 and 212 members in 47 counties. Today we have about 700 members in 58 counties, 21 states and three foreign countries, as well as a bank account of around \$8,000 which is being built up to finance a much wider effort to reach the rest of the 500,000 forest owners that the U.S. Forest Service says there are in New York State. This is a big job. Here is your opportunity to help expand the organization, do your children and the state a service, meet some interesting people and have some fun doing it.

Let us know who you are

According to the Forest Service report, about one half of the 500,000 forest owners own less than ten acres of woodland, and the average sized woodlot is from 40-60 acres. About four million acres are owned by farmers. About 8.3 million acres are owned by miscellaneous private owners, industry owns about one million acres, and the public owns four million acres. No timber is harvested on three million of these public lands.

So every one of us is important. If the forest industry in New York State is to keep up with demand for better results, we all have to take an interest in better management for whatever reason we have our woodlots. The time has come for a wider and more dedicated effort.

You could also tell your friends that the objectives of the organization are: 1. to unite the forest owners of New York in a common cause of improving their forest resources and forest opportunities. 2. To join with and support private, state and federal programs that strengthen forestry, such as the New York Forest Practice Act and Tree Farm Program. 3. To help make ownership of forest land more attractive as an investment. 4. To work toward an economic climate favorable to permanent forest industry. 5. To maintain a balance between timber growth and cut to assure raw materials for industry and steady employment in forest communities and rural areas. 6. To encourage education and research in forest management, marketing and use of forest products

and services. 7. To manage forest land to enhance its natural beauty for the benefit of the owner, motorist, tourist and recreation.

To meet these objectives, the Association:

- Publishes six issues of the *Forest Owner* each year, providing free and friendly exchange of experience, outlook and opinion among the members.

- Holds annual and Fall meetings, tours and field trips to inform and inspire.

- Promotes standards for timber harvesters that protect forest owners in the sale of timber and during logging operations.

- Works for the classification of forest lands into: timber growing, recreation, watershed, wildlife, and summer home sites.

- Works for a forest land tax adaptable to conditions of timber harvesting.

- Recognizes and acclaims meritorious effort in the field of forestry, conservation and outdoor recreation.

- Conducts "Woods Walks" to stimulate enthusiasm for: growing timber, enjoyment of our outdoor living and getting acquainted with NYFOA members.

The membership can bring you returns in the satisfaction of growing quality timber, stabilizing forest industries and markets, providing permanent jobs, increasing the value of your woods, enlarging areas of natural beauty across New York State, and leaving behind a monument in living trees to bless the tomorrows for the boys and girls of today.

—Editor

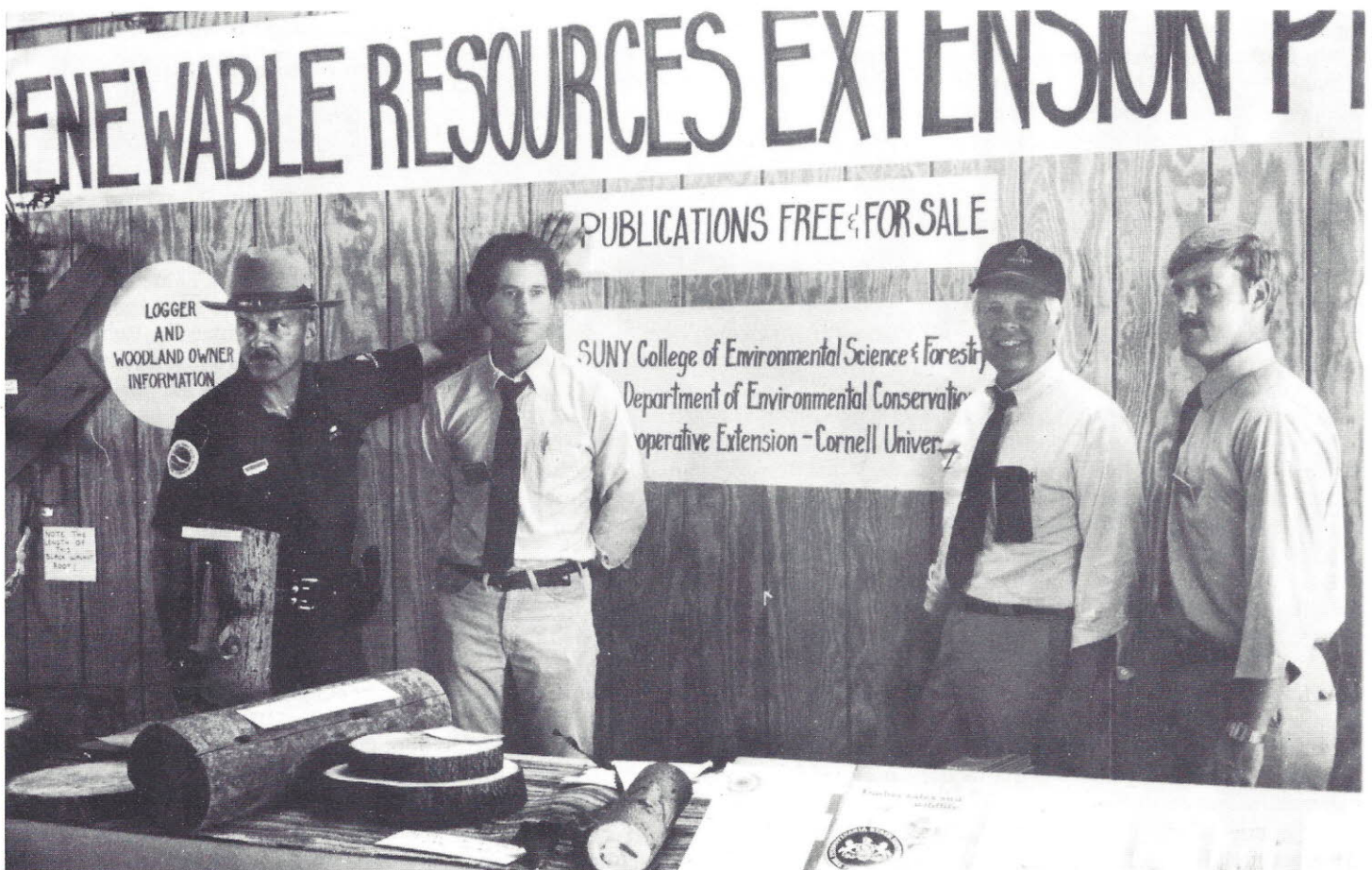
Letters to the Editor

Evelyn Stock
5756 Ike Dixon Road
Camillus, New York 13031

The November-December issue will be **Letters to the Editor** issue.
Please share your forestry ideas with us, as well as consider the following:

1. What are you doing to promote better forest management?
2. What do you think needs to be done for N.Y.F.O.A. to make a greater impact?
3. What do you think needs to be done in your area?
4. Would you like to see regional groups of members?
5. How would you expand the organization?
6. What would you like to see in the *Forest Owner*?
7. What do you like best about the *Forest Owner*?
8. What do you like least about the *Forest Owner*?

I have a new mailbox and I want to get a blizzard of mail and be stuffed with "food for thought." My address is: Evelyn Stock, 5756 Ike Dixon Road, Camillus, New York 13031.



DEC Commissioner Henry G. Williams (second from right) and N.Y.S. Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) forest ranger (left) visit the Renewable Resources Extension Program exhibit for loggers and woodland owners. Staffing the SUNY ESF, NYS DEC, and Cornell Cooperative Extension sponsored information exhibit were forester Arthur L. Brooks (right) and SUNY ESF graduate student Edward Pawlak (3rd from right). This was just one of many educational opportunities at the 36th New York State Woodsmen's Field Days in Boon-

ville which attracted some 15,000 persons. David W. Taber, Renewable Resources Extension Specialist, reported that the annual Friday Night Forestry Seminar at the Field Days attracted 186 persons from 25 counties in New York State plus people from five other states and Canada. One gentleman arrived from Washington State to say that they had the same problems in Washington that New Yorkers have. And he noted that we were doing a good job.

FIREWOOD THINNING

By N.A. Richards

A large part of the growing timber resources of New York is in pole-sized hardwood stands that have regenerated naturally in old fields, pastures, or clear-cuts. Many of these have trees still too small for sawtimber, but prime for firewood. Depending on the stand and how it is treated, firewood thinnings can either improve or reduce the potential for future sawtimber production — the highest value for hardwoods of sufficient quality.

I am now selling firewood from rather typical old-field stands on my tree farm in Delaware County, and am learning much from trying to put forestry concepts I teach into practice there. Here are some guidelines I have developed so far for firewood thinnings on my farm.

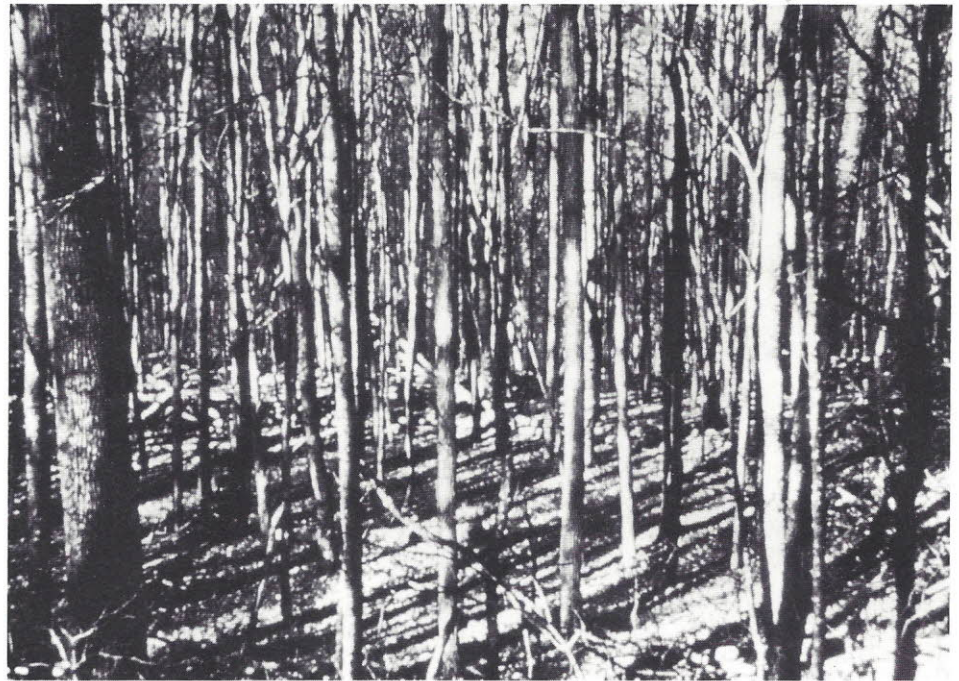
Firewood Thinnings versus Firewood Stands

My first step in evaluating stands for firewood cutting is to determine whether a stand has potential for good sawtimber production. If a stand has at least 40 trees per acre that have potential to grow good sawtimber, then I consider it a sawtimber stand and direct firewood thinnings to improving growth of the future crop trees. My criteria for good potential sawtimber trees is that they be straight, clear of limbs for at least 25 feet, and free of decay, cracks, or other stem defects. Species is less important because most of the hardwoods have a sawtimber market if good quality. However, it is wise to emphasize the species that grow best in one's area; on my farm these are sugar maple, red oak, and white ash.

Because it takes many years to grow good sawtimber, it pays to grow only good quality trees for this end product. Low grade sawtimber is plentiful, and now about equally valuable as firewood through much of New York. Therefore, if a stand or part of a stand has few good quality trees, it may be better to manage the area for firewood harvest and try to get a better quality stand in the next generation.

When to Thin

The question of when to thin hardwood pole stands has both silvicultural and economic considerations. Young hardwoods need to be fairly crowded for 20 to 30 years to develop straight, limb-free boles. If thinned too early,



Pole sized hardwood stand, unthinned.

bole quality is lost to limb growth. Depending on soil and other site conditions, hardwoods in closed, even-aged stands tend to reach a certain height of clear stem, after which additional crowding tends to reduce diameter growth more than improve stem quality. My young hardwoods are generally developing into "1½ to 2½ log stands" — referring to standard 16-foot log lengths. As long as most trees have vigorous crowns, they can be left crowded to improve stem quality. But when crowns begin to weaken, it is time for thinning to improve diameter growth.

Economic considerations center on minimum and optimum tree sizes for firewood harvest. Small trees below 6 inches diameter have a high proportion of bark and sapwood; their value as firewood increases with size. Also, a few inches diameter growth on small trees makes a large proportional increase in volume and value, whereas similar growth on a larger tree is a proportionately smaller gain if we think of the standing trees as invested capital. Finally, firewood handling is more efficient per cord from larger trees, up to the size where more or heavier equipment is required to handle them.

To mark trees and estimate volumes of firewood for sale on my tree farm, I use the Conservation Department's simple table that gives the number of trees of various diameters required to make a cord of four-foot wood. I currently get \$10 per cord for standing marked trees for firewood, a common stumpage price

around the state; so my stumpage value per tree is added to the following table.

Firewood Stumpage Volume and Value

D.B.H.	Trees per Cord	Value per Tree
6 inches	20	\$.50
8	10	1.00
10	6	1.67
12	4	2.50
14	3	3.33
16	2	5.00

From this, I have decided that it is best for me to make thinnings when most trees to be cut are 10 to 12 inches DBH. Smaller trees can be left for increased growth unless they are dying, crowding better trees, or otherwise should be removed to accomplish thinning objectives.

How to Thin

Another important consideration is that pole hardwood trees can be easily damaged by felling and skidding during a thinning, thus reducing future sawtimber quality. Because of this, I think it is better to thin smaller areas fairly heavily to last 10 to 20 years between thinnings, rather than make lighter, more frequent thinnings throughout a woodlot. Thinnings must be heavy enough to maintain good growth until the next thinning, but not so heavy as to stimulate branch sprouting on the clear stems. As a general rule, stands can be thinned down to about 60% of their full density without greatly reducing total stand production, because the remaining trees grow faster to make up the difference. Healthy trees usually don't

sprout new branches if thinned no more than this. For woodland owners inexperienced in evaluating stands, it is useful to lay out some 1/10 acre plots (66 feet square) in typical areas of their stands and tally the trees by DBH (diameter at 4.5 feet height) to estimate thinning needs. The following table, simplified from U.S. Forest Service research, gives the range of tree stocking through which nearly full stand production can be expected; the low value is at 60% and the high one at 100% of full stocking.

Average DBH	Trees per Acre Low	Trees per Acre High
6 inches	300	460
8	170	280
10	110	175
12	75	120
14	60	95
16	45	75

I find that most of my stands have good and poor patches of trees that warrant different treatments. For areas having enough quality trees for good sawtimber production, I generally try to remove about 1/3 of the tree volume in a thinning. I focus first on removing any larger trees that have poor potential for sawtimber production, and then thin out remaining dense patches as needed. For areas of a stand having poor sawtimber prospects, the general rule is to remove at least 2/3 of the stand to encourage good regeneration. However, I prefer to clear small patches rather than leave scattered trees opened up excessively. The result of such patch cuttings is to convert an even-aged stand to a two-aged stand as regeneration grows up in the patches.

My most common types of poor stand areas, beech colonies with the beech bark disease and multi-stemmed red maples, are widespread in the state. Although the younger stems in beech colonies are often disease-free, I try to clear these colonies rather than leave scattered small stems to grow into bushy, low quality trees. Multi-stemmed red maples rarely grow to quality sawtimber. Entire clumps either should be removed or left intact for greater firewood growth, rather than thinning stems from the clumps. Another problem is the scattered old parent trees in many stands, that have spread their crowns to prevent good young trees from growing underneath. I make an individual choice on each of these: To remove the old tree as rough firewood to regenerate the spot, or to leave the tree for wildlife and delay regeneration until its eventual demise.

A major key to minimizing damage to the remaining stand from firewood thinning is to lay out a good skid trail system before cutting. The trails should link the areas of heaviest cutting, while following the gentler slopes and avoiding wet spots as much as practical. They should steer clear of good trees, and rather, be lined with trees marked for thinning but cut last to take the brunt of damage during skidding — especially on trail curves. Where feasible, loop trails through the thinning area are best to provide the cutter with alternative directions for skidding trees.

The season of cutting also determines the damage done in firewood thinning. Trees are most susceptible to bark skinning during the first half of the growing season. Also, skid trails are most subject to rutting and erosion when soils are waterlogged in the spring, but soils usually dry out quickly after the trees

leaf out. Therefore, I close my woods to cutting from March through June to minimize damage to the trees and trails, and let the cutter choose his time during the rest of the year. I think late summer and early fall is best for firewood cutting for the next year's use, because the woods are quite resistant to damage then and the cut wood part-dries quickly. Although they say that cutting firewood in winter "warms twice," the slow-drying wood remains quite subject to decay fungi consuming BTU's during the following spring and summer.

Karin, my wife, enjoys woods that are pleasant for walking. Her comment after visiting a stand recently thinned for firewood to my specifications: "The cutter paid us to open up the woods and make these nice trails? We should be paying him." My professional response: "Getting paid to improve the woods is the key to good forest management."



Pole sized hardwood stand, thinned.

Safe Chain Saws Prevent Injuries

Since 1960 McCulloch has compiled extensive research on the cause and prevention of chain saw injuries, paying special attention to a major cause of injury, kickback.

Swedish accident statistics on kickback cases report that in the period from

1970-1972 kickback accidents were reduced by 667, from 1,492 to 825, when hand guards were in use. This is a reduction of 45%. In 1972 chain brakes were generally in use; and in the period 1972-1977 injuries were reduced from 825 to 178, an actual 78% reduction in injuries. Over the total time period, 1970-1977, the combination of hand guard and chain brake kickback accidents were reduced from 1,492 to 178.

NO LAND TAX and South African Foresters

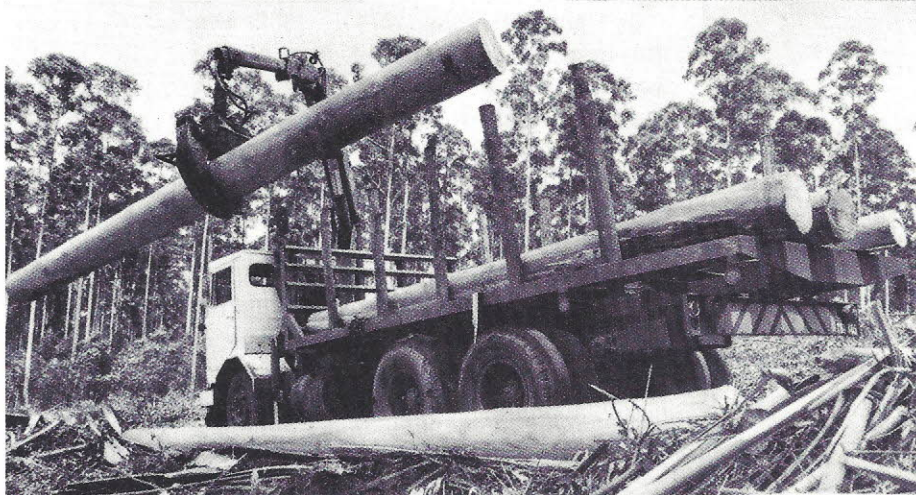
South Africa has no Land Tax. Although South African foresters and landowners are faced with many problems, the problem of land taxation is not one of them. To this fact I attribute the profitable timber production enterprise in South Africa.

The early Cape governors soon realized that the heavily exploited indigenous forests could not recover and that it would be necessary to import hardier and faster growing exotic tree species. More than a thousand species were brought in from all parts of the world and tested.

Plantation forestry was started in 1876 by J. Storr-Lister of the Indian Forest Service. He established a plantation of fast growing eucalyptus at Worcester to provide fuel for railway locomotives. In 1892-4 the Worcester plantation was sold to deBeers at a net profit of approximately £60 an acre. The financial success of this plantation gave an enormous stimulus to plantation forestry by the government and by private enterprise.

Since the second World War the growth of planted forests and subsidiary wood processing industries in South Africa has been phenomenal. From the small beginning at Worcester in 1876, the state now controls some 1,000,000 acres while the private sector has slightly more than 2,000,000 acres. Of the total plantation area, about one-half is in pine plantation, one-third in eucalyptus, and one-sixth in black wattle. Most of the eucalyptus and all of the black wattle are privately owned. Most of the softwood requirements of South Africa are satisfied by the hard pines (similar to our Southern pines). The various species of eucalyptus have a wide variety of hardwood physical properties that meet the hardwood need of South Africa.

Up to the outbreak of the second World War, there was very little private forestry in South Africa. The private sector was reluctant to enter the field of saw milling. The division of forestry was forced to establish its own sawmill at Elandshoek in 1937. The second World War changed all this. There was a serious shortage of timber and prices boomed. Dozens of private sawmills mushroomed up all over the country and new state sawmills and preservation plants were erected. After the war the private sector began to take an increas-



A plantation near Sabie in the Transvaal, property of the Hans Merensky Foundation.

ing interest in plantation forestry now that it had been conclusively demonstrated that forests were a profitable investment. Large plantation companies were formed in South Africa and Swaziland, and numerous smaller concerns embarked on tree-planting projects. Skilled forestry officers were induced to leave the S.A. Department of Forestry for private industry. In addition to conifer plantations, extensive plantings of eucalyptus grandis and saligna for mining timber and later also for rayon pulp and sawtimber, took place in the subtropical areas of the Transvaal lowveld and Zululand.

In 1957, a tree-breeding research station was started and genetic improvement is currently undertaken at four centers. Seed, cuttings and pollen are collected from "Super Trees." Controlled cross pollination is practiced. Seed orchards are established. Seedlings are tested in comparative experimental planting (provenant stands). The state selects trees in its plantations according to external visible, desirable characteristics, while the Wood Research Unit analyzes the selected trees to identify the timber characteristics. Only trees that meet with all the requirements are then retained for further breeding purposes.

Management plans for each \pm 10,000 acres run about 4 inches thick. Every operation in the rotation is carefully detailed. Pedigreed, site-adjusted trees are planted about 1370 trees per hectare (2.4711 acres). Each tree is planted in a soil-prepared spot. Thinning and pruning schedules are prepared and followed to produce a desired product or group of products. Different schedules are followed for the production of sawlogs; posts; poles and piling; mine timbers; pulpwood; etc.

Most of the sawlogs are graded according to size and gang sawed into inch lumber. This lumber is dried and glued up into elements about 12" x 24" x 40'. These elements are then sawed into use-oriented sizes and shapes.

The normal sawlog rotation is between 30 and 35 years with veneer logs running up to about 45 years. There is usually a thinning at about 7 years, a smallpole commercial thinning at 14 years, a pulpwood thinning at 21 years, and a clearcut final harvest. Natural reproduction is not encouraged, as genetically improved planting stock is desired for replanting.

After the harvest the native Bantu women come in and collect the slash wood for fuel at a charge of one to two cents per head load.

The direction of South African forestry has been largely influenced by French, British and German foresters. However, many middle executives come to the U.S. schools (especially Yale) for advanced degrees. The pine forestry of the U.S. southern coastal plain has much influence on South African forestry.

South Africa has a school for foresters (Ranger School) and a college for forest officers (Foresters).

Most of the timber harvesting is done by tribal native Bantu workers contracted from the tribal chiefs. There are a few women so employed but the practice is discouraged.

I am indebted to the S.A. Dept. of Forestry and the S.A. Timber Growers Assn. for much of the above information. When I spoke to them at a meeting of the S.A. Timber Growers Assn. about land taxes in the U.S., they told me to go back to the U.S. and take the land taxes with me.

David H. Hanaburgh

Could This Happen In Your Town?

Mr. Francis A. Demeree
Terrace Hill Road
Bainbridge, N.Y. 13733

Dear Evelyn,

This is what is slowly taking place. This is what we are trying to at least partially avoid with 480A. This kind of thing going on and staring us in the face is why I do not have the heart to write an upbeat article on forest ownership for the "Forest Owner."

Best Regards,

"Mike"

MIDDLE GROVE — Judd Kilmer represents the third generation of his family to operate the sawmill on Lake Desolation Road in this hamlet within the Saratoga County town of Greenfield Center.

He has two teenage sons interested and involved in the business who may someday run the mill.

But Kilmer has already sold or given away three-quarters of the 1,600 acres of prime timberland his father and grandfather acquired. After decades of careful forestry practices to preserve the timberland, he is cutting all the trees he can.

Kilmer said he is the victim of the town's decision to go to full value assessment. His taxes have doubled within the past three years, he said, and frustration had forced him to sell or give away the land his father and grandfather carefully used before him. Only 400 acres remain.

"I tried to sell some (land) for \$100 an acre to individuals for firewood and (the individuals) were sold (on the purchase) until they were told how high taxes are," he said.

Kilmer employs eight men in the sawmill and several logging crews. His mill harvests and cuts mostly hardwoods for use in furniture. The wood is shipped to North Carolina, New England, Canada and Europe.

"Since 1907 there has been a sawmill here and it never stopped until full value assessment," Kilmer said. Until the past three years, "We always used good forestry, preserving the timberland by making selective cuts and letting the next crop come on. It was a long term investment."

Today, with taxes up, Kilmer said he needs to harvest all the trees he can to pay for the business.

"There is no incentive to let them grow for 20 years. It's a poor investment," he said. "This family never butchered the land. Now, we cut and get out."

As for his sons, "There will be nothing left for them," he said.

Maureen Rowell, who was appointed sole assessor for Greenfield Center in January, replacing an elected three-man board, said Kilmer's taxes under full assessment "probably did take a big jump."

She noted she was sure in many cases woodland assessment "hadn't changed in years and years. If he (Judd) says there is a pinch on his business, it may very well be true."

Saratoga County, with the exception of Saratoga Springs, went to full value assessment in 1981, she said. The actual revaluation was started in 1977 by C.B.M. Services Division of Cleveland, Ohio, which received \$800,000 of the original \$1 million contract.

Hired by the county for \$1,019,000, the job was completed by Cole, Layer & Trumble of Dayton, Ohio. The contract with the Dayton firm provided \$789,000 for completion of the initial project and \$239,000 to update assessment rolls in future years.

Kilmer said full value assessment in its third year, escalated taxes from \$2 and \$2.25 an acre to \$5 and \$6 an acre. This resulted in paying an amount "so high, it doesn't pay to keep it," he said. Kilmer added, **"When you say an average of \$5.50 an acre it doesn't sound like much to most people but if you own or control timberland, 20-year cutting cycles can amount to hundreds of thousands of dollars and you can't draw interest on it."**

Politicians, Kilmer said, "have ruined a good resource of the future. We won't feel it, but it will run out and the next generation will."

"Some land a mile or two from the road is assessed at more than roadside," he said. "They (assessors) don't know what they're doing. I spent a lot of money fighting it but I didn't get anywhere. I sold my land to get rid of the taxes."

"Lumber is as easy to buy today as 20 years ago," he said, because woodland owners are cutting it down to get what cash they can out of their land. Twenty years in the future, however, he predicted, "lumber will get scarce."

There are other sawmills in the same area. "A lot of people are making a living here. There are 10 or 15 logging

crews in the woods around here," he said. "We want to conserve this resource but I've talked to other owners and they're disgusted too."

Kilmer suggested a probable answer to the problem. The government, he said, could offer incentives to lumbermen who continue to preserve the land and trees through 20-year cutting cycles. For years, he admitted, woodlands were assessed "a little cheaper than they should have been."

To jump taxes by 100 to 200 percent, however, is to kill not only his business but that of other timberland owners. "We're cutting oak right now," he said. "It's been growing for 150 years." If not pushed to harvest it to assure an income, he said, "we could hold it another 20 years."

There is pain in the decision Kilmer felt forced to make. "I'm doing something I thought I would never do," he said. "No more forestry for me. I'm stripping the land."

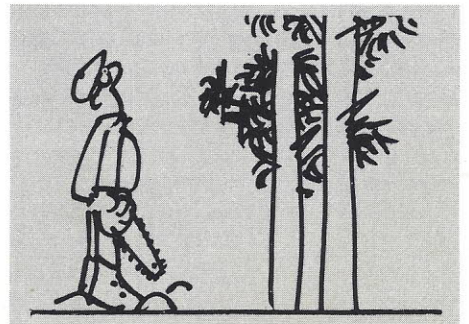
In the past, he despised those who thoughtlessly "butchered the land" without thought for the future. Since 1980 he has sold 1,200 acres. He has kept some cutting rights and also manages timberland for some other owners.

"I gave 169 acres to a Ballston Center church just to get rid of it," Kilmer said. The land contained high grade cherry and ash trees and he stripped the land for the wood before giving it away.

With the machinery in the sawmill paid off, Kilmer had thought he was working towards his retirement and building the business for the fourth generation. Now, he said, his concern is not for himself.

"I'll get enough timber. I know the country. I'll be all right," he said. "But when my sons get here, there won't be anything left."

"Mike" Demeree is the "father" of 480A (see pages 26-27 in the November-December 1982 Directory issue for an explanation of 480A), a member of the New York State Forest Practice Board, as well as the N.Y.F.O.A.



Timber Firms Moving to the South as Supplies in Northwest Diminish

By Thomas E. Ricks
Staff Reporter of
The Wall Street Journal

For the past half century, the nation's forest-products industry has made its home among the majestic firs and mountains of the Pacific Northwest. But as that region's supply of trees diminishes, the industry is moving to the South.

With the influx of new businesses, many Southerners now talk of timber with the reverence once reserved for cotton and tobacco. Last year, for instance, Georgia-Pacific Corp. moved its headquarters to Atlanta from Portland, Ore. Only two paper mills were started in the U.S. last year, and both are deep in Dixie. One, built by the American subsidiary of a British company, is in Hawkinsville, Ga. The other, in Columbus, Miss., is owned by Weyerhaeuser Co., a company based in Tacoma, Wash. And Louisiana-Pacific Corp., which hasn't expanded in the West in the past decade, has built or bought about two dozen plants in the South in that time.

The timber companies are moving South "for the cheap land, cheap labor, cheap taxes and ideal growing conditions," says Larry Miller of the United Woodcutters Association, a Mississippi labor group. "It's a paradise for them."

There's a flaw in this paradise, but it won't be evident for several decades. Almost three-quarters of the forest land in the South is in private, non-industry hands. And if those private landowners don't do a better job of replenishing their supply of trees, the South's natural advantages will be useless.

A Nomadic Industry

Logging in this country has always been nomadic. The industry has cut and moved on, from New England to the Great Lakes after the Civil War, to the South around the turn of the century, and to the West in the 1920s and 1930s.

But those days of wandering are numbered. Because naturally occurring supplies of trees won't meet future demand, the industry has to move toward an agricultural system of planting, managing and harvesting.

In the Pacific Coast states, more timber is being cut than is being grown. "All our projections show they can't sustain the volume of harvest," says Forest Service Economist Brian Wall. "The inventory is dropping dramatically."

Already, timber is the top agricultural product in South Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana. Last year, the region topped the Northwest in plywood production for the first time, accounting for about half the U.S. output. Just 25 years ago, the South didn't produce any plywood. The region also produces a third of the nation's lumber and two-thirds of its pulpwood, which is used to make paper.

The industry has been settling in the South in part because about 5% of the world's softwood trees — the stuff of basic building lumber — grow there. Foresters like the South because it offers plentiful rainfall, a long growing season, and flat land receptive to mechanical harvesters.

But the lures of the region are as much man-made as natural. While much of the Northwestern forest-products industry is unionized, every Southern state has passed right-to-work laws. Southern woodworkers make an average hourly wage about half that of their Northern counterparts.

Although many of the workers still use mules to haul logs and work under a system Mr. Miller of the woodcutters' association compares to sharecropping, more and more companies are turning to automated harvesting. Two people using traditional machinery can fill three or four trucks of pulpwood in a day, foresters say. But one person on a new feller-buncher, which looks like a tank with a giant pair of scissors attached, can cut as many as 12 truckloads a day.

The South uses about 85% of the lumber it cuts, much of it in housing. Close to 60% of all housing starts in the first five months of this year took place in the South — which the Census Bureau defines as a region that includes the old Confederacy as well as Oklahoma, Kentucky, Maryland, Delaware and Washington, D.C.

Sun Belt companies favor local lumber partly because of lower transportation costs. It costs \$4,064 to ship 50 tons of lumber by rail from Portland, Oregon, to Houston — about six times the cost of moving the same amount to Houston from a sawmill in Silsbee, Texas.

The Southern timber boom, strong as it is now, could turn to bust in a few

decades because it rests on a shaky foundation.

In the Northwest, the federal government owns more than half of the commercial timberland and can reclassify it at any time as wilderness or recreational areas. In the South, the government owns less than a tenth of the forested land. While lumber companies like the freedom from government intervention, having three-quarters of the region's commercial timberland in private hands also makes the industry vulnerable.

Much Southern timber comes from forests owned by farmers, who have the land cleared for planting. Because the landowners aren't in the timber business, they often don't replant.

Most private landowners in the South simply let nature take its course. That often means letting the land run to elm, sweet gum and red maple — hardwoods that commercial foresters deride as trash trees. According to the Forest Service, only one in every three acres of privately held timberland is adequately regenerated after it is cut.

Evaporating Land Surplus

Although the South is still growing more trees than it is losing, the region's land surplus is evaporating. The industry worries that today's timberland will be tomorrow's shopping mall or giant farm. The Forest Service predicts that during the next 50 years, about 15 million acres of Southern forest land will be lost.

If landowners worry the timber companies, some companies scare the environmentalists. As the Southern countryside grows more crowded, commercial foresters are draining and planting wetlands, which in their natural state incubate and protect wildlife.

The tree farms that replace the nourishing wetlands, environmentalists say, are "pine monoculture" deserts. It's not clear how much the long, dull rows of uniform pines affect the production of wildlife; but there's no doubt that these new woods are neither dark nor lovely nor deep.

It's a far cry from the old days, says John Clark, Jr., a Champion International Co. forester, as he walks past feller-bunchers and other heavy machinery in the South Carolina woods.

"It used to be a lumberjack would go in and cut wood and raise hell on the weekend," he says. "Now it's a lot more complicated than that."

— *The Wall Street Journal*

The Timber Industry in New York Continues to Grow

Despite minor setbacks from our recent recession, New York's timber industry continues to grow, especially sawmills. A spring 1982 survey of sawmills, veneer mills and pulpmills (primary wood using plants) found 650 million board feet of logs were used by sawmills and veneer mills, and about 860,000 cords by pulp mills. These represent substantial increases (10%) since the last survey in 1979. In addition, use of residues produced by these primary mills has also increased from 88% of total residues produced to almost 96% of total residues. New York's timber industry is healthy, continuing to grow as our forests have expanded and matured since the early 1900's.

More information on hardwood and softwood consumption, and use of mill residues such as bark, sawdust, slabs and edgings, and shavings is contained in a recent publication by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation entitled **Roundwood Consumption and Residue Production by New York's Primary Wood Using Industry in 1981**.

Besides figures on total consumption, an attempt was made to characterize the present industry, especially with respect to sawmills. Some other trends of sawmill production were found as a result. For example, Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, Tioga, Delaware and Warren Counties all have total sawmill consumption of greater than 30MMBF (million board feet) per year. Warren has been the traditional forest products leader, but there continues to be a shift towards central and western New York. This is because of the increase in the forest base in those areas, while it has not changed significantly in the Warren County area. Average sawmill size is increasing in New York, as is the proportion of large mills and their share of the total sawmill consumption in New York.

Trends in residue use were also evident from the survey. As mentioned before, a higher proportion of the wood residues produced by primary mills are being used. In addition, there has been a shift from use for pulp and animal bedding towards use for mulch and fuel. These trends are what one would expect from the increased interest in wood fuels, so it was good to see this verified by survey results.

If you would like a free copy of the **Roundwood Consumption and Residue Production by New York's Primary Wood Using Industry in 1981**, write to NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, Policy and Economic Development Section, Room 404, 50 Wolf Road, Albany, NY 12233-0001, telephone (518) 457-7431.

Trees May Alert Other Trees to Danger, Scientists Believe

Some scientists now suspect that trees can in effect warn one another of danger by releasing chemicals into the air.

Researchers are preparing new experiments that they hope will confirm the tentative findings of their initial tests, the National Science Foundation announced recently. If they are successful, the science foundation said, they will probably be the first to show that plants emit signals that are received and responded to by other plants.

The results of the investigations could have far-reaching implications for pest control programs, the foundation said.

Groups of botanical biologists in Washington and New Hampshire had noticed that when trees were being attacked by insects, other trees nearby took the same defensive measures as the trees actually infested. The defense involves altering the leaves' chemistry to make them less palatable and nutritious to the insects.

The scientists reasoned that chemical substances emitted by the attacked trees were received by nearby trees, which then altered the quantities of such chemicals as terpenes and tannins in their leaves. The researchers have found that a tree can make such insect-repelling alterations within hours of the first damage.

The initial experiments were performed a year ago by David Rhoades, Lynn Erckmann and Gordon Orians, researchers at the University of Washington. They found that uninfested willow trees changed their leaves' chemistry in the same way as nearby willows that were being attacked by tent caterpillars. At Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, Jack C. Schultz, a biologist, and Ian T. Baldwin, a chemist, found that similar defensive actions occurred

among sugar maple and poplar seedlings.

The researchers investigated the possibility that the trees might somehow transmit information or signals from their roots that could travel through the soil. But in excavating the soil between an affected and an unaffected tree they could detect no chemical or other means of transmitting a signal. And some of the unharmed trees that responded were as far as 200 feet away from the trees under attack.

As a result, the scientists reason that airborne emissions called pheromones might be altering the defensive mechanism of the other trees. Pheromones are chemical substances that convey information to and elicit responses in other individuals. The most widely known examples of this phenomenon are the insect sex-attractants.

Both groups of researchers are beginning more complex experiments in hopes of obtaining proof of their theories.

Financed by a grant from the National Science Foundation, Drs. Rhoades, Erckmann and Orians will try to induce changes in leaf quality of undamaged plants by confining them in chambers with damaged plants. They will then try to identify the nature of the chemical emissions responsible for the effects.

Drs. Schultz and Baldwin, likewise supported by a National Science Foundation grant, will pump air from a damaged group of trees to an unharmed group, using clear plastic containers. By filtering and sampling the air flowing between the chambers, they hope to isolate and identify the chemicals that are carrying the message.

KISSING

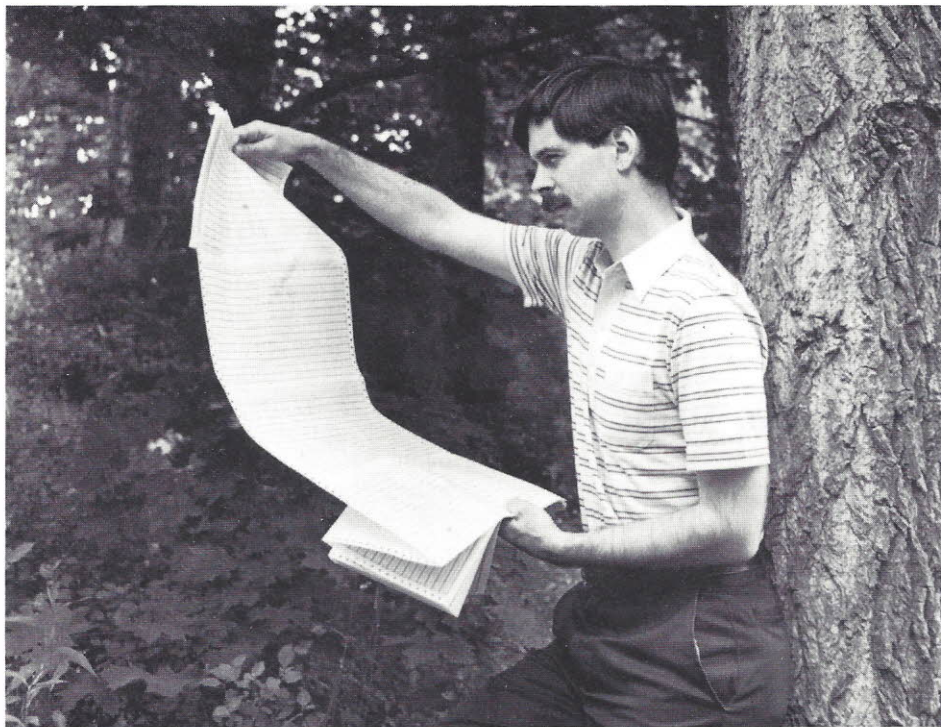
The young artist kissed his model smack on the lips.

"I'll bet you do that to all your models," she said when she regained her composure.

"No," he replied, "you are the first."

"How many have you had?" she inquired.

"Exactly four," he answered. "A rose, an onion, a banana, and you."



Gerald Hansen, ESF Forestry doctoral candidate, examines the computer print-out for his model to aid in the management of uneven aged hardwood stands.

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — **A computer may hold the answer** for foresters who want to accurately estimate the maximum yield from their tree crops. At the State University College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF), a research project has developed a computer model to aid in establishing guidelines to manage and harvest uneven-aged northern hardwood stands.

A stand is part of a forest that has its own identity. It is treated separately and is marked for harvesting separately.

According to Gerald Hansen, ESF forestry doctoral candidate, there are two philosophies for managing tree crops. One is the even-aged method where you begin with one crop of trees of essentially the same age, culture and grow them to maturity, harvest them all at once, and begin a new crop.

"The second method is to grow trees of many ages so the forest is an intermixture of saplings, pole trees and sawtimber trees — this is called the uneven-aged method of growing trees. At harvest, you remove selected individual sawtimber trees with the intent of reducing density to aid in establishing new saplings and to promote growth of those trees left. This method is good for a variety of areas including those that serve as intensive recreational areas or that may be located in ecologically sensitive areas," he said.

Saplings generally are those trees

having a diameter of up to six inches at 4½ feet of height, pole trees have a diameter of six to 12 inches and sawtimber is a tree larger than 12 inches in diameter which can be sawed for lumber.

Hansen concentrated his project on the uneven-aged hardwood management philosophy. In using this method, the forester must know the number of saplings, pole trees and sawtimber trees to be left following harvesting. Some guidelines are available, but they generally are for harvesting frequencies of from five to 15 years. In northern New York, particularly, it is not generally possible for foresters to return that often, and new guidelines are needed for intervals up to 30 years.

To execute this study, Hansen put together a computer simulation model which represents northern hardwood stands. He built this model on data that he collected in the field, from forest industry and College-owned lands.

The program Hansen developed stores data which described the trees by diameter at the height of four feet and by species. In order for the program to summarize all individual tree data and produce the stand projections, he added three basic growth components to the program. Within the model, there are subroutines that project future tree diameter, add new saplings and, finally, that eliminate tree records to mimic mortality.

"The computer model represents the stand by storing individual tree data. It projects tree data ahead through time and pools all individual tree data to produce stand summary statistics," he said.

In building the model, the diameter distribution, which refers to the number of trees among the different sizes, was a major concern. Hansen was interested in identifying different diameter distributions that would assure that the stands harvested would be recreated and maintained at the end of the 30-year interval. He also examined how different diameter distributions affected the stand growth.

The resulting model would serve as a means for estimating the volume of wood available for cutting in the future from uneven-aged stands, and will serve as a basis for making recommendations on how uneven-aged stands should be cut.

This project was requested by New York foresters who approached Dr. John V. Berglund, dean of ESF's School of Forestry, and his associate, Dr. Ralph D. Nyland, who received funding from the McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Research Program. The purpose of this funding program is to encourage and assist forestry schools to conduct the research necessary to improve the production, protection and utilization of forest and related rangelands and to stimulate the training of scientists in forestry and related specialties.

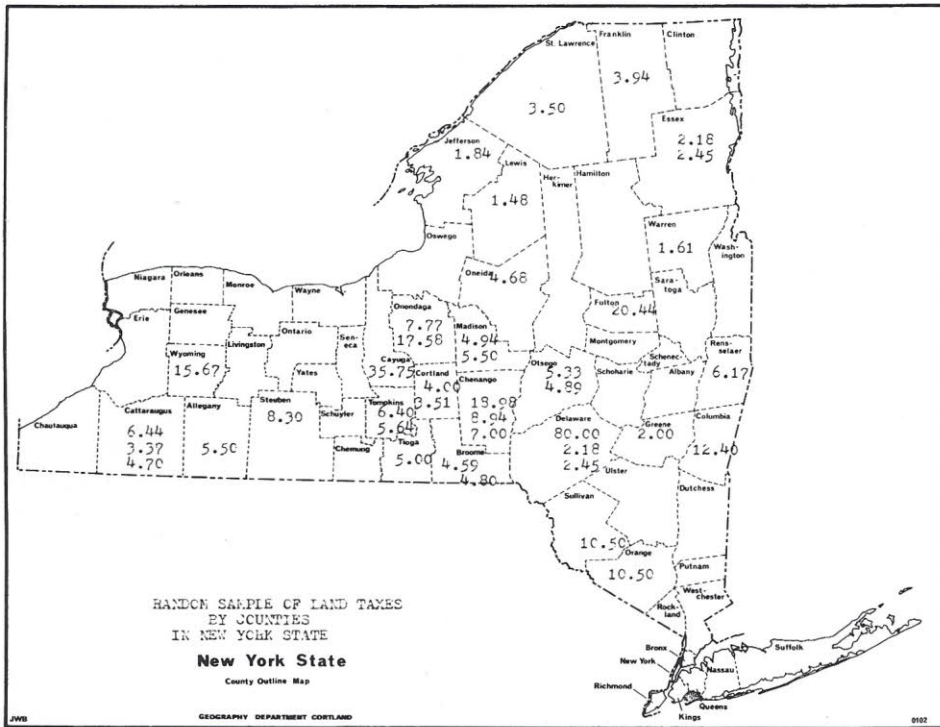
Northern hardwood forests are composed primarily of sugar maple, beech and yellow birch. They stretch from northern Pennsylvania into eastern Canada and reach as far west as Wisconsin. Hansen focused on this type of forest because it is so prevalent in New York.

Hansen, a baccalaureate graduate of ESF who received his master's at West Virginia University, will complete his Ph.D. dissertation within the next few months.

Another graduate student will continue this project and test its accuracy. The outlook is optimistic for practical use of the study. "There are tremendous efficiencies for managers who pick up this project," Berglund said.

"This is an exciting project for the reason that it ties into the real needs of the forest industry in New York State," Hansen said.





I suppose everybody who owns woodland figures their taxes are too high. I'm sure I do. But what I have found out from my brief survey should make some of you feel pretty good.

After I wrote an article, "Real Property Taxes and How They Got That Way" for the May-June issue of the *Forest Owner*, I began to wonder how much taxes varied in different parts of the state.

I got my idea from asking people in attendance at the annual meeting in Syracuse, and from personal friends and acquaintances. But I still had no information from various parts of the state. So I sent a form letter to thirty members of the N.Y.F.O.A. who had land in the parts of the state I was missing. Twenty-one of them answered. In all I have figures for 43 parcels in 28 different counties.

LAND TAXES — Here's What We Pay

County	Tax	Remarks
Allegany	\$5.50	
Broome	4.49, 4.80	
Cattaraugus	6.44, 3.37, 4.70	
Cayuga	35.75	Camp & large pond
Chenango	7.00, 18.98	
Chenango	8.94	Has a 3 Ac. pond
Columbia	12.40	
Cortland	4.00, 3.51	
Delaware	8.37, 7.26, 4.33	
Delaware	80.00	Unexplainable
Essex	2.18, 2.45	
Franklin	3.94	Includes small camp
Fulton	20.44	
Greene	2.00	
Jefferson	1.84	Under old Fisher Forest Tax Law
Lewis	1.48	Under old Fisher Forest Tax Law
Madison	4.94, 5.50, 4.80, 4.97	
Oneida	4.68	
Onondaga	7.77	
Onondaga	17.58	
Otsego	5.33, 4.89	Includes residence
Rensselaer	6.17	
St. Lawrence	3.50	
Steuben-Ontario	8.30	
Sullivan-Orange	10.50	
Tioga	5.00	Includes small camp & pond
Tompkins	6.40, 6.42, 5.64, 3.20	
Warren	1.61	Under old Fisher Forest Tax Law
Wyoming	15.67	



A.W. Roberts, Jr.

The information I asked for was what the individual paid in **land** taxes per year (town, county, school) on a **per acre** basis **excluding** improvements. A problem arose, however, when some towns did not separate out land from buildings. So some of my respondents included improvements (such as camps, ponds) and let me know this. I suspect that from the size of the tax reported by other correspondents, they included the tax on improvements but did not specify.

So my survey is not very scientific, to say the least, but with the comments column it at least gives some comparisons. It also seems to indicate that if you want to buy forest land, you had better go North of the Mohawk.



Evelyn A. Stock
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ASK A FORESTER

by AL ROBERTS

Another View On Tree Planting

August 25, 1983

Mr. A.W. Roberts, Jr.
RD #3
Cortland, NY 13045

Dear Mr. Roberts:

I read with interest your letter in the August, 1983 issue of the *American Christmas Tree Journal** in which you advised the New York landowner that "Christmas trees are about your only hope of making any money in your lifetime on planting trees of any kind."

While your assertion is correct in one respect, in a different respect it does a disservice to the believing landowner and this nation's forest resource. It is true that planting timber crop trees on worn out farmland is not the best investment. Indeed, the landowner would be far better off financially to simply sell the land and invest that money elsewhere.

However, as an alternative to leaving land barren, a timber crop — say red pine — is far better all around than letting the abandoned land lie fallow.

Let me give you an example. In 1958

my grandfather planted red pine on 100 acres of worn out land on his central Wisconsin farm. Now, 25 years later, that plantation, if clearcut, would yield about 30 cords per acre. If sold on the stump at current local market value of \$16 per cord, his income per acre would be \$480, or \$48,000 for the whole 100 acres. Needless to say, with proper thinning, the value of that timber will begin to increase in value at an even faster rate.

His neighbor, who planted nothing on his adjoining 100-acre field, has nothing to show for his land other than the fact that he still owns it, and has been paying taxes on it for the past 25 years.

In this case, the bottom line is that the neighbor's land has produced nothing, while my grandfather's has produced \$48,000. No small sum under the circumstances (zero maintenance), and well within the grasp of most people within their lifetimes.

Now, who would be crazy enough to let their land lie in an unproductive state for 25 years? My grandfather's neighbor, for one, and probably anybody else who takes your assertion at face value, but doesn't care to sell his land for whatever reason.

As for the point that Christmas trees are the only realistic cash crop at the

landowner's disposal, true enough at the moment. But from what I read, a Christmas tree glut is looming on the horizon. Your promise of quick income could well evaporate within the next seven-year growing cycle, leaving the sincere landowner with nothing more than a stand of inferior pulpwood.

My point is this: There's nothing wrong with planting Christmas trees, but it's a shame to plant nothing at all simply because somebody says there's no "hope of making any money in your lifetime" with the alternatives.

Sincerely,

Eric Johnson
Associate Editor
The Northern Logger magazine

*Reprinted from March-April 1983
N.Y. Forest Owner.

Comment on the above:

Thirty cords per acre in 25 years is exceptionally good growth, not always obtained in New York. Also, the pulpwood market in Wisconsin is much better than in New York. In parts of New York there is no market for red pine pulpwood. The stumpage price where there is a market averages \$4.00 per cord.

A.W. Roberts