

*The New York*  
**FOREST OWNER**

A publication of the New York Forest Owners Association

January/February 1995



**Catskill Treasures**



# THE NEW YORK FOREST OWNER

VOL. 33, NO. 1  
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**COVER:** Ashokan Reservoir

Photo courtesy of Bill Rudge.

# FOREST OWNER

A publication of the New York Forest Owners Association  
Editorial Committee: Al Brown, Betty Densmore, Alan Knight, Mary McCarty and Bill Miner.

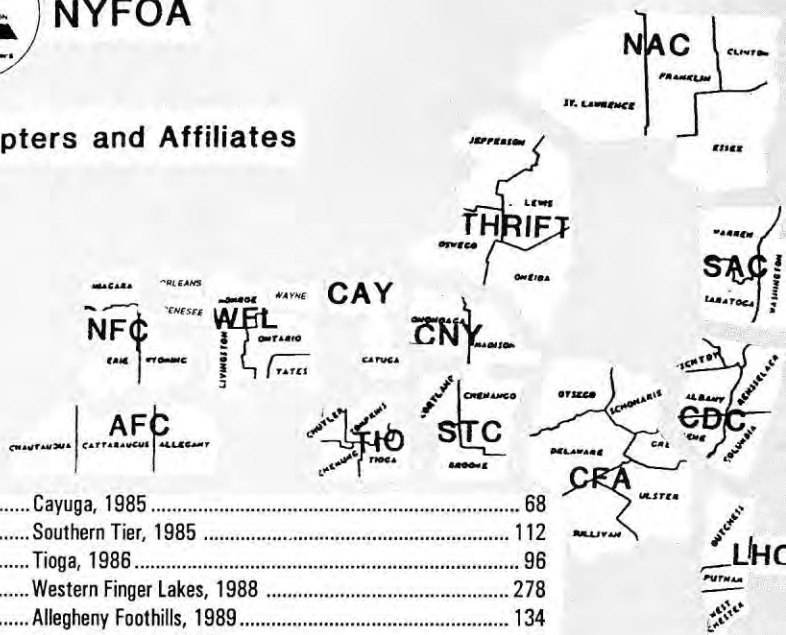
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**NYFOA**

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Membership as of December 1, 1994: 1990

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I hope the weather in your part of the State has been as good as it has been in the Central New York area. I've been able to get a lot of extra outside work done that I haven't been able to finish in the past. But more importantly, I had an opportunity to spend some time in my woodlot. In the last issue of the magazine, I mentioned that I had just completed a woods road and that I was fearful of the heavy rains eroding it. I am happy to report that all is well. The contractor did a nice job of installing water bars. My woodlot, as is the case for most of you, is used for a lot more than just timber production. For instance, my wife, Betty, annually gathers Balsam Fir boughs for our front door Christmas wreath. Like so many of you, the most enjoyable hours that I spend these days are spent in the woodlot.

I thought I would take a moment here to talk a little bit about some of the more pertinent issues being discussed at Board meetings and by the Long-Range Planning Committee. At the last Board Meeting in October, John Marchant in his Executive Director's Report announced his retirement

effective April, 1995. John pointed out that he had been serving in this volunteer capacity for five years. For those of you who are not familiar with the Executive Director role, it deals with external affairs, networking with other groups, etc., while the President of our Association deals with internal operations. John's effort over these past five years are sincerely appreciated. He will be missed tremendously. Thank you John for your years of service to NYFOA. The Long-Range Planning Committee has identified a subcommittee chaired by Norm Richards to come up with recommendations on how to fill this huge vacancy. Also for everyone's information, the Board agreed at the last meeting to support a proposal from the Western Finger Lakes Chapter to sponsor the Fall, 1995 Meeting. The tentative date is September 30 - October 1. Mark your calendars. WFL's proposal is to tour the city of Rochester's private forest surrounding Hemlock Lake. I understand this is an absolutely beautiful area.

By the time this magazine is received, your Chapter/Affiliate chair and many of



*President Don Wagner and Friend at the 1994 Family Forest Fair.*

you will already be involved in a USDA Forest Service Woodland Survey. NYFOA as an organization has agreed to support this effort. Besides NYFOA's involvement being the right decision, helping complete the survey will also add some money to your individual Chapter/Affiliate treasuries. We have been promised \$1 plus phone expenses for every individual surveyed, not a bad deal.

My wife, Betty, is in the process of creating a quilt for NYFOA to raffle as a fund raiser. Because this project will take a good share of her time over the next few months, we will not be able to do much together, so I'll have a lot of time on my hands. This means I shall make a valid attempt to attend several Chapter and Affiliate meetings this winter, especially the Christmas parties and pot luck dinners. I'm not sure which ones I will attend at this point, but I do intend to make as many as possible. Lastly, I promised Tom Hewitt at the last Board Meeting that I would make the Cabin Fever Festival in Cayuga County, God willing and I don't get snowed in. The event is scheduled for the weekend of **February 11 and 12**. I am told by Dick Fox and Tom that the event goes on regardless of the weather. Sounds like fun; hope to see you all there.

I was very pleased to get a couple of letters from Mary and Stuart McCarty recently. They are wonderful folks and it's always good hearing from them.

I sincerely hope you all had a nice holiday season.

## "Winter Fun for the Whole Family"

### 7th Cabin Fever Festival

Sponsored by NYFOA's Cayuga Chapter 10 AM, Sat. & Sun., Feb. 11 & 12, 1995

Fillmore Glen State Park, Moravia, NY



*A construction from raw logs done on site for the benefit of 2-3 thousand attendees at the 2-day festival.*





above I am doing well. I worry about the branch collar however, it has to stay on the tree during all pruning operations. It produces chemicals that protect the tree from decay causing organisms. The branch collar is not always clearly evident, but it is there.

The **third year** I do the same thing I did the year before. By now the seedling tops are at eye level allowing a better focus. Some new straight trees show up which were overlooked last year. I pay particular attention to leaders I had corrected. If it has helped, fine, if not, the tree may have genetic difficulties with leader formation (white ash does this on my land). I do another correction nevertheless, but its the last one. I am more radical with the competition and cut them way down so that my selected straight trees have about 16 inches free crown room. Then I hang a loose loop of flagging near the top on the stem. I prefer dark blue flagging: it shows best in all seasons. A great aspect of this management procedure is that youngsters can do it very easily too. Have you ever seen a kid who dislikes snippers? They would have their own forestry project, they would learn a lot from your guidance!

The **fourth year** is easy because I can see the flagging which shows the trees I assisted. It also shows nature's response and I step back for an overview. My hand pruner may not be strong enough now so I get the small chainsaw. I look for the stump sprouts at this point which sometimes have grown twice as tall as the seedlings. I select the best sprout, one that is emerging within six inches of the ground, which exhibits good form and branching and I cut off the rest. I also go after vigorous undesirables: striped maple, hophornbeam and beech brush and cut them off at ground level if they are within six feet of any flags.

The **fifth year** my pole saw arrives. I do not use it on my flagged straight trees but on the older generation of trees sur-

### By Peter S. Levatic

My next license plate? Hmm... It is a tempting idea. It would proclaim my forest love affair: S-T-R-eight tree-S! It would be cool, exhibiting my secret. My wife, Barbara, on the other hand, thinks vanity plates are in bad taste. And of course they do cost extra, and one has to be rational in forest management. \$ 25.00 each year these plates would cost! Could there be a better use of my forest funds?

Instead of buying these plates,

the **first \$25.00** could go for a gift membership in NYFOA,

the **second year** I could buy myself a good hand pruner,

the **third year** some 5 mill flagging which lasts a long time and

the **fourth \$25.00** could be saved and added to

the **fifth** installment to buy a good pole saw for under \$50.00;

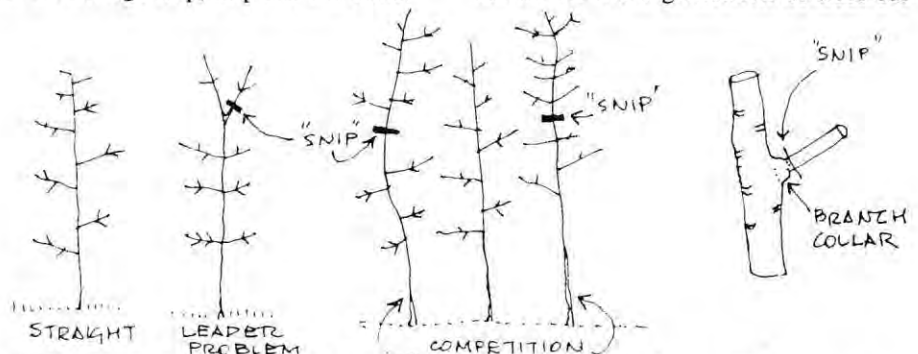
all of which would certainly be more useful than driving around with only a slogan, no matter how important it is. Of course, dear reader, I also do something with my acquisitions each year, and so I have my slogan and straight trees too. This is how it works.

Soon after each timber stand improvement (TSI) project, lots of young seedlings spring up in the sun filled areas, full of joy and hope like hordes of kindergarten kids. I can easily detect those better endowed by nature and growing more rapidly. I can also see the straight ones. However, they are not always the same trees. So I intervene on behalf of the straight ones. I give them an assist, maybe two assists. Sometimes this makes a difference and the straight trees I favored become indeed the leaders, the crop trees among the multitude. Not always, because my method cannot negate genetic, or soil conditions, etc. which are the determinants. But it makes a difference often

enough to reward me for my effort, which really is minimal because I do all this while I walk around in the woods relaxing, day dreaming, sort of resting after a long day. Not working, just having fun.

In the **first year**, I simply observe what is developing. I make notes about the species, the variety, whether black cherry, oak, or whether other valuable shade intolerants have made it into a former maple stand, for example. I want to see if striped maple, hophornbeam or other "pests" are invading. How is this regeneration going to benefit the turkey, or the grouse? Are the deer going to come, or is there better food for them close by. How is the forest litter? Can it hold the necessary moisture for the new crop. Most of all, I note the concentrations of seedlings about three to four feet high because these are the ones I will work with when I buy my hand pruner.

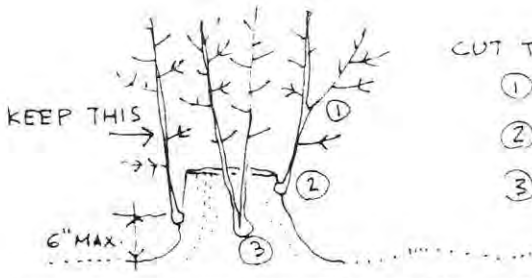
The **second year**, during the dormant season, I do two things. I correct the leader of otherwise straight trees noted the year before, and I eliminate the unwanted competitors within 12 inches of the top of the straight tree. Competitors are those less straight trees which are crowding and therefore shading my little crop tree. Leader correction is necessary if the leader looks damaged, or if the tree forms more than one leader. I go snip, snip and it is done!



I don't worry about tree spacing at this time. As long as there is lots of blue sky

rounding my TSI area. These trees have grown low branches into the forest open-





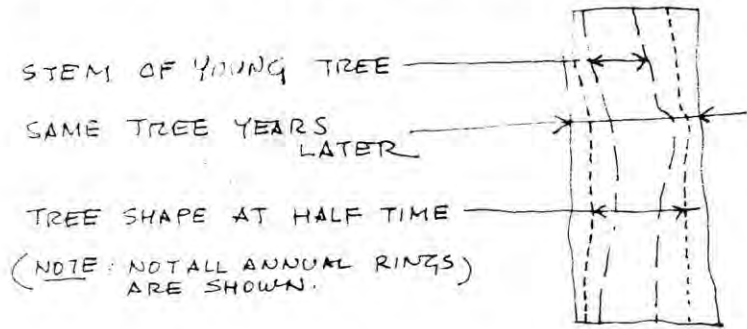
CUT THESE BECAUSE:

- ① FORKED STEM
- ② TOO HIGH OFF THE GROUND
- ③ DOUBLE SPROUT

ing where my flagged trees are because the light conditions are favorable there. If I can reach any, off they come! My flagged little trees are mostly on their own now. I make it a rule not to prune with my hand pruner any higher than I can reach. (I cut my finger once doing that!) I also quit the pruning when the seedling gets to be about one inch thick at breast height, (DBH). I come back to check and to admire from time to time. In about three more years the flagging falls off. It is no longer needed, the evidence is in plain sight.

One more phenomenon is worth mentioning. I once said to Bob Sand, a forester friend, that it was too bad that a certain sapling had a crook in it where the leader had

died and a new one had formed. He said not to worry about it, trees straighten out. This puzzled me for a long time thinking about how the cat straightens its hind leg when it stretches; trees cannot do that, I was sure! Later, observing grain patterns in



boards, I saw that trees grow unequally in width: they fill in concave, or hollow areas of the trunk more rapidly than other areas. The annual rings are farther apart where hollow areas existed. The trees do this for increased structural stability, not to please me. But I do not care, as long as they are straight I love them regardless.

So, how about those plates? Are you going to beat me to them?

*Peter, a NYFOA Director who represents Tompkins County at the NYS DEC Region 7 Forest Practice Board, is a Master Forest Owner (Class of '92).*

## NY'S FOREST INVENTORY — The State of Our State's Forest Land

By Carolyn L. Willard

The USDA Forest Service has completed the field work for New York's fourth forest resource inventory. While the final analysis of the data will not be completed until midyear 1995, we do have some of the preliminary results. Bruce Williamson, utilization/marketing specialist for the NYS DEC and Carol Alerich, forester for the USDA Forest Service, kicked-off Empire State Forest Products Association's (ESFPA) annual Fall Membership Meeting Nov. 9 with an informative overview of the preliminary report.

The report found that New York state is growing 3.5 times more trees than are harvested or otherwise removed. The quality of New York's forests have also improved with significant increases in larger diameter trees and corresponding increases in quality.

"The inventory provides more evidence that with 85% of the state's forests in private hands, the forest products industry and other forest landowners are doing a good job of maintaining an important resource," said Kevin S. King, Executive Vice President of ESFPA.

The initial presentation was followed by an informal panel discussion led by two foresters, a woodlands manager and a consultant, who brought varied opinions and perspectives of the inventory to the discus-

sion. Panel members agreed that the information provided by the inventory is useful to the forest products industry. To be sure, timber harvesters, foresters, and sawmill operators oftentimes refer to the inventory before expanding or growing their businesses.

"The inventory shows that our resource is in the best condition it has ever been in—in terms of modern timber quality and species composition," said Curt Bauer, forester for Forecon, Inc.

Although the data makes it possible to efficiently manage lands in a sustainable fashion, control the flow of products and remain profitable, there are, however, some limits to the accuracy and statistical validity of the information on a regional and/or county scale that handicap its usefulness. For instance, the longevity of the data's validity, which is conducted every ten years, was cited as a major problem. The

quality of the information could be maintained, if provided in a more timely and local fashion.

"There are problems inherent to the forest inventory simply because of the length of time between reports," said Kevin King. "But it's the best method of forest land evaluation available to us now."

While the inventory may be a useful tool, for the forest products industry, it is frequently referred to by state decision makers as a basis for discussions within state government. Decision makers rely on the information in the forest inventory to help them gauge the viability and health of New York's forest resource, ultimately affecting policy decisions.

*Carolyn Willard is the Director of Communications for the Empire State Forest Products Association at Albany.*

### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REPORT

- \* New York's timberland area remained virtually unchanged since 1980.
- \* Non-industrial private landowners own 84% of New York's timberland.
- \* The number of 1 inch & larger trees increased from 6.5 to 8 billion.
- \* The average annual net growth for all species is 589.1 million cubic feet, 142.9 was harvested and 45.4 was removed by land use changes. This resulted in a net annual increase of 400.8 million cubic feet.
- \* The average number of five inch and larger trees per acre increased from 117 to 140.



# What'll You Do With The Farm When You're Gone?

By David J. Colligan

As a practicing attorney, I am constantly asked whether the living trusts that are being propounded and sold by attorneys around the state will achieve the objectives of avoiding probate, limiting income taxes, reducing or eliminating estate taxes, as well as fulfilling the planning objectives of the grantor. While living trusts may be appropriate for some, I believe living trusts are oversold and are not appropriate for many of the individuals and family situations for which they are being created. My principal objection to living trusts is that the estate, income, and gift tax benefits (if any) of living trusts are not sufficient to justify the monumental effort in creating and maintaining the trust.

Many of my clients are forest owners with family tree farms which they have every intention of passing on to the next generation so their stewardship ideas and plans can be followed for many decades to come. They have expressed to me that they wish to continue to control the management and harvest decisions of those tree farms for the foreseeable future. They also want to pass the fruits of their labor onto their descendants. Subject to these conditions and desires, they are willing to make some present transfers to their descendants to take advantage of the annual \$10,000.00 gift tax exclusion.

There is currently an estate planning tool that can achieve the multiple goals of reducing estate taxes, utilizing the annual gift tax exclusion, and transferring assets to the next generation with control retained by the present generation. This estate planning tool is known as the family limited partnership. As with a business partnership, ownership of an asset, in this case a tree farm, is transferred from the current owners to a limited partnership. A small fraction of the ownership, usually one percent, is transferred to the "general partner", who makes all the management and operational decisions for the limited partnership. The remainder is split into multiple limited partnership "units", similar to shares in a corporation, that evidence ownership and can be transferred individually or in blocks. Initially, all the units are owned by the original tree farm owners.

What makes the family limited partnership concept so appealing for tree farmers is that the tree farm remains intact, the management of the tree farm remains stable and under the control of the original owners, and the fractional units of the limited partnership can be transferred without breaking up the parcel into smaller parcels. The limited partnership can be created without regard to the value of the asset being transferred. However, the greater the value of the asset, the more limited partnership units that must be created to best utilize estate and gift tax exclusions.

## How About:

### A FAMILY LIMITED PARTNERSHIP?

Since the units can be transferred each year, each owner can transfer as much as ten thousand dollars per year to each child and (or) grand child as they deem appropriate. Additionally, because the gifts of the units represent minority interests with restricted marketability, the IRS permits discounts of market values to reflect the fact that market prices of business minority interests are usually substantially reduced. Any increase in the value of the property or timber after the units are transferred will be attributable to the partners proportionate to their ownership. This further reduces estate size and tax burden. There are income tax advantages to the family limited partnership over a trust or corporate entity; because all the benefits and deductions are passed through to the partners to be taxed at their income tax rates, not the higher rates applied to trusts and the double taxation of most real estate corporations.

Eventually, the creator of a family limited partnership may want to transfer control of the partnership as "general partner" to the next generation. Since a general partner is a part owner of the equity of the asset, that fractional value can be calculated the same as the valuation of the limited partner units; but once control shifts, no discount is given for minority interests.

Family limited partnerships are currently being created for many types of investments; but they cannot be created for S corporation stock, pension funds, or the

primary residence portion of real property. They are ideal for the tree farmer who wants to be the "managing general partner" in an organization which was created to transfer family wealth. The limited partnership unit owners have no liability to creditors beyond the partnership assets.

The drawbacks are that the asset will be owned by a separate entity and once the units are given away, they cannot be recovered. Also, the IRS, which has ruled favorably on family limited partnerships in the past, may change their stance in the future, in which case the partnership agreement can be amended to take new laws into account. Also, certain formalities must be observed, including a written limited partnership agreement properly filed with the State and an annual partnership income tax filing for information purposes, even though any income is "passed through" to the partners.

The creation of a limited partnership by a family wishing to transfer an asset such as a tree farm is legally permissible and it creates substantial savings of gift and estate taxes. If you would like additional information regarding family limited partnerships, the author can be reached at (716) 852-3540.

*Dave Colligan is a practicing attorney with a Buffalo law firm and serves NYFOA as our legislative liaison.*

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# "It's Too Late Once Your Tree...."

By Ron Pedersen

has been felled and skidded out of your woodlot." That's the way Bob Sand put it (NY FOREST OWNER N/D '94). Dave Taber said, "A landowner needs to use good business practices when selling stumpage" (NY FOREST OWNER M/A '91). And David Colligan explained to readers the whys, wherefores, and importance of well marked boundary lines (NY FOREST OWNER S/O '93)

The NYFOA Board of Directors has voted to undertake a multi-year educational effort to help thwart unreasonable and dishonest timber harvest practices and to help foil timber land trespass and timber theft. As timber prices have risen, so has timber theft. Enthusiastic attendance at a recent workshop by the Northeast - Petroleum-Forest Resources Cooperative with SUNY/ESF and at an October program put on with the help of a Stewardship Grant by the Catskill Forest Association. NYFOA affiliate, demonstrated wide spread interest in the problem of timber theft. (See page 10 this issue) These programs focused attention on the importance of prevention, and the frustrating problems associated with prosecution.

Poor business practices and timber theft are not new, nor are they challenges that those concerned with sound resource management have ignored. DEC, for example, some years ago instituted its cooperating consultant forester program, has logger guidelines, and pushes use of its model timber sales contract. Cornell Cooperative Extension and SUNY/ESF have bulletins and

educational resources. The Catskill Forest Association and other NYFOA entities provide articles on what to look for when a "logger comes around" and the NYS Logger Training Committee has recently undertaken a program with timber harvesters.

A landowner allows himself to be cheated or is satisfied with a less than reasonable sale price; because the landowner is not paying attention, did not execute a sound contract, did not shop around (i. e. seek bids) before making a deal, did not have the trees to be harvested carefully marked, did not have the boundaries of the harvest area clearly delineated and (or) did not periodically inspect the site during logging.

In other words, the logger is authorized to be on the property; but the specifics of the sale have not been made clear and the harvest is not being monitored, so the temptation and the opportunity for creative interpretation of the agreement are present. And, with a single black cherry tree fetching perhaps \$1000, the financial incentive is there as well.

Many landowners are not in a position to regularly check their lands; because the acreage is too great or they are not in the area and do not have a neighbor to keep an eye on things. In such cases, strong law enforcement and effective prosecution are needed to assure dishonest operators can expect to get what they deserve. Police and law enforcement agencies, however, have numerous other priorities, and typically have not been well equipped to pursue cases of timber theft. There is, however,

interest in the law enforcement community in putting more effort into this area.

NYFOA does not want to reinvent the wheel; but it does want to build upon past efforts and provide further impetus to spreading the word among landowner and forest industry people. Be informed! Get advice! BEFORE you sell! We are hoping that the Stewardship Program will help provide the resources for this effort.

We have two broad objectives in mind: getting the message to as many landowners as possible, probably over several years and on a continuing basis. Only a small fraction of woodlot owners receive the NY FOREST OWNER, or other forestry publications; so it's felt that a widespread creative outreach effort with the help of all interested parties is called for.

Secondly, working with law enforcement agencies to determine how NYFOA and other non-law enforcement interests can best help. Some have mentioned the need for training or that penalties may not be an adequate deterrent. It's very difficult to get convictions for timber theft and some have suggested that it would be easier to enforce some kind of licensing or notification law. The Catskill Forest Association's workshop pointed to the need for greater efforts in this area.

As part of NYFOA's planning, we invite - no! we urge! - readers to respond to the questions noted below and to add comments about personal experiences and what others are doing, have done, or can do to help promote fair and honest timber sale practices and to reduce timber trespass thefts. Your responses, as soon as possible, will be most helpful as we move ahead on this effort.

## SURVEY

- \* How serious do you think timber trespass and theft are? If you know of any examples, please share the circumstances and the amount of the loss with us.
- \* Who are the interested parties in timber theft and trespass? Please send your suggestions on individuals, groups, associations, businesses, industries, professions, publications, and agencies that have an interest or might help.
- \* What are the most effective ways to reach as many landowners as possible with the message - Be informed! Get advice! BEFORE you sell! What other steps should be taken?
- \* In what ways would you be willing to help?

Please take a minute to respond. We know there is a wealth of information and lots of experience and ideas among NYFOA members. Please share your insights and ideas by writing today to: NYFOA, c/o Ronald W. Pedersen, 22 Vandenburg Lane, Latham, NY 12110-1189.

Ron Pedersen is a Master Forest Owner and a charter member of NYFOA. He and his wife own a tree farm in Broome County.



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# Master Forester Owners Are Special People

## A CASE STUDY

By Michael C. Greason

"Pick up the pace. Those guys have sticks and knives." That utterance was made to me by Master Forest Owner (MFO), Jack McShane as we were walking across Manhattan.

We were carrying boxes of pamphlets to a Forest Stewardship Seminar that was being conducted as a part of a series to encourage forest owners from the northeast who reside in the city to manage their resources. Jack had volunteered to be our featured speaker for this series of five seminars for absentee forest owners, one in each borough of the city.

We were just a few blocks south and east of the precinct that Jack had served as a policeman during his career. This was a special effort he had agreed to even though returning to the city was not high on his list of wants; he'd much rather be out on his Tree Farm watching deer and turkeys than those turkeys carrying the sticks and knives. After all he'd spent a couple of decades watching that kind. In addition, he followed through on this volunteer commitment in spite of the fact that his wife, Nancy, had two weeks off to be on vacation from her job as a flight attendant.

Just a few nights before, Jack had enjoyed my awkwardness while I drove down Flatbush Avenue heading for one of the seminars in Brooklyn. My eyes had widened once when a bicyclist with blank, glazed eyes the size of saucers cut in front of us from a side street defying us to use him as a hood ornament. From that point on I was an extreme example of defensive driving. Jack chuckled for several miles to and from that meeting.

During the seminars, Jack gave a slide presentation about his management activities on his and Nancy's 240 acre property in the Catskills. Slides showed trails, seeps, seedlings and shelters that had been installed under SIP, ponds that had been built, wildflowers in bloom and apple trees released and pruned. All showed a landowner with a sincere appreciation for wildlife habitat and nature. To say that Jack effectively conveyed his love of the land and his stewardship ethic to the limited number of attendees that showed up would be an understatement. Feedback from those sessions give the bureaucrats the idea we could have stayed home and let Jack be a one man show. These landowners were really motivated by one of their peers. Most indicate they are going to follow through and meet with a forester. Jack offered to meet with those in surrounding counties to his Tree Farm and made referrals to other MFOs in more distant counties. He committed to meet several of the attendees in spite of the fact he has just undertaken building a new home; now, that is dedication!

And that's what the Bureau of Forest Resource Management of the Department of Environmental Conservation is looking for from the MFO program. MFOs have credibility with landowners. They effectively serve as a bridge between landowners and foresters. As volunteers, MFOs meet one on one with neighbors or participate in various events promoting forest management. Their interest and enthusiasm are contagious. Once a new client has had contact with a MFO and contacts a forester, the client has thought about, among other things, management goals and locating boundary lines. Consequently the forester's meeting is more efficient and productive. The client is less frustrated because there has been the opportunity to make progress while awaiting the appointment with a forester who may be backlogged on appointments.

But what is a MFO? Simply put they are people who have attended a training course put on through a Stewardship Grant by Cornell Cooperative Extension, who then agree to go out and perform volunteer services promoting forestry. They are people from all walks of life and from all over the state; but they share a common

bond to the land. They have outgoing personalities and are generous with their time. Most have far exceeded their commitment to Director Gary Goff, for the training program. I would be remiss at this point if I did not mention that John Marchant, Executive Director of the New York Forest Owners Association (NYFOA), has been the individual I would credit for being the father of our MFO program. John has recognized, better than most of us, the value of asking volunteers to be involved.

MFOs tend to be involved people. Back to our case study, Jack McShane is President of the Board of the Catskill Forest Association which is an affiliate of NYFOA. He is a Tree Farmer and member of the Society of American Foresters. Jack serves on New York's Forest Stewardship Committee and officially represented New York, along with MFOs Polly and Erwin Fullerton and John Krebs, at the first National Forest Stewardship Conference held in Nebraska. He talked to the Northeastern Cooperative Forest Management Supervisors and Extension Foresters at West Point this past spring as a part of a panel including a consulting forester and a saw mill owner speaking on forestry in the Lower Hudson Valley. It seems this volunteer is working full time promoting the wise use of our resource.

Similar stories could be written about each MFOs experiences. This part of the Forest Stewardship initiative is considered highly successful due to the spirit and generosity of some very caring people.

*Mike Greason is an Associate Forester for NYS DEC Division of Lands and Forest in the Central Office in Albany and 1993 winner of NYFOA's Heiberg Award.*



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### Crop Tree Management

By Lfee Signor

Some trees should be harvested  
To give others room to grow;  
A fact that some folks  
Don't really seem to know.  
Trees need lots of sunlight  
And room for spreading roots.  
People also like the limelight;  
But hate tight fitting boots.



# Frustrations of A Master Forest Owner



By Jack McShane

Once in a while I question the purpose of my activities within the New York Forest Owners Association (NYFOA), the affiliate Catskill Forest Association (CFA) and Master Forest Owners (MFO) program. All these are great stewardship oriented organizations aimed at ensuring the future of our tremendous, renewable forest resource.

An incident occurred recently that left me with lingering doubts; yet deep down I know that my resolve will write this off as, "well you can't win 'em all".

A logger with a questionable reputation entered a valley in my area and approached landowners with offers for their trees. He was successful with three of them and the harvesting was initiated. During the operation, Fred, an acquaintance of mine, told me he had been offered \$5,000 for his trees by this logger and was considering the offer with favor. Fred, whom I had recruited for membership in NYFOA/CFA and who had attended woodwalks and workshops put on by CFA, asked me for an opinion. I told Fred that he should wait and to hire a forester who could mark his trees for a proper harvest, develop a prospectus and solicit bids.

Fred procrastinated and was again approached by the logger and the offer was increased to \$10,500. Again I urged him to hire a forester and finally he did. Fred

was delighted to receive a high bid of \$26,500. This "success" story was highly touted by CFA and was a feature article of one of our newsletters. This was a prime example of "good forestry": good for the landowner, good for the industry, and good for the resource ... or so it would seem. I felt good that my advice caused such a fine result.

Later that year I was on a fishing trip in Canada with some friends, one of whom was the forester who had marked Fred's timber. One evening after a few cold beers, the forester confided in me that all was not as glorious as it appeared on the surface. After the initial marking, he had told Fred it would be possible to have another harvest in eight to ten years and that care should be exercised in laying out proper skid trails that would hold the soil in place on this steep topography and serve as permanent access. He was concerned that allowing the logger to remove the timber in the most economical manner, straight down the slope would cause serious erosion. Fred, at this point, informed the forester he was not interested in a future harvest nor any restrictions which would reduce the final price of this present sale. At 78 years of age, Fred wanted it all now. His son wasn't interested in the property so the order stood, "Put no restrictions on the logger that would impinge on the price paid and mark every salable tree".

So what was the result of all my and CFA's efforts in this affair? In reality all we did was take the money from the logger and put it into Fred's and the forester's pockets. Is the moral of the story: not all people will be willing to embrace our call for a stewardship ethic? Human behavior can be greatly affected by need and greed and not necessarily in that order. Destruction and stewardship go on. The final outcome remains to be seen; and we probably will not see it.

I remain the optimist and surround myself with friends who believe in a stewardship ethic - so might you and, if so, we can succeed! I am fortunate to find most of my contacts through the Master Forest Owner program and the association with other fine Master Forest Owners has been a rewarding experience.

## The Catskill Blue Line

By Bill Ridge

### What is the Catskill Park? ("Blue line area")?

The Catskill Park is a geographic region encompassing over 700,000 acres of the most mountainous tracts of both public (41%) and private land (59%) in Delaware, Greene, Sullivan and Ulster Counties. Created in 1885, it was one of the earliest attempts at land preservation in the United States.

### What is the Catskill Forest Preserve?

The Catskill Forest Preserve is the State-owned land within the Catskill Park. The 1885 legislation directed that the Forest Preserve "be forever kept as wild forest lands." In 1894, an amendment to the New York State Constitution gave further direction that the Forest Preserve land, "shall not be leased, sold or exchanged, or be taken by any corporation, public or private, nor shall the timber thereon be sold, removed or destroyed. This mandate, now Article XIV of the Constitution, assures lasting protection for one of the State's most valuable resources.

Since 1885, the Catskill Forest Preserve has grown from 34,000 acres to over 288,000 acres. To best manage this resource, Catskill Forest Preserve lands have been classified according to their characteristics and capacity to withstand use to include four (4) wilderness areas, 18 wild forests, seven (7) campgrounds, a day use area, and a ski center. Together they serve as watershed, wildland recreation area, and ecological and scenic reserve.

*Bill Ridge is a NYS DEC Sr. Forester working from the New Paltz office of Region 3 with special responsibilities to the Catskill Forest Preserve. His wife, Patricia, is a NYS Ranger assigned to the same area.*





# CHAPTER/AFFILIATES

## Northern Adirondack

On October 8th, we were treated to a forest soils tour by Master Forest Owner Gerald Smith in Essex County. Gerald is a Soil Scientist with the USDA Soil Conservation Service in Westport. We began the tour in his office as he described how soils surveys were made and basic soil characteristics. He also explained how the current soils were formed from the last ice age and how much of the Champlain Valley was at one time under water. Gerald then led us to the field where we examined various soil profiles and discussed how these soils related to how the timber on these sites should be managed.

## Allegheny Foothills

Our annual walnuts, cones and acorn collecting fundraiser was the best ever; at this point we have put \$1641.00 in our treasury. Many members put in hours of time and deserve a big pat on the back. Next year we will be able to fund lots of worthy activities.

On November 12 our chapter met at the Pierce Whitney forest to see what our chapter funded intern, Vincent Marzolf had done this summer. We were all pleased to see how much trail had been cleared, and the native species marked on the trails with nice, legible signs. Vincent and member, Steve Eaton, also surveyed and recorded flora and fauna observed this summer. We just may have a New York record biggest Hop Hornbeam on the Pierce Whitney!

After the walk many of us met in the Machias Library meeting room for a spirited committee meeting to plot next year's events. We hope to fund next year's intern at an even higher level....perhaps \$1000.00.

## Capital District

The chapter is sponsoring a slide talk on the rain forests of the Amazon on **Saturday, January 21, 1995** at 7:30 PM. The presentation will be held at the Voorheesville Cooperative Extension on Martin Road off of route 85A.

Mike Greason, Supervising Forester with DEC will be the speaker. He went to the Amazon in the spring of 1994, because he wanted to "see the forests before they disappear". Greason's professionally trained appraisal of the situation there should be of interest to woodlot owners and environmentalists.

## Western Finger Lakes

WFL has a meeting **January 17th** at

7:30 PM, at the Cornell Cooperative Extension on Highland Avenue. Bruce Robinson, a private consulting forester from Jamestown, will speak on tree diseases. Identifying diseases and saving diseased trees will be discussed.

Now that the year is ending, I would like to thank all of the speakers, woodwalk hosts, woodwalk guides, and the many volunteers who have helped our chapter throughout 1994. We hope to provide more information that will meet our members' needs in the coming year.

## Tioga

We held a meeting on Dec. 1 in Spencer, NY. The featured speaker was Dave Forness of the NYS DEC, Cortland office. He enlightened over thirty interested listeners with information on New York's forest tax law. He explained the pros and

## Catskill Forest Association



*Suter Woodwalk:  
Forester Jack  
Karnig, (l) Tom  
Studwell, Kenny  
& Sherry Chase  
(with backs  
facing).  
Photo by Larry  
Studwell.*

Jim and Marjorie Dunbar were selected as the 1994 Outstanding Forest Landowners for Region 3. The Forest Practice Board for Region 3 chose the Dunbars because of their long commitment to forest stewardship on their 80 acre Marbletown (Ulster County) property. Management activities date back to 1949. The Dunbars, who were featured in the Mar/Apr 1987 issue of The Forest Owner, have accomplished much on their land, including timber harvests, TSI, wildlife plantings, and a cut-your-own Christmas tree business. An award ceremony will be scheduled in the spring.

On October 25, CFA and the DEC Region 4 hosted "Timber Theft: Law and Order." This workshop targeted the law enforcement and legal communities of the Catskill and Capital region. The event was an effort to raise the awareness of the increasing timber theft problem and to begin to develop procedures for dealing with the issue. Forty-eight participants, represent-

cons of becoming involved with 480-A. Some of the audience shared their experiences with application of the tax law to their properties. Dave emphasized that the forest tax abatement opportunity wasn't for everyone, but for woodland owners with over 50 acres of forest it deserves investigation. Homemade cookies and coffee rounded out an enjoyable evening.

## THRIFT

There was a meeting held Dec. 2, at Pulaski, between members of Cornell Cooperative Extension and THRIFT council to discuss mutual programs between the organizations; to set up an educational program concerning a 261 acre parcel of forest land, donated to Extension, for educating various public groups about forest management.

ing the New York State Police, county Sheriff's departments, district attorney's offices, private attorneys, and DEC, learned of investigation and prosecution of timber theft cases. CFA Executive Director Dinnie Sloman spoke on timber trespass laws. The topic of civil prosecution was presented by Karen Mankes of the NYS Attorney General's office. Gary Kropkowski, Assistant District Attorney for Dutchess County, shared his experiences with criminal prosecution. Consulting forester Bernie Braun described some of the aspects of investigating a timber theft case. During the wrap-up, all agreed there is much more work to be done and cooperation is essential in tackling the problem.

Betty Suter hosted a Marking and Logging woodwalk on her property in West Saugerties on Sunday, November 13. She is having a timber sale on about 30 acres of her property.



## NYFOA In The 21st

By John Marchant, Executive Director

There is a lot of talk these days about the Information Super Highway; and many of us are using it in various ways to increase the effectiveness of our communication. One of the simplest, yet most useful capabilities, is being able to generate and receive Electronic or E-Mail. E-Mail is effective because it eliminates all those missed phone calls where two people go back and forth trying to catch each other at home. If you want to send information to someone, just send it. They read it at their convenience and answer it, literally, by typing the answer and pressing another button. No addresses to look up, no envelopes to address and then deliver. It's ideal for people in an organization to keep in close touch.

I used this for communication extensively in putting together the program for the First National Conference on Forest Stewardship. I was in constant communication with the US Forest Service, Cooperative Extension specialists and other landowners across the nation. The direct costs were less than the costs of mail and phone calls; and, if you consider the time delays of a returned phone call or letter, it was - faster as well.

More recently, Don Wagner and I have been in touch via the internet (the Super Information Highway) on a number of occasions. We thought it would be interesting to ask how many of you already have internet addresses or how many would be interested in participating in the transmittal of forestry and NYFOA information this way?

We would like to list the E-Mail addresses of any of our members in an issue of the NY FOREST OWNER. If you have an address you wish to share, please send it to our editor, Dick Fox. If you are interested in getting started and have a computer and modem, you are almost there, even a computer gets you well on your way. For more information call Debbie (1-800-836-3566) and she will refer you to one of us who is presently using the system.

### E-MAIL ADDRESSES

John Marchant-JCMTREES@AOL.COM  
Don Wagner-WAGNERDJ@AOL.COM

## A Dollar and a Sweet Dream

By Elizabeth Densmore

Would you spend a dollar for a chance on a beautiful work of art that is worth \$1500.00? Would you spend a dollar for a chance on a practical, stunning accessory to your home? Would you spend a dollar that included a financial boost to your chapter and a boost to NYFOA? One dollar can do all of the above.

Betty Wagner, member of NYFOA's Board of Directors, donated a quilt to the Central New York Chapter two years ago. They sold chances on this quilt and made nearly \$1000.00 for their chapter and they say it was easy. Betty has now donated a quilt to NYFOA and every chapter can sell tickets, with \$.25 of each ticket sold going into the chapter's treasury and the balance going to NYFOA. Betty Wagner doesn't just make quilts; Betty makes prize winning works of art, destined to become heirlooms.

Betty says, "I'm from a family of stitchers—garments—not quiltmakers! My interest in quilts came as a result of the NYS Fair and their quilt exhibit. I found a class being offered at the Munson Williams Proctor Art Institute in 1980, since then I've been hooked and take as many classes as I can. For the last 12 years, each summer, I spend a week at Morrisville College attending a conference known as "Quilting by the Lake". For the last two years I've been teaching classes at our local shop. It always amazes me that even though I'm the instructor, I'm learning from my students!

I usually enter one or two quilts in local exhibits and usually receive a ribbon or two. The Ohio Star which hung in the Barrett Art Gallery Exhibit is my most decorated quilt, having won four ribbons: 1st, Workmanship, Judge's Choice and Viewers Choice. I have other quilts which have also won multiple ribbons.

I am making a design based on a traditional quilt design known as Sunshine and Shadow, I have named the NYFOA quilt "Adirondack Beauty". I see in it all the wonderful color Mother Nature presents to us, in particular, when we're at our camp on Piseco Lake.

We need to enlist everyone in every chapter in selling these raffle tickets. I've placed the order for 13,000 tickets. (Husband Don always tells me to think BIG, set your goals high!) If each chapter sells 1,000 tickets (as the CNY chapter easily did with

their quilt), not only will the NYFOA treasury increase substantially, but each chapter will be \$250.00 richer.

The quilt top will be shown at the January board of director's meeting. Tickets will be bundled and distributed to each chapter/affiliate at this time. The completed quilt will be on display at the Spring meeting....also tickets will be sold then. After the Spring Meeting, it can travel to any chapter having an event to display it at, and tickets can be sold. If the quilt is displayed at any large event someone must stay with it and take it home each night; as quilts often come up missing. I've heard of too many quilts stolen from gallery space, quilt shops, or even never delivered enroute from place to another. The raffle drawing will be held at the Fall Meeting."

Well, NYFOANS, it seems that Betty Wagner has given us all a golden opportunity to possibly win a real treasure and to make money for our organization. Her gift is more than a valuable item, it is hundreds of hours of painstaking craftsmanship and artistry. Those of you who saw the quilt given to the CNY chapter will certainly want to buy chances on this one. Even if YOU don't care about quilts; it is absolutely certain that you know several people who would be ecstatic to have this quilt. Almost every chapter needs funds for their activities or is searching for an easy fundraiser; this can give you both in one easy step. Let's all think BIG and sell a thousand tickets a chapter. Let's help fill chapter treasuries, NYFOA's treasury, and take a chance on owning a valuable work of art that will warm our sweet dreams.

*Elizabeth Densmore is a Director of NYFOA and Chairperson of the Editorial Committee.*

*Happy  
New Year*



# 1994 - The Year of the Defoliator

By Douglas Allen

This past year New York's hardwood forests experienced extensive defoliation by a number of native defoliators. Forest landowners throughout the state understandably are concerned about the effect that damage by these insects will have on their woodlots. Though some of the comments that follow may be repetitious of information discussed in previous articles, I thought it might be worthwhile to summarize the current situation and attempt to answer the most commonly asked questions.

## THE DEFOLIATORS INVOLVED

By far the most prevalent hardwood problem in New York during 1994 was forest tent caterpillar. Our current situation represents the most extensive (geographic distribution) and intensive (level of defoliation) outbreak of this early season defoliator that the state has witnessed since the early 1950s.

In many areas of Central and Southern Tier regions, elm spanworm, fall cankerworm and cherry scallop shell moth (species of inchworms or loopers) also caused conspicuous defoliation to a variety of broadleaved trees.

## THE CONCERN

Certainly crown dieback and tree mortality are the most visible immediate effects associated with forest tent caterpillar defoliation. The historical record in both Canada and the United States indicates that "typical" outbreaks last for 2-4 years before natural mortality returns numbers to sparse levels. This scenario usually causes crown dieback (the tree's response to stress), a degree of mortality in all host size classes,

reduced growth of surviving trees, and lower quantity (volume/tree) and quality (% sugar) of maple sap.

With this experience as a background, it was surprising when in the early 1980s extensive sugar maple mortality occurred in Delaware county after only a single year of heavy defoliation (75-100%). We speculated that this rapid mortality resulted from the interaction of two stresses that occurred simultaneously; defoliation and drought. Observations following previous episodes of tent caterpillar indicate that defoliation immediately before, during or following other stresses (e.g., a second insect defoliation later in the same season, drought, thinning) can be lethal to most northern hardwoods. Even knowing this, however, the extent of mortality that occurred in this Delaware Co. outbreak was surprising.

Another unusual event occurred during 1994 in parts of northeastern Pennsylvania where tent caterpillar defoliation apparently was followed by a severe outbreak of anthracnose, a fungal disease of sugar maple foliage. This one-two punch assured that affected maples were unable to retain uneaten foliage; or heavily defoliated trees could not produce a new compliment of leaves for the remainder of this growing season. It remains to be seen what the end result will be; but because of these combined stresses extensive mortality is anticipated on some sites after a single year of heavy defoliation.

## WHAT TO DO?

Forest landowners can take steps to minimize or even prevent significant damage by forest tent caterpillar:

1. Be able to recognize its life stages (see Sept./Oct. 1992 issue of Forest Owner, call ESF Extension [315-470-6751] for a copy of Pest Leaflet No. 9). Early warning allows adequate time to assess and plan.

2. Look for early signs of a building population (e.g., light feeding, ragged leaves in the crown margin) in your woodlot and (or) adjacent areas. Ordinarily, light to spotty defoliation is evident to the careful observer a year or two before significant defoliation occurs. Also, observing an unusual abundance of caterpillars resting on tree boles during daylight hours or on foliage may indicate a general increase in population

density.

3. Determine whether or not your woodlot has experienced another major stress or stresses during the past year or two. For example, drought, forest management events such as a major thinning, or significant defoliation by another agent. If you believe your woodlot was stressed recently, this may increase your need (depending on management or ownership objectives) to take action. The purpose being to prevent compounding effects of stresses. That is, it may be dangerous to allow heavy defoliation to follow on the heels of or occur along with another major disturbance.

4. If forest tent caterpillar is present in large numbers (i.e., you did not detect the population buildup until moderate to severe defoliation occurred) look for signs of natural mortality; abundance of "wilted" (diseased) caterpillars, small irregular egg masses. Symptoms such as these may indicate that severe defoliation is not likely to occur next year.

5. With the help of a consulting or DEC forester, estimate egg mass density. This is best done in late fall or winter when masses are most visible on branch tips. This information is more difficult to obtain, but it can provide the most accurate information about the likely course of future events.

## MAKING A PEST MANAGEMENT DECISION

Results of a general assessment such as that outlined above must be weighed against individual ownership objectives. In terms of how quick one should react, concern over sugarbush values require the most

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immediate response. One must protect foliage in the summer to get adequate quality and quantities of sap the following spring.

Next, certain wildlife values may require relatively quick attention. For example, if the landowner is concerned about nesting success of song birds that typically occur in northern hardwood stands it may be desirable to protect foliage.

Generally, a sawtimber objective will not be affected until at least two years of heavy defoliation so if this is your principle goal control may be delayed. However, it must be remembered that there have been exceptions to this rule of thumb. If you have reason to believe that the woodlot is of poor vigor due to a previous or concurrent stress or it is characterized by generally poor site conditions for northern hardwoods, treatment may be desirable to reduce the danger of growth loss, crown deterioration and (or) mortality.

#### AVAILABLE TOOLS

Several "hard" chemicals are available for direct control of forest tent caterpillar. The choice of which material to use should

be made after consulting with DEC personnel and a professional pesticide applicator.

The bacterium *Bacillus thuringiensis* (commonly referred to as "Bt") is another option that can be very effective and is more compatible environmentally. Formulation, timing of application relative to pest and host plant development, and weather conditions at the time of application are more critical when applying Bt than when using one of the chemicals. However, forest tent caterpillar is very susceptible to this biological and when the material is applied properly it does an excellent job of protecting foliage. Again, one should discuss the characteristics of this material, including cost, relative to hard chemicals before making a decision.

[I thank Phil Sanders, Paul Trotta and Peter Ennis, Department of Environmental Conservation, Stamford, NY for reviewing this article.]

*This is the 18th in the series of articles provided by Dr. Allen. Professor of Forest Entomology at SUNY/ESF. Reprints of the series may be obtained by request.*

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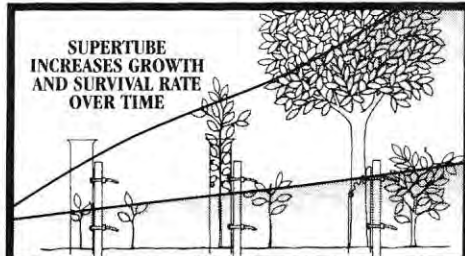
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# ECOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT: The Human Element Is More Than Population<sup>1</sup>

By Jim Coufal

This morning the leaves seemed to leap up to get in my face; red, yellow, orange, purple, brown, and fading green, splashed with the brilliance of a painting by Gaugin, crying out like a shooting star, "Look, look at me now, for soon I will be gone!" A month ago, the Tundra of Denali National Park, in Alaska, was a softer palette: the yellows of dwarf birch and willow, the red of blueberry, and the dark green of spruce, the latter 2-10 feet tall, twisted and wind-blown, and likely 100 or more years old. In the morning mist, viewing the tundra was like seeing through the soft veil of impressionism as painted by Monet. The world is a wondrous place, a tapestry of ever changing scenes.

Aldo Leopold talked of forestry as an art, whereby foresters and landowners create landscape tapestries. In the tapestry of nature that I see and sense in other ways, there is a time and place of the gentleness of Claire de Lune, and another of the wild power and passion of *The Rites Of Spring*. One view of nature, even just here in my

Chittenango Creek gorge, brings the realism of a Rembrandt, while around the corner is the gaudiness of Gaugin, over my shoulder the light plays in a pattern as if by Monet, and across the creek the view is like the wacky insight of Dali. I can't imagine humanity reaching the time of *The Peaceable Kingdom* in such a state that there will be no lion to lie down with the lamb, but only humans, cows, dogs and cats. How impoverished a kingdom that would be! If I am to multiply and subdue, I am also told that the Lord creator looked and saw that the creation was good, and I believe that it was and it is. As Charlie Mowatt so pointedly asked, how long can this wondrous nature remain if we don't address "demand-side ecology" and human population growth?

But humans are part of this wondrous nature; and I am just as fascinated by the act of creation that brought about the jet I flew in to Alaska and home again as I am by the creations of nature, of which we are one. I am staggered by the magnificent repertory of music in the world based on just nine notes, and by the variety of instruments created around the world used to play that music. I am awed by the fact that human minds fashioned tapes and discs from which flow the music of the world. And so starts the problems, dilemmas and paradoxes.

As awed as I am by nature, so also am I awed by the adaptability of humans, and by the creations of their minds. Some argue that our greatest natural resource is the human mind, and that to limit human popu-

## Balance

J.E. Coufal ©

The beautiful blue heron  
did spear the lovely little fish,  
and dropped it on the shore.  
Then, without a heavy thought  
it speared that lovely little fish  
once, twice, thrice more.

The beautiful blue heron  
then took the lovely little fish  
and dipped it in the water.  
This it did to make it slick  
to slide easily down  
the sinuous neck of slaughter.

Quite at ease with itself,  
the beautiful blue heron returned  
to once more stalk the shore;  
an uncondemned serial killer  
for now and evermore.

<sup>1</sup>This is not a critique of Charlie Mowatt's essay, "Ecological Management Must Include The Human Element...or, how can this be called ecological management," (Sept/Oct 1994) but rather it is a reflection on his thought-provoking ideas. Frankly, I agree with most of what Charlie said, (and I'm glad that you have only "retired" from DEC, Charlie, and not from the world of thought and action!).

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lation is to limit the chance of solving environmental and economic problems and attaining the elusive "acceptable level of quality" of life so often talked about. As much as I believe this, so also do I believe that we — individually and through our market system — often mistakenly assume an endless supply of the foundations of life; of air, water, soil, genes, species, and ecosystems, and that we must be concerned with human populations. But when I hear some environmentalists say the human population of the earth must be cut by 90%, my first response is, "Yeah, and I know what 10% these folks intend to be in!" How do we honestly and equitably deal with population problems?

As much as I know that we must be concerned with human population growth, and as much as I am pleased by nature, my greatest joy is in seeing the reflection of eternity in the eyes of my grandchildren. Should I deny anyone such joy? And for whom, after all, do we sustain the earth beyond ourselves? The quandry is, for example, how do we manage a Yellowstone or a Yosemite for people's pleasure without loving these crown jewels of our continent to death? Will the only way these



grandchildren of mine and yours be able to see wild nature be either by being part of a ruling elite or through computers and "virtual reality?"

As awed as I am by human adaptability and ingenuity, so too am I afraid of it, and our destructive capacity is so widespread and known that examples are unnecessary. It is frightening when 1,600 scientists, including 102 Nobel laureates, issue a "Warning to Humanity," saying that "no more than one or a few decades remain before the chance to avert the threats we are now confronting will be lost..." What an awesome responsibility we have to own the capacity to create both powerful good and overwhelming destruction! And we don't even get the chance to say, "But I don't want to play this game!"

The human element of ecological management is more than a simple population problem of numbers. It involves distribution and equity. It involves technology, affluence, political ideologies of all sorts that focus on limitless economic growth, and doctrinaire belief systems that, each one of them, know that they hold "the truth." The U.S. has less than 5% of the world's population but consumes nearly 30 percent of the planet's resources. Ninety percent of

American households own cars, while only 8% of households worldwide do so. The American lifestyle is now the global model: can we deny other populations the chance for the quality of life we have? can we lead by creating a new and sustainable alternative, admitting that sustainable development is not the same as sustainable growth and that what we often really seek is sustainable consumption, at our level of consumption? There are no easy answers, only great threats to our way of life.

Human population growth is part of the problem of ecological management, and when coupled with affluence, technology, and ideology it creates questions that are so overwhelming that we deny them, are paralyzed by them, or hope that someone else will deal with them because they demand real changes in our lifestyle. Can we have a sustainable and thriving economy that doesn't require constant growth and cause environmental destruction? Can we resist the demands of want, not need, created by advertising, mass media, and peer pressure such that we reduce consumption while providing jobs for all? In our affluence, can we practice real conservation in a culture that promotes indulgence and immediate gratification? Can we find different measures of value to measure the quality of life, getting past more, bigger, and how much is it worth in \$\$\$? Can the richest fifth of the world learn to share with the poorest? Can we do all this without impinging on cherished traditions and values, such as national sovereignty and private property rights? These are questions that go much beyond technical detail to fundamental attitudes and values. Looking at myself, I can only answer that, despite good intentions, change comes slowly.

The scientists' "Warning to Humanity" said that "A new ethic is required — a new attitude toward discharging our responsibility for caring for ourselves and for the Earth...This ethic must motivate a great movement, convincing reluctant leaders and reluctant governments and reluctant peoples themselves to effect the needed changes." My fear is that we will wait until a crisis situation occurs — dissension, famine, pestilence, war — that will force us to change. My guess is that we will muddle through in standard human fashion, challenging tradition and change in the ritual dance of human evolution. My hope is that we have more than a decade or a few decades to bring the needed changes about.

With apologies for the paraphrase, and

kudos to those who believe nature has intrinsic value, ecological management can not help but contain the human element because it is management of ecosystems of which humans are an integral part, for people, and it is done by people. In a final paradox, ecosystem or landscape management, and human population as part of it, must begin in the attitudes and values of individuals. Aldo Leopold said it long ago: "As a land-user thinketh, so is he." Is forest stewardship a concept and belief system — a "new" old ethic — deep enough, powerful enough, and appealing enough to bring about needed changes?

*Professor Coufal serves Forestry at SUNY/ESF as coordinator of Undergraduate Education. The Editor regrets that the publication of this article lags both the issue which followed the one containing Charlie Mowatt's challenging article and the fall colors which inspired Jim Coufal.*

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# ASK A FORESTER

## Know Your Forester

By Dinnie Sloman

Many landowners have not had the opportunity to learn proper forest management techniques. A forester's skills and experience will help landowners to realize ownership goals and minimize negative impacts. Nevertheless, landowners must diligently hire and responsibly oversee any forester working on their land.

In New York anyone can call himself or herself a forester. No law or regulation has established forester qualifications, and no group officially oversees the forestry profession. [NYS DEC Regional Forest Practice Boards may help a complainant.]

To hire a forester, begin by looking at their credentials and affiliations. Forestry is a science with some art sprinkled on top. Most of the science is learned in the classroom, while the art comes from experience. Two levels of education are recognized nationally. *Forest technicians* have completed a two year associates degree. Typically they have concentrated on the technical aspects of forest management such as forest inventory and timber harvest control. *Foresters* have completed a four year degree; some have a masters degree or even a Ph. D.

Affiliations can provide some assurance. The Society of American Foresters (SAF) is the oldest forestry association in the

country. Both foresters and technicians can join as long as they have completed specific educational requirements at a SAF accredited college. Members must abide by a code of ethics; although SAF does not actively police its members. Private consulting foresters can join the Association of Consulting Foresters (ACF). ACF represents foresters who work with non-industrial private forest owners. In addition to these two private associations, the NY State DEC coordinates the Cooperating Consultant Forester Program listing those who agree to follow certain guidelines and to adhere to the SAF code of ethics. In return, DEC includes their name on a free referral list.

References are vital. Regardless of education and affiliations, a forester must be able to determine and satisfy the goals of the landowner. Many landowners have only a vague understanding of what they want from their land. Foresters must be able to listen to clients and elicit such information. Trust is needed and references build trust. Landowners should talk to the references and visit some of the properties.

Usually landowners hire foresters to perform a specific task, such as preparation of a management plan, planting trees, or planning and supervising a timber sale.



Dinnie Sloman  
Photo by Larry Studwell.

As always, best results are obtained when the details of the task are written into a contract. Any ambiguity can be resolved before the contract is signed. Any legal questions can be referred to a lawyer.

The cost of the task is a factor in the selection of a forester; there are no uniform price scales. Not only do different foresters charge different fees, the particular conditions at a property can increase the cost. Foresters perform most of their work on a per-hour or per-acre basis. Unfortunately, for most timber sales in New York foresters require a commission based on the value of the trees harvested. This policy can create a conflict of interest. The forester might, albeit subconsciously, mark valuable trees prematurely. Even if a forester can separate the owner's interest from his or her own, a commission creates an appearance of impropriety.

The landowner should continue control over the operation. The forester should oversee the contractors or the loggers. However, the landowner must inspect the operation regularly and discuss any problems with the forester. One landowner reported that a forester restricted him from inspecting: because the job was "too dangerous". Much to the landowner's chagrin, the forester did not follow the landowner's instructions; and the job was a mess when completed. At the time of discovery the forester and logger were off the property, and the landowner no longer had remedy.

Many foresters are skillful and professional; they will serve the landowner well. Nevertheless, the profession is made up of people and in any group of people predators await to take advantage of the unwary.

*Dinnie is educated as both a lawyer and a forester. He serves as the Executive Director of NYFOA's affiliate The Catskill Forest Association.*

*This article was excerpted from CFA NEWS (Vol. XII, No. 3).*

## ASK A FORESTER - COUNTERPOINT

### Stump Marking and Locked Doors

By David Tregaskis

Tree marking like door locks help to keep harvesters, consulting foresters, and (or) competing bidders, honest. But even marking the stump, (ASK A FORESTER, NYFO Nov/Dec '94), does not necessarily ensure the woodlot owner is protected from disreputable chain saw and spray can wielding harvesters, foresters, or buyers.

A member of NYFOA who reads this magazine and attends local chapter meetings, gains insight into the many ways of selling standing timber from woodlot to sawmill. With this added knowledge the forest owner may then come to know the local reputable timber harvesters who for years have dealt with neighbors, have cut woods under sound forest management principles, and were recalled for periodic harvests.

But for these harvesters, time is also money. They may not stump mark; but they

may provide a species count, volume estimate, price per thousand, and a contract! Generally more information than just a lump sum price or percentage split, as is all too common.

The local harvester wants to come back again, or to a neighboring woodlot.

Therefore beware, when it is said, "stumps are not marked"; "only 18 inch trees will be cut" (18 inch, where?); the business card is from 4 counties away; or the commissioned consulting forester marks (stump or not) only the best and does not recommend culling.

Perhaps the only way to be certain of satisfaction (and full value) is to supervise the sale and (or) harvest yourself.

*David Tregaskis is an insurance agent offering service to the New York forest industry. Dave owns and manages several woodlots and played a prominent role in organizing the Cayuga Chapter.*



# The Earth At Its Best

By **Homer E. Stennett**

New York State is, environmentally, in a spectacular period of transition.

Three hundred years ago New York State was all in forests. The forest soils were high in organic matter and the soils were very porous. By one hundred years ago most of the land had been converted to agriculture. There were probably as many as one million small farms. Even a farm of a few acres would contribute significantly to the food and fiber needs of the occupants.

The farms as they were operated would be about one third in woods. It was almost a universal practice to use the woods for pasture. Cows tramping through the woods compacted the soil. The pressure per square inch by a horse, ox, or cow's hoof was sometimes greater than the pressure exerted per square inch by a tractor tire. So the compaction of the soil was great.

Old forest soils would readily soak up and hold for future release huge amounts of water; air could easily penetrate into the soils. Compacted soils had little room for air and water.

Farm abandonment has been very high in New York. Today 62% of the state or 21 million acres are forested, or are in the process of returning to woods through plant succession: first grasses, then weeds, herbs, shrubs, then trees. Environmentally this represents an enormous change returning millions of acres of compacted soils back to the loose porous soils common in old woods. It is in the soils that the biggest change takes place, but the process is slow. The energy expended by nature in this process is tremendous; but as nature does it, the changes come quietly and unobtrusively. If a like amount of energy were expended in a project done by men, there would be great noise and turmoil.

Here is some of what is happening:

In a field that had been used for farming over one hundred years; but has recently been abandoned, a tree seed germinates and grows. From the beginning the tree has difficulty pushing its roots through the compacted soils. A large amount of growth energy is used for that purpose and

detracts from the energy available for above ground growth. Then the roots will grow in diameter, as large as a man's thigh - or a woman's. This lifts and displaces a huge weight of soil. The whole growth period for the tree is one of struggle, pushing the

mals. See a chipmunk's hole going straight into the soil. Chances are it is going to an old root hole that provides a cozy home.

It is likely that these root holes are the most, biologically, active parts of the whole earth.

Then a new tree grows where another had been. Its roots find easier access into the soil by following the old root hole which it will extend and expand.

After this tree has occupied the soil and the air above for its life span of 100 years or so, it dies and is followed by another. This tree increased the number of root holes and enlarged those that were in place. In two generations of trees vast change has taken place. But quietly and unobtrusively.

The change will continue. After ten generations of trees in some 1000 years the forest will have reached a stage than can be called a climax forest. This is the best that, environmentally, the earth can get. The soil will be a great labyrinth of root holes filled with organic matter and harboring great quantities and great diversity of life. There will, indeed, be a marriage of the biosphere and the atmosphere.

The soil will have reached one of its greatest purposes. It will soak up huge amounts of water during rainy periods, providing a great reservoir to hold the water for later release through seeps and springs during long dry periods, and will add much water to the earth's aquifers.

**THIS IS THE EARTH AT ITS BEST.**

During this period of time the forest will be forever changing. There will be damaging storms. There will be insect and disease invasions. There will be benevolent periods. There will be changes in the makeup of the forest community mostly determined by nature but in a minor way through management to meet the needs of industry.

Through it all the forest will survive and will lend its strength and endurance to mankind.

*Homer Stennett, a resident of Jamestown, retired after 39 years employed by the US Soil Conservation Service.*



*Some shelf mushrooms — Photo by David Hecei, Jamestown Audubon Society.*

roots through the soil and then expanding their thickness.

In 80 years or 100 years the tree will have reached its maximum growth. It will be mature-ripe. It will be cut or will die. The roots in the soil will deteriorate. In the soil will be a long, wide root hole that is filled with punk like organic matter. The root hole provides easy access for air and water to penetrate deeply into the soil. The organic matter, damp and rich in nutrients that are released as the root deteriorates, provides a near ideal place for life to exist and flourish. There will be huge numbers of bacteria, protozoa, mites, worms, bugs, millipedes and insect larva. Even larger ani-



# The Gotsh Land, Sullivan County: Settled 1895

By Jane Sorensen Lord

Come. It is cooler here; and there is a breeze in the pines.

We walked through the family preserve of hemlocks, too big to hug, on Jerry Gotsch's Tree Farm located within the Blue Line of the Catskills; and then we entered a stately stand of red pine, pruned, straight, and tall and old enough to practically shade all the ground. Ferns grew here and there; but mostly there was a thick loose covering of needles.

It's beautiful, isn't it? Jerry and his father planted them in the sixties. Until then they grew food for the family here. They've taken care of the trees since they first planted them. Not at all the gone-to-weed red pine stands that so many deserted.

We walked slowly, breathing the scented air, listening to the soft rustle of wind in the canopy. I could never see something like this on my Tree Farm which had overgrown for 70 years before my husband and I bought it. We will never live to see the fullness of our efforts no matter how much we plant, prune, or TSI.

Look. Look over here. Jerry did this to see what would happen. He clear cut this acre about 15 years ago. It's still covered with brush and plants; because deer continually browsed the regenerating trees. See the trees he started in tree protectors a couple of years ago? They are proper sized; because the deer cannot get to them. I don't know where they all came from; but all types of small animals like chipmunks moved in right after he cleared. They couldn't hide anywhere in the pine grove.

The ground was covered with tall plants and thigh high bushes. Wintergreen and partridge berry were gaining footholds. It was an interesting contrast to the pines.

We walked back under the pines which started to become interspersed with young hemlocks.

Did you see that? The deer had trouble last winter because of the deep snow. Jerry dropped hemlocks to feed them. He told people that the deer cleaned the needles like you clean corn on the cob. But that one couldn't make it. Must have been small or young.

All of us who Tree Farm in the Catskills, seem to have a love-hate relationship with deer. You can't plant all the types of flora you want because of deer browse or rub. But there is an awe when, at dusk, a six

by removing every third row.

Leave two and take one and eventually they will become majestic like the others. Jerry pays close attention; so as plantings become crowded he releases them. People must understand how important the thinning is. The trees will stop growing, become stunted when they are not thinned. Through the 100 years the family has owned and taken care of this land, they have learned to manage it like a family raises a second child. They know what is apt to happen and take care of it before it does!

Come. You must appreciate one last thing. As you walk through the steeple bush, you will front on a Christmas Tree plantation. Walk towards it, but don't cross the road. Turn right and start to walk back to the farmhouse.

The right turn provides a panorama like one in Church's Catskill paintings. The road gradually drops crossing a small wooden bridge. Straight ahead is a miles-away view of forested mountain tops shrouded in light sun mist.

"Wow!", I thought "Land, you are so beautiful and lucky to have been loved and cared for so well."

And it seemed, as I walked downhill, back to my car, that the mist across the valley lifted, revealing glittering gemstone greens; and that the earth sprung more beneath my step.

*Jerry Gotsch is a forester in Region 3 of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. His great-grandfather bought the farm as the family homestead. Jane Sorensen Lord is a Tree Farmer and Master Forest Owner. She serves as Communications Liaison to the New York Tree Farm Committee. This was a July woodswalk sponsored by the Catskill Forest Association.*



The Gotsh land and view.

pointer stands on your lawn silhouetted by the rose in the sunset. And a thrill when you round the corner on a wood's trail and, with a sudden snort, a deer rises up on its rear legs, thrashing with its forelegs, twists, and, before your eyes, disappears back into the woods. And it is sad to see the small, white, complete skeleton facing where the hemlocks were felled only a hundred feet away.

We walk by an area covered with brambles. More wildlife cover. And just about opposite are pine stands, younger than the previous, which are being thinned



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**Jan 18:** STC; 7:30 PM; Chapter Meeting; Program TBA; Binghamton Extension

**Jan 19:** CNY; 7 PM; Wildlife Rehabilitation; Cynthia Page; Manlius Library; Manlius, (315) 673-3691

**Jan 21:** CDC; 7:30 PM; Amazon Forest; M. Greason; Voorheesville Extension (518) 797-3623

**Jan 28:** NFC; X-Country Ski; Emery Park; So. Wales; Bring a can of soup (716) 655-4995

**Feb 11, 12:** CAY; 10 AM; **7th Cabin Fever Festival**; Fillmore Glen State Park; Moravia; (315) 497-1078

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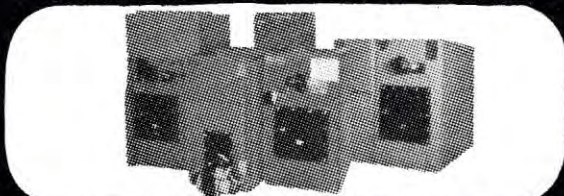
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