

The New York Forest Owner

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION

September/October 2003



Landowners and Foresters working together to plan management activities – See page 6 for full story.

Volume 41 Number 5



**THE NEW YORK
FOREST OWNERS
ASSOCIATION**

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The New York Forest Owner

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Please address all membership fees and change of address requests to P.O. Box 1055, Penfield, N.Y. 14526. 1-800-836-3566. Cost of family membership/subscription is \$30.

www.nyfoa.org

COVER: Forester working with landowners to plan for management activities. For complete article on Working with Foresters see page 6. Photograph courtesy of Peter Smallidge.

From The Exec. Director

Stewardship and NYFOA

NYFOA's mission of "promoting sustainable woodland practices and improved stewardship of privately held woodlands" is now being furthered through a US Forest Service/DEC/NYFOA partnership. This partnership will implement both the Forest Land Enhancement Program (FLEP) and the New York State portion of the NY/NJ Highlands Stewardship Program.

Through FLEP, cost sharing for nine stewardship practices is available from



funds provided by the US Forest Service. DEC will review applications and determine which practices for which landowner will be funded. These decisions are

based upon the priorities set forth in the State Priority Plan recently approved by the US Forest Service. DEC will also determine when the practice is satisfactorily completed. NYFOA will administer the funds and issue payments to landowners upon completion of the practice. Practices for which cost sharing is available includes preparation of stewardship plans, forest stand improvements, fish and wildlife habitat improvements, water quality improvements and watershed protection as examples. It should be noted that to obtain cost sharing for all practices except stewardship plan development an approved stewardship plan is required. (Note: please see page 10 for a detailed explanation of the FLEP program).

Under the NY/NJ Highlands Stewardship Program cost sharing for the development of stewardship plans is available for forestlands in the NY Highlands area. This area includes portions of Orange, Dutchess, Putnam, Rockland and Westchester Counties. The three partners will have the same roles in this program as they have in the FLEP.

Both programs provide landowners the opportunity to obtain cost sharing for their stewardship efforts. FLEP cost share funding is limited. Each DEC Region has been allocated a portion of the available FLEP funds. Under the NY portion of the NY/NJ Highlands Stewardship Program \$125,000 is available for cost sharing of the development of stewardship plans.

Another source of cost sharing funds for development of stewardship plans is through the Watershed Agricultural Council's Forestry Program. Development of forest stewardship plans is fully funded for forestlands within the Delaware/Catskill and Croton Water Supply Systems that provide New York City with its drinking water. Information about participation in this program can be obtained by contacting Watershed Agricultural Council's Forestry Program at (607) 865-7790.

As you can see from the above there are cost sharing programs that can either assist you in developing a forest stewardship plan or in implementing your existing plan. As NYFOA members committed to the NYFOA mission, now is the time to take action. Contact your consulting forester, DEC regional service forester or, if in the New York City watershed, the Watershed Agricultural Council to apply.

Your participation in these programs has two benefits. First it helps you, the landowner, implement better stewardship on your forestland that benefits you as an individual but also benefits all New Yorkers through better water quality, cleaner air and preservation of open space. Second, participation in FLEP assists in ensuring New York State gets future funding through the program as this funding depends upon effective expenditure of current funds in achieving better stewardship. This additional funding will assist you and others in their future stewardship efforts. 🌲

-Dan Palm
Executive Director

Join!

NYFOA is a not-for-profit group of NY State landowners promoting

stewardship of private forests for the benefit of current and future generations. Through local chapters and statewide activities, NYFOA helps woodland owners to become responsible stewards and interested publics to appreciate the importance of New York's forests.

Join NYFOA today and begin to receive its many benefits including: six issues of *The New York Forest Owner*, woodwalks, chapter meetings, and two statewide meetings. Complete and mail this form:

I/We would like to support good forestry and stewardship of New York's forest lands

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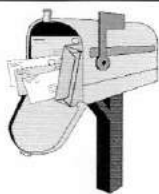
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In The MAIL



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Lean-tos

I just read a recent issue of the *New York Forest Owner* with the photograph of the lean-to located on the front cover. I was wondering if you had plans which would be available to your

subscribers. I would love to build one of these on my property. Another idea would be to put out an issue with various plans for different styles of lean-tos.

—John Deyo

Editors Note:

A “Standard plan for an Adirondack Lean-to or Open Camp” was received from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Raybrook office. While this extensive plan is too technical and detailed to reprint clearly in the *New York Forest Owner*, a copy will be sent to Mr. Deyo. Anyone else who may have additional information on an Adirondack lean-to please contact the editor at the address above.



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Our approach is broad. Our results are credible. Our commitment is genuine.

The Knots of Timber Tax

LLOYD R. CASEY

I am from the Government and I am here to help you." This phrase, of course, is traditionally known as one of the three biggest lies. However, I don't know of any other period in time in which there have been more government incentive programs from which forest landowners can benefit.

There is the Environmental Quality Improvement Program (EQIP), the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP), the Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program (WHIP) and the Forest Land Enhancement Program (FLEP). FLEP is a USDA Forest Service program administered through the NYS DEC and the others are administered through the USDA NRCS.

All these programs have one thing in common - they all provide cost share opportunities to nonindustrial private forest owners and farmers for various conservation purposes. Many participants are surprised after receiving their

payments to receive a 1099-G indicating that the government payments are considered income and that Federal income tax may be due.

All is not lost. Under section 126 of the Internal Revenue Code, all or part of these government payments may be excluded from income. It is important to know that it must be reported as income, but it *may* be excluded if the following procedures are completed.

If there has been income from the treated land preceding the treatment during the last three years, take that income and average it over the 3 years (divide it by 3); multiply it by 10 percent. Your answer will then be divided by justifiable interest rate (the lower the better). If the final figure is larger than the government payment, all of the payment is excludable, if it is less; only the amount calculated is excludable.


If there has been no income over the last three years, multiply \$2.50 times the number of treated acres and divide by the appropriate interest rate. If the answer is larger than the government payment, all can be excluded; if not, only that amount calculated can be excluded.

For reporting use a plain piece of paper (form 3-P) and provide the amount of the cost-share payment, the date received, the amount of the payment that qualifies for exclusion, the amount you choose to exclude and show your calculation and an explanation of why you used a particular interest rate.

For those of you that are "forest investor," report as miscellaneous income on the front of form 1040. For those of you that are in the "timber growing business" report on Schedule C, Form 1040 and for farmers on Schedule F Form 1040.

Each taxpayer's situation is different so one should calculate the tax with and without the exclusion to determine which way is best.

The bottom line is: to know that if you are participating in one of the aforementioned programs that the payments are considered income and a tax will be due unless you go through the Section 126 Exclusion process.

More information can be obtained by going to the following website: www.timbertax.org 

Lloyd R. Casey works in the Forest Land Owner Assistance area of the USDA Forest Service Northeastern Area.

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WORKING with FORESTERS

PETER J. SMALLIDGE

Introduction

Some good advice for a landowner who plans to conduct any management activity in their forest is to seek advice and counsel from a forester. This article discusses the process a landowner should use to select a forester and what factors to consider when deciding how to pay a forester for services. The logical basis for the recommendation to seek assistance is consistent with advice to the homeowner who seeks counsel from a plumber, electrician, attorney, or a tax preparer for assistance and guidance. In all these situations, we need technical information and perhaps assistance with complex decision-making. Typically, our efficiency and the results improve when we get advice from a professional. We almost always pay for these services.

The exception to the "pay for services" rule is when a DEC public service forester visits a woodlot. In those cases, the DEC forester arrives pre-paid through your state and federal tax dollars and provides services free of any additional charges. Public-sector

foresters will provide many important services, such as a developing a stewardship management plan based on your objectives and thus giving you a benchmark against which you can assess future management decisions. Because of time constraints and workload demands, DEC foresters must limit the variety of services they provide. Thus, at some point, you may need to locate a private-sector forester.

Types of Foresters

Even though there is no legal definition of a forester in New York, the profession recognizes a forester as a person who has completed college-level training that has a forestry focus. This education most often includes a 4-year degree, in a science-based curriculum that emphasizes courses that often include tree identification, forest ecology, forest management, soils, forest measurements, silviculture, wildlife management, hydrology, harvesting, recreation, and more. Other foresters have a 2-year degree, with more limited course work. All foresters should expand on their



Landowner investigates canopy structure for wildlife potential

original education with continuing education through universities and professional societies. Foresters work in either the public sector, as described above, or the private sector. Foresters in the private sector include consultants whose primary business is providing services to landowners, or industrial foresters who work for the forest industry and provide services to landowners as part of the process of supplying wood to the mill. All foresters are important to forestry in New York. The landowner pays the consultant a fee and the industrial forester is paid by the mill. Landowners should consider both consultant and industrial foresters when looking to develop a relationship with a private sector forester. The extent to which

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any forester can service the specific needs of the landowner depends on many factors, such as technical ability, conflicts of interest, business philosophy, personal ethics, landowner resources to invest, and the landowner's ability to communicate their ownership objectives to the forester. New York is fortunate to have exceptional foresters available from public and private sectors, but landowners will need to find the forester who is best suited to their needs.

A group of people will try to present themselves as a forester wanting to help the landowner. These people are actually timber brokers, loggers, or perhaps trained foresters who de-emphasize their forestry skills to work as brokers. This group of people seeks only to maximize their own profits with disregard for the landowner's objectives. In some cases they will purchase trees from a landowner and re-sell the trees, even without cutting them, to another person or company. This leaves the landowner disconnected from the person who ultimately cuts the trees and perhaps with little control over how and when the timber is harvested. In other cases these individuals will offer "forestry services" to the landowner, then sell the

timber to themselves or a subsidiary company at below market prices and charge the landowner a fee to supervise the harvest. Thus, the landowner most importantly may not achieve their true ownership objective, likely won't have their forest treated sustainably, and seldom comes close to realizing the actual market value for their timber. When hiring a forester you are buying a service and buyer beware.

Loggers are critical to many forestry processes, and unfortunately they are often maligned. Loggers are trained to harvest trees in a safe and effective manner. They can often construct skid trails and haul roads, which your forester should locate, that you can subsequently use for hiking or skiing. However, loggers are not trained to give technical advice on how to sustainably manage your forest to meet the full range of your ownership objectives. Your forester, and many educational web sites, can help you think about the process of selecting a logger.

Finding a Forester for You

Your forest is valuable to you for its monetary, recreational, and aesthetic qualities. Just as you wouldn't hire someone for your company or business without asking for a resume and references nor should you hire the first

forester you meet. By considering several foresters, you improve the odds of finding one that will best suit your needs. What factors should you use to evaluate foresters and which foresters do you evaluate? Select a forester based on a combination of factors. These factors include:

- educational background,
- involvement in continuing education,
- participation in their professional forestry society,
- work experience,
- references,
- visits to their previous jobs,
- a demonstrated commitment to sustainable practices,
- certification through a professional society or independent organization, and
- their personal interactions with you.

Price for services is an issue, but use this as a secondary consideration after you are satisfied with the other factors. It isn't possible to emphasize one criterion over others on the list.

Review your candidates thoroughly and proceed with diligence. It's helpful to call several recent landowner clients, but the landowner may not be able to effectively judge all aspects of sustainable forestry. The best way to accumulate the information needed to evaluate several foresters is to write down what you want the forester to do based on the stewardship plan prepared by the DEC forester and then ask several foresters to submit a letter of intent or brief proposal outlining the services they would provide and for what price. Foresters who are eager to serve landowners will be happy to comply with such a request.

With hundreds of foresters in New York, who should you ask for proposals? Finding potential foresters in your region is a straightforward but daunting task. Here are five strategies that if used together, will help you build a list of potential private sector foresters. Websites for each are listed at the end



Grapple skidder parked on a landing in Northern New York

continued on page 8



Natural resource professional using a hand held field data recorder to collect stewardship information during an inventory.

of the article or your local Cornell Cooperative Extension office can help you contact these sources.

1. Start with a copy of the DEC Cooperating Forester Directory from your local DEC office or their website. The directory isn't a complete list of foresters in the state and those listed meet minimum eligibility requirements.

2. Go the Society of American Foresters webpage and look for Certified Foresters in your area. Foresters are certified by SAF based on education, work experience, statement of work ethic, and a written exam that evaluates competency. Additionally, many NY consulting foresters are members of the NY Institute of Consulting Foresters or

the Association of Consulting Foresters.

3. Talk with other forest owners and look for advertisements in forest owner magazines. Potentially good sources of information are members of the statewide forest landowner association, the New York Forest Owners Association (NYFOA) or regional groups such as the Catskill Forest Association (CFA) and Tug Hill Resource Investment for the For Tomorrow (THRIFT).

4. Ask for a free visit and consultation with volunteers in Cornell's Master Forest Owner program. These landowner-volunteers are trained by Cornell Cooperative Extension to provide non-technical assistance. They have typically experienced, and overcome, the same problems you're currently dealing with.

5. Attend landowner workshops and woodswalks to meet with the foresters who are investing time in supporting landowner educational needs. As you can see the process to collect names isn't trivial, but it's a critical step before you request proposals.

Hiring a Forester

Once you've selected your forester, how do you negotiate and foster a relationship? Foresters will encourage you to have a contract with a logger, and similarly they should be receptive to a contract with you. There are several issues to consider within a contract but that discussion is beyond the scope of this article. Fundamentally, the contract should identify the parties involved and the property, the terms of payment, constraints or requirements on the parties, and the services to be provided. Be sure to review any contract with your attorney.

In the forestry profession there is considerable discussion and debate about service fees. There are two categories of service – one is timber sale design and administration and the other is broadly grouped as forest management activities. One of the most contentious issues among foresters is payment for assistance with timber



Landowners enjoy the solitude of their property on a woodland trail.

Websites to Help Locate Potential Foresters and Help You Work with Foresters:

Cornell Forestry Extension
www.dnr.cornell.edu/ext/forestrypage

Master Forest Owner volunteers
www.dnr.cornell.edu/ext/mfo

DEC Private Land Services
www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dlf/privland

NYFOA
www.nyfoa.org

Catskill Forest Association
www.catskillforest.org

Society of American Foresters, Certified Foresters
www.safnet.org

New York Institute of Consulting Foresters *www.nyicf.org*

Association of Consulting Foresters *www.acf-foresters.com*

sales. I won't address pay scale or amount, but rather payment method.

Some, but not all, industrial foresters won't charge you directly for services because they may expect the timber to be sold to their mill, and under some circumstances this is a desirable working relationship. Many mills have been established for decades and seek long-term sustainable relationships with forest owners. Some mills have well-qualified and credentialed foresters who can provide a variety of services.

Among consultants the most common payment method is as a percentage of sale or "on commission." Payment on commission means some percentage of the timber sale value goes to the forester; the more high-value timber that is cut, the more money the forester makes. If you decide to hire a forester using commission, know that you can negotiate the rate of commission and that you need not be bound by the

"usual" rate. Most consultant foresters will be able to describe what they see as advantages to payment on commission.

An increasingly common payment method and one that has several advantages for landowners is to pay on a flat rate, such as per hour or per acre, rather than pay a commission for timber sale assistance. The advantages of flat rate include the following:

1. Avoiding the potential for a conflict of interest. The potential exists because the forester makes more money if they administer a sale where they designate a greater number of high value trees and a lesser number of low value trees for harvest. Foresters won't inherently favor high-value trees, but a flat rate avoids the perception of a conflict of interest.

2. With flat rate, a forester receives fair compensation at a known rate for any and all services. A forester deserves fair compensation because they can provide important and valuable technical assistance. Because timber sales involve similar skills (e.g., inventory, planning, tree selection) regardless of the quality of the timber, a flat rate ensures fair compensation for the forester and a stable price for the landowner. Note that the sale of low value timber to improve the forest may require more time for marking and marketing and thus perhaps higher costs than high value sales.

3. A flat rate allows a forester to provide services to a landowner without a timber sale or with a sale involving low value trees. Some foresters won't work with landowners who want to cut cull trees or other low value trees. Payment on commission of sale isn't possible if the only desired service is to update a management plan, mark boundaries, designate trails, girdle habitat trees, or plant open land.

Good forestry, or bad forestry, can happen with any type of forester or payment method. The landowner needs to emphasize their desire for the use of sustainable practices that meet the goals for the property. Through a

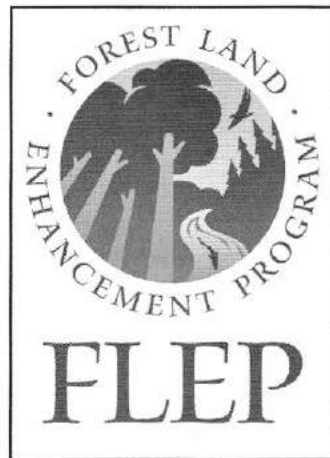
combination of the process to find a forester, a contract with a forester, and clear communication of your goals, find a strategy that ensures the sustainability of your forest resource.

Summary Points

When working with a forester, start with a free visit by a DEC forester. You might actually be well served to talk with a MFO volunteer before a DEC forester visits so you learn about some educational resources and focus your questions to make efficient use of the DEC forester's time. In addition to the DEC public sector foresters, private sector foresters include consultants who seek landowners as clients and industrial foresters who ensure their mill has a sufficient supply of wood. If you decide to hire a forester from the private sector it is in your best interest to solicit proposals from a number of foresters who describe what they will do to further your stewardship plan and what credentials for employment they would bring to you. When you discuss method of payment, know that most private consultants and some industrial foresters will suggest that the usual way to pay foresters is as a commission or percentage of a timber sale. There are other options than payment on commission, so landowners can consider working with an industrial forester or hiring a consulting forester using a flat scale based on time or services. An increasing number of foresters and forest owners are deciding not to establish a relationship based on a commission. ▲

Peter J. Smallidge is the New York State Extension Forester at Cornell University. He is also a NYFOA board member. This article is from the Series: "Looking Into Your Woodlot" - Short Articles on Woodlot Management. More complete information is available from the author, your county office of Cornell Cooperative Extension, or by contacting your local NYS Department of Environmental Conservation office for forestry assistance.

A Landowner's Guide to: New York's Forest Land Enhancement Program



Overview and History:

As a result of the 2002 Farm Bill, New York can launch the Forest Land Enhancement Program (FLEP) to serve the needs of private forest owners. Also through the 2002 Farm Bill, former programs such as SIP and FIP were terminated. This article is a summary of the program. Full details are available from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation field office that serves your county or from their web site at www.dec.state.ny.us/website/df/. This document is specific to FLEP in New York. Other Farm Bill programs, such as the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP), etc. are described at www.whmi.nrcs.usda.gov/ and the originating legislation is at www.usda.gov/farbill/

The objective of FLEP is to enhance stewardship efforts that support the sustainable use of forest resources of non-industrial private lands. These private lands are critical to the health, beauty and economy of New York. Private forests represent 85% of the forest land (15% are public and industrial) and provide approximately 70% of the raw material for forest industries. Private forests provide clean air and water, wildlife habitat, and recreational enterprise opportunities. FLEP attempts to balance the 2002 Farm Bill investment in technical assistance, cost-share assistance, and educational programming with programs already existing in the state. The balance occurs through advice provided by the State Forest Stewardship Committee to the NYS DEC State Forester.

The national focus of FLEP includes areas such as: productivity of timber,

habitat for flora and fauna, soil conservation, water and air quality, wetland and riparian protection, and control of forest pests, pathogens, and invasive species. New York supports these national goals and has emphasized topics that relate to conditions in New York's forests. These conditions warrant increased attention on the management of forests for sustainable timber production and wildlife habitat, preservation of water quality, and forest health. Specific details of topics emphasized in New York are outlined in the section below on cost-share assistance and approved practices.

Technical Assistance

Technical assistance provides guidance to private forest landowners by trained professionals to help put the knowledge of forest resource management into practice on the ground. The NYS DEC Bureau of Private Land Services is the primary provider of technical assistance and should be contacted before a landowner initiates any projects with hopes of receiving cost-share payments. In addition to the DEC foresters who provide technical assistance, the private sector offers foresters who can guide landowners in their management decisions. Even if landowners don't utilize resources from

the cost-share and educational programs, technical assistance helps owners achieve their goals. To receive technical assistance, contact your local DEC office. DEC foresters can make a free visit to your property for consultation and can provide a list of Cooperating Foresters. The Cornell Cooperative Extension fact sheet "Working with Foresters" is also available to help in choosing a private sector forester. View this information at www.dnr.cornell.edu/ext/forestrypage, or for an extended article see page 6 of this issue of the *Forest Owner*.

Cost-Share Assistance

Cost-share programs reimburse forest owners for a portion of actual expenses associated with forest management practices having prior approval by the state forester. This financial assistance has proven to be an effective incentive that encourages landowners to play a more active management role than without cost-sharing and to continue management activity after approved practices are completed. Cost-share practices must be approved by a DEC forester *before* they are initiated by the forest owner. Forest owners need a DEC-approved Landowner Forest Stewardship Plan (see FLEP #1 below) before they are eligible for cost-sharing, but plans are developed free of charge by the DEC or with partial reimbursement from private sector foresters under FLEP practice 1, with DEC approval. Funds are available on a first-come first-served basis. Forest owners must implement their approved practice within 6 months of approval and can typically treat up to 50 acres per year, receive up to \$5,000 annually, with a maximum total of \$25,000 in cost-share

payments through 2007 – the end of the current Farm Bill program authorization. Development of plans is reimbursable up to 75% of the actual cost and other practices are reimbursable at 50% or 75%, depending on the practice. It is anticipated that an average of approximately \$250,000+ per year is available for cost-sharing in New York for 2003 – 2007.

Educational Programs

Educational programs inform landowners, foresters, and other resource professionals about the FLEP, how to use the guidelines of FLEP effectively, and how forest management practices can help landowners reach their goals while practicing sustainable forest management. The FLEP educational program is coordinated by the State Extension Forester in consultation with the DEC, through the Cornell Cooperative Extension system. The educational program seeks to inform through broad-scale initiatives and to enable enhanced practices through more intensive educational initiatives. FLEP educational programs are open to all individuals and complement on-going extension education provided statewide and through county associations of Cornell Cooperative Extension and outreach efforts of DEC. FLEP educational program activities will include direct mailing to thousands of forest owners, press releases, workshops and training for forest owners, training for foresters, training for Master Forest Owner volunteers, and public presentations to civic and community groups. The New York Forest Owners Association will partner with CCE in delivering FLEP education programs.

Summary of Approved Practices:

Below is a summary of practices approved for FLEP cost-share assistance in New York. Full details on the practices are available in the state's priority plan from the DEC Division of Lands and Forests web site or from a DEC forester. "Approved practices" are management activities that the State Forester has recognized as consistent

with the needs of New York to meet the federal goals of FLEP. Many management activities recommended by your technical assistance provider are sustainable, but only approved practices are eligible (*with prior approval by DEC*) for cost-share assistance. Your technical assistance provider may recommend some practices that while sustainable aren't "approved" for FLEP, but are important to help you meet your goals. The description of practices below is only a summary and should not be used to guide specific management decisions. Log on to the DEC web site, www.dec.state.ny.us for a copy of the state priority plan and the specifications provided in that document.

FLEP 1 - Forest Stewardship Planning: Develop a Landowner Forest Stewardship Plan (LFSP) or upgrade an existing plan to meet NYS approved standards. Plans may be prepared by private sector foresters with a cost-share rate of 75% of actual costs for new plans or upgraded plans not to exceed established program maximum rates. A stewardship plan must be prepared and approved by DEC before the landowner is eligible for other FLEP practices.

FLEP 2 -Afforestation or Reforestation: To encourage regeneration of forest cover through site preparation, planting, seeding, fencing, or tree shelters for the purposes of timber or

fiber production or carbon sequestration. The planting plan may be part of the LFSP. Cost-share rate is 50%. Planting is limited to non-invasive native or naturalized species and cannot be used for orchard, ornamental, nursery or Christmas tree purposes.

FLEP 3 - Forest Stand Improvement: To enhance growth and quality of wood fiber. The cost-share rate of 75% is appropriate for activities such as: tree marking, thinning, cull removal, or grapevine removal. Marking will be by an approved silvicultural prescription. Crop tree release is an eligible activity when following the approved guide.

FLEP 4 - Agroforestry Implementation: not available in NY at this time

FLEP 5 - Water Quality Improvement: To improve or protect water quality, riparian areas, forest wetlands and forest watersheds through the establishment, maintenance, renovation, and/or restoration of approved practices. The cost-share rate of 75% may be used for water control, forestry best management practices, design and layout of access corridors, and soil stabilization with plants to restrict erosion and protect water quality.

FLEP 6 - Fish and Wildlife Habitat improvement: To create, protect, or maintain fish and wildlife habitat through establishment, maintenance,

continued on page 12

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FLEP (continued)

and restoration practices. The cost-share rate of 50% may be applied to activities such as: wildlife crop tree release, wild fruit tree maintenance, installing artificial cavities and hibernacula, creating forest openings, establishing streamside vegetation, and enhancing seeps.

FLEP 7 - Forest Health Practices: To improve, protect or restore forest health relative to detection of or damage by insects, diseases, and animals affecting established stands. The cost-share rate of 75% covers practices such as tree marking for stand improvement and thinning. Marking guidelines must be based on an approved silvicultural guide. The practice does not include cost-sharing for applications of chemical or biological agents for control of forest pests, such as gypsy moth.

FLEP 8 - Invasive Species Control: To limit the spread of invasive species in forested environments through eradication or management practices that support the forest owner's management goals. The cost-share rate of 50% can support practices of mechanical removal or chemical control. Chemical or biological controls must adhere to label guidelines. This practice is not for

orchard, ornamental, nursery or Christmas tree purposes.

FLEP 9 - Wildfire and Catastrophic Risk Reduction: not available in NY at this time.

FLEP 10 - Wildfire and Catastrophic Event Rehabilitation: To restore and rehabilitate forests following catastrophic natural events such as wildfire, wind, and ice storms. The cost-share rate of 50% includes activities such as stabilizing firebreak soils or burned areas, tree designation for stand improvement, and thinning. Tree marking and thinning must follow an approved silvicultural guide.

FLEP 11 - Special Practices: no special practices are currently approved.

Summary of Steps to Receive Cost-Share Payments:

1. Complete the FLEP cost-share application/transaction form provided by the NYS DEC (available on the NY FLEP web site). Submit to Regional DEC office.
2. Regional DEC regional office will determine if the requested practice is eligible based on the LFSP or for FLEP #1 if the acreage is eligible. If the

practice request is approved, the Regional DEC office will submit the approved request to the Cost Share Disbursement Administrator.

3. The Disbursement Administrator will obligate the funds, if available, and make payment to the landowner upon written notification of the successful completion of practices from the DEC service forester.

4. If sufficient funds are not available, the Disbursement Administrator will inform the landowner in writing.

5. Applicants have 6 months to complete the practice and report its completion. The six-month starts on the date the Disbursement Administrator (i.e., NYFOA) mails notice to the landowner. One six-month extension is possible with reasonable justification. Failure to complete practices within the approved time period (original or extended) will result in cancellation of approval.

Summary

FLEP is a useful tool to help forest owners enhance and ensure the sustainable use of their forests. This in turn supports the numerous benefits that private forests provide to communities and society. Before undertaking any activity, consult with and seek approval through your local DEC forester. ▲

FLEP is administered through NYS DEC in partnership with NYFOA and the Cornell Forestry Extension Program. Information also available at www.dnr.cornell.edu/ext/forestrypage

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NEWS & NOTES

Governor Pataki Presents Tree Farm Award

 New York State Governor George Pataki presented 2003 Tree Farmer of the Year Jean Vetter with a plaque as part of the Arbor Day celebration at the Governor's Mansion in Albany. In recognition of her commitment to sustainable forest management, Mrs. Vetter was invited to take part in festivities celebrating the important part trees play in the lives of all New Yorkers. In addition to the plaque, Mrs. Vetter will also receive a safety equipment package and a MS 290 Farm Boss chain saw from Stihl, Inc., national sponsor of the Tree Farmer of the Year contest. The Vetter's tree farm is located in Chestertown, Warren County. Congratulations to the Vetter family, and thank you for doing your part to ensure healthy and productive forests are part of New York's future.


Donald Brown recognized as Forester of the Year

 The Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters (NAASF) recently awarded Donald Brown the Forester of the Year at their annual meeting. Don retired in April after an illustrious 30 year career with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation working in St Lawrence County helping forest landowners manage their forests.

Don has been featured in numerous articles and has been involved with many organizations including NYFOA, Forest Practice Board, American Tree Farm program, Potsdam Tree Board and Project Learning Tree. He has been recognized for his work by: NYFOA in 2002 when he received their Outstanding Service Award, DEC in 2000 when he received their Outstanding Employee Award and USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service in 2003 when he received their Working in Harmony Award.

Don's dedication to Forestry, especially after the 1998 Ice Storm, and his accomplishments over his career earned him this award. Don is a member of NYFOA and lives in Potsdam. His expertise, enthusiasm and dedication to the forests and people of St Lawrence County has been and continues to be a blessing.

NYFOA Awards


 It is time to begin the process of selecting a select few for special thanks. And, we'd like your help.

Each year NYFOA presents awards to recognize substantial contributions to NYFOA and to private forest ownership. The Heiberg Memorial Award recognizes outstanding contributions to forestry and conservation in New York. The NYFOA Outstanding Service Award recognizes outstanding service to the NYFOA membership and furtherance of NYFOA's mission to promote sustainable woodland practices and improved stewardship of privately owned woodlands.

The Chapter Activity Award is recognition by the statewide NYFOA membership of an individual's efforts to help private forest owners in their chapter area. The individual or couple is chosen by the chapter, and each chapter is invited to name a recipient each year.

Please send your nominees by November 1st to Ronald W. Pedersen at 22 Vandenburg Lane, Latham, NY 12110 or rwp22@earthlink.net. The Heiberg Memorial Award and the Outstanding Service Award are competitive, and final selections are made by an awards committee named by NYFOA's President.

Certified Loggers Available Online

 New York Logger Training, Inc. (NYLT) has just launched an interactive website to benefit loggers and landowners: www.nyloggertraining.org

NYLT is a cooperative effort of timber harvesters, forest industry, government, educators, and foresters working together to deliver resources allowing loggers to learn environmentally sound practices and improved skills. This website is the next step along that path, and allows any person the ability to determine if an individual is Trained Logger Certified (TLC).


Since the original certificates were presented in 1996, TLC has become a

standard within the wood-using industry in New York. Many businesses, forest landowners, and land managers require certification of woods workers, with many others encouraging participation in the program. Within the Catskill region, TLC is an instrumental part of the water quality protection efforts of the New York City Watershed.

The TLC program was developed to recognize loggers who complete a training schedule involving three "core" areas of knowledge and skills: Chainsaw Operation, Safety, & Productivity; Environmental Concerns; and Adult First Aid & CPR. Continuing education is the backbone of TLC. After initial certification is achieved, three Continuing Education credits over the next three years are required to maintain current TLC status.

A *Logger Search* tab is provided on the site in part to provide landowners with another tool in determining a logger's qualifications. NYLT certifies that a timber harvester has completed training in best management practices for water quality and preventing soil erosion, as well as proper felling techniques to minimize risk of injury and residual damage to the forest. NYLT does not endorse any individual logger or contractor, or the quality of their work.

The *Home* and *Get Certified* pages provide background information on NYLT, how and why it developed, what services are available, and how to participate in and get more information on TLC. Also provided is a list of pre-approved continuing education classes. Clicking on *Announcements* brings the viewer to a place where news and recent policy changes effecting NYLT are posted. *Statistics* tab shows progress over the last seven years, highlighting workshops provided, students participating, and a running tally of certified loggers. There are over 2,500 participants in the NYLT Database, 275 of whom are currently Trained Logger Certified.

Workshops shows what classes are available, when, costs, contact person, and a sign-up link. Since 1996 NYLT has had, on average, one training session per week. A private *Login* area is available to many program participants to check their status and plan future training opportunities. 

HOW TO: *Know When to Fertilize Your Forest*

STEVE WILENT

Fertilization is a silvicultural practice that is increasingly attractive to forest managers and landowners who must maximize the financial returns on their timberland investments. Foliar or soil nutrient analyses can highlight nutrient deficiencies in a stand, but deciding whether to add fertilizer is often not so simple.

James A. Moore, professor of forestry at the University of Idaho and director of the Intermountain Forest Tree Nutrition Cooperative (IFTNC), says the most common reason for fertilizing in the Pacific Northwest is, as in most regions, to improve timber growth and yield.

"The second most common reason is to improve forest health," says Moore. "We're studying links between nutrition and resistance to disease and insect infestation. It looks promising – although it isn't proven yet, enough evidence has accumulated that fertilizing for forest health is also now a common practice in the region. And often increased growth and improved forest health go hand in hand."

Deciding when to apply fertilizer depends, as do most forest management decisions, on the goals and objectives of the landowner, as well as the type and condition of the stand and the site.

"You can always make a recommendation to put fertilizer on a site, but you have a responsibility to make sure that fertilization will meet the landowner's objectives, particularly from an economic standpoint," says David J. Moorhead, professor and extension forester at the University of Georgia's Warnell School of Forest Resources. "You also have to match fertilization to the biological needs of the trees. Sometimes putting those two things together are difficult and may be at odds with what the landowner might want to do."

For example, many agricultural fields in the South that have been planted with trees over the past 20-25 years have different levels of nutrients than nonagricultural forestlands.

"Those landowners are very used to applying fertilizers in growing annual crops, and they have quite an interest in

the benefits of fertilizers on their tree crops," says Moorhead.

Many former agricultural fields do not need fertilization before or immediately after planting, says Moorhead, because residual nutrients, especially nitrogen, remain in the soil.

"We may have to add some phosphorus early on in planting," says Moorhead, "but most fertilization involves adding nitrogen, and that is generally done after the trees have grown up and closed their crowns and have begun to compete with each other. That's when the trees' demand for nitrogen exceeds the amount available on the site."

Forest managers need to understand how and where the growth gains will occur, says Moorhead: "The response to nitrogen applications is transient. Growth peaks at about six to eight years after application and then begins to decline. If you want to capture the value of your nitrogen, both in increased growth and from an economic standpoint, you need to harvest within five to ten years after fertilizing."

According to Moore, a rule of thumb is that silviculture dollars are usually best spent in stands that are within 10 to 15 years of harvesting. "But some organizations find that they need to fertilize stands that are much younger than that," he says. "It is becoming apparent that we have nutritional problems much earlier in the rotation than nearer to final harvest."

Can fertilizer be applied too early? Fertilizing at or soon after planting time to increase growth rates and seedling survival may seem like a sound practice, but Moore says he has no data to definitively support the idea.

In stands managed for sawtimber, fertilization is best done after thinning, where the thinning itself increases the

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Read More About Fertilization

These publications are available on the Internet.

Tree Fertilization: A Guide for Fertilizing New and Established Trees in the Landscape, by Jeff Gillman, Nursery Management Specialist, Carl Rosen, Extension Soil Scientist, University of Minnesota Extension. www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/horticulture/DG7410.html

Fertilizing Pine Plantations: A County Agents' Guide for Making Fertilization Recommendations, by David J. Moorhead. The University of Georgia, 1999. www.bugwood.caes.uga.edu/fertilization/csoillab.html.

Potassium and Our Forests: Potassium Affects Our Forest in Many Different Ways. An "electronic display" created by the University of Idaho that is designed "to provide those interested in forest fertility with a brief description of potassium, where it comes from, and its ecological benefits in the Pacific Northwest." www.ets.uidaho.edu/extforest/electron.htm.

Fertilizing Eastern Washington Coniferous Forests: A Guide for Nonindustrial Private Forest Landowners, by James A. Moore, Donald P. Hanley, H.N. Chappell, John Shumway, Steven B. Webster, and John M. Mandzak. WSU Cooperative Extension, 1998. <http://cru.cahe.wsu.edu/CEPublications/eb1874/eb1874.pdf>.

growth rate and the fertilizer encourages additional growth in the released trees. In southern pulpwood plantations, making lighter fertilizer applications every four or five years may make economic sense, with final harvest at age 12-15.

"Probably the worst thing you can do is to fertilize once and walk away from the stand for 20 years," says Moorhead. "At the point you've passed the peak growth response and, because you've been carrying the money you invested in the fertilizer application for a much longer period, your rate of return is negligible."

More Than Volume

Some resource managers use fertilizers to increase forage and cover for wildlife. According to Moorhead, fertilizing longleaf, loblolly, and slash pine stands can double needle growth and therefore can double the production of pine straw in a stand.

Mike Wolcott, a forester and vice president of Inland Forest Manage-

ment, Inc., of Sandpoint, Idaho, says some of his firm's clients are more interested in aesthetics than in increasing timber yields.

"In some situations, landowners want the slash from a logging operation and other debris on the forest floor thoroughly cleaned up, in order to create a more park-like appearance," says Wolcott. "That removes nutrients that are important in the long run to the health and vigor of the forest. Some landowners are willing to make the investment in fertilizing to help replace a portion of those nutrients."

After grass seeding in such cleaned-up stands, fertilization also helps produce the appearance that landowners desire. "In the spring, you get a very lush, green undergrowth, in addition to increased timber growth," says Wolcott.

But the objective of most fertilizer applications is to stimulate growth on the bottom line. In general, says Moore, fertilization in a wide variety of stand and site conditions will produce

an economic return on the investment in fertilizer and application costs. The IFTNC has developed predictive models that show growth or mortality response to added nutrients. Forest managers can take the equations that predict response and incorporate them into their own management planning process to make the economic decision about whether a stand meets the criteria for fertilization. ▲

This article originally appeared in the March 2002 issue of "The Forestry Source" a publication of the Society of American Foresters. It is reprinted with their permission.



NYFOA Scholarship Fund

As of August 1, 2003, the NYFOA Endowed Scholarship Fund that is administered by the SUNY ESF College Foundation, Inc. has a fund balance of \$18,740.96

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Forest Insect Pest Alerts

DOUGLAS C. ALLEN

“Once the horse is gone it is too late to close the barn door” and “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” are two expressions familiar to us all. The point they make is very relevant to our modern concept of pest management. Monitoring pest activities in your wood lot is a necessary precursor for preventing unwanted economic, aesthetic or ecological damage. The purpose of “pest alerts” is to make forest owners aware of potential problems and to encourage regular monitoring of forest conditions. Even though it may seem as if outbreaks occur overnight, most infestations are preceded by a year or two of minor but detectable damage. If a person makes the effort, and knows when and where to look, even an informal survey of the wood lot every spring and summer will go a long way

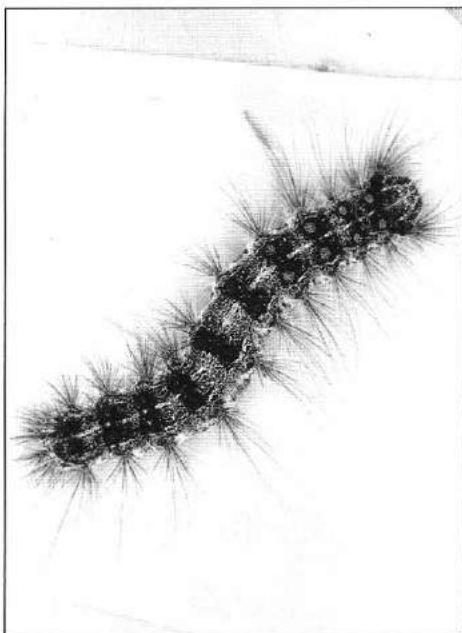


Figure 2. Gypsy moth caterpillar (actual length is approx. 2.0”).

toward anticipating problems before forest management goals are affected.

For the past several years, insect defoliators have been relatively quiet statewide with only scattered episodes of noticeable defoliation. The tide turned this summer, however, when approximately 30,000 acres (a conservative estimate at this point) in northern New York State were infested by a complex which was dominated by forest tent caterpillar (Fig. 1) but included some gypsy moth (Fig. 2) and eastern tent caterpillar as well. Specifically, the outbreak encompasses an area bounded by the village of Edwards (St. Lawrence Co.), south almost to Indian River (Lewis Co.), west to the town of Theresa (Franklin Co.) and north to the village of Richville in St. Lawrence Co. Noticeable defoliation was also reported in Delaware and Otsego counties. Thin crowns, the presence of ragged and partially eaten leaves and the frequent appearance of caterpillars on tree trunks during the day are all indications that populations of forest tent caterpillar are on the increase.

Shot-hole feeding (Fig. 3) by various inchworms or loopers was also noted in other parts of the state. An increase in this type of leaf damage often indicates a building population of loopers. Ground surveys required to identify the species involved have not been completed, but preliminary evidence from two areas point to fall cankerworm in parts of Wyoming Co. and Bruce spanworm in St. Lawrence Co.

Forest owners, most especially sugarbush operators, who noticed light to moderate defoliation this year should consider the likelihood this level of activity could be a precursor to heavy damage (e.g., low quantity and quality

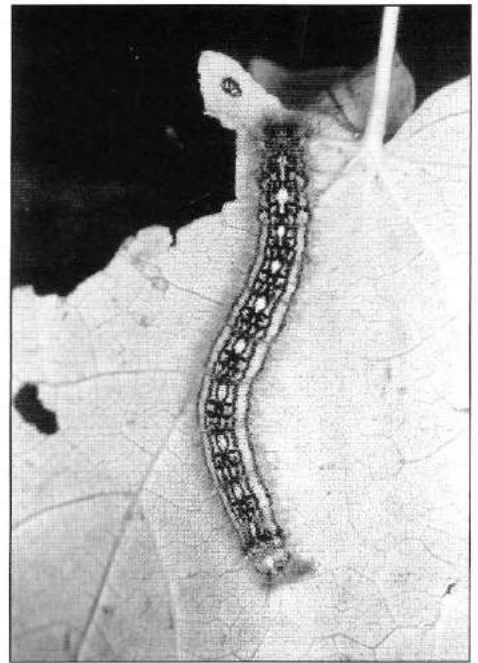


Figure 1. Forest tent caterpillar (actual length is approx. 1.5”).

of sap) next year. Generally, defoliation by these insects occurs early in the growing season (at the time of bud-burst or shortly thereafter) and damage is temporary, amounting to little more than some crown dieback. We know from past experience, however, the end result can be much more serious when defoliation occurs along with other

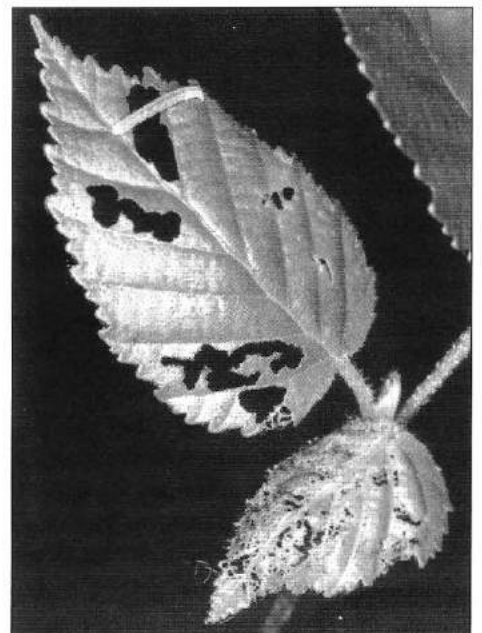


Figure 3. An example of shot-hole feeding typical of many loopers.



Figure 4. Gum spots on a live cherry caused by the boring activity of peach bark beetle adults.

stresses. Counties of special concern are those where defoliation occurs with or is followed by unusually dry weather; that is, regions where precipitation has been substantially below normal. Similarly, if forest tent caterpillar damage occurs in conjunction with or is followed by an infestation of a leaf

disease called anthracnose (an-thrac-nos) tree mortality may occur. Foliage infected with this fungus look as if damaged by frost. Large brown areas of dead leaf tissue form adjacent to leaf veins and eventually the leaf may die. Anthracnose tends to be more prevalent in early summer during years of abundant moisture. The combination of two stresses can be devastating. Under these conditions, spraying to save foliage early next year should be seriously considered, most especially when management goals include timber and/or sap production.

Except for gypsy moth, all of the early season defoliators mentioned above are natives. Their periodic outbreaks are a normal occurrence in northern hardwood forests. We are not sure what event or events "release" populations from their natural controls. Infestations of forest tent caterpillar usually appear over fairly large areas, however, and this implicates a period(s) of favorable weather at critical times during its life cycle.

A U.S. Forest Service publication featuring 2002 Forest Health Highlights for New York State indicates populations of hemlock woolly adelgid spread significantly last year into 13 new townships and two new counties (Delaware and Monroe). Severe damage

usually requires several years of feeding, and the death of severely affected hemlock is preceded by a few years of decline. At this point, the much touted biological control efforts have been only marginally successful and, in my opinion, to date we do not have recommendations for preventing infestations or for saving infested trees.

One of my graduate students has been conducting a statewide survey of peach bark beetle. Preliminary results indicate populations remain high, most especially in the eastern and western counties of the southern tier. Gum produced by beetles preparing to overwinter beneath the bark of live black cherry (Fig. 4) and brood galleries in black cherry logging residue (Fig. 5) are striking evidence of an infestation. In other studies, we are trying to determine a time of year when a stand can be harvested and the resulting cherry slash or residue will not be suitable for brood production for the current or succeeding generations. The only management recommendation that appears successful at this time is to remove slash from the site or to pile and burn slash on site. Both options are expensive and time consuming, but until we learn more about this insect this is the best we can do. ▲

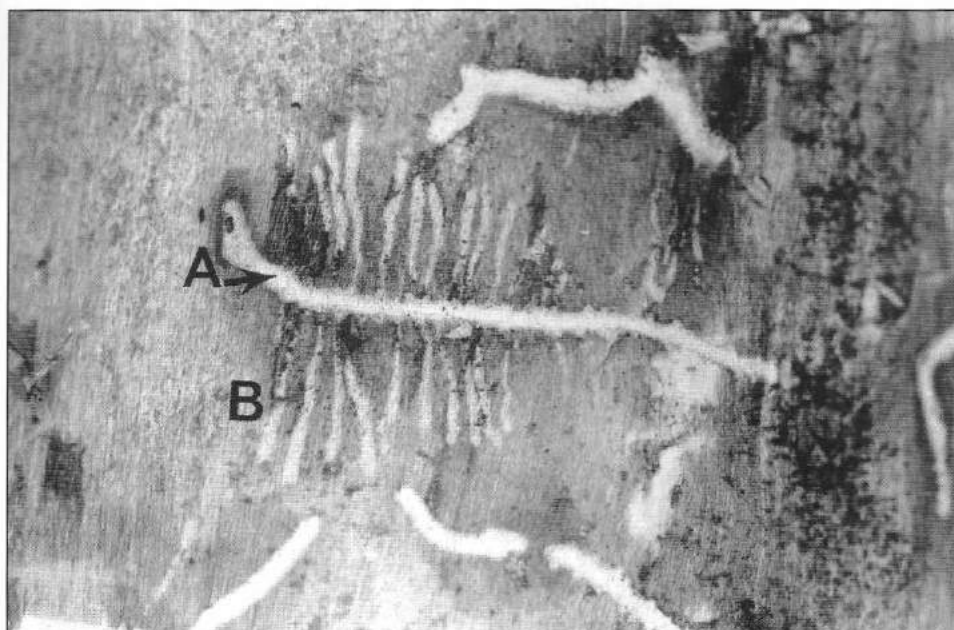


Figure 5. Typical brood gallery (A) and larval galleries (B) of peach bark beetle (actual length of brood gallery in this example is approx. 1"). The brood gallery goes across the grain (i.e., is horizontal).

This is the 70th in the series of articles contributed by Dr. Allen, Professor of Entomology at SUNY-ESF. It is possible to download this collection from the NYS DEC Web page at: <http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dlf/privland/forprot/health/myfo/index.html>.

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Western Finger Lakes Spring '03 Woodswalk

CHUCK WINSHIP & GARY GOFF – PHOTOS BY GARY GOFF

Saturday, April 5th was cold, rainy and windy but about 30 hardy, dedicated people arrived at Chuck Winship's Sugarbush Hollow sugarbush and sugar house, in the town of Springwater, Livingston County. The event had been advertised far and wide in advance, but it was just two days after the ice-storm that walloped the Rochester area. Springwater was fortunately just on the southern fringe of the impacted area although the higher elevations sustained large ice accumulations. Bruce Robinson led the woods walk and Chuck Winship led the sugar house and maple sap tubing discussions. The event was sponsored by the Western Finger lakes chapter of NYFOA.

The overall goal of the maple syrup enterprise is to establish a state-of-the-art sugarbush and sugar house with an emphasis on on-site retail sales. Equally important is my desire to host educational tours for the public and contribute to research on various aspects of maple syrup production. The various maple products are all made right at the sugar house. The facility is generally open for sales

all year and special tours can be given by appointment any time. As such, the April woodswalk was the second such event for this, my first maple syrup season at this location.

The tour started at the sugar house with a description of the floor plan and equipment. Most of the equipment, as well as the sugar house, is brand new. The equipment includes a number of stainless steel items made by Amish craftsmen. Construction lumber was also purchased from the Amish. My brother Bruce, a friend from previous employment and I built the sugar house this past fall. But suffice to say, many people helped build this new installation.

A reverse osmosis (RO) machine removes about three fourths of the water prior to entering the evaporator for the final boiling into maple syrup. The RO saves lots of time and fuel, and faster production means higher quality (grade) syrup.

The evaporator is oil-fired but was converted from wood. Although the day of the woodswalk was raw and uncomfortable for the participants, I had a good sap run, with more than 1,000 gallons of sap collected and ready

to process. I was extremely pleased with overall production this first season, considering many producers had a below-average year. Each tap yielded an average of .3 gallons of syrup.

We next bundled up and headed out to tour the sugarbush. The season was only about three weeks old at that time, which is considered late for this part of the state. Contributing to the late season is the relatively high elevation of 1,800 to 2,200 feet of the sugar bush. There was still snow on the ground in the woods. For most of the winter there was about three feet of snow throughout the woods.

My woodlot management goals for the 40-acre sugarbush stand are: 1) Achieve Grade A syrup yields of 0.3 gallons per tap hole, 2) Maintain sustainable harvests of saw logs, 3) Maintain diversity of the forest, 4) Promote high maple syrup yielding trees, 5) Use the forest as a lab and teaching aide of good forestry and sugarbush practices, and 6) Recreation.

There are 1865 taps on 12 miles of tubing. The tubing system is all gravity flow, straight to storage tanks on the second floor of the sugar house. A



Sugarbush Hollow sugar house located in Springwater, New York



Chuck Winship explains the maple syrup processing equipment inside the sugar house.

vacuum system on the tubing network tends to help yield a higher sap volume. The tubing remains in the woods year round and the spouts are disconnected from the trees at the close of each season. When the season is over (around mid-April), a mild disinfectant is pumped backward through the tubing and spouts. When next season starts, one just has to drill new holes and insert the spouts.

This installation uses a new, small-diameter spout; 5/16 versus 7/16 inches. The resulting damage (mostly staining above and below the tap hole) to the butt log lumber of the tree is reduced by 75% and the tap hole completely heals over in just one year. Trees considered veneer potential were not tapped.

The Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at Cornell University, is running a series of experiments in the woods. One is comparing the growth rates of tapped versus untapped sugar maple trees. The second is tracking bacteria and yeast counts in the sap over time in the sap collection systems. A third is a long-term evaluation of global warming effects on the health of the sugar maple species, considered one of the most vulnerable to global warming. I am

also fortunate to be a cooperator in assessing Cornell's "sweet tree" program. I have a small grove of cloned, high-sugar content maple saplings. The expectation is the trees can be tapped in 25 years.

Bruce Robinson of Bruce E. Robinson, Inc. Forestry Consultants, helped me with developing a silvicultural plan and a commercial sale that would meet my needs. The stand needed to be thinned to release the crowns of trees with good sawtimber potential and the sugar maples that are my crop trees. Plus, the stand needed to have much of the pole-size trees cut to achieve the required stand density for a healthy forest. Unfortunately, because there was not a lot of sawtimber value to be removed and there was no market for the hundreds of pole-sized beech and sugar maples in the understory, finding a timber harvester interested in the sale was going to be difficult.

Bruce organized the work in two phases. First, a sawtimber sale was marked that reduced the basal area from approximately 140 to 120 square feet per acre. This sale generated enough profit to allow a second harvest of the pole-size trees on a contract basis as well as pay for the tubing for the maple sap collection. Stan Steck, working for

Bruce Robinson, felled those trees in place, without entering the stand again with any skidding equipment, which would have inevitably damaged the residual stand. That cut brought the basal area down to about 90. I was extremely pleased with the quality of

continued on page 20



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Example of a strong tree crotch. Note the inside of the crotch is more U shaped than V shaped.

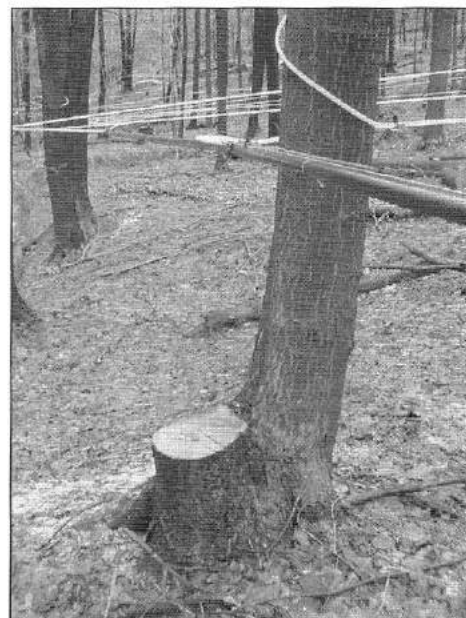
shape is much more likely to withstand such stresses over time.

When thinning trees with multiple stems, he advised that stems with smaller crowns and other defects should

be cut, rather than the better stems. The lesser stems are not likely to respond favorably to the release and are more prone to wind throw or continued decay. The trees selected for harvest were multiple stems, weak forked, diseased or undesirable species.

I expected to see considerable damage to the trees and the tubing system because of the ice storm that left up to one inch of ice on everything. As we entered the forest the day after the storm, we were pleasantly surprised to see only one tree snapped off and spouts pulled out of just six trees. This observation is a strong testimony to the need to keep the woods free of weak trees. If the woods had not been harvested and not received the post harvest timber stand improvement the previous fall, we would have experienced considerable damage to the trees and the maple sap tubing system.

After a couple hours in the sugarbush, we returned to the sugar house to warm up with coffee and snacks by the woodstove. Sugar on



Example of a double stem tree where the weaker stem has been removed from the pair with out any damage to the remaining tree.

snow was enjoyed by all as was the maple cream and maple syrups. ▲

Chuck Winship is owner of Sugarbush Hollow; Gary Goff is Sr. Extension Associate at Cornell University. Both are members of NYFOA.



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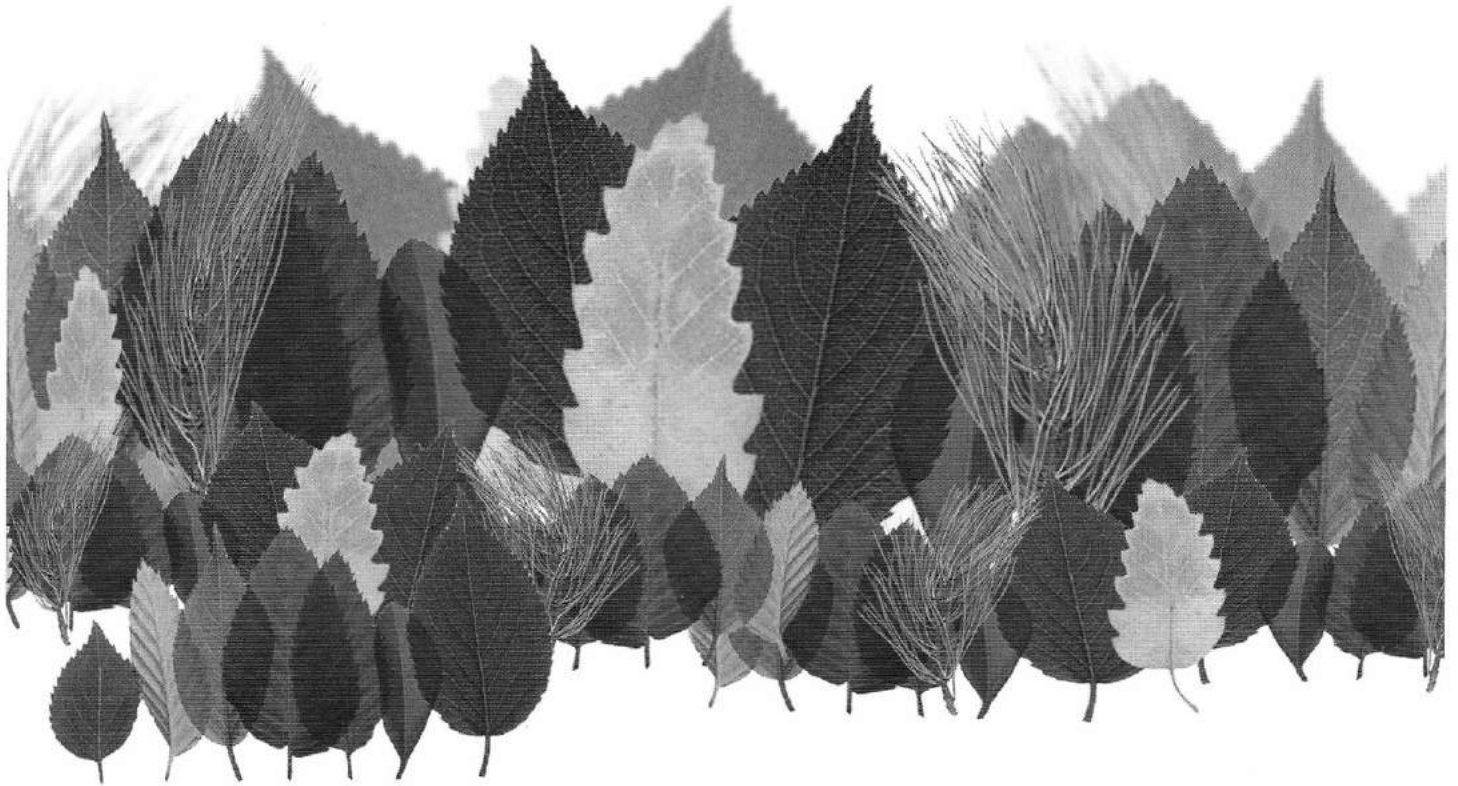
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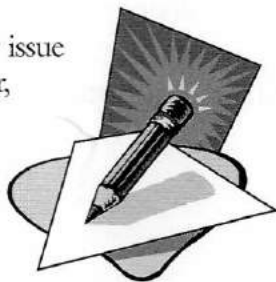
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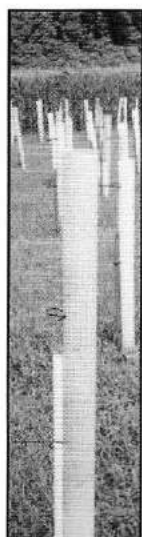
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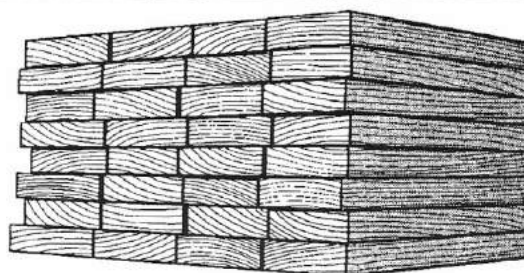
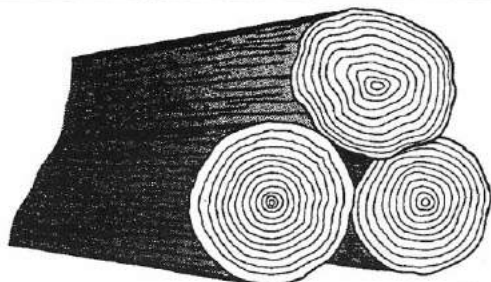
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