

The New York Forest Owner

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION

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Member Profile: Matt Smith Family

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www.nyfoa.org

COVER: Photo shows the Smith family at their home in Chautauqua County. For complete member profile, turn to page 21. Photo courtesy of Matt Smith.

From The Executive Director



If you would like to receive updates via email on emerging forestry issues and opportunities for forest owners email mjpacker@nyfoa.org


-Mary Jeanne Packer
Executive Director

The mission of the New York Forest Owners Association (NYFOA) is to promote sustainable forestry practices and improved stewardship on privately owned woodlands in New York State. NYFOA is a not-for-profit group of landowners and others interested in the thoughtful management of private forests for the benefit of current and future generations.

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 statewide meetings.

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NYFOA Member Submissions

Firewood Warms You Eight Times

1) In the *felling* of the tree
In the yelling *Timbereee!*

2) In the *limbing* of the branches
In the trimming of the stanchions.

3) In the *bucking* of the bole
Roll it over so and so.

4) In the *hauling* of the logs
To the woodshed and the dogs.

5) In the *splitting* with the maul
Into pieces large and small.

6) In the *storing* of the wood
In the woodshed, strong and good.

7) In the *moving* of the wood
Near the stove, in *winter's hood*.

8) Then the last, enjoying flame
As we, our labor's fruit reclaim.
*When outside, cold winds blow,
Inside, warm contentment know.*

—William H. Mueller

June 26, 2007

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NYS DEC Q-and-A: *Emerald Ash Borer*

New York's forests are under attack from numerous invasive exotic insect pests. In years past, we have been hit with Chestnut blight, European gypsy moth, Dutch elm disease and Beech bark disease, all with devastating results. Recently, we have discovered Asian long-horned beetles, Hemlock wooly adelgids, Pine shoot beetles and Sirex woodwasps infesting New York's urban and rural forests and killing thousands of trees.

Another potentially devastating insect invader, the Emerald Ash Borer, has been moving east from Michigan and has been found recently in Pennsylvania.

Question: What is the Emerald Ash Borer and what does it do?

Answer: This Asian beetle, discovered in 2002 in southeastern Michigan and Windsor, Ont., infests and kills North American ash species (*Fraxinus* sp.) including green, white, black and blue ash.

Damage is caused by the larvae, which feed in tunnels (called galleries) in the phloem just below the bark. The serpentine galleries disrupt water and nutrient transport, causing branches, and eventually the entire tree, to die. Death often occurs rapidly, within two to three years, depending on level of infestation.

Q: Can you see it? What does it look like?

A: EAB adults are dark metallic green in color, with a coppery red or purple abdomen. Individuals are 3/8 to 5/8 inch long and 1/16-inch wide.

Adults may be present from late May to September, or later, but are typically most common in June and July. Adults may be seen when present, but are sometimes hard to find, especially at low infestation levels. Larvae are creamy white in color and are found under the bark, so are not obvious, but their expanding S-shaped galleries may be seen if the bark is knocked off or removed. Larvae themselves are very small and hard to see.

As they mature and emerge, adult beetles leave distinctive D-shaped exit holes in the outer bark of branches and the trunk. Their presence typically goes undetected until trees show symptoms of being infested.

Q: Where is it now?

A: Southeastern Michigan, where the pest was first detected in North America, is heavily infested. EAB has also been found in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Southern Ontario and, just last month, in Pennsylvania (near Pittsburgh). It is roughly 75 miles from our borders.

Q: How does it migrate?

A: EAB is not a particularly strong flier. Adults typically fly less than 1/2 mile from their emergence tree, although research has indicated they can fly a kilometer or more. Most long-distance movement of EAB has been directly traced to ash firewood or ash nursery stock. Other untreated ash wood and ash product movement (logs, lumber, pallets, etc) generally present lesser risks. Wood chips or mulch are considered to pose no risk of movement.

Q: Why should New York care? How serious is this?

A: The estimated annual contribution of forest-based manufacturing and forest related recreation and tourism to the New York State economy is over \$9 billion. Ash species (white, green and black) comprise almost 8% of all trees in NY state.

Ash is a commercially-valuable species, and is used for baseball bats, furniture lumber, and pallet manufacture. Black ash is also prized by Native American tribes, including the Akwesasne, for traditional basket making. More importantly, ash is a very common street tree in many New York communities. It was widely planted to replace native elms lost to Dutch elm disease. In Michigan, the greatest economic impact has been on communities

faced with removal of thousands of dead ash on streets and in yards. Many of these dead trees pose significant public safety hazards and liability problems for municipalities.

Q: What action is the state taking or recommending?

A: The State has been taking several actions over the past several years:

- We have been cooperating with NYS Dept. of Agriculture & Markets and U.S.D.A. on surveying and monitoring efforts aimed at early detection of this insect. For the past several years we have deployed baited traps and established "trap trees" in an attempt to determine if EAB is present in our forests.
- We have cooperated in research efforts on trapping and detection methods for EAB and other invasive forest pests.
- This year, we initiated a major outreach and information campaign aimed at users of state campgrounds alerting them to the dangers of moving firewood and asking them not to move firewood, and buy firewood locally instead.
- We have been investigating response strategies to the potential discovery of EAB in NY.
- We have been exploring and discussing the idea of a firewood quarantine or ban on firewood coming into State Parks and campgrounds (as many other States have instituted), and how to make that work.
- We have been communicating and collaborating with other groups, agencies and States regarding the need to deal with firewood movement as a vector for invasive species on a regional, if not national level. 📌

DEC's firewood webpage: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/28722.html>
US Forest Service firewood webpage: <http://www.na.fs.fed.us/fhp/eab/firewood/>
USDA APHIS Cooperative Emerald ash borer program webpage: <http://www.emeraldashborer.info>
US Forest Service Emerald ash borer webpage: <http://na.fs.fed.us/fhp/eab/>
USDA APHIS Emerald ash borer webpage: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/emerald_ash_b/index.shtml
PA Dept. Of Agriculture Emerald ash borer webpage: <http://www.agriculture.state.pa.us/agriculture/cwpl/view.asp?a=3&Q=144707&PM=1>
OH Dept. Of Agriculture Emerald ash borer webpage: <http://www.ohioagriculture.gov/eab/>

DEC Contact: Yancey Roy at (518) 402-8000.

Ask A Professional

PETER SMALLIDGE



Peter Smallidge

Landowner questions are addressed by foresters and other natural resources professionals. Landowners should be careful when interpreting answers and applying this general advice to their property because landowner objectives and property conditions will affect specific management options. When in doubt, check with your regional DEC office or other service providers. Landowners are also encouraged to be active participants in Cornell Cooperative Extension and NYFOA programs to gain additional, often site-specific, answers to questions. To submit a question, email to Peter Smallidge at pjs23@cornell.edu with an explicit mention of "Ask a Professional." Additional reading on various topics is available at www.forestconnect.info

Question:

I have read about sustainable forestry, but I want to know if I will be able to practice sustainable forestry?

Answer:

Sustainable forestry uses forest management practices that ensure the forest resources (with "resources" broadly defined) are available for current and future use. The notion is similar to "conservation" or wise resource use. Private forest sustainability starts with the landowner, but the benefits extend to everyone who enjoys forest outputs, such as clean water, and forest products, such as paper. Healthy and productive forests are important to everyone.

People initially think about sustaining the forest value that is most important to them. This value might be growing timber, native species diversity, recreational opportunities, or perhaps the social and economic culture that has developed around a local wood using industry. Simply, sustainable forestry addresses all the resources provided by the forest and strives to retain current opportunities into the future. Because forests change, sustainability emphasizes the need to retain all viable options and opportunities and de-emphasizes

the specific qualities of a forest on a specific acre. Future availability has a time-frame context; a sawtimber harvest today, with appropriate regeneration, will result in future sawtimber availability.

Sustainable forestry can happen on

every acre, but not every acre will look the same. As forests mature, a landowner's decision to manage for certain forest resources may change the way the forest looks. We often resist change, but forests change even if we do nothing. A reasonable goal then is



Sustainable forestry looks broadly at forest resources, benefiting from those resources now and managing to ensure they are available in the future.



Forest owners interested in sustainable forestry will want to work with a forester to collect data on the forest and which activities are compatible with long term sustained use.

to use management activities in specific areas to ensure we retain current options while producing resources or products for our use.


Knowing if sustainable forestry is happening in your forest requires that you: (1) know the current condition of the forest and its characteristics, (2) have a plan for managing the forest, (3) understand natural forest change, and (4) use appropriate management tools to meet management objectives.

These components provide a logical arrangement of information. With this information, and with the assistance of trained natural resource managers, you can sustain your forest values.

As a good starting point, contact your local office of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to speak with a public service forester. It is possible, but not necessary, to have your property certified as sustainably managed. You might also work with

a private sector forester who has been certified to work with forest owners using only sustainable practices.

In recent years, various organizations have defined criteria and indicators of sustainable forestry. They are developing ways of measuring and describing forest conditions that represent healthy forests and communities. What defines success in sustainability? Because each forest is different, the criteria include a combination of forest characteristics like biodiversity or forest productivity together with the processes to manage sustainably. When considering the criteria of sustainability we must not depend on our tendency to equate visual appeal with the sustainability of ecological or biological health. While the visual impacts of forestry practices are a component of sustainability, they should not be a critical measure.

For additional information on forest sustainability, visit the USFS web site at www.na.fs.fed.us/sustainability. For more information on organizations that offer validation of sustainable practices, or certification, visit The Sustainable Forestry Initiative www.aboutsfi.org, The Forest Stewardship Council www.fsc.org/en, and The Tree Farm System at www.treefarmssystem.org, and the National Woodland Owners Association at www.woodlandowners.org. 

This response was adapted from a FAQ developed for the USDA Forest Service Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry web page. Peter J. Smallidge, NYS Extension Forester and Director, Arnot Teaching and Research Forest, Cornell University Cooperative Extension, Ithaca, NY. pjs23@cornell.edu; 116 Fernow Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853. To learn about other frequently asked questions visit <http://www.na.fs.fed.us/stewardship/faq/index.html>

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Would you like to receive updates via email on emerging forestry issues and opportunities for forest owners? If so, please make sure we have your current email address. Contact Liana in the NYFOA office: lgooding@nyfoa.org

New York State Tree Farm News

MICHAEL BURNS

The idea of providing a Tree Farm article in the New York Forest Owner is two-fold; First it helps to bring Tree Farm closer to one of our key sponsors by providing a visible link between our organizations. Secondly it allows readers to gain a better understanding of what Tree Farm is all about. I'll get into a little bit of background for those of you who may not be familiar with the American Tree Farm System (ATFS).



When I speak of Tree Farm, I am not referring to Christmas trees or hardwood plantings. The term "Tree Farm" was coined in 1941 as a way for people to think of trees as a crop, and it actually predates the commercial production and sale of Christmas trees. Since 1956, New York Tree Farm has been recognizing landowners who practice quality forest management on their lands by providing professional advice and "the big green sign" to participants. For 45 years Tree Farm was purely a recognition program funded by corporate donations to present a positive image and demonstrate the benefits of forest management. In the last few years there have been big changes in the Tree Farm program that reflect the global changes in business, forestry, and land management.

Ten years ago ATFS stood at a crossroads. The corporate sponsors that had bankrolled the program were cutting back on their annual donations, or merging, resulting in fewer national supporters. At the same time the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) had pioneered forest certification standards as a way to assure consumers that the products they demanded were not being harvested at the expense of either the ecosystem or future generations. As the new certification systems were expensive to implement and audit, ATFS saw an opportunity to provide a service to a niche audience, one that controls most of the land in the eastern

US: the small, non-industrial private owner – families.

In order for this vision to become a reality, major changes to the program needed to be instituted. The American Forest Foundation (Tree Farm's parent organization) developed their Standards of Sustainability that every Tree Farm must meet in order to be eligible for Certification. As a result, more was expected of all program participants, landowners, foresters, and co-sponsors. For the first time, landowners were required to have a written forest management plan to state what their goals are and what activities they will use to achieve them. Foresters were required to document their credentials (education) and attend a standardized training program that highlighted the program changes. The changes did not always go smoothly. Long-time participants dropped out of the program, as it no longer met their goals or beliefs as to what it meant to be a Tree Farmer.

Today, we are starting to see the results of the changes. Family forest owners have an inexpensive certification option that has been reviewed as meeting international standards. Tree Farm is recognized throughout the world as a standard for assuring that small, private forests are managed in a manner consistent with current science to assure sustainability. Tree farmers have also taken control of their own destiny. For the first time a Tree Farmer is Chair of the National Operating Committee, and in 2006 the largest

contribution to the support of ATFS was donations from Tree Farmers. So why would you want your forest to be a Certified Tree Farm?

If you are actively managing your forest and have a written management plan, you should consider Tree Farm because you deserve the recognition of a job well done.

What does it cost to become a Tree Farm?

Tree Farm Inspecting Foresters volunteer their time to review your plan and property, so there is no direct cost for certification. Foresters are NOT required to write, revise, or amend your plan free of charge, so there may be an indirect cost to meet the Tree Farm Standards.

Do I get a break on my taxes for being a Tree Farm?

Certification will not lower your property taxes, but it may make it easier to qualify for income and sales tax reductions.

I don't have a lot of land, can I still be a Tree Farm?

Tree Farms are required to be a minimum of 10 forested acres and a maximum of 10,000.

How closely do I have to stick to the management plan? What if things change in a couple of years?

Plans are written on paper, not etched in stone. They evolve and grow as your forest matures and your goals change. The reason a written plan is required is so that the legacy you have worked so hard to achieve can be followed by others in the future. The only constant is change. ▲

Mike Burns is Chair of the NYS Tree Farm Committee.

Kid's Corner

REBECCA HARGRAVE



Do you have a photo of you and your kids or grandkids in your forest? If so, *The New York Forest Owner* would like to see it! Send an electronic or hard copy to *Forest Owner* editor, MaryBeth Malmsheimer, (address on page 22) and it may end up on this page!

Eric Gantley submitted this photograph. The picture shows the Gantley family at the woods in Redfield, NY. Pictured are Patricia, Evan, Erin, Katie and Brian Gantley.

Hungry? Go for a Hike!

All that summer fun can leave your tummy rumbling in the afternoon, so why not dine on some forest snacks? Our woodlots are full of fruits, berries and leaves that are mighty tasty and easy to find!

Most forest fruits are things you'll probably recognize; raspberries, blackberries, blueberries, but there are a few others you'll likely find. Elderberries are small, purple berries in a large flat cluster that grow on large shrubs with opposite leaves. These little berries are excellent in jams and pies and can be eaten in small quantities right from the plant.

Serviceberry, or Juneberry, grows on small trees with smooth, gray bark. The serviceberry resembles a large blueberry and is just as sweet. As they mature they turn from green to red to purple, when they're deep purple they're ready to be munched. Serviceberries are also good in jams and pies.



Another berry you can find growing wild, or cultivated in yards is mountain-ash. American mountain-ash can be found on wooded edges, and European mountain-ash is commonly planted in landscapes. Both small trees

can be identified by pinnately compound leaves and clusters of large, orange berries. Usually used in spreads and drinks, mountain-ash is not so tasty raw.



apples a try, some are going to be very sweet, but others may be a little on the tart side.

Some other fruits you may run across are wild American plum, hawthorn, cranberry, gooseberry, currants and wild grapes. See what you can find and give them a try. Wild fruits are usually smaller than those found in the store, but often with a more intense flavor.

There are a few nuts out there that are pretty good eating too! Black walnuts, butternuts, shagbark hickory, and beechnuts are commonly eaten; one of my favorites is crushed black walnuts over ice cream with real maple syrup.

Collecting your nuts is the easy part; breaking into them is much harder. You'll need a stone or hammer, and maybe an adult to help you crack the shell. Walnuts, butternuts and hickory nuts have a fleshy fruit that has to be

removed before you can crack open the shell. The dyes in the walnut and butternut husk, which can also be used to dye clothing, will leave your hands black for a few days, so I recommend wearing rubber gloves, but it is well worth it.

You may also run across hazelnut and chestnut, which are very good eating, or oaks (acorns) which require some cooking before eating.



After finishing your fruit and nut buffet, you may want something to cleanse your palate — look for black (sweet) or yellow birch with wintergreen flavored twigs. Or, you can find the wintergreen groundcover for the real thing. Or, chew on some sweet sassafras twigs or vibrant white pine needles for a delightful dessert.

Identify all edibles properly, and don't eat anything you're unsure of. Enjoy your snack! 🍴

Rebecca Hargrave is the Community Horticulture and Natural Resources Educator at Cornell University Cooperative Extension in Chenango County.

Global Climate Change and The NY Forest Owner

Part I: Ecosystem Market Mechanisms

MATTHEW SMITH AND RYAN SHURLIFFE

Forecon EcoMarket Solutions is happy to present NYFOA with a series of three articles regarding carbon market opportunities for forest landowners. This first article will concentrate on a general overview and introduction to the topic of climate change and carbon offsets. The second article will discuss forest offset projects specifically, and the third and final article will present the outlook for the future. We appreciate the opportunity to present this information to forest landowners in NYS. We hope these articles broaden your understanding of the issue, the potential benefits, and potential costs or risks of participation.

One hardly needs to tell a forest owner how much economic values of our forests have changed over the years. For example, if you've sold any timber you know how the value of the same trees can change depending on year, season, market, a buyer's inventory needs, and other factors. But wood product values aren't the only things that have changed over the years. Societal perceptions of forests and the services that they provide have also changed, and one could argue that is the real driver of economic changes. In the NY hardwood market for example, trends in fashionable furniture species and styles, new housing starts, and substitute woods from other regions of the world have a very real affect on the value of our timber. There are many other examples that illustrate the changes in how society and subsequently, the forest owner, views the value of our forest resources, but none more current and potentially exciting as ecosystem services, and most particularly, forest carbon.

Recently, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change found that with more than 90 percent confidence, that CO₂ and other heat trapping greenhouse gasses (GHG's) from human activities were the main drivers of global warming since 1950 (IPCC, 2007). In addition, the earth is losing (net) about 18 million acres of forest per year (FAO, 2007). In almost every case, the loss of forest is directly due to the land being more profitable in an alternative use. In

places like the Brazilian rainforests, it may be a cash crop like soybeans. In places like NY and much of the US, overall forested land is steady or on the rise, but land is being permanently removed from potential forestland due to development and residential expansion. In either case, to some extent, the reason for the loss of forests is in large part due to an under valuing of ecosystem benefits like clean water, habitat, and GHG mitigation (carbon sequestration) that they provide.

The greenhouse affect, global warming, biofuels, alternative or "green" energy, carbon neutrality, emissions reduction, carbon sequestration....these are just a sample of some of the terminology that has become increasingly prevalent in the mainstream media today. The global initiative to reduce the impacts of fossil fuel consumption combined with the controversial issue of dependence on foreign oil sources has developed into what could be considered a renaissance like period for the international community. This is particularly true when it comes to environmental policy and responsible environmental practices. It certainly appears that the time has arrived for real progress on the issue of global warming and its impacts on our society. But what does all this mean the NY Forest Owner? To understand that we must understand

the role that forests play in mitigating greenhouse gasses, the theory and affects of market based mechanisms for mitigating climate change such as that of cap and trade programs, and the emerging GHG registries and markets.

Forests play a significant role in offsetting carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions, the primary greenhouse gas. Through the process of photosynthesis, trees remove CO₂ from the atmosphere and convert (sequester) carbon into wood, leaves, bark, and roots. Forests are the most efficient land use for carbon storage, providing a location that traps and stores carbon for a period of time. The value of managed forests is further enhanced due to the storage of carbon in harvested wood products, adding to the long-term storage of CO₂. Forests in the U.S. alone sequester between 200 to 250 million metric tons of carbon each year, representing between 10% to 15% of annual U.S. greenhouse gas emissions from burning fossil fuels (Helms, 2007). This level equates to the GHG emissions of over 225 million vehicles annually. Simply put, forests provide a valuable service to society as one type of greenhouse gas offset or mitigation tool. Forests, along with other carbon offset projects, sequester measurable amounts of carbon that may be marketed or "traded" in the current markets.


Some of you may recall the heightened sense of concern that was prevalent in through the 80's and early '90's regarding acid rain. While acid rain is still of concern today, the issue is not the "crisis" we experienced some time ago. This is due in large part to the success of a market based approach to mitigating acid rain emissions sources through the use of market based cap and trade programs. Cap and trade programs such as those implemented for acid rain, and now for greenhouse gasses, are founded on the premise



that emitting pollutants has a cost. In the absence of regulation on emissions levels, the environment and society has historically borne this cost. In a cap and trade system, a cap on the maximum allowable emission of pollutants is set. Emitters that exceed the cap may buy emissions credits (in this case carbon credits) from other emitters who are able to stay below the cap, hence the "trade". Cap and trade programs shift the cost of emitting greenhouse gasses from the environment and society to those that directly produce them. The cost of emissions manifests itself through the investments the emitter of these pollutants needs to make in order to reduce their emissions under the cap. Recognizing the impact these additional costs could have on our economy, these market based mechanisms allow emitters to reach their reduction in the most cost effective manner possible. Several options are available to the producers of GHG's such as developing and implementing new technology, renewable energy use, purchase of emissions allowances, or most importantly to the forest land owner, the purchase of offset credits from carbon sequestration projects like forests.


Recognizing the ecosystem values of a forest and the theory of cap and trade are all well and good, but without a marketplace and participants, its just theory and of little consequence to the forest owner. The global carbon market has emerged as a result of the Kyoto Protocol that set GHG emission limitations on its industrialized signatory countries. The Kyoto Protocol went into affect in February 2005 after being ratified by all industrialized countries except Australia and the United States. The Kyoto Protocol introduced concepts of GHG emissions by sources and removals by sinks, but it limited the role of forestry to afforestation, reforestation, and avoided deforestation activities. There is currently no role for the managed forest. The omission of managed forests from the protocol has shed a degree of uncertainty on the future for this type of project in the carbon space.

Today, the US is not participating in the Kyoto process, and to date has not adopted a formal domestic policy or regulatory requirement on the issue of GHG emissions. In spite of the absence of a comprehensive U.S. GHG regulatory regime mandating emission reductions, e.g. cap-and-trade legislation, GHG emissions trading in the U.S. has been actively occurring since 2002-2003 through various state or regional registries and markets such as the Chicago Climate Exchange (CCX). Many of the current US registries also share the reluctance of the international community on managed forests as offsets. Others in contrast, recognize the role and opportunity of forestry projects, and are either developing or have developed mechanisms to register and or trade credits from qualifying projects domestically. For forest landowners interested in participating in these markets, there are significant costs that need to be understood, risks to be recognized, and hurdles to overcome in order to bring managed forest offset credits to market in an efficient and positive way.

In the next article, we will discuss in more detail the requirements for a forest offset project in the US, the challenges that a managed forest faces in the current marketplace, and some case study results for one managed forest project in the Northeast. 

Co-Authors: Matthew Smith CF, ACF, EMS-A, Director of Land Management, Forecon Inc. Ryan Shurtliffe, Ecomarket Analyst, Forecon EcoMarket Solutions LLC.

Jim Allen
Forester

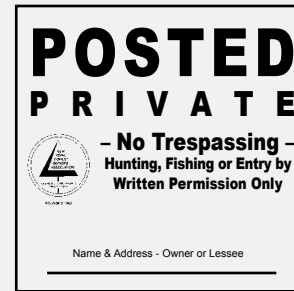


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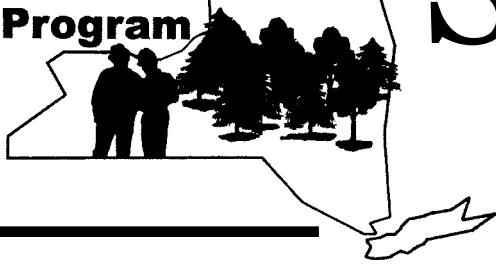
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NY Master Forest Owner/COVERTS Program



Stories from the Woods

CYNTHIA KING

The goal of the MFO/COVERTS Program is to provide private forest owners with the information and encouragement necessary to manage their forests to enhance ownership satisfaction.

Cindy has been a very active MFO volunteer since 1999. She also participated on a regional committee as a forest owner for a series of workshops conducted by NYS DEC and Cooperative Extension on Writing Forest Stewardship Plans in 2003-4. She currently is a board member for NYFOA and was recently newsletter editor for the Capitol District Chapter. She also is a volunteer for the George Landis Arboretum in Esperance, NY.

Coping with some of the trials and tribulations forest ownership.

In 1997, I bought 11 acres of land behind our house. There is a small field, woods that slope down to a spring-fed stream, and more woods that extend over halfway up the steep hill on the other side of the stream. It

was a "dream come true" for me, and I was thrilled. After closing on the property in January, I waited anxiously for the snow to melt. On April 18, I sauntered through the field, down into the valley where the stream is and found a convenient log to sit on. It was a perfect early spring day. I enjoyed the sunshine and watched a couple of early butterflies flutter by. It was utterly peaceful.

Then, all hell broke loose. A chainsaw started up, and some huge machinery was grinding through the woods just up the hill. It was the beginning of a long, trying summer. My neighbor (who did not realize that my property had been sold) had clearcut his own woods two years before. He

had found a friend with a skidder and thought it would be good to come down the hill; take down the fence on the property line; and help himself to some of my nice trees. The farmer who had sold me the land lived a couple of towns away, which made him an absentee landlord.

Once it became clear to me that the fence was down, I called the NYS Police to report the event. "We don't handle border disputes," the girl at the switchboard told me. And there began my education in the trials and tribulations of responsible woodlot ownership. Over the course of the summer, I learned that the Division of Law Enforcement in the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation handles timber thefts. I also learned that they only had one officer assigned to my area. Unfortunately, he was busy with a timber theft in a neighboring county and could not come to help me for 3 weeks. I was watching the skidder head down the hill to the fence line as I was told this!

I had to talk myself into it, but I decided that I was NOT going to let ANYONE steal my trees! I ran down the hill and up the other side to confront my neighbor and tell him where the property line was. He and his friend with the skidder saw me coming and took off. We repeated this scene for a week. Then they started shooting over my head with a .22 caliber rifle, presumably to scare me. By that time, I was so angry I didn't care whether they shot me or not!! I called the State Police again. This time they came, due to the shooting. Not even the State



Posters should have the name and address of the landowner or lessee clearly stated. NYFOA provides posters for a reasonable fee that helps forest owners, while generating revenue for the organization. www.nyfoa.org



Woodland paths provide access for recreation and work projects. They also help you keep an eye on your boundaries and uninvited activities.

Police could catch the neighbor to talk to him. He would hide in the woods when they came. This neighbor knew that, legally, the owner has to notify the neighbor about the property line before the law will take any more steps.

Finally, I sued the neighbor in Small Claims Court just so he would know where the property line was. To make a long story short, I won the case. The neighbor only got one tree on the property line. He called me many names, but he is now afraid of me, which is a good thing!

When I heard about the NY Master Forest Owner/COVERTS Volunteer Program through Cooperative Extension the next year, I decided to sign up. If there was any way to help prevent the

situation I had gone through from happening to others, I wanted to do it. I attended the course in 1999 and have been pretty busy ever since. Most of the people I see want to do "the best thing for the woods," but have no idea what that might be. I use my own experience to emphasize how important it is to check the property on a regular basis, both borders and the interior. Posted signs that include the owner's name and address must be displayed in at least 660-foot increments (more frequent signage is, of course, advisable). All corners must be posted with signs on each of the boundaries. Painted blazes on trees and brushed boundaries are also a good idea, as are pictures depicting the boundaries. Law enforcement may not come when you need them if your boundaries are not clearly marked.

I also strongly suggest owners make trails through their woods. Easy access is key to getting out in the woods for fun or work projects. My woods are full of paths just wide enough for me to walk through without brushing the vegetation. I make them in late winter and early spring using large and small clippers and a small saw. I go around anything too large to saw by hand in an hour or so. When an occasional storm blows down a tree and blocks a path, I have a friend with a chainsaw who cuts the tree up for firewood. My woods are small and easy to walk. Larger woods will need pathways for four-wheelers or tractors. I urge woodlot owners to get off the machine, and walk and sit in the woods. It is the only real way to get to know the woods and the wildlife that live there.

It is also important to be constantly vigilant. And it is important to be will-

ing to do something when a problem arises. One of my early requests for woodswalk from a forest owner took place in the town of Stratford in Fulton County. The owner is a scientist who lived in Schenectady, had purchased 98 acres so he could hunt. He explained that he was not comfortable bothering other people with requests to hunt on their property, so he bought his own hunting territory. When I asked him how the hunting was in Stratford, he laughed and said, "I find a place where I can see the animals go by. Then, when they walk by, the deer and the bear, I am so fascinated watching them that I forget to shoot until it is too late." A logger had approached him recently about cutting some timber, so we took a walk to check out the timber. We also brought along some posted signs. The plan was to walk around the perimeter of the property, posting the signs as we went.

Things went well until we were most of the way up the hill on the first boundary. Suddenly, there was a road!! It was an elaborate, well-constructed road with drains and grading. It was obviously being used by locals for their four-wheelers. The road cut through four or five acres of the woodlot! "This wasn't here the last time I was up here," said the owner in amazement.

I was furious to think that anyone could be so bold as to build an entire road through someone else's property with no thought of asking, etc. I had to tell myself to calm down so I did not upset the landowner too much. We finished walking the property perimeter, checked out the possible timber, and stopped for lunch on the way home.

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For more information on how to arrange a visit from a MFO volunteer in your area or how to become a MFO volunteer, contact your county Cornell Cooperative Extension Office or visit www.cornellmfo.info.

Information for the MFO volunteers

I'd like to thank all the volunteers who came to this summer's series of regional refresher workshops and the speakers and hosts who donated their time. Most regional MFO coordinators are planning meetings and workshops for the volunteers in their regions so please make an extra effort to attend those planning sessions. Also, be sure to access the MFO webpage www.cornellmfo.info to get a listing of this year's new volunteers after the September workshop and invite one or more of the new MFOs to come on along on your next forest owner visit! Thank you!

Sponsors of the MFO Program include: The Ruffed Grouse Society, New York Forest Owners Association, NYS-DEC Div. of Lands & Forests, The Robert H. Wentorf, Jr. Foundation, USDA Renewable Resources Extension Program, and Cornell Cooperative Extension.

Portable Sawmills

A Valuable Asset for Small Woodland Owners

JEFF MULLINS

Natural disasters, insect damage, and prior poor management practices can dramatically reduce the value of woodlands requiring immediate consideration to minimize the loss of the devalued trees. Fortunately, for most small woodland owners, windfalls usually do not occur in numbers large enough to require sending a full load of recovered logs to the mill but achieving the optimal value from randomly downed logs is a problem. Similarly, insect killed trees, damaged or poorly formed stems pose similar challenges to recovery of the existing value without incurring excessive expense. While most agree it is a shame to cut good logs into firewood or let them rot, options in the past have sometimes been limited. Today, many forested land owners are finding portable, thin-kerf band sawmills can provide environmentally and economically sound answers to the challenges presented to owners of less than premium value trees.

When Joel Aldrich, a construction contractor, observed development of small wooded acreages near his North Branford, Connecticut home was resulting in good trees being chipped or cut into firewood, he purchased a thin-kerf band sawmill and started sawing valuable lumber. Currently, he services many small woodland owners by cutting lumber from trees that otherwise would be wasted.

Michael Peters, owner of Shady Lane Tree Farm, also desired to optimize value from trees on his 23 acre woodlot near Allentown, Pennsylvania. When a forester marked trees for thinning, Michael realized that many of the trees identified for removal had valuable lumber in them but were not of the size or quality that a mill would purchase. His solution was to purchase a Wood-Mizer LT40 portable thin-kerf bandsaw to make lumber for his personal use or to be sold

to others. In nearby New Jersey, Peter Furfaro produces lumber with his thin-kerf band mill for use in his furniture/cabinet business.

Like Michael, Joel and Peter, many woodland owners throughout the nation, have found that portable sawmills are a significant management tool that maximizes options, optimizes resource utilization, and increases revenues while producing a positive environmental contribution.

Portable Thin-Kerf Milling Profits the Small Woodland Owner

When first introduced on a commercial basis, about 25 years ago, portable thin-kerf band sawmills drew little attention from the commercial forest products industry. The low cost of the units combined with their capacity to produce fine quality lumber, although operated by neophytes, led to enthusiastic acceptance of the new concept by hobbyists, farmers, and others wanting to saw relatively small quantities of inexpensive lumber to support their personal needs.

More importantly, the availability of this new technology provided a tool to profitably turn previously “useless and worthless” trees into valuable lumber with an initial investment less than the cost of a small tractor. The highly portable mills can be operated by a single operator to produce quality lumber from logs conventional sawmills cannot or will not accept.

Trees with little commercial value that will not improve with time and are a detriment to the future value of the stand, can be removed from Peter’s stand, and milled with his Wood-Mizer bandsaw. He says, “The portable sawmill allows me to improve my stand and realize a profit from an essentially worthless tree.”

Additionally, the bandsaws use blades as thin as .045 inch to produce very thin kerfs resulting in smooth and consistent lumber often useable without secondary processing. “Kerf” is the thickness of the cut a saw blade makes as it passes through wood fiber when lumber is milled. The ratio of usable lumber to sawdust generated in sawmill operations has a direct relationship to kerf. Thinner kerfs yield more lumber and generate less sawdust from a given volume of wood fiber.

Thin-kerf mills produce more and higher grade lumber from each log processed when compared to those processed by traditional circle saw mills with .250 inch or greater kerfs, achieving better value and higher profit margins. The bandsaw design allows for evaluating and turning each log to obtain the most and highest value grade lumber from each block.

In many cases, sawmill owners like Michael Peters have found the portable thin-kerf mills enable them to both earn a profit from their own woodlands and expand into custom sawmilling for neighbors to supplement their income.



Thin kerf bandsaws remove only about 1/8th inch with each cut — increasing yields significantly.



Jeff Mullins produces valuable cedar lumber from old growth stumps remaining after logging operations conducted decades earlier.

Some have started part time or full time sawing businesses.

Sawmill portability allows the mill to come to the logs minimizing transportation costs and enhancing profitability. In addition to cutting lumber from his own logs, Michael Peters benefits his neighbors by milling custom lumber for them. Although his business is primarily stationary these days, mills like his can easily be towed behind a small pickup to remote locations and can be set up and sawing lumber within 20 minutes, even though the location may have uneven ground.

Some portable mills are equipped with hydraulic lifting arms, clamps and log turners reducing the labor of milling logs as large as 36 inches in diameter and up to 21 feet in length. Oversized logs can be split with a chainsaw prior to milling. In addition to hydraulics, portable sawmills come equipped with a variety of optional features that enhance their usability. Computerized controls, debarkers, lubrication systems, automatic clutches and attachments to cut shakes or beveled siding increase their value as an asset and their utility. Burt Harker, a 65 year old Idaho woodlot owner, purchased a LT40 hydraulic mill 6 years ago to mill lumber from beetle-killed trees. He says, “The hydraulic log lifting and turning features take the heavy lifting out of portable sawmilling. The only labor is in removing the sawn boards from the bed.”

Environmental Benefits – A Significant Bonus

Several tangible and measurable environmental benefits are realized by utilizing thin-kerf sawmills. Although there is considerable controversy regarding greenhouse emissions and global warming, most agree that when greenhouse gases can be reduced with little difficulty or expense, they should be. Portable sawmills can, and do, play an important role in some of the carbon mitigation strategies many believe to be critical in reducing atmospheric carbon.

By way of example, portable sawmills often utilize raw materials that otherwise would be left to rot, burned or at best processed into chips, all of which eventually release significant amounts of carbon into the atmosphere. By converting these materials into lumber, the durable wood products sequester (trap) the carbon and thereby minimize contributions to atmospheric greenhouse gasses. Also, the lumber recovered from this type of material reduces the need for additional harvest from standing forests. The forests allowed to remain standing continue to “scrub” carbon from the air and release oxygen further contributing to atmospheric health and the reduction of emissions associated with harvesting and processing the trees.

Without the availability of portable sawmills many trees would be underutilized or completely wasted. The

utilization of thin-kerf technology also increases the amount of lumber produced from a given volume of logs. Thin-kerf saw mill operators often report yields above scale ranging between 30 and 200 percent depending on the length and quality of logs being processed. By producing more lumber and less sawdust from each log, even more carbon is sequestered.

Portable Thin Kerf Sawmilling – An Alternative to Commercial Harvests

For some timber holders, thin-kerf sawmilling provides more flexible and more profitable alternatives to traditional commercial harvest methods. In a commercial environment, a significant number of trees must be harvested to make harvests financially feasible. In less than ideal situations, most landowners have a significant number of lower quality trees that net negligible return to the landowner, even though there is a significant amount of wood fiber shipped. Utilization of a portable mill offers several potential advantages over such traditional commercial harvest requirements.

Portable mills allow landowners flexibility to manage small woodlands for optimum long term production. Landowners can remove and mill trees that improve the future of their stand, rather than being forced to produce a minimum volume to pay for logging and full load shipment to mills.

Lower quality trees may also be harvested profitably. Portable mills offer the flexibility to work around defects of individual blocks and can profitably mill trees that would be significantly depreciated at the mill’s grading yard. Rather than shipping a “poor quality” log to a commercial mill that will not pay much for it, the portable mill can recover much valuable lumber for the owner’s personal use or for sale to others.

The higher yields produced by thin-kerf saws also increase value realized by the landowner. The ability to rotate and evaluate each log enables operators to saw each log to yield the most high grade lumber.

By taking the mill to the logs, transportation costs are also significantly

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The Once Mighty Chestnut Tree

ED AND WANDA PIESTRAK

Growing up in a small Pennsylvania coal mining town during the 1950's we had much exposure to the chestnut tree. During the early 1900's the developing town paved the streets with bricks, and planted chestnut trees all along the streets; not the edible ones, but the "ornamental horse chestnuts." As children we used to pick up 100's of them during the autumn season and make necklaces, rings, etc. We would drill holes in the chestnuts and attach them together with string. Many a young girl and boy would wear the chestnut rings with pride. They could easily be fitted to any size by changing the drill size. Note: My children related that they too remember picking the chestnuts during the early 1980's, when a few of the trees were still standing. At this time there are none of those trees left standing, but there remains a connection with the chestnuts in our heritage within this small town.

During the year 2000 we purchased a couple hundred acres of clear cut adjoining our property in Lindly, NY. As the young trees began to develop we noticed quite a few young American Chestnut seedlings. We kept an observation on

some of them and noticed they grew extremely fast and towered over the surrounding hardwoods. They are very straight and pleasing to the eye. This past summer some of the trees provided a crop of chestnuts. The nuts were near the top of the trees but appeared very impressive. When they fell to the ground the squirrels quickly put them into storage. We are sure the animals on the property would truly enjoy having a large supply of chestnuts to consume during the cool snowy, winter evenings. We have read that the American Chestnut is very nutritious for the animals and would truly supplement the acorn crop. Also, the additional food supply would spare some oak seedlings from being consumed by the ever hungry deer population.

We belong to the American Chestnut Foundation and are very aware of the chestnut blight that killed most of the native chestnut trees in the United States. I spoke to a farmer who owned this property 40 years ago. He revealed there were multiple

dead standing chestnut trees in the 1950's and 1960's that he utilized for firewood. Therefore it appears the seeds were in the ground waiting for sunlight to reach the forest floor to be activated.

Now the question is how long these healthy looking chestnut trees will survive? Will they go the way of their ancestors? Probably yes, but we are hoping some will survive. For quite some time the American Chestnut Foundation has been working towards a blight resistant tree and the research has been somewhat positive. However, much work needs to be done.

Since this is an extremely good chestnut tree site, it would be nice to plant some experimental blight resistant seedlings in order to determine if they can survive. We would be honored to try some of the experimental stock. In the meantime, we will continue to observe our native chestnut stock and keep our fingers crossed, as well as our prayers to our creator.

Ed and Wanda Piestrak are MFO Volunteers and members of the _____ chapter of NYFOA.

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Stories from the Woods (continued)

The landowner was very upset about the road. He thought he might sell the property to avoid further future headaches. I reported the whole thing to DEC after I got home. However, there was not much anyone could do. The road was built. The owner was absent. The neighbors were unscrupulous trespassers who took every advantage they could.

At the other end of the spectrum, another landowner in western Montgomery County invited me to tour his woodlot. On it, he had built the most beautiful pond I have ever seen. He had researched grants over several years to provide nesting sites for waterfowl. He was interested in using his property as a teaching facility, especially for school children (his wife was a school nurse). His property exemplified every good thing a property owner can and should do to make his woods the best they can be. The posted signs were in place; the paths and roadways were a joy to walk and ride over. Every view (and there were several) had a sitting place so it could be admired.

Most of the landowners fall in between the above two situations. I am hopeful that my preaching about responsible woodlot ownership is heeded by most. Once people realize the need for such things as posted signs, marked trees, paths that make the woods accessible and frequent visits to their property, they will be well on their way to being good stewards of the beautiful woodlands they own. 🌲

Sources of Assistance

Posting and Trespass

NYS Laws pertaining to posting and trespass on private lands: Penal Law 140.00-140.10 and Environmental Conservation Law (ECL) 11-2111-2117, define the rights of landowners versus recreationists or others who might enter or use private property.

Questions and answers about posting under the Environmental Conservation Law, <http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/8371.html>

Recreational access and owner liability, by T. L. Brown, Dept. of Natural Resources, Cornell University, Factsheet 203.00, 1995, 4 pages. <http://www.dnr.cornell.edu/hdru/PUBS/recaccessliab.pdf>

How to determine your property boundaries, by J. Kays and R. Tjaden, Maryland Cooperative Extension, Fact Sheet 619, 1999, 7 pages. <http://www.agnr.umd.edu/MCE/Publications/Publication.cfm?ID=28&cat=N>

HOW TO: Maintain forest boundary lines, by S. Baker, NY Forest Owner, Sept/Oct 2004, pg. 5.

Controlling access to your property through posting, by J. Ochterski and D. Palm, NY Forest Owner, Mar/Apr 2003, pg. 3.

Timber theft! Prevent it or report it.
An information brochure produced by NY Forest Owner's Association. www.nyfoa.org

Trail Construction

Trail construction and maintenance notebook. USDA Forest Service – Technology & Development Program, 0023-2839-MTDC, 2000, 144 pages. <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/fspubs/00232839/toc.htm>

Trail development to improve your property value, by C. Wiedeman and R. Neagle, NY Forest Owner, Mar/Apr 2002, pg. 18-19.



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Forest Landowner Organizations

Below is a listing of other organizations and contact info that NYFOA members may be interested in joining.

American Tree Farm System
c/o American Forest Foundation
1111 Nineteenth Street, NW
Suite 780
Washington, D.C. 20036
Phone: 202.463.2462
Fax: 202.463.2461
Email: info@treefarmssystem.org
www.treefarmssystem.org

Christmas Tree Farmers Association of NY
646 Finches Corners Road
Red Creek, NY 13143
Phone: 315-754-8132
FAX: 315-754-8499
Email: bnorris@usadatanet.net
www.christmastreesny.org

Empire State Forest Products Association
828 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12203
Phone: 518-463-1297
Fax: 518-426-9502
E-mail: esfpa@esfpa.org
www.esfpa.org

Forest Landowners Tax Council
P.O. Box 784
Alexandria, VA 22313-0784
(703) 549-0747
www.fltc.net

National Woodland Owners Association
374 Maple Ave. E, Suite 310, Vienna, VA 22180
Ph: 800-476-8733 • Fax: 703-281-9200
E-mail: info@woodlandowners.org
www.woodlandowners.org/

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In Memoriam

J. MORGAN HEUSSLER

June 9, 1923 to April 5, 2007

By David J. Colligan

The New York Forest Owners Association is populated with kindred spirits. Rumor has it that the current 2,000 member strong organization was founded by a group of dyed-in-the-wool forestry enthusiasts sitting around a piping hot wood stove talking about how other forest owners would appreciate the knowledge and camaraderie they were sharing. We owe a debt of gratitude to those pioneers. Morgan Heussler is one of those pioneers.

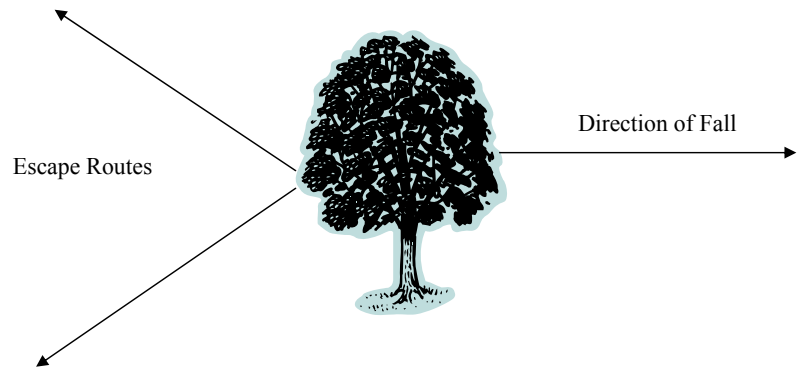
Morgan's enthusiasm for the New York Forest Owners Association was infectious. He served as one of NYFOA's first presidents. Not only did he inspire me, and many others, to become involved in a statewide organization, he also helped to create a highly effective chapter government. I will remember the first meeting of the Niagara Frontier Chapter with 50 fellow tree enthusiasts brought together locally for the first time to talk about our mutual interest in woodlot management.

Morgan Heussler and his penchant for good forest management has been an inspiration to others as well. Morgan always practiced what he preached about forest management and used his interest in firewood cutting to sate his appetite for woodlot management. Morgan cut firewood in all seasons and in all weather. His great physical conditioning was probably attributed directly to his firewood harvesting activities. I can remember visiting a woodlot that Morgan managed and remember remarking that it had been transformed from a poorly managed woodlot to a very well managed woodlot. Thanks to Morgan I was finally able to see the forest for the trees!

In the end Morgan Heussler met his demise doing an activity he loved and cherished. While no one can say that a sudden accidental death caused by a tree falling in an unanticipated fashion can be a good thing, it certainly can be said that Morgan was doing what he loved at the time he met his demise. That one small solace can help us remember this volunteer who helped develop the wonderful New York Forest Owners Association that we enjoy today. We are thankful of his extraordinary leadership and efforts on our behalf and we will all miss him and his mantra that "good forestry is the *only* form of woodlot management that makes sense."

NYFOA SAFETY TIP

Studies have shown that when felling a tree, 90% of serious accidents (including fatalities) occur within five to ten feet of the stump after the felling cut is made. Game of Logging® instructs fellers to prepare an escape route at a 45° angle from the felling direction. Be sure the route is free of obstacles such as brush, dead wood, etc. Once the tree begins to fall, the cutter should use one of his/her escape routes to be at least 15 feet from the falling tree. NEVER remain next to the stump as the tree is falling.



Safety tip provided by Ed Wright, President, W. J. Cox Associates, Inc.

Portable Sawmills (continued)

reduced. The need to transport logs to the mill is eliminated and a small tractor can usually move blocks into stacks where they can be rolled onto the lifting arms. Once processed into lumber, farm trucks, pick-ups or trailers can easily transport the boards at a much lower cost than an 18-wheeler would charge to haul the logs. This saves fuel and wear and tear on highways resulting in yet another environmental contribution while putting more money in the pocket of the land owner and/or the sawmill owner.

Many sawmill owners provide additional services for their customers. Joel Aldrich offers kiln drying, planing, and moulding service to his customers to produce flooring, moulding, or siding from the lumber he mills.

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Jeff Mullins is an Oregon Small Woodlands Association member who pastors a rural church in northwest Oregon where he lives with his wife and children. He is a regular contributor to a number of forest and timber publications and recently purchased a portable sawmill.

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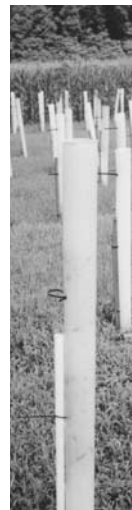
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Member Profile: *Matt Smith Family*

ALEXANDRA SILVA

As a graduate of SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry and long time professional forestry and environmental consultant, Matt Smith has devoted his career to the sustainable management of our natural resources. In his current role as Director of Land Management and Director of Ecosystem Services for Forecon, Inc., Matt spends much of his time speaking and writing about climate change and the use of forests as carbon sinks both locally and nationally. For the past twelve years, Matt has also played a lead role in the management of over 250,000 acres of timberland in the northeast for institutional investors. Recently, Matt was selected to serve on the National Climate Change Task Force for the Society of American Foresters. Along with others on his task force, Matt is trying to understand how forests are affected by climate change, and how forests

can contribute to long term solutions for climate change. Though developing solutions to detrimental effects of climate change is proving to be a lengthy process, Matt enjoys crisscrossing the country to speak with interested forest owners, policy makers, and other groups on how their forests can be used to combat climate change.

For his own part, Matt uses his 114 acre property in western New York to promote environmental sustainability and multiple use. From wildlife food crops to acres of managed forests, Matt is working towards improving many of the ecological aspects of the property, and enjoys sharing the results with others.

With his wife, Marsha, Matt purchased the land thirteen years ago from Marsha's father and mother. Since that time, they've lived on the property in Chautauqua County. Matt and Marsha,

who was a manager at a biotech company, have renovated their old farmhouse into a more modern house and have recently finished a large addition. The house is located on the bottom of a hill, along with a new barn built from trees harvested on and near their farm. Regardless of whether they are building barns, planting food plots or trees, harvesting firewood, or some other activity, Matt and Marsha have relied on the help and guidance of Marsha's father, Paul.

Paul and his wife live on the fifty acres of property next door, but spend much of their time with Matt, Marsha and their grandchildren Loren and Luisa. Broken apart across the two properties lays approximately seven acres of wildlife agricultural crops, which Matt and Paul care for together. Corn, buckwheat, forage turnips, clover, and brassica are all planted specifically for wildlife each year. In addition to annual food plots, apple, hybrid chestnut, and sawtooth oak trees are also planted for wildlife use. Matt also grafts domestic apple and pear varieties to the wild trees to increase the stock for themselves and the wildlife. Some apple trees on the property have up to three different kinds of apples growing on them. The apple tree grafting and wildlife management was the primary subject of one of Matt and Marsha's NY-FOA woodswalks. Their other woodswalk centered on chainsaw safety.

Apart from the acres of wildlife crops, Matt and Marsha also have sixty acres of mixed hardwood timber, including sugar maple, black cherry, and white ash. Matt does improvement thinning on three to five acres of these sawtimber stands each year. He uses the wood from these dense, young woods to heat his home, and then sells whatever is leftover.

There are also eight acres of softwood forests planted on the property. These stands are primarily comprised of Norway spruce and European larch. Since 1994, when they bought the land, Matt has planted over 3000 trees on what were previously open fields. Currently there are still between 32-34 acres of open fields on the property, which are mowed every other year.



Loren Smith in a stand of Norway Spruce.

continued on page 22



Loren Smith, age seven, hugging a cherry tree.

Prior to Matt and Marsha purchasing the property, Marsha's Dad built a ½ acre pond on the property. Though they had to stock the pond with fish several times, it is now self-sustaining and is enjoyed by the entire family. Besides the pond, there are also two small creeks on the property, which Loren and Luisa can't keep out of.

Loren, who has just turned seven, and Luisa, age two, were both adopted from Colombia. Loren spends a lot of time on the property, especially on top of the hill, where most of woods are located. The peace and quiet of the woods allows Loren, who is autistic, to focus on and interact with others with less distractions from other activity. As a result, Matt and Loren are able to connect and communicate with each other in a more intimate way than would be afforded otherwise. Loren loves looking for salamanders, frogs, and other creepy crawlies along with dropped antlers in the spring.

Luisa, on the other hand, enjoys the property in a different way. While she doesn't spend as much time on the property as does her older brother, she enjoys the rides up and down the hill, as well as the time spent picking berries with the rest of the family. At some point in the past, a previous owner had planted domestic blueberries and blackberries on the property, which the Smith's enjoy picking during the late summer.

While the summer is spent picking berries and mowing the fields, the fall is spent cutting firewood and hunting. Friends and guests are allowed to hunt deer, turkey, and small game on the property. Over the years, Matt and Marsha have found the resident deer to be ungrateful guests and consequently have developed a love-hate relationship due to their impact on the forest and garden alike. Aside from deer, Matt and Marsha have also had black bears that come for the berries, and for the honey produced on property in the past.

Matt and Marsha enjoy planning out activities in the many fields on the farm. According to Matt, an open field is like a painter's canvas, with which you can do a million things, including wildlife plantings, tree plantings, building ponds, or other activities. However, Matt also recommends that, while landowners should plan for and try new things, when it comes to planting, don't put all of your eggs in one basket because Mother Nature may have a plan of her own.

Following his own advice, Matt is looking forward to his first timber sale on the property. Sometime during the late summer or fall, Matt plans on selling about 20,000 board feet through bid process. While planning to harvest some of the trees he has groomed for years, he has gained a new appreciation

for the "separation anxiety" a landowner can experience when the decision is made to harvest.

Though this will be his first timber sale on his property, Matt has been a professional forester with Forecon Inc. Forestry Consulting for nearly twenty years. Matt is also the Western New York Chairman of the Society of American Foresters, where he coordinates educational events and participates in local issues on forestry. Matt not only speaks on climate change, but also coordinates various other educational efforts such as teaching youth about the environment and various landowner organizations. Starting in 1999, Matt served as a steering committee member, vice chairman (2 years), and programs chairman (5 years) of the Alleghany Foothills Chapter of NYFOA.

With the help and support of Marsha and the rest of the family, the Smiths look forward to many years of managing and enjoying their small piece of the planet. Their goal is to manage the land for multiple benefits, but primarily to develop a place where they can recreate and have a place where their family can truly bond. 🌲

Alexandra Silva is a Forest Resources Extension Program Assistant at Cornell University, Department of Natural Resources, Ithaca, NY 14853.



Ten year old sawtooth oak trees on the Smith property.

MAGAZINE DEADLINE

Materials submitted for the November/December Issue issue should be sent to Mary Beth Malmshemer, Editor, *The New York Forest Owner*, 134 Lincklaen Street, Cazenovia, NY 13035, (315) 655-4110 or via e-mail at mmalmshe@syr.edu Articles, artwork and photos are invited and if requested, are returned after use.



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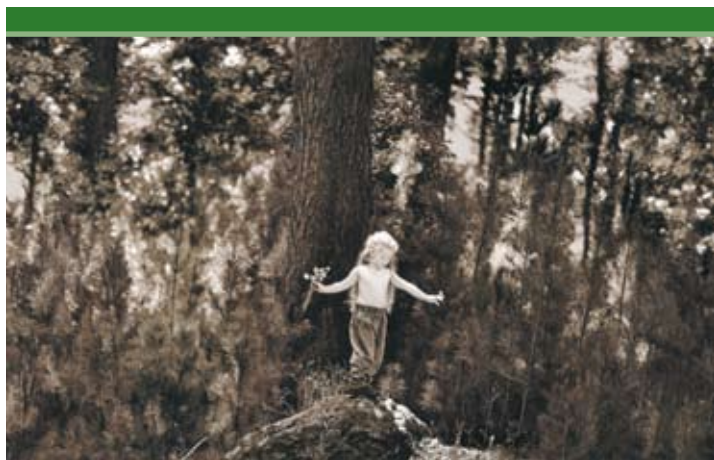
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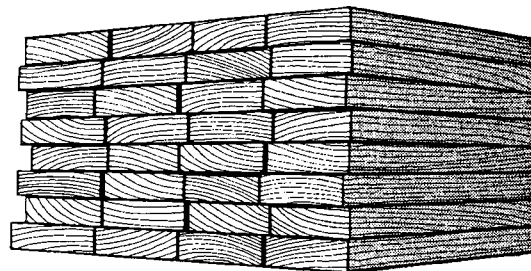
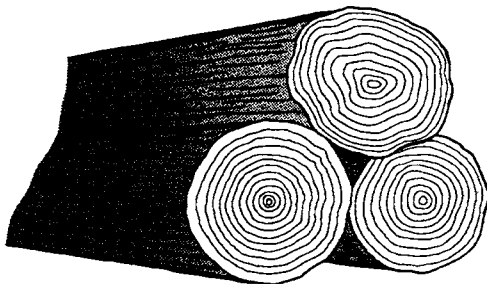
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