

# The New York Forest Owner

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION

November/December 2007



*Member Profile: Charlie & Marian Mowatt*

*Volume 45 Number 6*



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VOLUME 45, NUMBER 6

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Please address all membership fees and change of address requests to P.O. Box 541, Lima, N.Y. 14485. 1-800-836-3566. Cost of family membership/subscription is \$35.

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[www.nyfoa.org](http://www.nyfoa.org)

**COVER:** Charlie and Marian Mowatt near their Remembrance Tree with their Christmas Tree lot in the background. For complete member profile, turn to page 21. Photo courtesy of the Mowatt's.

# From The Executive Director

This edition of *The Forest Owner* features important news members can use. Are you worried about the arrival of Emerald Ash Borer in New York State's forests? I know many landowners who are. State Extension Forester Peter Smallidge has suggestions for private woodland management in anticipation of EAB beginning on p. 6.

The second part of our three part series, "Global Climate Change and the New York Forest Owner", is on pp. 14-15. Thanks again to NYFOA member Matt Smith, Director of Land Management for Forecon Inc., and co-author Ryan Shurtliffe, a Forecon EcoMarket Analyst, for contributing this informative piece on the opportunities of marketing carbon credits from managed forest



lands. I'm looking forward to the third installment in the January/February edition. The NYS Council of Forest Resources Organizations (CFRO), of which NYFOA

is a founding member and is co-chaired by NYFOA President Alan White, had its first meeting in October; and one of the top issues that CFRO is considering to including in its 2008 Legislative Priorities is climate change. Learn more about CFRO positions on our website [www.nyfoa.org](http://www.nyfoa.org).

Look for information about how to sign-up for the popular Letter Series project (p. 19), which will be offered again beginning in early 2008. Also, find out about Cornell's ForestConnect Internet Seminars that are broadcast to your computer once each month via a website. This system is called webcasting. I had the opportunity to listen in to the October webcast, presented by Kristi Sullivan and "attended" by over 40 woodland owners and forestry professionals. Kristi's presentation featured woodland pools – why they are

important for wildlife and how to create them in your woods. The technology was easy to use and the information first rate. I recommend that members take advantage of this valuable Seminar series.

In September, I attended a portion of the MFO training at Arnot Forest (see photo next page); and visited with this year's group of new MFO volunteers. NYFOA is proud to sponsor the MFO program and I was

Please share this magazine with a neighbor and urge them to join NYFOA. By gaining more members, NYFOA's voice will

proud to know that all of the participating volunteers are our members.

Active volunteers keep any organization moving forward; and NYFOA is no exception. NYFOA's is led by an all-volunteer Board of Directors. If you are interested in serving on the Board, or would like to suggest someone else for this role, contact Peter Smallidge NYFOA nominating committee chair.

In addition to volunteers, the other piece that enables our organization to accomplish so many important educational and advocacy functions is the generous financial support of our members. If you haven't already made a donation to NYFOA this year, I hope you will consider doing so now; and if you have already contributed, please consider an additional donation as part of your yearend financial planning. 🌲

–Mary Jeanne Packer  
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 statewide meetings.

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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.



The 2007 class of new MFO Volunteers at Arnot Forest. Turn to page 12 to see the next article in the MFO series, "Stories from the Woods." This article features the experiences of Scott Clarke, new MFO volunteer, who attended the September training workshop, and a brief introduction to the other volunteers from the MFO class of '07.

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# Timber Theft:

*Victims report emotional, environmental, and financial losses*

A coalition of sixteen organizations working to curb timber theft released a report today on the nature of losses from illegal logging in New York and listed suggestions to cut timber crimes.

Replies to a questionnaire and interviews with landowners, foresters, loggers, mill buyers, and with law enforcement and judicial personnel, underscored the continuing landowner and societal damage wrought by dishonest loggers.

"Timber theft is a poorly understood, insidious crime that hinders our everyday efforts to manage New York's forests sustainably", declared James Savage, Chair of the New York Society of American Foresters." This report helps clarify the nature and extent of the problem and encourages practical solutions."

"Timber theft is a crime that reaches far beyond the property owner's pocket book and legacy. Those who steal timber rob from the forest environment that all New Yorkers depend upon," said Alan White, President of the New York Forest Owners Association. "This report makes clear that all parties -- landowners, timber harvesters/buyers/processors, and government -- must accept a greater responsibility for eradicating crimes of timber theft."

"The New York State Timber Producers, a statewide association of loggers, strongly supports efforts to curb timber theft. Loggers who steal timber selfishly hurt all of us in the industry. We need to work together in overcoming the landowner losses and natural resource damage that brings black marks

on the people working in our industry". Samuel R. Creech, President, New York State Timber Producers Association.

"The illegal harvest of trees is a serious issue and must be stopped. Landowners are hurt; our world famous hardwoods are hurt. Responsible timber harvesting provides jobs, helps maintain open spaces, and contributes to our quality of life", according to Kevin King, President and CEO, Empire State Forest Products Association.

The report points out that victims are rarely made whole following a theft. Law enforcement is inconsistent and often ineffective. The identity of the thief may never be known, and even if caught, brought to trial and found guilty, may well be "judgment" proof" with no assets for the court to attach for fines or restitution.

Known timber thefts range from a few trees worth about \$1000 to several hundred trees valued at \$70,000. The average loss for those responding to the questionnaire was \$10,650, not including losses from growth potential or environmental damage from hasty harvesting.

The report points to steps to help stem timber theft that have been suggested, including:

Landowners must accept more responsibility for their lands, including: well marked boundaries, no spur-of-the-moment harvest decisions, and use of sound contracts with forester and legal guidance.


Loggers and buyers, for their own protection, should physically acknowledge sale boundaries before harvesting

and encourage sound contracts demonstrating legality of logs being handled.

Law enforcement and judicial officials must better understand timber industry practices, have laws they can work with and have means to determine whether timber has been legally harvested.

In recent years, penalties have been increased and the Department of Environmental Conservation's powers expanded. The Department, along with the Attorney General and the Office of Court Administration is developing plans to train law enforcement and judicial offices on timber theft.

The NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources: Senator George H. Winner, Jr., Chairman, Assemblyman David Koon, Vice-Chairman, has been very helpful with past legislative changes and has widely distributed a summary of timber trespass laws.

The full report is available from Hugh Canham at phone 315 457-4972 or email: hocanham@esf.edu. 



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# Private Woodland Management in Anticipation of the Emerald Ash Borer

PETER J. SMALLIDGE

## Background

Emerald Ash Borer (*Agrilus plannipennis*, EAB) is a non-native insect that will infest and kill ash trees of all species, age, size, and vigor. Infestation and subsequent management actions at the original North American points of dispersal have resulted in the death of more than 20 million ash trees. Ash trees are an important ecological and productive component of private forest land in the Northeast and New York. Many abandoned agricultural fields were partially or completely reforested by wind dispersed ash seeds. Ash dominates many NY forests along with maple, aspen, cherry and oak. Infestation in New York, if and when it occurs, likely will be dramatic. In some forested areas, ash is the dominant species. The potential effects of EAB are on the same scale of disturbance as chestnut blight and Dutch elm disease. Reasonable management goals in anticipation of EAB include: reducing the probability and rate of spread, managing the impact on forests, and sustaining the important contributions of ash and other hardwoods in New York forests and woodlands. Success

towards these goals depends on early detection, owner recognition of their objectives, and the deliberate and informed actions of private forest owners and managers. The best management strategy depends on numerous factors.

Current information on the EAB is critical to effective management. Prior to any action, contact your local office of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation or Cornell University Cooperative Extension. The insect is relatively new to the eastern US and management recommendations will change as experience and research is shared among professionals. Consult with knowledgeable professionals before taking action. The most effective strategies to avoid excessive losses in our ash woodlands and forests are those which provide early detection of EAB infestations and rapid responses to remove the threat. Owners and managers of ash forests should familiarize themselves with the evidence for EAB infestations and remain vigilant in the search for these symptoms whenever and wherever ash decline is noted. Several state agencies and universities in the Lake States and eastern US have

informative web sites and on-line material. Additional sources of information are provided below. Ohio State University Extension has a particularly useful publication describing alternatives for several options that apply to forest land management in New York.

Currently, EAB is not known to occur in NY. The insect is known in PA and OH and is thus likely to arrive soon in NY. EAB also occurs in MI, IN, IL, and MD. When the insect is known to occur in NY, legal constraints may be imposed to quarantine some or all of the state and prohibit or restrict the movement of potentially infected material. The western and southern tiers of NY are likely points of first evidence, but any location in the state is possible given the potential for human-assisted transport. All forest owners in NY should consider how EAB may affect their forests.

The most likely mode of spread into NY will be in firewood that people transport for use while camping. Responsible campers should not transport any firewood.

## Management Actions

This document can not address the full range of management alternatives, or the details of implementation. The specific course of action a landowner selects will depend on the: timing of EAB arrival in NY, owner objectives, abundance and maturity of ash in their woodland, the abundance and quality of other species in the woodland, owner's geographic proximity to EAB infestation, the availability of markets, and owner's ability to complete or coordinate work tasks in the woods.

The attitudes and resources of the private forest owner will influence how they respond to EAB if and when it spreads into NY. Management actions will influence the impact EAB has on a particular forest. Forest owners who seek productive forests may want to be proactive to capture current value while a variety of local and distant markets remain accessible. A forest owner who can utilize ash personally or in nearby markets may wait for

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the insect to arrive and address tree mortality as it occurs, assuming no regulatory actions might be enacted that would limit this option. Owners who desire minimal manipulation of their woods similarly may wait and then respond to manage effects that may cascade from ash mortality, such as invasive plants, less desirable regeneration, loss of diversity or reduced forest stocking. Each owner needs to personally assess their objectives to guide their strategy and timing for a response to EAB.

Effective management of forests in anticipation of EAB requires knowledge of forest characteristics such as the variety of other desired tree species, presence of invasive plants, forest density, tree age and average tree diameter. Most forest owners should work with a forester to acquire this information. Information on how to select a forester is available through Cornell University Cooperative Extension and at [www.ForestConnect.info](http://www.ForestConnect.info). The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation provides free Stewardship management planning advice to forest owners upon their request. Contact the local DEC forestry office to obtain assistance from a DEC Forester. The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation also maintains a list of Cooperating Foresters, foresters in the private sector who provide services to forest owners. Selecting a forester needs to be a deliberate process.

Because the arrival of EAB is seemingly imminent, and there are no known methods of control, forest owners should assess their interest in managing impacts and, if appropriate, capturing the value that exists in ash on their property. Young, fully forested areas but with low abundance of ash stems will experience minimal ecological effect from the insect. Forests that are increasingly mature or having greater abundance of ash will be more dramatically affected when the insect arrives. Owners should strive for a mixture of species and forests that are adequately stocked for optimum growth.

In young forests and forests having low densities of ash, owners may benefit from non- or pre-commercial thinning to reduce the density of ash in favor of alternative desired species. This will shift growth to other desirable species and ensure they are thrifty if and when ash mortality occurs. In areas being planned for planting, species other than ash that are suited to soil conditions should be used.

In maturing forests, where the average tree is 12 inches diameter or larger, owners should evaluate their desire to capture any value that exists in ash. However, owners should strongly avoid the temptation for unnecessarily harvesting other high value trees that may serve as an important seed source to restock the forest following the death or removal of ash. Management in mature stands with abundant ash may seek to establish regeneration of other species in anticipation of EAB's arrival. In woodlands with abundant ash, this management strategy will result in a dramatic visual change. Owners should carefully consider their ownership goals and all management options. Complete liquidation of ash from a woodland is not recommended.

When forests are disturbed through natural or deliberate processes, they experience some type of change. Forests typically display predictable patterns of response, depending on local condition, existing vegetation, current deer populations, and the type of disturbance. The pattern of response will be desirable or undesirable depending on local conditions. Specific conditions or ac-

tions that might inhibit the development of healthy and ecologically functional forests following EAB include: the spread of invasive plants that compete with desirable plants, deer browsing that reduces desirable species, logging disturbance without attention to water quality best management practices, high-grade (diameter limit) harvests that remove all or most of the valuable trees prior to effective forest regeneration, damage to the root systems or stems of residual trees during logging, or removal of desired trees needed for seed production.

Cornell University Cooperative Extension recommends these steps for private forest owners:

1. Work with professionals to evaluate your need and desire to manage the impact and extent of mortality associated with EAB relative to your ownership objectives. Your ownership objectives influence the following recommendations. Be calm and deliberate in your decision making.

2. If you actively participate in forest operations (e.g., cutting, skidding, etc.) use appropriate personal protective equipment and learn appropriate techniques such as directional felling.

3. Determine the current status of EAB in New York and identify any revisions to management recommendations. EAB status may change more than once each year. Consider geographic location and the need for timely actions.

4. Assess the abundance and age of ash in your forest. Consult with a

*continued on page 8*

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## Private Woodland Management... (continued)

forester to learn how ash abundance in your woodlands, relative to other species, will be affected by the potential complete loss of ash.

5. In young forests or those that have low ash density, you could harvest or kill the ash that compete (shade) with other desired trees. This will retain some ash that are not competing and will ensure that a mixture of species is thriving in the event that EAB arrives and affects your forest.

6. In mature forests or those with high densities of ash, identify potential markets and harvest ash trees to capture current values. The arrival of EAB into NY will likely result in quarantines that restrict access to a variety of markets.

7. Call Before Your Cut: Consult with a forester, DEC or Cooperating Forester, prior to making decisions to cut or not to cut. 

### Additional Information:

[www.emeraldashborer.info](http://www.emeraldashborer.info)  
[www.na.fs.fed.us/fhp/eab/paemeraldashborer.psu.edu](http://www.na.fs.fed.us/fhp/eab/paemeraldashborer.psu.edu)  
[www.ForestConnect.info](http://www.ForestConnect.info)  
[www.dec.ny.gov/lands/4972.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/4972.html)  
[www.nyfoa.org](http://www.nyfoa.org)

Hargrave, R., E. Selleck, and K. Fallone. 2006. Controlling invasive species in woodlots. ForestConnect Fact Sheet Series. 4 pages. <http://www.dnr.cornell.edu/ext/info/pubs/FC%20factsheets/FCFSinvasives.pdf>

Heiligmann, R. and K. Smith. 2006 (revised). Management options for minimizing emerald ash borer impacts on Ohio woodlands. Ohio State University Extension Fact Sheet F-59-rev06. available at [www.ForestConnect.info](http://www.ForestConnect.info)

Smallidge, PJ. 2005. Working with Foresters, Chapter 10: Enhancing the Stewardship of Your Forest. 5 pages. <http://www.dnr.cornell.edu/ext/info/pubs/Stewardshipmanual/10Working%20with%20Foresters.pdf>

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# NYFOA CHAPTER NEWS

## Northern Adirondack Chapter Hosts Woodswalk

The Northern Adirondack chapter recently hosted a woodswalk, which was one in a series of three, that was part of the ForestConnect 2007 Letter Series. This woodswalk included a fish tour, hydroelectric plant, maple tour, sawmill demonstration, black walnuts, several plantations and much more! The walk took place on Saturday, September 8, 2007 and was well attended by over 90 people ranging in age from 3 months to senior citizens. Five states and 3 chapters were represented there, as well as Assemblyman Aubertine, St Lawrence County Legislature Tom Grow, and Channel 5 News from Plattsburg.

Peter Smallidge conducted a tour of the thinning program of a nearby maple sugar woods, and the hosts, Garth Stephen and his family, opened their home and cared for us with refreshments and kind hospitality.

The children had a great time feeding the fish and playing together — having a wonderful day as well. It was great to see many of our old friends and provided the opportunity to meet new people, who were impressed and excited with what NYFOA does and what they saw. Some of those people even joined NYFOA by days end. It truly was an entire family outing.



Left: NAC NYFOA Chairman, Bill LaPoint (left), presents a gift of appreciation to landowner MFO Garth Stephen for hosting the September 7th NAC NYFOA woodswalk.

Right: Woodswalk attendees had the opportunity to look at a 10 year old black walnut plantation; one of several planted by MFO Garth Stephen, seen here answering questions about growing black walnut trees on his northern Franklin County property.



Left: One of three springs used to feed fish ponds on the Stephen's property. This spring also supplies water to the owners' hydroelectric plant.



# 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!

*Adelaide Smallidge practices safe whittling technique on her fifty acres in Essex County. She learned that safety includes a sharp knife, being seated away from others, and whittling away from yourself.*

## A Bird's Eye View

Ever wondered what our world looks like from up above? If you've flown in a plane, and were lucky enough to have a window seat, you likely saw part of the expanse of our county: cities, homes, mountains, Great Lakes, fields, forests, or deserts. Fortunately we don't have to get into an airplane to see the earth from above- we have pictures!

Pictures taken from satellites, airplanes and helicopters of the ground are called aerial photographs. Aerial photos can show buildings, neighborhoods, towns and forests just as a map does, but you get to see the actual building, not just a symbol for it. We can use aerial photos for many of the same tasks that we use maps for, distances between two features, area measurements, and the relative placement of objects to one another, as well a view of what is actually happening on the ground.

One a cold day this winter, when you're looking for something to do, check out some of the aerial photo web sites:

Terraserver: <http://terraserver.microsoft.com/>


Google Earth: <http://earth.google.com/> (must download free software)

NYS GIS Clearinghouse: <http://www.nysgis.state.ny.us/>

Or one from the USGS List: <http://nationalmap.gov/gio/viewonline.html>

See if you can find:

- Your house
- Your school
- Your woodlot (if you have one)
- A river
- A lake

- An airport
- A city
- A farm
- A plantation forest
- A native forest 

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



*Sample aerial photo of a farm, pond, and forest. Can you find all three? What else can you see in the photograph?*

# Wild Things in Your Woodlands

KRISTI SULLIVAN

## BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE (*Poecile atricapilla*)



*The black-capped chickadee is a small songbird with a short bill. Male and female chickadees look alike, with a black cap on the head, a black bib, and white cheeks. They are mostly grey on the wings, tail, and back, and they have buff colored sides.*

As the weather grows colder and snow begins to fall, black-capped chickadees remain active symbols of nature, even on the coldest winter days. Chickadees are common year-round residents in New York State. They survive the winter by roosting in dense vegetation and tree cavities. On cold winter nights, chickadees sometimes enter a state of regulated hypothermia, dropping their body temperature 18 - 22° F below their normal daytime temperature. By doing so, they can save a lot of energy.

Insects form a large part of the chickadee's diet, particularly in the summer. In the winter, they rely more on seeds and berries. Chickadees are also one of our most common birds at feeders. Research has shown that, especially during the fall, chickadees will also hide food under bark or dead leaves, or in knotholes. Later, when food is scarce, they return and retrieve the hidden food items. They are able to remember thousands of hiding places for up to a month! During fall and win-

ter, chickadees often flock together to feed, and may flock with other species including titmice, nuthatches, brown creepers, and kinglets.

Chickadees live in wooded habitats of all kinds, including deciduous and mixed deciduous/coniferous woodlands, open woods, old fields, parks, and neighborhoods. They are most abundant along forest edges. Chickadees will excavate nest cavities in dead trees or dead tree limbs by pecking away rotting wood. They will also use old woodpecker holes if available, and sometimes will use nesting boxes if natural cavities are not available. The male and female both work to excavate the nest cavity, and the female alone lines the nest cavity with moss, feathers, plant down, hair, and insect cocoons. Once the cavity is lined, the female will roost on the nest until the eggs (6-8) hatch. The male feeds the female while she is on the nest, and both parents feed the young after they hatch.


Forests with between 50 and 75% canopy closure, and a well-developed

middle and lower canopy layer, are optimum habitat for chickadees. The abundance of leaves under these conditions attracts insects that provide food for these birds. Because black-capped chickadees nest in tree cavities and can only excavate a cavity in soft or rotten wood, landowners can create ideal breeding habitat by managing to provide two snags per acre between 4 and 10 inches dbh. Trees that are dead or partially dead (at least half of the branches have either fallen, or are present but no longer have leaves) can be considered snags. Snags provide potential cavity trees for many other species as well as chickadees, and will help keep your woods alive year-round with the sights and sounds of bird life. ▲

*Kristi Sullivan coordinates the Conservation Education Program at Cornell's Arnot Forest. More information on managing habitat for wildlife, as well as upcoming educational programs at the Arnot Forest can be found by visiting the Arnot Conservation Education Program web site at [www.arnotconservation.info](http://www.arnotconservation.info)*

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

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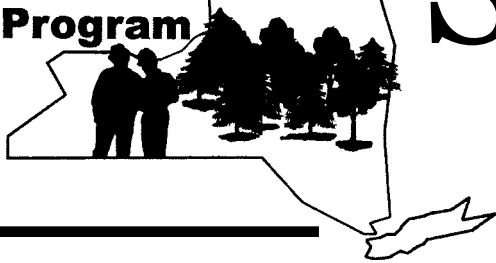
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## NY Master Forest Owner/COVERTS Program



# Stories from the Woods

SCOTT B. CLARKE

*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.*

Every woodlot has its own history or story. Similarly, the 2007 MFO class is made up of 9 forest owners who each have their own forest owner story. This article features the experiences of Scott B. Clarke, new MFO volunteer, who attended the September training workshop, and a brief introduction to the other volunteers from the MFO class of '07. I wish to thank the volunteers for making the commitment to attend the workshop and take on the responsibility to be forest stewards in their communities via the MFO program. This year's small class size contributed to what I consider to be one of the best and most engaged classes. They are ready to meet with forest owners to share what they have learned through their personal forest owning experi-

ences and what they learned at the workshop. – Gary Goff

Nine participants in the Master Forest Owner (MFO) volunteer training program arrived at Cornell University's 4,200-acre Arnot Forest on Sept. 19<sup>th</sup>. Most of us had met with our respective county Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) Educators at their office and an MFO volunteer on our own property as prerequisites for the program training. The program began with a wonderful meal and was followed by a series of introductions and welcomes from faculty in the Department of Natural Resources, NYFOA secretary Kelly Smallidge and Andy Doyle, an MFO

from Schuyler County who attended the first training, back in '91! That evening session was also our introduction to the Arnot's special "pay attention" HARDwood chairs.

For the next four days we all seemed to get into the routine of a shower at 6:45, breakfast at 7:15 and classes beginning at 8am and ending at 8pm. With hearty, mom's home cookin' provided by Lee and Carol (who had raised 9 and 5 children respectively), we only needed to concentrate on the curriculum and numerous woods field trips.

The individual detailed classes included many cutting edge researchers/professors from Cornell's Department of Natural Resources, CCE County Educators, and resource management professionals from NYS DEC, Wagner Hardwoods, and Scott Edsall from William's and Edsall Surveying. All presenters were obviously well informed, highly motivated, and welcomed our questions. This was the 17<sup>th</sup> year of the MFO program and all of us were overwhelmed with the information presented about working with forest owners, forest management, wildlife management, forest ecology, and various field trip hands-on experience. One suggestion in working with the forest owners was to listen carefully.

During snack breaks we got to know each other. The concept of all nine of us becoming an extended family occurred to me. This extended



*The class learning how to estimate number of 16-ft. logs in a standing tree*



MFO Scott B. Clarke browsing on chinquapin nuts as part of a field trip to view grass and shrub plantings for wildlife habitat improvement.

family would include the presenters and current MFO volunteers, who consistently arrived early and stayed for discussion after presenting. Our background and goals are as follows:

Elmo Drilling from Erie County has been an agroforester in south-east Asia for 24 years and has written agroforestry plans for people in developing countries. One of his goals is to improve forest management for landowners and improve the prices that landowners receive for their forest products.

Tim Lannan from Columbia County does organizational development consultation work with non-profit

organizations to help them deliver their missions more effectively. He wants to leave his land/forest better than it was when purchased, help new forest owners know what to do with the forestland, and wants to ensure/promote diversity of plants and animals as well as increase property aesthetics.

Ross Wilck from Wayne County runs locks for the N.Y.S Canal Corp. By helping other landowners set and accomplish management goals, he hopes they will improve forest quality through firewood/timber harvesting while keeping property in family ownership.

Richard Goldberg from Dutchess County, where he has a second home, is Director of Computer

Operations for a Long Island manufacturing company. He's primarily interested in ornamental trees, clearing invasive plants, shrubs, and deer proofing.

Walter Kersch from Rensselaer County is a retired high school principal and is the proud 23-year owner of the 57 kilometers of cross country ski trails at Pineridge Cross Country Ski Area (pineridgexc.com). While managing his own forest of 800 acres, he hopes to help others manage their forest and understand the values of the many purposes of the forests i.e.: wildlife, water quality, habitat, recreation, and forest products.

Robert Barton from Schuyler County is recently retired from the Navy Research and Development Lab in Newport, RI focusing on sonar. On his 45-acre family farm, several walnut tree varieties have been planted as well as American Chestnuts. His long-term personal family forest goal blends with his MFO goals of fuel production, understanding plant diversity, lumber production and combined forest/agriculture co-production.

Frank Winkler from Delaware County grew up and now lives on his small, family dairy farm in the Catskills. Managing his 110-acre woodlot has always been his therapy for everyday challenges. He received a B.S. in Crop Science from Cornell and worked for 30+ years with the USDA – Natural Resources Conser-

*continued on page 18*

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](http://www.cornellmfo.info).

### Information for the MFO volunteers

The new Regional Coordinators are working hard to help you get more visit requests and help you work more closely with each other, CCE County Associations, and NYS DEC Regional Offices. Please respond to their requests and let them know you appreciate their efforts to make the program more effective. For example, most coordinators have regional planning meetings scheduled, so I hope you can make every effort to attend! 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.*

# Global Climate Change and The NY Forest Owner

## Part II: The Managed Forest Carbon Offset Project

MATTHEW SMITH AND RYAN SHURLIFFE

In the last article we explored climate change and forest offset projects by examining how forests sequester carbon, how market based mechanisms like cap and trade work, and finished up by discussing current greenhouse gas (GHG) registries and markets. In this article we focus on the forest offset project itself. In order to develop a marketable project, specific activities must take place in order to satisfy the requirements demanded in the marketplace. After these requirements are discussed, we'll conclude with an overview of a sample managed forest offset project in the northeast US.

For a managed (harvesting activities taking place) forest offset project, there are currently two potential options for marketing carbon credits. The first option is the Chicago Climate Exchange (CCX) and the second is the general over-the-counter (OTC) or retail market. Although there are opportunities in both the CCX and OTC markets, OTC markets are an emerging opportunity, as many OTC consumers remain appre-

hensive about purchasing credits from managed forests at this time. In order for a project to be approved by the CCX, it must adhere to a defined set of rules. Requirements for OTC markets on the other hand may vary significantly from retailer to retailer. Regardless of which market we consider, there are some basic requirements for developing a credible project. Meeting these requirements is critical to success as consumers or emitters interested in purchasing offset credits, want to be confident that their money is being spent on a project that clearly and correctly defines how it is generating these credits.

When developing a managed forest carbon offset project, basic requirements can be broken down into five general components; inventory, certification, project developers/verifiers, project protection commitments, and a positive net flow of carbon. These requirements can represent investments on the part of project owners. It should also be recognized that there may be opportunity costs

associated with market participation.

The first basic requirement is the need for an accurate and current inventory of forest stocks. This data can be used to quantify the amount of carbon stored in the trees at the time of the inventory. This is called setting the "baseline". As the individual trees grow over time they sequester carbon. The net change between growth and harvests or removals is the sequestered amount, or the amount that can be registered, banked, or traded in the market. In other words, the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> that a forest takes in from the atmosphere is what a GHG emitter can use to offset their emissions. This process requires diligent record keeping for any harvesting activities or other disturbance events (fire, storms, insects and disease) that might occur. Costs to meet this requirement include the collection of inventory data as well as accounting processes for data manipulation and reporting.

Second, the forest must be certified as sustainably managed. Sustainable certification organizations such as the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI), and the American Tree Farm System Group Certification program ensure that management practices employed in the project are not sequestering carbon at the expense of the other environmental values and the long term viability of a healthy forest occupying that area. Certification has a real cost, and will require that a management plan is in place.

The third requirement would be the retention of a project developer and aggregator. An expert in forestry and specifically forest carbon creates confidence in the project. In the case of the CCX, only Offset Providers and/or Aggregators are allowed to register and sell offset credits on the exchange. Project owners should carefully consider their selection of an aggregator or broker. Cost, expertise, and experience are all qualities that vary amongst approved aggregators.

Next the project owner must make a long term commitment to maintaining their forest as a forest. In the case of the CCX market, that amounts to a minimum 15 year commitment. OTC opportunities

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may require longer terms. Vehicles commonly used to ensure compliance with this requirement include deed restrictions or conservation easements limiting land use change. This requirement has perhaps the greatest impact on private forest owners as there is potentially significant opportunity cost. Landowners participating in carbon markets may be foregoing opportunities to sub divide or develop project lands for a period of time.

Finally, the project owner must commit to net positive flows of carbon over the project timeline. While over the long term, a forest may sequester more carbon than it releases due to mortality and harvest, conditions and activities over certain periods may result in net carbon loss for that period, even if managed sustainably. The following example will illustrate this concept more clearly. Changes in harvest timing and extent to meet this requirement create an opportunity cost to the owner.

The required components of a forest offset project of forest inventory, sustainability certification, project developer, and commitments to positive net carbon flows all present real or opportunity costs to the project owner and must be understood when determining whether or not to participate in the carbon market.

In order to assess whether or not to develop a project one must weigh all of the costs associated with entry and ongoing participation as outlined above

against the potential income generated from the sale of the sequestered carbon credits. As the NY forest owner knows well, forest conditions vary greatly, and consequently, no two projects are ever the same.


The dynamics of forest offset projects presented above can be demonstrated through the use of an example. This privately owned forest carbon offset project consists of 831 forested acres of mixed hardwoods. The property was inventoried in 2003 using random sampling. For demonstration purposes, we established the carbon base line stocks as of 1/1/03 for a forested property and tracked the annual net carbon sequestration for 4 years to 12/31/2006. Using this inventory it was determined that the baseline carbon stocks were 85,857 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e. Using site specific growth models, and removing for harvests in 2003 and 2006, we determined the yearly sequestration rates for this forest as shown in the graph below.

As you can see from the graph, the project or forest property generated 5,490 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents (aka MtCO<sub>2</sub>e or carbon credits) in the four year period, with an estimated gross value of \$16,744 (based on the CCX current market value of \$3.05 per MtCO<sub>2</sub>e). After applying the CCX related costs for initial investments, participation, trading, and aggregation the resulting net value after four years was \$9,022 or \$2.71 per forested acre per year on average. While

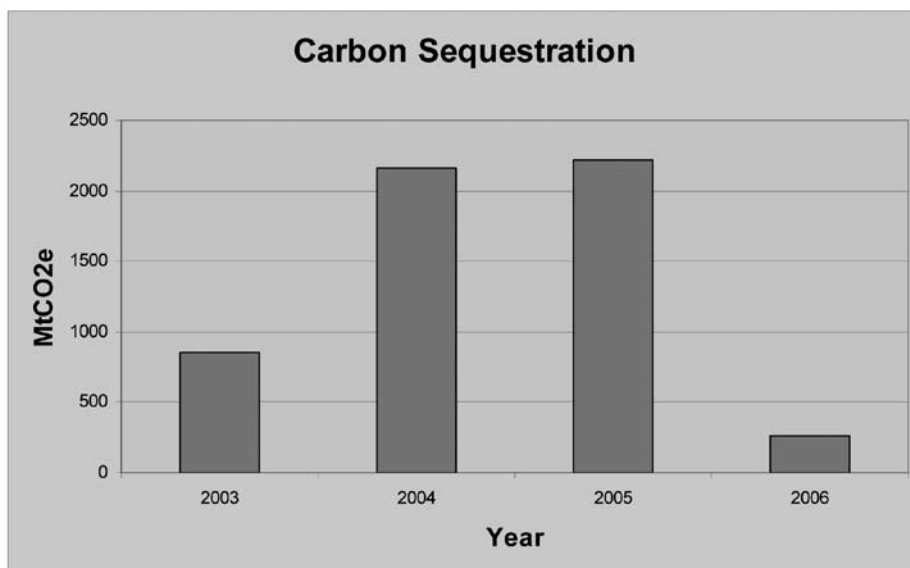
not a windfall, the project does provide positive cash flow to the owner in addition to the revenue generated from the timber sales. If the property is enrolled for a longer period of time, some of the fixed or one-time entry costs are spread out over more years and with prices of carbon credits expected to rise, this could become a more significant opportunity in the near future.

As you can see, in a productive well stocked forest where harvest does not surpass growth, a consistent cash flow from the sale of carbon credits can be realized. It is important however to recognize the liabilities associated with this project. One major risk is associated with the harvest or removal rates on a forest. In our example, if the harvest in 2006 was more significant, it could have resulted in negative sequestration (carbon losses) from the project. When carbon stock losses occur, the market requires compensation, either in banked credits, reserves held by the market, or in some cases, through cash purchases of credits from the market by the project owner.

When project owners consider how to optimize the carbon potential for their project other issues must be addressed. Carbon market or program requirements, aggregator or broker requirements, term length, quantification method, verifier choice, transparency, and growth modeling and reporting are all key issues to investigate before entering the market. It is only after fully considering all aspects of this new market opportunity that a landowner should commit to a carbon project. In the rapidly developing business of offset aggregation and carbon marketing, a patient and diligent approach on the part of land owners will pay off. Fully investigate opportunities as they emerge, this is a real opportunity however, when deciding where and how to market your carbon remember...if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!

In the final article, we will discuss the future role of forests, and their owners, in climate change mitigation. 

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



# Sugar Maple Decline

## *A Continuing Problem*

DOUGLAS C. ALLEN

Since the early 1980s, the progressive deterioration of sugar maple in certain northern hardwood stands throughout the northeastern United States and eastern Canada has been a concern of many forest owners. Even after 25 years of research in both countries, it is difficult to provide an unequivocal explanation for many decline events. The purpose of this article is to briefly summarize our current understanding of maple decline.

### What is a decline?

A good working definition of a decline is a disease characterized by the progressive deterioration of tree and stand conditions resulting from a sequence of interacting biotic and/or abiotic events. Decline is a prolonged and gradual process requiring multiple stresses over several years. A true decline eventually results in tree death. Crown dieback and reduced growth for several consecutive

years are the most readily recognized symptoms of this disease.

Crown dieback and tree mortality may also result from a single short term stress or simultaneous multiple events such as insect defoliation and drought. The distinction between a “decline” and “dieback” is an important one. The former is a disease, the latter is a symptom that may herald the onset of this disease, or it may merely reflect the temporary stress of a short-term disturbance. Crown dieback is a tree’s response to stress. Whether or not the tree will recover (i.e., in a year or two the tree’s crown and growth will return to a “healthy” or “normal” condition, Fig. 1) or progressively deteriorate (i.e., decline, Fig. 2) depends on whether the disturbance(s) are temporary or prolonged.

The recent bout with forest tent caterpillar (FTC) in the northeast illustrates the two possible outcomes of crown

dieback. In many stands in southern St. Lawrence County, for example, sugar maples have been declining for years. In this case, recent heavy or repeated defoliation by FTC accelerated the deterioration of these trees. On the other hand, where defoliation by FTC occurred to vigorous trees in other regions of the state, the end result of this one disturbance was temporary crown dieback (Fig. 3). Some tree mortality is likely to occur following an outbreak of most defoliators, even in healthy stands. Trees that experience 30% to 35% dieback from a single stress or disturbance under otherwise favorable conditions, however, usually recover and dead twigs and branches will be replaced in their crowns.

### There are many causes of maple decline.

The objective of much northern hardwood research in both the United States and Canada over the past 15 to 20 years has been to identify factors that predispose sugar maple to decline. Secondary biotic and abiotic stresses (i.e., agents that are “secondary” in the sense that they require a stressed host in order to come into play) that build on this predisposition are relatively easy to identify; such as, drought, insects and diseases. The predisposing or primary event and the secondary events that follow may vary from one decline to another. In other words, there are thought to be several “maple declines”.

For instance, a search for predisposing factors in Vermont associated depletion of calcium and high levels of aluminum in sugar maple foliage, presumably the result of acidic deposition, with deteriorating growth and reduced tree vigor. Similarly, many other studies in both the United States and Canada point to poor soil nutrition as indicated by decreases in base cations (positively charged elements), such as calcium, magnesium and potassium, and increases in toxic anions (negatively charged elements) like aluminum and manganese.

In a Quebec study, dieback and eventual decline occurred frequently on sites where sugar maple was not able to



**Figure 1.** Healthy sugar maple crowns, dense foliage, leaves of normal size and color, no dieback.



**Figure 2.** Sugar maple decline; crowns have progressively deteriorated, bark is sloughing off large branches and the upper boles.

tolerate poor drainage. Other research in this region associated predisposition with marginal site conditions. For example, sugar maple growing downhill or in depressions (site too moist) or on exceedingly dry sites, such as ridges or other places with relatively thin soil (more susceptible to drought).

Other predisposing events that have been suggested are extreme weather

conditions such as excessive root freezing (mortality) during winters with low snow fall. Drought and excessive stand density (competition for water and nutrients) also are thought to play predisposing roles.

**Management implications**

Clearly, studies to date strongly suggest that predisposition of sugar maple to many declines can be related to an event or events that take place in the soil; predominantly localized nutrient imbalances resulting from soil properties, climate and/or human related activities such as air pollution that results in “acid rain”. Unfortunately, the subterranean part of a forest ecosystem is very difficult and impractical to deal with from a forest management perspective. Similarly, inherent soil properties and climate are beyond our control. Society has made significant strides, however, in addressing acidic deposition, which is thought to be at the root (no pun intended!) of many maple declines. Hopefully continued efforts on this front will eventually result in a return to more favorable soil conditions.

In the meantime, what can a forest owner do? I would recommend the following:

- When crown dieback first appears, do not be too hasty with the chain saw! Remember dieback is symptom of stress and once certain stresses are removed,



**Figure 3.** Temporary crown dieback resulting from defoliation by forest tent caterpillar. Crown returned to normal within two years following the end of defoliation and absence of other stress factors.

sugar maple crowns often return to a healthy condition.

- On the other hand, a chain saw can be the most effective management tool we have when it comes to improving stand conditions. Minimize the competition between trees and enhance the vigor of residual trees by thinning maple stands at the appropriate times during stand development.
- Protect maple foliage from repeated severe insect defoliation, especially when maple is growing on marginal sites.
- Once it is clear dieback is a precursor to a decline (continued crown deterioration, bark sloughing) and the trees will not recover, remove the stand while the stem wood is still of some value. ⚠

*This is the 90th 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/nyfo/index.html>.*

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## Stories from the Woods (continued)

vation Service. As an MFO, he hopes to promote an appreciation and sound management of our forest resources.

Bob Grant, representing Oswego County, is a production line supervisor where they make stone counter tops. Bob has a love of the outdoors and is a very proud family man with two young daughters. In combining working on his own property, he wants to help others learn proper silviculture. Bob also roomed with me in cabin #2 and remembered to bring flashlights and an alarm clock.

My name is Scott Clarke from Broome County and I worked for 30+ years with either NYS Office of Mental Health or Office of Retardation/Developmental Disabilities. I'm privileged to be a third-generation owner of 55 acres that my grandparents and parents called their Ponderosa, from the old TV show. My dog Tippy takes me for long walks in the woods everyday. My MFO goals are to continue my personal education of the outdoors and respect for the interdependent web of all existence

and to share my fascination and wise use of the forests with others.

Now that you know our new extended MFO family, here're just a few "did you know?" tidbits from the course:

- Did you know that there are at least 16 different types of goldenrod in NYS?

- Each state has a federal land-grant university and Cornell is NY State's and any NY resident can get a library card for the state-affiliated CU libraries by applying in person.

- If you own a 50+ acre woodlot and you're willing to place it in a sawtimber management plan (NYS Forest Tax Law 480-a) with the DEC, you can reduce your land taxes by 80%. This requires a 10-year commitment.

- By definition reptiles lay eggs on land and amphibians lay eggs in the water (or moist environments). Salamanders make no vocalizations.

- Generally, the more diverse the ecosystem, the healthier the trees/forest.

- Good forest stewardship ensures ecologic health and economic sustainability.

- Culling or wise thinning contrib-

utes to sustainability.

- On average, about 5% of the logs delivered to a mill from mature, sawtimber-sized hardwood stands contain veneer-grade wood.

- Striped maple is also known as moosewood or goosefoot maple.

- Dragonflies have been around for 300 million years.

- All landowners should have legal contracts when harvesting trees.

Our hats are off to Gary Goff, MFO Program Director, for fine tuning a detailed program with 116 handout pamphlets/books and pulling together perhaps the finest quality presenters in NYS!

If you or anyone you know is interested in the MFO volunteer training, receiving a visit from an MFO volunteer, or additional Arnot Forest continuing education, call Gary Goff (607-255-2824) or NY Extension Forester Pete Smallidge (607-592-3640), e-mail Gary at: [grg3@cornell.edu](mailto:grg3@cornell.edu), or visit the website: [www.cornellmfo.info](http://www.cornellmfo.info) Your inquiries will be welcomed. The website also contains the 2007 training agenda, names and addresses of the '07 new volunteers and pictures from the training. 

## New York State Maple

- The production of maple syrup, and associated value-added products, is an important agricultural industry in New York State.

- Maple production contributes to local rural economies and provides supplemental income to farmers and forest land owners. In 2005, there were 1,485 producers with 100 or more taps.

- New York State maple production, valued at nearly \$7.2 million in 2004, represents about one-sixth of the total production in the U.S.

- New York is the third largest maple producer in the nation behind Vermont and Maine.

The mission of the New York State Maple Producers Association is to support the maple products industry in New York State and promote its long-term viability.

*Do you own a sugarbush? Join NYSMPA today. Working together we can make things happen.*



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The ForestConnect 2007 Letter Series is designed for private forest owners throughout New York State. This educational program is based on an award-winning project developed by Cornell University Cooperative Extension of Warren County and the Greater Adirondack Resource Conservation and Development Council. Funding is provided through the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and the USDA Forest Service State and Private Forestry. More information is available at:

Cornell University's website: [www.ForestConnect.info](http://www.ForestConnect.info)  
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# Member Profile: *Charlie & Marian Mowatt*

ALEXANDRA SILVA

On what used to be a dairy farm during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Hog Hollow Tree Farm was established by Marian and Charlie Mowatt. Currently, the Mowatt's live on the eighty-acre expanse of land that makes up Hog Hollow Tree Farm. The property was purchased by Charlie's parents in 1958 from retired dairy farmers. After the passing of his parents, Charlie and Marian purchased the property from his siblings in 1997 as a retirement home. They dubbed the land, "Hog Hollow Tree Farm," after the former name of the county road that runs through the property.

The first few years at Hog Hollow were spent building a garage and updating the 125 year-old farm house. The garage was sheathed with red pine grown on the property and the basement was dug out in order to create a

recreational room. After the renovations, Charlie and Marian focused their attention on the forest management of Hog Hollow.

As a former forester for the DEC, Charlie spent 32 years helping others to manage and improve their woodlots. Now at age 72 and retired, Charlie is turning more towards the biological aspects of forest management. Instead of focusing on the monetary return associated with logging and thinning, Charlie believes that foresters should focus more on the future productivity and sustainability of the forest. While many forested properties are high-graded through diameter cuts, Charlie believes that logging should be geared towards giving the best tress optimum growing space by removing less thrifty stems.

At Hog Hollow Tree Farm, thin-

nings and log harvests are carried out in order to improve the forest growth and development. While the added income is relatively small, it does act as an incentive to continue harvesting trees. Charlie harvests primarily to enhance future forest growth. He employs his tractor and Farmi winch to bring the harvested logs and firewood to the roadside for sale.

Aside from the logs and firewood sold at Hog Hollow, Charlie and Marian also sell Christmas trees that grow on a separate lot behind their house. What started as a barter system with their neighbor, whereby Charlie and Marian received homemade maple syrup in exchange for Christmas trees, has turned into a niche market. Charlie and Marian usually cut between twenty and thirty balsam and concolor firs a season, which are purchased by families from the area.

During the summers of 2002 and 2003, Charlie and Marian's property was home to twenty kid goats as part of the Arnot Forest's "Goats in the Woods" project. Volunteering their land and labor, Charlie and Marian housed the goats in various paddocks across the woodlot, in order to assess how goats affect desired and undesired forest vegetation. While Cornell University had many goals related to the project, the Mowatt's were personally interested in how the goats would handle the honeysuckle, ironwood and beech sprouts on the property. This undesirable understory vegetation had been caused by the white-tailed deer, which consumed the maple, white ash and black cherry seedlings, leaving the undesirable species to proliferate. At the end of the two months in the woods, the twenty goats had cleared 2.4 acres worth of understory, while fattening themselves for market.

Though the goats proved to be an effective means of clearing the understory, the white-tailed deer in the area are still problematic to the Mowatt's. Their open land policy, however, is geared at curbing the deer population by encouraging hunters to visit Hog



Charlie and Marian Mowatt at Hog Hollow Tree Farm.

*continued on page 22*



Hog Hollow Tree Farm in Cattaraugus County during October of 2004.

Hollow. In addition, the Mowatt's have enlisted the help of the DEC by enrolling in the DMAP program, which allows Hog Hollow to harvest more deer than usually permitted. Specifically, those hunting under these rules are instructed to harvest "antlerless" deer, with the aim of reducing



Marian Mowatt in front of the Remembrance Tree on Hog Hollow Tree Farm.

the doe population, thus depressing future deer populations.

In addition to hunters, Charlie and Marian encourage anglers, hikers and birders to visit Hog Hollow Tree Farm. This year, a 21" five-pound bass was caught in their lake and a red-headed woodpecker was seen at one of their bird feeders. Hummingbirds are Marian's specialty, but birds aren't the only animals attracted to her bird feeders. A few years ago the couple witnessed a black bear destroy two bird feeders and walk away with a third!

As members of the Allegheny Foothills Chapter of NYFOA, Marian and Charlie have hosted several woodswalks on their property. Hog Hollow is also the location of many picnics and gatherings, which include a family 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration and a past AFC Christmas party. Charlie, with Marian and several others, was instrumental in starting the Allegheny Foothills Chapter of NYFOA. He represented that chapter on the NYFOA Board of Directors for 15 years.

While Hog Hollow Tree Farm is home to numerous trees of varying species, there is one tree in particular

that has special significance for Charlie and Marian. A young hard maple, The Remembrance Tree is a place to remember people or events that are significant in their lives. Eric Anderson, a frequent hunter at Hog Hollow, inscribed "In Remembrance..." on a rock next to the tree. Nearby is a waterproof bench, which was donated by Charlie's niece, Margo Chambers. As active members of the Allegheny Foothills Chapter, Marian and Charlie invite all members of NYFOA to visit and enjoy Hog Hollow Tree Farm and sit under The Remembrance Tree. 🌲

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



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# MAGAZINE DEADLINE

Materials submitted for the January/February 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](mailto:mmalmshe@syr.edu) Articles, artwork and photos are invited and if requested, are returned after use.



**Deadline for material is December 1, 2007**

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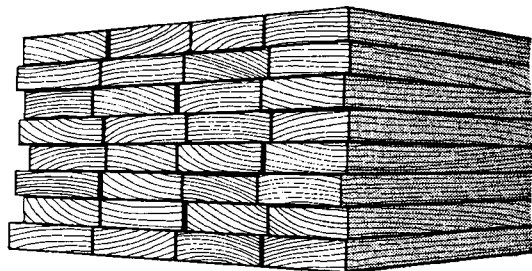
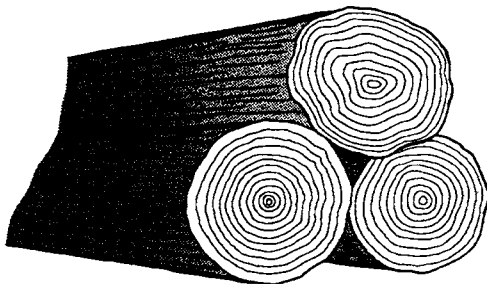
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