

The New York Forest Owner

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION

For people caring about New York's trees and forests

September/October 2011



Member Profile: Rolf and Deb Wentorf

Volume 49 Number 5



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The New York Forest Owner

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION

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

This publication is printed on Finch Opaque, Smooth, 70 lb. text paper. Located in the beautiful Adirondacks, Finch has long understood that the viability of our business relies on the wise use—and reuse—of resources. Finch papers are made with renewable energy, post-consumer recycled fiber and elemental chlorine-free pulps. In addition, Finch Paper was the first integrated paper mill in the US to receive both the Forest Management and Chain of Custody certifications from the Forest Stewardship Council and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative.

www.nyfoa.org

COVER: Rolf and Deb Wentorf on their property in Johnsonville, New York. For member profile, turn to page 21. Photo courtesy of the Wentorf's.

From The President

As this is being written we're making plans to attend the NYFOA 2011 Fall Meeting on September 24 at the Agroforestry Resource Center (ARC) in Arca, NY. If you haven't done so already you can get more information and register by calling Cornell Cooperative Extension of Greene County at 518-622-9820.



The NYFOA board of directors will hold their 3rd (of 3) annual meetings the following day at the ARC. One of the topics of discussion then will be creating a slate of candidates for board positions that will be voted on at our annual membership meeting

next February. Each year the membership elects 4 members to serve on the board of directors for a 3-year term. As this is done every year we have 3 sets of 4 board members for a total of 12 board members elected by you. In addition our by-laws also specify that each of our 10 chapters can designate a board member which brings the total board to 22 members.

Our Leadership Development Committee is always on the lookout for members willing to contribute additional time and effort to further the mission of our organization. If you or someone you know is willing to spend some extra time as a board member, learn more about the organization, and work with a great group of people, please let either Ron Pedersen or Mike Seager know through the contact information given on the inside front cover of this magazine.

Last year NYFOA rejoined the National Woodlands Owners Association (NWOA).

One of the benefits of our membership (and your membership in NYFOA) is that all our members (that is, you good people) receive their annual *Family Lands & Conservation* magazine. Look for it soon as it should be arriving in your mailbox about the same time you receive this issue.

You may have read earlier this year that the IRS is expanding its random audits of tax-exempt nonprofits, technically known as 501(c)(3) organization. NYFOA is such an organization with its mission to provide education to its members and the general public. In late June we were notified by the IRS that we were to be audited and the audit was subsequently held over the course of two days in mid-July at the offices of our accountants, Buffamante Whipple Buttafaro, P.C., in Olean, NY. As of this writing we don't have the final written results of the audit but the preliminary verbal results were that there were no problems, we are in compliance and our accounts are in order.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Scott Reed of BWB for representing NYFOA over the course of those two days; our Office Administrator, Liana Gooding, for pulling together all of the organizational documents required by the IRS; and our past Treasurer, Mike Birmingham for laying the groundwork several years ago that assured our continued adherence to 501(c)(3) standards.

I would also like to take this opportunity to remind our members that our mission to promote sustainable forestry practices in New York State is significantly enhanced by your generous tax-deductible contributions over and above your membership dues to NYFOA. Thank you! 🌲

-Jim Minor
NYFOA President

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 people who care about NYS's trees and forests and are interested in the thoughtful management of private forests for the benefit of current and future generations.

Join! NYFOA is a not-for-profit group 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 helps the interested public to appreciate the importance of New York's forests.

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Ties to the Land:

Planning for the Future of Your Woodlands

MAUREEN MULLEN AND SHORNA BROUSSARD ALLRED

Many landowners want to ensure that their land will be well taken care of into the future. In fact, few challenges that family forest landowners face are more important than the issue of passing the family forest on to the following generation. However, many think that simply having a will that passes their land on to the next generation is enough; but this is rarely the case. A will is a basic and necessary component of estate planning, but so are the preparation and grooming of heirs. Some heirs are unaware of how to sustain a working forest, while other heirs may have no interest. Some heirs may feel the best financial option is to sell the land to developers due to feeling overwhelmed by the tax obligations. As a woodland owner, you have likely invested a great deal of energy, time, and resources into stewarding your forest and want your land sustained into the future. Yet research has shown that few owners have taken the necessary steps to make that happen. As a result, woodland owners stand to lose more than just the property out of the family. Their family heritage, as well as a portion of the wealth they have accumulated over the years, is also at risk. Fortunately, there are strategies, tools, and resources to help you ensure the legacy of your land through a process known as "succession planning".

Succession planning is "preparing your property and your family for a change in ownership and leadership. Estate planning is the process of understanding and using the set of legal tools that are available to make sure your Succession Plan happens the way you want it to happen"¹. An estate plan ensures that heirs inherit property but ensures neither continuity of ownership nor harmony among heirs. Succession planning is actually a much broader process concerned with the continuity and health of families and the land they manage². It includes but goes well beyond an estate plan. Succession planning is a progressive process that takes place over years and is driv-

en by social dynamics and communications. It requires healthy interpersonal dynamics, creating a shared vision, selecting and mentoring successors, creating decision-making structures, and the using appropriate legal and tax strategies to support the transition. We point out the difference between the two terms (succession/legacy planning vs. estate planning) because it is important to recognize how they differ in scope. Both are important but the succession planning conversation should be your first step and is based on good communication – communication with your spouse, your children, and those you work most closely with in your woods. This is where you discuss what you and others want for the future of your woodlands and what tools you will put in place to ensure that.

The succession planning process will vary from family to family. Some people find it hard to discuss mortality or your children may feel they are betraying you by discussing a future without you. You and your family members also have a history, good or bad, and that will influence the succession planning process. Fortunately, there are tools in place to facilitate this discussion process and, to make it easier for everyone involved, whether it's working through a plan or inviting a mediator to the table. But the most important thing is to have these conversations and to come to agreements, or compromises, about how to keep your woodlands -- your family heirloom -- in the family.

Succession planning can be a lengthy process. The succession planning discussions with family members to discuss goals and options for the future may take a couple of years to develop fully. Estate planning will involve talking to financial and legal professionals and may also involve discussions with land trusts and business or financial planners. Thus, it is best to start the process now. Begin talking with your family; begin passing on your knowledge of

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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

I've heard a word, but don't know what it means. Part II.

Question: As an aggregate of questions I hear or receive, several words are common to some people and not common to other people. This column will provide definitions for several of the common words, some of which lack a standardized definition. Words in bold are defined elsewhere in this glossary of terms.

Note – Due to length, this is the second part of these responses to this question. The first part appeared in the July/August issue of the Forest Owner. The full length will eventually be available via the publications page at www.ForestConnect.info

Interfering vegetation – Plants, whether native or exotic, that interfere with the **objectives** of an owner. Often used to describe plants that interfere with efforts to regenerate the forest.

Intermediate treatment – A **silvicultural** treatment that intends to influence the growth, vigor, quality or **composition** of the currently established **stand**.

Invasive species – A species that is exotic, non-native, and has a negative economic, ecological or personal health impact on society. The definition requires more than being exotic, or non-native, as most of our agricultural crops have an exotic origin. For more information see <http://nyis.info>

Landing - The area where logs are deposit-

ed by the **logger** and loaded onto the truck for transport. A heavily disturbed area that can and should be reused when possible.

Log – A section of a tree, or more generally, the tree once it is horizontal. When utilized for other products, the log is cut into sections of standard length plus a few inches. Traditionally a log was 16 feet long, but many sawmills will specify their willingness to buy logs at other lengths, such as 8', 10', 12', etc. Each mill has different specifications.

Log scale – The system and equations to estimate the number of **board feet** in a **log**. Common log scales include the International ¼ inch, Doyle, and Scribner Decimal C. Each scale will give a different estimate of the board foot volume for a log, so owners should know what scale is used if someone provides an estimate of board foot volume.

Logger – A person who has special skills to safely and efficiently fell, **skid**, and buck (cut into sections) **logs** or other forest products.

Low impact harvesting – A style of forest harvesting that strives to minimize the amount of disturbance and damage associated with the felling and moving of logs. In a purest sense, low impact may involve ATVs or other small machines and also be low productivity. Larger machines and equipment can have minimal impact if the **logger** is attentive. Note that any tree cutting will result in visual and ecological changes to the forest.

Low-grade – Trees, irrespective of species, that are of low economic value. Some people will use this term as a verb to describe the process of removing the trees of low economic value from the forest.

Mast crop – A year when a **mast species**



A sugarbush is the land area used to produce maple sap that is collected and boiled into syrup. The term originated in Quebec, the world's large maple syrup producer, where a "bush" is synonymous with what Americans call woods or forest. Thus a sugarbush is the woods that produces the sugary sap for syrup.

produces an abundance of seed. Most mast species have a standard cycle during which they may have a peak year and years of average or below average production.

Mast species – Species that produce berry, nut or nut like seeds used by wildlife. Common mast species include oaks, beech, cherry, and hickory.

MFO Volunteer – A Master Forest Owner is a forest owner, not a forester, who is trained by Cornell University Cooperative Extension to provide non-technical assistance to other owners in the form of encouragement and connect those owners to resources. www.CornellMFO.info

Ownership objectives – The desires of an owner regarding their land, why they own the land, and what they hope the land will provide in the future. Knowing the objectives is an essential basis for sustainable management. Objectives can be determined through discussions with trained volunteers, foresters, or by thinking about the motivations, desires and needs the owner has for the property.

Peavey – A tool with a sharp point, a hook and a handle used to roll logs. A peavey differs from a **cant** hook which is blunt on the end.

PPE – Personal Protective Equipment are articles that lessen the likelihood or extent of injury when using herbicides or chainsaws. For the latter, necessary PPE includes a **logger's** helmet, cut resistant chaps or pants, and appropriate boots.

Regeneration treatment – A **silvicultural** treatment that intends to influence the establishment, **composition**, growth and quality of the next **stand**.

Sawlog – A tree that is able to produce a **log** that will be at least 10" on the small end if hardwood and 8" on the small end



A shelterwood harvest was used in the stand pictured to regenerate eastern white pine. The seed cut was completed and the next forest has become established.

if a softwood. Log length will vary, but is typically a minimum of 8 feet.

Seedtree – A **silvicultural** system that creates or maintains an **even-aged** forest and results in a **regeneration** harvest defined by two harvest entries. An initial entry is the seed cut that leaves approximately 7 to 12 of the best quality and large diameter trees per acre for seed production. Once seedlings for the next forest are established, the seed trees are removed in the second entry.

Selection system – A **silvicultural** system that manages an **uneven-aged** forest. Entries to harvest trees will remove trees from all size classes of trees, with removals either clustered in groups (group selection) or uniformly dispersed as single trees (single tree selection).

Selective cutting – A harvesting method analogous to **diameter limit cutting** or **high-grading** where the most valuable trees are selected and then cut. This term is often and inappropriately confused with the **selection system**. Selective cutting will remove the best and

leave the rest, or “cut the big trees to let the little trees grow.”

Selective treatment – A chemical or mechanical application that is applied to individual stems. This term is contrasted with **broadcast treatment**.

Shelterwood – A **silvicultural** system that creates or maintains an **even-aged** forest and results in a **regeneration** harvest defined by two or three entries. The preparatory cut removes **low-grade** stems and undesired species. The seed cut leaves approximately 20 to 40 of the best quality and largest diameter trees per acre as seed source. The final cut or overstory removal cuts the seed trees once the seedlings for the next forest are established.

Silviculture – The art and science of controlling the establishment, growth, **composition** and quality of forest **stands** in order to achieve sustainable **ownership objectives**.

Single-tree selection - (see **selection system**)

Skid trail – The path left by the **skidder** or similar equipment during a harvest. With prior planning, skid trails can be shaped into functional recreational and other use trails.

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New York State Tree Farm News

ERIN O'NEILL



The most sacred season of the year... HUNTING SEASON!!

In your management plan, you should find a landowner goals section...if you live, breath, eat and sleep with a rifle in your hand this time of year, this section should say something like; "Improve overall property health for game species." That way a forester knows it's important to manage your property for wildlife as well as timber. Big game, especially deer, prefer to travel for long distances through the undisturbed strips along brooks in a managed stand. Whether you manage your property for firewood production, quality saw timber or anything in between, managed forests provide light to the forest floor and seed sources for many species, while maintaining structure and travel corridors for others. Often, ducks and fisher will nest along clear pools in large brooks and ponds to properly feed their young. Remember when you're managing primarily for recreation, skid roads used as snowmobile and ATV trails should be well maintained so they can be shared by the game species you're hunting.

This is also a good time of year to walk your boundaries, know where they are and who's on your property. If you're posting, you'll want to remember that a legal posted


sign is at least 11" x 11" and contains the word "POSTED." The signs must be visible at all corners and roadways and cannot be more than 660 feet apart along the lines. You should touch up posted signs at least once a year to make sure they are legal. If you get some flagging tape from the local hardware store, you can tie that to trees along your boundary to make it more noticeable as well.

You should be able to find your corner pins, too and be sure to mark them with a little extra flagging so you can find them more easily next time. If you don't have pins from a survey, you can mark your corners with a pile of rocks or a wooden stake so it's easy to recognize, just make sure all your adjoining neighbors agree with your markers. Keep in mind that you should be able to see one marker on either side of you from the one you're standing on when you look down the line.

If you give permission to friends and neighbors to hunt on your property, consider asking them to organize themselves in a way that tracks how many people would be hunting at a time and who they are. This will help prevent accidents and injury. If they are already organized as a club or organization, make sure they add you to their

insurance policy. Don't be shy about laying ground rules.

If you're looking to improve the hunting experience on your property, working with a knowledgeable forester will help you make decisions about how to manage for wildlife with appropriate species selection, edges, openings and brush piles for habitat; preventing erosion and disturbance to water sources; and providing a seed crop and varied structure.

As always, with this in mind, if you'd like to learn more about the NY Tree Farm certification program remember, a Tree Farm representative is only a phone call (1-800-836-3566) or e-mail (nytreefarm@hotmail.com) away. 

Erin O'Neill is the Immediate Past Chair of the NYS Tree Farm Committee.

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Kid's Corner

REBECCA HARGRAVE



Although this is not a “kids” photo, Peter and Nancy Caan of Canastota, NY submitted this. “We believe this is a fisher seen during a walk in our woods. We live in Canastota, New York and had never seen one this far South before.”

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, and it may end up on this page!

Science...For the Birds

You. In your living room. Staring out the window. You can contribute to ongoing, world renowned science on bird numbers and locations. Project Feeder Watch, from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, asks bird watchers from all over the country to watch for



and identify birds at their home bird feeders.

And, now is the time to sign up.

Project Feeder Watch asks you to 1) Put up a feeder, 2)

Watch to see what comes, and 3) Report what you see from November to April. It's that simple.

Run by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology (the study of birds) and Bird Studies Canada, Project Feeder Watch has participant scientists across the country watching and reporting their birds each winter. The data the watchers are collecting are very important. The Labs want to know where different birds are, and are not, and how many are in each place, all across North America. This data has been collected for more than 30 years.

Professional scientists use the data from Project Feeder Watch to track how different bird species' winter ranges and numbers differ in different years. This data has been used to identify which bird species are in decline, and they start

follow up studies to find out why. Their data is regularly used in national journal articles- the highest honor data can have; and you can be a part of it!

Individuals, families and groups can all sign up as participant scientists. Each participant scientist is sent a Research Kit that includes a bird identification poster, a wall calendar, a guide to feeding birds and a log sheet. There is a small fee for participating and the kit; but it's worth it. Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Bird Studies Canada are non-profits, and the fee covers the cost to run the program.

So, how do you get started? Go to the Project Feeder Watch web site <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/pfw/> and look around. You can browse through guides and collected data, see the form you need to fill out and learn all the details to collect the best information.

You may be surprised at what you see at your feeder. Chickadees and juncos are almost a given, but maybe you'll see hermit thrushes and cedar waxwings; or you could even see hawks and owls who are watching some of those same birds you're looking for at your feeder!

Project Feeder Watch is a great way to help birds across the country and a great way for you to learn what perches at your feeder in the winter. 🌲

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

Ties to the Land (continued)

your woodlands, grooming your successor; and begin making a business plan so that it is clear where the future of your woodlands is heading.

Your woodlands are important to you, your family, and to New York. Woodlands make up 63% of New York's landscape and 59% of these are family-owned woodlands³ that support recreation, wildlife habitat, clean air and water, and timber production, among many other benefits. To help you learn more about succession planning, Cornell Cooperative Extension, in partnership with the Agricultural Stewardship Association, the Rensselaer Land Trust, and the Rensselaer Plateau Alliance are hosting two morning workshops (9:00am-12:30pm) on September 17 and October 22 focusing on the succession planning process. If you are interested in attending, or learning more about the tools available to you, please visit <http://SuccessionPlanning.ning.com> or call Maureen Mullen at 607-254-6556.

(Endnotes)

- 1 C. Bentz. 2009. Succession versus Estate Planning. *Tree Farmer*, November/December 2009.
- 2 Withrow-Robinson, B., Allred, S.B., Landgren, C., and M. Sisock. (*In Review*). Planning Across Generations: Helping Family Landowners maintain their Ties to the Land. *Journal of Forestry*.
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Wild Things in Your Woodlands

KRISTI SULLIVAN

EASTERN SCREECH-OWL (*OTUS ASIO*)



The Eastern Screech-Owl is a small, nocturnal, predatory bird, about 8.5 inches in size. The robin-sized owl has short, rounded wings, bright yellow eyes, and a rounded head with visible “ear tufts.” The ear tufts, which the bird raises when alarmed, are otherwise inconspicuous. The facial disc is lightly mottled and has a prominent dark rim along the sides. The tail and the flight feathers of the wings are barred. The eastern screech-owl occurs in two color morphs, red and gray. The red color morph is more common near the coast, and the grey color morph is more common in the interior of the state. Male and female screech owls look alike.


In the fall light and temperature conditions mimic those of spring and birds and amphibians sometimes begin calling again, a reactivation of breeding behavior termed “autumnal recrudescence”. At this time, the screech owl’s tremulous call can be heard in a variety of habitats including open woodlands, deciduous forests, parks, farms, riparian areas, swamps, old orchards, small woodlots, and suburban areas. This small owl is an often common, nocturnal bird in much of New York State, though it is uncommon in heavily forested regions, at high elevations, and on Long Island. The screech owl is a year-round resident, spending both the breeding and non-breeding seasons in the same area.

The screech owl nests in natural hollows or cavities in trees, old woodpecker holes, nesting boxes, and occasionally crevices in the sides of buildings.

Screech owl pairs may roost together in the same tree cavity during the day throughout the breeding season. While the female is incubating the eggs, the male will bring food to her at night. The nest is usually about five to 20 feet off the ground. The female lays four or five eggs in wood chips, old leaves, and assorted fur and feathers from their prey.

While insects are a major food source in the summer, a hearty fare of small mammals and birds make up a majority of the screech owl’s winter diet. To survive winter, this species eats quite a bit in the fall to put on fat stores, and may store food in holes.

The best way to create habitat for the eastern screech owl is to maintain large trees with natural holes (cavities), or trees with large woodpecker holes. In areas where such trees are not available, nest boxes designed for

screech owls can be attached to trees in open forests, parks, next to woodland clearings, along forest edges, or along wooded stream edges. The nest box should have a 3-inch round opening and the box should be placed under a tree limb with the opening facing north. Add 2”-3” of wood shavings in the bottom of the nest box and place the box 10 – 30 feet high. For more information on nest boxes visit <http://www.audubonmagazine.org/backyard/backyard0201.html> 

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 Arnotconservation.info

Photo Credit: Dr. Thomas G. Barnes, University of Kentucky

What's up with all this Early Successional Habitat Stuff?

RICH TABER

What is ESH?

Early Successional Habitat (ESH) has been receiving a lot of press and emphasis in natural resource management circles lately. What's up with all of this emphasis? To begin with, New York State has an amazing variety of wildlife, and is home to these species: 32 amphibians, 39 reptiles, 375 birds, and 92 mammals. Many of these species need Early Successional Habitat, and are in peril of becoming threatened or endangered, due to the loss of ESH. Next, let's define what succession is. Succession is the orderly natural process whereby one plant community replaces another, after a disturbance of one kind or another. A disturbance can be naturally caused, such as by fire, windstorms, hurricanes, insect infestations, tree diseases, flooding, ice storms, or abandoned beaver ponds. Manmade disturbances are land clearing for suburban development, forest (silvicultural) operations, fires, and agriculture. Whatever the cause of the disturbance, the end result is that an area is returned to a more open condition, which sets the stage for succession to occur. Starting with an open area, it will progress through a series of "seral stages" on its way to becoming a mature forest.

A simple analogy of succession can start with your lawn; picture the changes which will occur over a period of years if you don't mow it. A lawn has been cleared of its original forest, a disturbance. If you don't mow it, eventually weeds will take over the area, and in a few more years, shrubs and tree seedlings will replace the weeds. Sun loving trees such as aspen and grey birch will take hold, and will be replaced by intermediate shade tolerant trees such as black cherry and white ash. As time goes by, more shade tolerant trees such as sugar maple and American beech will come to dominate the site, and

eventually become a mature forest, which may last for hundreds of years until another disturbance comes along.

A major "take home" point is that unless periodically disturbed, ESH exists on a given site for only a few short years, before moving out of the ESH stage on its way to becoming a mature forest. This is great for species that are not particular about their habitats, or ones that need mature forest conditions, but does not bode well for species which require ESH for their life cycles.

History of ESH

At the time of European settlement, much of the eastern part of this country consisted of a vast, heavily forested region. Critically needed ESH occupied relatively small percentages of the landscape, but was provided nonetheless by a variety of causes. Native Americans

cleared areas for agriculture by burning, resulting in ESH. Many river basins periodically flooded, and remained in ESH. Beavers would colonize streams, and when they depleted their food sources, they would abandon the site, the dams would break, and 'beaver meadows' would flourish, providing ESH. With all the possible causes that provided ESH, species that needed it proliferated in those areas where it existed, even though the percentage of ESH was relatively small. Foresters and Wildlife Biologists often refer to this as a "shifting mosaic" of Early Successional Habitat maintenance; nature provided a mosaic of ESH across the landscape.

The Problem

Today however, even though some disturbances that create ESH still occur, the "shifting mosaic" of ESH no longer occurs. Native Americans no longer

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Note the interspersed Early Successional Habitats: in the foreground is actively farmed grassland, in the middle is unmowed grassland reverting to shrubland, and on the woodland edge young aspen trees encroach into the field.



This is a former hayfield reverting to shrubland habitat, and has not been mowed for several years

practice their burning and clearing for agriculture. Flood plains are controlled, and have been replaced with cities and suburbs. Beavers are controlled and no longer dominate the landscape as they did. Forest fires are controlled and do not contribute much ESH either.

Upon settlement of this country, vast areas of the landscape were cleared of their forests for agriculture, which reached its peak in the late 1800s. Upwards of 75% of New York's landscape was cleared. During the late 1800s when much of New York's farmland was abandoned, forests returned to much of the state, and now 62% of New York or 18 million acres is forested. During the period of farmland abandonment, a "heyday" of fabulous ESH followed up through the 1950s.

With much of the state maturing into

forest at one time, the stage was set for a "train wreck" for ESH dependent species, as stated by Dr. Mike Zagata, Executive Director of the Ruffed Grouse Society. Forests are maturing at an unprecedented rate, with much less ESH on the landscape, and the historical means of providing ESH having been drastically reduced. Grasslands, shrublands, and seedling/sapling stages of forest growth are in short supply.

The Solution

As woodland owners, you may have a variety of ESH on your property. Grasslands, shrublands, and young, brushy, seedling/sapling stages of woodland are all different versions of ESH. What can woodland owners do to encourage ESH? ESH can be maintained via a variety of land management activities. Grasslands can be periodically mowed or "brush

hogged". This need not be done every year, but should be done at least once every third year, and after around August 1, to prevent the harming of ground nesting birds. If delayed for more than three years, mowing can be difficult as shrubs takeover a site and will wreak havoc on tractor tires and machinery. The rotational grazing of livestock can maintain grasslands; if you don't have or want livestock, perhaps you could rent out that grassland to someone who does graze.

Silvicultural activities are beneficial in creating ESH. Conducting timber stand improvements, firewood harvesting, and timber cutting in accordance with the principles of either even-age or uneven age silviculture, the forest canopy can be opened up allowing sunlight to reach the woodland floor. This allows for the proliferation of sun loving plants and providing habitat for ESH dependent species.

Groups, or guilds of ESH dependent species, can be provided habitat in a much more predictable manner than when high grading and diameter limit cutting occurs. High grading and diameter limit cutting focus only on extracting saleable timber, with little or no regard to forest sustainability, regeneration, or wildlife habitat. Forest landowners own 80% of New York's 18 million acres of forest, and have a critical role in maintaining ESH dependent wildlife species, and preventing them from becoming endangered or threatened. 🌲

For more information:

Information about woodland and wildlife habitat management, and Wildlife Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) is available on the New York Forest Owner's Association website. Go to <http://www.nyfoa.org> and click on the "Wild About Wildlife" section, and click on the publications section. The Cornell Human Dimensions website on ESH, <http://www.landownerdecisions.org/>

Rich Taber works for Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chenango County, and is the NYFOA State Wildlife Grant Project Manager. He can be reached at 607-334-5841, ext. 21, or rbt44@cornell.edu.

GOT TREES? GOT SUGARBUSH?

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NYFOA 2011 CDC FALL MEETING

Open to statewide membership

Meeting Future Forest Challenges through Partnerships: Opportunities and Resources for Landowners

September 24, 2011

Agroforestry Resource Center in Arca, NY

Hosted by the NYFOA Capital District Chapter (CDC)

This event will focus on the value of working partnerships, illustrating to other NYFOA chapters how partnerships have helped carry out our mission and provide opportunities and resources to help landowners meet the challenges facing their forests. Organizations working with the CDC of NYFOA include Cornell Cooperative Extension of Greene County (CCE) the Watershed Agricultural Council (WAC), Rensselaer Plateau Alliance (RPA), Columbia Land Conservancy (CLC) and Greene Land conservancies, the Hudson/Mohawk Resource and Conservation & Development Council (RC&D), regional Master Forest Owners (MFO), the Catskill Forest Association (CFA), and area wood based industries.

Topics of Discussion will include:

- Emerald ash borer: How NYFOA members (and others) can help deal with this invasive pest. Speaker: Mark Whitmore, Cornell University.
- Alternatives to Traditional Forest Use: An Agroforestry Overview. Speakers: Christine O'Dell, Silvo-pasture; Marilyn Wyman, Mushrooms; and Bob Beyfuss, Ginseng.
- Silvo...What? Silviculture- What is it and why is it important? Speaker: Pete Smallidge, Cornell University.
- Woody Biomass: How Can It Fit with Landowners Objectives? Speaker: Dan Conable, NY Biomass Energy Alliance

Concurrent field trip tracks are tentatively scheduled for the afternoon:

- 1) Viewing of a roadside severe exploitation harvest, a well managed woodlot owned by a Master Forest Owner, and a visit to an emerald ash borer infested site.
- 2) Walking tour of the Agroforestry Resource Center, Siuslaw Model Forest showing best management practices, an improvement harvest, the site where the ARC's oak floor was harvested, biomass examples, an American chestnut nursery and other features of the forest.
- 3) Visit a major local log export yard (B&B) and a tour of a property enrolled in Real Property Tax Law (RPTL), Section 480-a where both recent timber and firewood harvests have occurred.

Elizabeth LoGiudice, CCE Greene staff, will provide children's activities at the Model Forest for those who have children accompanying them.

**For more information or to register please contact:
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Greene County at
518-622-9820; greenec@cornell.edu; or www.agroforestrycenter.org**

Cost: \$10/person, \$15/couple, or \$5.00/youth (12 and under)



Woodland Health

A column focusing on topics that might limit the health, vigor and productivity of our private or public woodlands

COORDINATED BY MARK WHITMORE

THE BALSAM WOOLLY ADELGID IN NEW YORK

BY MARK WHITMORE

On a recent trip through the Adirondacks I was reminded of the importance of yet another non-native invasive forest pest, the Balsam Woolly Adelgid (BWA), *Adelges piceae*. This native of European forests infests only true fir trees, the genus *Abies*, and in New York the most important forest tree host is Balsam fir, *A. balsamea*, but in Christmas tree farms it would be the closely related Fraser fir, *A. fraseri*. BWA was first thought to have been introduced on nursery stock into the Maritime Provinces of Canada around 1908. It causes crown dieback and/or tree death and damage has been intense in certain circumstances. Since its introduction BWA has spread south through the northeast into the southern Appalachian Mountains as well as throughout the Pacific Northwest, basically following the range of true fir distribution.

BWA, as with other adelgids like the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, is a small aphid-like insect that feeds on the host tree's bark. Adult BWA are small, only about 1mm (or 1/32 inch) in length, and are covered by a white woolly mass of waxy hairs (Figure 1). There are only female BWA in North America and each can produce up to 200 eggs. Considering there are at least 2 generations a year in New York this can result in explosive population expansion once a susceptible host tree becomes infested (200 x 200 = 40,000 individuals from a single parent at the beginning of the season).

BWA feed by inserting their long,

tube-like mouthparts into the inner bark of the host tree. In the process of feeding they inject a substance into the bark that causes the cells to swell up, or become more "juicy". This might be good for BWA in the short run but it also causes the tree's sapwood to prematurely turn into heartwood, and in the case of intense stem infestations (Figure 2) can lead to tree death because the sapwood basically gets clogged. BWA feeding can also cause swelling, or "gouting", on twigs (Figure 3). Gouting is often found only in the upper crown, just below the top of the tree, where it can persist for years. In these situations it often produces a crown that looks like a golf ball sitting

atop a tree (Figure 4). Low level BWA infestations can persist in canopies for years causing growth loss and gradual canopy deterioration and can be frequently seen in the Adirondacks.

BWA overwinter as first-instar nymphs with their mouthparts inserted in the bark. BWA start growing in spring when the sap starts to move in the tree. Temperature closely determines how rapidly they develop. Research in the southern Appalachians found that low-elevation BWA begins developing a month or more earlier than at high elevation and they can produce a third generation (Arthur and Hain, 1984). As they feed they produce the characteristic waxy wool which will fill up with eggs when they become adults.

The only mobile, or dispersal, stage of BWA is the first instar "crawler" that emerges from the hatching egg. The crawler is so small (about 0.4mm) that it is readily carried by wind, birds, or perhaps small mammals to other trees. When it finds the appropriate location the crawler will insert its mouthparts into the bark and will not move from that spot for the rest of their life.

One fortunate aspect of this invading insect is that unlike the Hemlock



Figure 1. Balsam woolly adelgid adult on Balsam fir. M.C. Whitmore.



Figure 2. Heavy stem infestation of BWA on Balsam fir in Bear Swamp State Forest, NY. M.C. Whitmore.

Woolly Adelgid, there appears to be some amount of resistance in our native True fir trees. While Balsam fir and Frazer fir seem to be quite susceptible, Noble fir (*A. procera*) appears to be resistant and Grand fir (*A. grandis*) can harbor low level infestations for 30 years or more. One of the more fascinating things about BWA is the fact that you can have two fir trees growing in close proximity, one will be infested and the other will exhibit no symptoms. I've seen this numerous times and in most cases can attribute the difference to soil conditions that would weaken

the tree that is symptomatic. Needless to say, where the trees are planted off-site BWA can be a problem, such as in urban plantings or may be the case in Christmas tree plantations. In addition, air pollution has been implicated enhancing susceptibility to BWA (Hain 1987).

There have been numerous efforts to establish natural enemies of BWA but success has been limited and with the reproductive potential of this insect there would need to be a high level of efficacy to keep populations static. Cold winter temperatures were initially thought to be effective in limiting the distribution of BWA. Even into the 1980's many forest entomologists didn't think BWA would spread inland from coastal fir forests. We now know that this is not the case. BWA has been found throughout the fir forests of New York and I've even seen it near the summit of Mt. Washington in New Hampshire.

So what does this all mean to the woodlot owner in New York? First of all, if you are growing Fraser or Balsam fir for Christmas trees you should be paying attention to catch the first signs of BWA infestation. If you find it in a few trees you could wrap them in a tarp, cut, then take them away and destroy them. In trees with light infestation an application of a systemic insecticide such as Bayer Advanced Tree and Shrub should work but you might want to investigate the economics of treatment. Whenever using insecticides be sure that you fully read and follow the instructions on the label.



Figure 3. Twig gouting on Balsam fir, Bear Swamp State Forest, NY. M.C. Whitmore.

For those with ornamental plantings of true firs look for crown symptoms and gouting of the twigs. Treatment of individual trees with a systemic insecticide may be effective but also may be moderated in heavy infestations if the vascular system is compromised.

Balsam fir is an important species of some wild forests in the Adirondacks and Catskills as well as in small localized wetlands of western New York. Area-wide treatments would be prohibitively expensive and potentially ecologically damaging. At this time

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Got Trees? Got Questions?
 Visit the **Woodland Owners Forum** at:
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 to share ideas, information and questions with fellow woodland owners, foresters and other members of the forest community across New York



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Balsam Woolly Adelgid (continued)



Figure 4. Typical crown decline symptoms of BWA in Balsam fir, Adirondack Park, NY. M.C. Whitmore.

perhaps it is most important to identify BWA presence and follow stand development, at the same time encouraging

reproduction of trees that appear to be resistant. In the southern Appalachians research indicates Fraser fir is persisting but the forests are changing (Smith and Nicolas, 2000). BWA is an insect that will continue to grow in our forests and likely alter stand structure over time, but we may be able to keep the true firs in New York's forests if we pay attention. 

Sources

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Mark Whitmore is a forest entomologist in the Cornell University Department of Natural Resources and the chair of the NY Forest Health Advisory Council.

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Ask a Professional (continued)

Skidder – Equipment used by a **logger** to move logs from a harvest area to a **landing**. The skidder drags the logs. Logs can be attached with either a cable, or enclosed within a large grapple that pinches several logs together at the same time.

Slab wood – The outer portions of the tree that are removed when a **log** is initially being processed into boards. The slabs are of little economic value and any defects that occur only in the slab are of minimal concern.

Spile – The originally metal and now more commonly plastic spouts inserted into sugar and red maples to collect sap for processing into syrup.

Stand – A contiguous management unit in a forest where trees are of similar species and size. Homogeneity within the stand permits the uniform application of management practices. Stands are analogous to fields in an agricultural context, such as a hay field or a corn field.

Structure – The physical configuration of a forest, particularly as described by the variety of tree ages or diameters.

Stumpage – The economic value of a tree standing on the stump.

Sugarbush – That area of forest dominated by red or sugar maple and where sap is collected for processing into maple syrup.

Uneven-aged – A forest where there are three or more distinct age classes and the difference between the youngest and oldest age class is more than 20% of the total age of the **stand**. 🌲



Hickory nuts, such as these pignut hickory nuts, are important mast for many wildlife. Pignut hickory nuts have a thin husk compared to the thick husk on shagbark hickory.

Peter J. Smallidge is the NYS Extension Forester and Director Cornell University Arnot Teaching and Research Forest. He can be reached at email: pjs23@cornell.edu or visit his website at www.ForestConnect.info



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Timber Topics:

When to Have a Timber Harvest

HUGH CANHAM AND RONALD PEDERSEN

We have just reached the end of one of the hottest summers on record. On several occasions, we couldn't help thinking how nice it will be this winter skiing through our woodlot and trekking through the "whispering pines and hemlocks" with the snow gently sifting down. We have nice trails, and, well...maybe you don't but wish you did, so here are a few ideas.

Owners now enjoying gently sloping trails that take advantage of the terrain may have had a carefully planned timber sale in the past to thank. For many families, however, the answer might lie in planning ahead for recreational benefits from a future timber harvest. A carefully structured timber sale embracing conditions on where and how skid trails, haul roads, and log loading areas are laid out, plus clean-up and grading upon completion can be very rewarding. Quite apart from recreation, it is strongly recommended that timber sale contracts always provide for skid trail layout and grading with seeding as needed upon completion.

While marking the trees for harvest your forester will be able to make suggestions on layout of trails and other applicable "Best Management Practices". Better known as "BMPs," these industry standards and guidelines address control of water run-off and erosion, stream protection, safety, and damage to remaining trees, among other areas.

Timber harvests often can be a way to develop family values such as trails, forest openings, wildlife plantings or scenic outlooks, while encouraging long-term growth of desirable species by removal of fully mature trees and culls. Take your time in considering where you want these trails or other features after a first sketch on

a map of your property. Your woodlands management plan describing the various stands and their characteristics would provide guidance, as would a topographic map of the property. The location of likely timber harvests in the near and longer term, as well as present trails, slopes, streams, property access points, and boundaries are among the factors worthy of consideration.

Grading trails or bridging wet spots need not be part of a timber harvest, but in many cases incorporating such activities in a sale may be the most economical approach if a lot of machine work will be needed. Whether or not this work is to be handled by a separate contractor or as part of a timber sale, it is essential that your plans and expectations be spelled out accurately in writing. Verbal descriptions cannot take the place of a carefully prepared map and on-the-ground markings.

The written description and instructions would be part of the sale prospectus that is put out for bid, along with the forester's listing of number of trees, species, and estimated board feet. Particularly if the desired trail work is substantial relative to the amount of timber for sale, you may wish to negotiate the sale and work with a harvesting firm you have dealt with before or know very well. Again, your forester can be helpful. While this is probably a one-time experience for you, a professional foresters' guidance is based on many similar situations over time.

Obviously, there will be a cost to having the trail work done. If the work is done apart from harvesting, the cost is clearly known. If the timber harvest does not include the trail work, the stumpage value of the marked timber is clearly known. If the trail work is handled as special conditions to the sale of timber, the added costs to the

logger of the trail work likely will not be listed separately, but rather will be reflected in an overall lower sale price. In any case, you must decide if the lower stumpage price with your special considerations is worth the reduction in the amount received for the sale.

Finally, if you decide to combine the logging with trail work, it is particularly important to monitor the sale progress and make sure that trails are graded and free of tops and other slash and that all conditions specified in the contract are fully met. While holding an amount in escrow is standard practice and recommended, as a practical matter, it is too late after the sale is completed to find that the work was not completed as agreed. As with any other business transaction, you and your forester must talk with the loggers on the ground, communicate with whomever signed the contract, and periodically inspect the job.

Good skiing, hiking, or birding in your woods! 🏔️

Hugh Canham is a retired professor from SUNY ESF and a member of NYFOA's CNY chapter. Ron Pedersen is a past President of NYFOA, current board member and a member of the Capital District chapter.

Would you like to receive an electronic version of future editions of *The Forest Owner*? If so, please send Liana an email (lgooding@nyfoa.org).

You will receive an email every two months that includes a PDF file of the publication. While being convenient for you – read *The Forest Owner* anytime, any place; this will also help to save the Association money as the cost of printing and postage continues to rise with each edition.

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NEWS & NOTES

Smallidge to Receive Technology Transfer Award from SAF

Peter Smallidge, NYFOA Editorial Committee Chair and Ex-Officio Board Member, who is also New York State extension forester working out of Cornell University, director of Cornell's Arnot Teaching and Research Forest, and director of the Cornell Maple Program, will receive the Technology Transfer Award, one of seven national awards from the Society of American Foresters (SAF). Founded in 1900 by Gifford Pinchot, SAF is the national scientific and educational organization representing the forestry profession in the United States.

The Technology Transfer Award recognizes outstanding achievement in technology transfer, implementation, and extension by a Society of American Foresters member, as evidenced in the recipient's career or involvement in SAF Working Group or science program activities. Smallidge will receive the award during a ceremony at the forthcoming 2011 SAF National Convention, to be held November 2-6 in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Smallidge received this honor in recognition for his record of delivering high-quality extension materials in print, online, and in person, as well as for his ability to connect with a wide variety of audiences. He is credited with developing the first and longest-running Internet outreach program—the ForestConnect webinar series—started in 2007, and the

success of the program garnered him the Association of Natural Resources Extension Professionals' Gold Level Award for Individual Program Leadership in 2009.

Celebrating New York's Forests Photo Contest

In honor of **International Year of Forests**, The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Division of Lands and Forests kicks off the **Celebrating New York's Forests Photo Contest**. This contest is an effort to increase awareness of and appreciation for all types of forests, urban and rural, large and small, public and privately owned, across the state.

We are looking for the best photos in the following categories:

- Nature (wildlife, plants, natural landscapes, etc.)
- Enjoying the forest (hunting, fishing, trails, camping, hiking, etc.)
- Trees where we live (parks, streets, yards, etc.)
- Forest products (maple syrup, lumber, baseball bats, furniture, etc.)
- State-owned forests (State Forests, Forest Preserve lands, forested Wildlife Management Areas, campgrounds)

All submissions must be received by close of business on **November 1, 2011**.

All submissions will be screened for acceptability. Acceptable submissions will be judged by DEC personnel. The

judges will review the photographs by category.

The winning photograph along with a selection of entries (determined by DEC) from each category will be posted to the contest web pages. Each photographer may only win one category. The decisions of the judges are final.

All submissions must be received by close of business on November 1, 2011. Winners will be announced Thursday, December 1, 2011. Submissions received after November 1 will not be considered in this contest.

Please help us spread the word about this contest, tell your friends, put it on facebook, do whatever you can to get the word the out.

For more information visit the Celebrating New York's Forests Photo Contest webpage. <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/75396.html>

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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

NYFOA is in need of individuals to volunteer for *two new positions*.

1. The first position would require an individual(s) to play a leadership role on the Communications and Outreach Committee. This person would help craft and implement a comprehensive marketing strategy for NYFOA. It is expected that this strategy would be incorporated into the *Forest Owner*, the NYFOA web site, as well as any advertisements and articles in the general press and perhaps other venues.
2. The second position is for an individual comfortable with technology that could research options for such things as e-mail management software, web site design (possibly implementation), social networking options and similar topics.

Interested parties are encouraged to **contact Jim Minor**, President of NYFOA for exploratory discussions at 585-247-7069 or jminor@nyfoa.org

Member Profile: *Rolf and Deb Wentorf*

CARLY NEUMANN

Rolf and Deb Wentorf live in the middle of 106 private, heavily-wooded acres in Johnsonville, New York, and also own 142 acres in White Creek, New York, located only a few miles from the Vermont border. Originally from the upstate New York area, Rolf worked on Long Island as an aerospace engineer and eventually returned to work and teach at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Deb still works there today as a technical writer.

But Rolf missed the open spaces of his childhood while living on Long Island. Growing up, he had lived on his parents' small farm in Columbia County; his two older sisters had horses, and so this kept the family in the country where his parents gained an interest in agriculture. Ultimately, it was this background that led Wentorf back to upstate New York, and after he and Deb married in 1987,

the couple began the search for their current home.

In the search for their 106 acres in Johnsonville, the couple almost gave up hope. After finding the property listed in a realty paper, the couple drove to the area, hoping to see the land for themselves, but since no one had said the property was located on the other side of the railroad tracks which parallel the main road, they drove past the small railroad overpass entrance three times before giving up and heading home. Fortunately, they were eventually able to view the property with the help of a local realtor; they purchased the land in 1990 and moved into their home in 1994. The property, which features well-drained soils, was once used as farmland but was abandoned, and it is now regenerating. Interestingly, when the Wentorfs first bought the property,

there was no access large enough to allow a concrete truck through the small opening in the railroad overpass, so it was not until after they had modified an access road that they could actually build their current home!

The Wentorfs bought their second wooded property — the 142 acres in White Creek — in 1996. Originally used as a sheep farm centuries ago, the property still has many stone walls running through it, and you can still tell which fields were plowed when it was an active farm, as some still have good soil while others are almost bare rock. The property also originally contained an old 1700's farmhouse, but since the couple didn't care to take on another renovation project, they parceled off two acres of land around the old structure and sold the farmhouse, which was later renovated by the new owners and is now in excellent condition.

The couple didn't have much knowledge about forestry management practices when they first bought the Johnsonville property. After Rolf had developed more of an interest they purchased the White Creek property later. Both properties had been previously logged decades ago, and Wentorf initially concentrated on harvesting firewood to heat their home. About two years after they moved to Johnsonville, the couple noticed a newspaper ad for a NYFOA meeting, and decided to attend. Next, a state forester evaluated the land, created a management plan, and mentioned a cost-share program where they could get their trees marked and get some assistance with cutting. The Wentorf's chose to do a few acres at first, and so started their growing interest in forest management. The couple later went through and




Maple regeneration under a Black Birch Canopy as a result of thinning.

continued on page 22

thinned about 50% of their total acreage, and over time installed and improved trails — on both the Johnsonville and White Creek properties — some of which were still evident from when the lands had originally been logged. Eventually, the couple was in a position to sell some wood, and Rolf remembers his first timber sale of White birch with a local timber mill. During the process, a company forester came out and verified that the trees were what they wanted to purchase, and at this point Wentorf began learning about — and having a more active interest in — cutting and selling timber.

The Wentorfs have experienced a number of natural disasters, which have affected their forests, but even these have been learning experiences. Most notably, a tornado went through their Johnsonville property in 1997 and “selected all of the trees that their thinning had created with big bushy tops and threw 95% of them to the ground in an eight-acre area.” That summer, Wentorf salvaged the wood himself, selling it to local mills. The tornado’s swath formed a natural clear-cut area, which they decided to let regenerate itself, and the species that initially regenerated struggled. Wentorf recalls, “the Black Cherry got hit by caterpillars year after year, and the White Pine and Quaking Aspen were out-competed by invasive species such as Honeysuckle and Multiflora rose which seemed to creep in from the road.” As a result, the Wentorfs changed their management strategies three or four years ago and, after

attending an agroforestry seminar at Cornell, they planted nut trees with hay in between the rows. Rolf has selected nut trees such as hickory and walnut for the new plantings because, as he puts it, “if you’re going to be growing trees, you might as well be growing something you can eat.” The project is currently going well. The couple’s properties have also been affected by a small forest fire and ice damage, but Wentorf’s attitude reflects optimism: “Things keep changing and we’ve just got to change with them,” he says.

Wentorf, who started his own firewood business several years ago, spends most of his time on his lands, but he also went through the Master Forest Owner program and served as both chair and vice-chair with NYFOA’s South-eastern Adirondack Chapter; his wife, Deb, served as the chapter’s secretary for about ten years. Together, they have worked with many foresters, DEC and private, over the years to get the property where it is today, and the most successful goal, in Wentorf’s mind, is the regeneration of the sugar maples on their lands due to their thinning practices. While now active with timber sales and the firewood business, Wentorf states that the initial reason for purchasing the property was as an investment; that philosophy still holds true to this day. 

Carly Neumann is a Forest Resources Extension Program Assistant at Cornell University, Dept. of Natural Resources, Ithaca, NY 14853. Dr. Shorna Allred is the faculty advisor for the Member Profile Series.

Do you want access to woodlot, wildlife, agroforestry, maple and other related information at your finger tips? Internet resources exist and help connect NY woodland owners to unbiased research-based information. Check out Cornell Cooperative Extension – Woodlots on the Internet

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MAGAZINE DEADLINE

Materials submitted for the November/December Issue should be sent to Mary Beth Malmsheimer, 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.



Deadline for material is October 1, 2011

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