

Fall

September
2019

ASGAARD Farm Woods Walk

10am Saturday October 12th

74 Asgaard Way, Ausable Forks NY

Welcome New NAC Members

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Scenic - Historical - Sustainable - Progressive

NY Forest Owner Assoc. members, local woodlot owners and all forest enthusiasts are invited to attend a woods walk at the Asgaard Farm and Dairy in Ausable Forks NY. The workshop is free and registration is not required.

Scenic Asgaard Farm and Dairy is the former home of artist, writer, adventurer and political activist Rockwell Kent (1882-1971). Kent resided here from the 1920s until his death in 1971. Asgaard not only served as the inspiration for many of Kent's paintings, but was also a working dairy farm. David Brunner and Rhonda Butler acquired the farm in 1988. After working several years to restore the land and buildings, they put the farm back into production in 2003.

"We sustainably harvest logs for our own use as well as for Ward Lumber in Jay, NY, under American Tree Farm certification. The mission of the Tree Farm System is to promote the growing of renewable forest resources on private lands while protecting environmental benefits and increasing public understanding of all benefits of productive forestry. We have a continuous program of harvesting each year (mostly white pine) but also some mixed hardwoods, including oak and maple. We practice both traditional chainsaw harvest and/or mechanical harvest depending on the site and situation. One of our earlier harvests was an ice storm '98 salvage cut with a conventional crew. More recently we harvested an area along the river in September of 2013 which is currently utilized as a "silvopature" grazing area where we raise "Heritage Hogs". The hogs are rotated through a recently logged woodlot, clearing the site, distributing fertilizer and rooting up the soil to facilitate new silvopatures that will eventually provide the rest of our livestock with shade and forage in the summer as well as protection from winter elements."

This promises to be an interesting tour with some progressive farming and forestry techniques being utilized by the owners, who have enrolled a portion of their 1100-acre properties in the 480a forest tax plan. There will be a chance to see and discuss the condition of the forest 20 years after Ice Storm '98.

Mark your calendars, bring a brown bag lunch and a friend, appropriate footwear and clothing on what we hope will be a perfect weather fall day. Those who are up to the challenge are invited to walk to the summit of nearby Haystack mountain (not the 46'er) after the woods walk is completed.

Scott Bonno

CHAIR REPORT

Hello NAC Members

I hope you all had a good summer of family activities and got into your woodlots for fun and management. I don't own any land, so I get my "management kicks" from working in my brother's and friend's woodlots.

NAC put together two excellent events this spring/summer. It is very encouraging and rewarding to see collaboration among the members and cooperating organizations. The April educational program "Healthy, Diverse Forests: Management Techniques & Forest Walk", held at the Paul Smith's VIC, in cooperation with Paul Smith's College and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Essex County, was well attended and came off without a hitch. It was just plain a lot of fun mixing it up with a wide diversity of people all interested in forest management! And then, the recent woods walk hosted by Scott and Donna Bonno, was similarly very interesting, educational and a lot of fun. Thank you all who helped organize the events and those who attended! The upcoming Asgaard Farm Woods Walk, Oct 12, will ideally be a similar success.

I would greatly like to see continued involvement by the membership initiating programming ideas, helping to plan and run the programs, and of course promoting attendance by both members and friends, family, neighbors, and the general public. For instance, well over half the attendees were non-NAC members at Scott's woods walk. Such cooperation leads to better programs and distributes the workload such that all can enjoy the event and feel a sense of accomplishment. Please get in touch with any of the NAC officers with programming ideas that you would like to see taken on and of course volunteer to help out with such programs!

Thank you,

Gary Goff

NAC Chair

Bonno Woods Walk Recap



On Saturday, Aug. 17, NAC member Scott Bonno hosted a woods walk at his 230-ac "Glenmeal Maple Lane Farm" in the town of Pierrepont, St. Lawrence County. 35 forest owners and otherwise interested persons attended, which is an excellent turnout for such events in the north country. Scott and his wife Donna had the day perfectly planned and all came off without a hitch!

We started off with coffee, donuts and introductions at an outbuilding and from there went up to a maple sap holding tank, which will soon have a vacuum pump attached. He sells sap from 1100 taps to a neighbor who produces syrup. We walked through a portion of the young sugar bush and assessed tree health and recovery from the '98 ice storm. Interestingly there were 2 foundations from old sugar shacks, maybe 100 years old. It was obvious that when it is time to regenerate the stand, deer browsing and ferns will need to be dealt with. There were several spectacularly massive old and maple "wolf" trees scattered through the bush, which date back to when the stand was likely a pasture with a few open-grown shade trees. Scott pointed out a few of the young timber trees on which he keeps diameter growth data.

Scott has been experimenting with scattering red oak acorns and hickory nuts in stands in an effort to establish a mast crop to compensate for the loss of beech mast due to Beech Scale. Once regeneration begins, he puts plastic tree tubes over them to keep the deer off. It is showing some promise, but he feels the saplings will need more light to flourish. We also visited a managed grassland and a few deer/turkey food plots he has established in old fields. Scott typically removes 100 cords of wood from all the thinnings, which he sells or uses as firewood.

Scott and Donna provided a great platter of cold cuts for sandwiches for lunch along with desert which we ate in his spruced-up garage turned lecture hall. We had 4 guest speakers through lunch: Steve Sherwood (NYS DEC Forester) brought us up to date on invasive insects, Kris Williams (Saratoga Coop. Extension) reviewed the Master Forest Owner Volunteer Program and other Extension programs, Mike Zagata (NYFOA Program Development) went over some of the many benefits of NYFOA membership and Mike Corse (professional mushroom grower) introduced us to how to cultivate mushrooms. Donna and Scott had solicited a few door prizes from WalMart, Tractor Supply, and the Woodchop Shop.

Rain threatened after lunch, abbreviating the planned walk, but saw some more food plots, a managed micro-habitat hollow, and a hemlock-yellow birch swamp. We wrapped up back at the cars, probably a mile-plus walk. Nearly all attendees stayed through the afternoon, which attests to Scott's diverse woodlot, his activities and accomplishments and his very interesting personal experiences and dialogue through the tour. As with all NYFOA woods walks, there were many side conversations, questions and answers, and sharing of experiences among the participants.

Special thanks go out to the NAC woods walk planning committee; Bill Lynch, Scott Bonno, and Steve Sherwood for putting together a great program at a great location!

Gary Goff

Putting a Woods Walk Lesson to Work

Woods walk events provide excellent opportunities to collaborate and socialize with other forest owners while gaining valuable insight into current challenges we face in our forests today. Sometimes the forest owner's list of challenges can be overwhelming. There is an immense amount of resources available to us as NYFOA members which can help provide a path to a healthier forest. Woods walks take it a step further by seeing both the methods and results of applied techniques.

The Graham Park Woods Walk in the fall of 2017 provided such guidance in controlling beech. The lessons learned at that walk provided us a chance to see the tools, technique and results of herbicide thinning treatments made prior to that event. We decided to give it a shot in our woods. We bought the recommended supplies and tried some of the application options. We notched the "smiley" face cuts on each side of numerous beaches in various places and applied roundup in proper safety coverage. We hit it in September before leaf drop and it was clear by early spring those trees were no longer influencing their neighbors' fight for light, water & nutrients.

Our forest goal is not to eliminate the Beech, but merely prevent it from dominating or filling any open space created from other forest impacts from owner directed activities or mother nature events. Their branches seem to have no limit on reach when it comes to finding more sun. In our woods, most of the annual retrimming of paths is simply because of "beech reach". Trimming back a few branches this year seems to only encourage other branches from the same stem to find a way over to the path opening. In the past, without a full understanding of the invasive nature of beech, we'd just cut down the stems near the path. Yielding of course more beech stems in subsequent years. Now we simply try and strike a balance of beech trees in right locations and have the skills and tools to control their presence in our forest.

The process works and we like how surgical you can be without the worry of increasing the beech crawl via the underground network. You can also customize your approach with a constant eye on personal safety.

Decisions still have to be made. What do you do with the stems? Firewood? Wildlife shelter either standing or perhaps as slash piles for snowshoe hare? Beech trees can be rather knarly to deal with, dead or alive. Do you drop it now and herbicide the stump or just slash/treat the stem and let nature take it from there? A visual survey and analysis of the quality in the immediate surrounding area often will dictate if a particular beech stem has a purpose. Your forestry plan may also come into the decision process. When in doubt, reach out to a local forestry professional for guidance and possible marking of what to take and what to leave. Even if your primary objective is simply a healthy forest, a forester can provide guidance based on your objectives.

Any stems along our road or most travelled trails would we decided to just cut directly down with herbicide applied to the stump. Controlling the location and timing of the tree fall was the goal. We apply the "hack/slash & squirt" process Steven Graham demonstrated for us at his walk on other, less visible or travelled locations. Your preference and tolerance for forest aesthetics could also be a factor. Having gone through a decade plus of ADK ice storm recovery, we opted for less dead or dying stems scattered throughout our forest.

We encourage you to not only attend NYFOA NAC woods walks and events when possible, but to experiment with some of the techniques discovered at these gatherings. Share your successes and techniques with us by contributing to our newsletter. See the links column to the right to read more about the process of controlling beech. Do the research and test the process. Enjoy every moment in your forest.

Bob Coupal

Forestry, Nature and Activity Links

If you are viewing this
newsletter digitally you can
click on the link directly
otherwise search by the title
given to most likely land in the
same place.

Paul Smith VIC Programs

<https://www.paulsmiths.edu/vic/programs/>

NYFOA Statewide Events

<https://www.nyfoa.org/events>

NYFOA Resources

<https://www.nyfoa.org/resources>

NYFOA Wildlife and Forestry

<https://www.nyfoa.org/application/files/6614/7948/5977/WildlifeandForestryinNYNorthernHardwoods.pdf>

Cornell Forest Connect

<http://blogs.cornell.edu/cceforestconnect/>

Cornell forest Connect Resources

<http://blogs.cornell.edu/cceforestconnect/who-can-i-call-for-help/>

Strategies to Control American Beech

<https://smallfarms.cornell.edu/2015/10/strategies-to-control/>



Not a Trail Cam-Iphone-No Zoom!

Upcoming Events

- **Asgard Farm woodswalk**

10am Saturday October 12th , 74 Asgaard Way, Ausable Forks, NY
Bring a brown bag lunch and a friend, no registration required

- **Fall Forestry Roundtable**

Climate Change and the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act

Tuesday October 15th <http://www.adkresearch.org/conference/specialty/>
Northwest Bay Conference Center, Adirondak Hall, SUNY Adirodak, 640 Bay Rd ,Queensbury

- **2020 April - May Time Period**

Scott Bonno is working on scheduling a walk or event in Lewis / Jefferson county area. If you have any interest or thoughts on options for this event please contact Scott.

- **See You at Asgaard**

