

The New York Forest Owner

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION

For people caring about New York's trees and forests

January/February 2017



Member Profile: Jena Buckwell & Colin Butgereit

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**THE NEW YORK
FOREST OWNERS
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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 \$45.

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www.nyfoa.org

COVER: Jena Buckwell taking a break while spending an afternoon splitting and stacking wood. For member profile see page 21. All photos courtesy of Jena Buckwell and Colin Butgereit.

From The President

Landowners when surveyed are often reluctant to admit there is any financial motivation involved in management of our forests or even in ownership of forested land. According to the National Woodland Owner Survey, conducted by the US Forest Service, "Most landowners say that beauty, wildlife, legacy, privacy, and nature are more important than



investment, timber, and non-timber forest products." The importance of financial motivation should not be overlooked. My wife and

I recently hosted a forester from Vermont for deer hunting. Naturally, the conversation was often about forestry and associated issues, both in the evening and during the hunt (we generally hunt out of home made elevated box blinds and hence can converse without the deer hearing us.) Our visitor wrote an article in Sawmill and Woodlot magazine in March 2015 called "It Is Not All About the Money" (the article is available at <https://robboholleranforester.org/articles/>). As the article states, "there is nothing wrong with financial motivation. Land is a significant investment, with considerable costs for maintenance and management. It is this economic consideration that leads us to grow trees to full economic maturity, and to ensure proper reforestation after harvest. Good forest stewardship also allows the real

estate to accumulate value." In addition, "Many harvesting operations involve more than just selling timber. We make a 'package deal' with road or trail improvements, aesthetic considerations, removal of cull trees, scarification of harvest sites, or other services. And the wood pays for all this."

The schedule for NYFOA's seminars at the Farm Show on February 23-25 appears on page 19 in this issue. These programs are free and open to all and were selected to help landowners get more benefits from their woodlots. There should be something here to interest every forest owner. Programs start on the hour and allow time for questions and discussion. In addition to the seminars, NYFOA staffs a booth where you can speak with a NYS Department of Environmental Conservation forester or a Cornell trained Master Forest Owner Volunteer. Mark your calendars and we hope to see you there.

Also, the NYFOA Annual Meeting will be Saturday April 8, 2017 at SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry. Save the date. Great speakers have been arranged, we are offering some fabulous door prizes and a silent auction will be held. The silent auction beneficiaries for 2017 will be the NY 4-H forestry invitational team and a new program of NYFOA mini-grants to help bring forestry into school classrooms. It will be a fun and informative event and is a great chance to meet fellow forest owners from around the state. Send your registration form in promptly.

—Charles Stackhouse
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.

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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Restore New York Woodlands Legislative Initiative

JERRY MICHAEL & STACEY KAZACOS


Thank you to the NYFOA members who visited or wrote to their state legislators this past fall. As discussed in previous issues of the *NY Forest Owner*, we are asking the governor and the legislature to earmark \$3 million from the \$300 million Environmental Protection Fund for stewardship practices on private and public forestlands. Specifically, the funds would provide a 50% cost-share for practices required to establish forest regeneration, including the management of interfering vegetation and deer exclosure fencing. We also requested support for certain revisions to the Forest Tax Law 480a, including a reduction of the minimum acreage to qualify from 50 to 25 acres, relief from some burdensome requirements, and

new funding to reimburse local taxing authorities for “tax shift” resulting from enrollment in the program.

Sample letters were provided to NYFOA membership in an early-September email, and presentation materials were provided to about 20 members who volunteered to meet personally with certain key legislators in their home district offices. We know that many NYFOA members responded to the call for action because their letters to the Governor are usually referred to DEC Commissioner Basil Seggos and we hear about that. We have also received very positive feedback from members who personally visited their state senators and/or assemblypersons, and many of these legislators have pledged

to sponsor or co-sponsor whatever legislation may be required to further these initiatives.

We are also pleased that the Council of Forest Resource Organizations (CFRO) and the Empire State Forest Products Association (ESFPA) have endorsed our proposals, although at a lower level of financial support than we have requested.

If our efforts prove successful, the governor’s budget message for 2017-2018 will request funding for these initiatives and the legislature may act on his recommendations during the first quarter of 2017. If we think an additional “push” from the NYFOA membership will be helpful, we will let you know via email. 

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Silent Auction for Youth Forestry is Building Steam!

DEAN FAKLIS

NYFOA's traditional silent auction coincides with its annual meeting on April 8, 2017. The auction's beneficiaries for 2017 have been selected from several worthy organizations that are passionate about forestry and NY's young people. The winners are NY's 4-H Forestry Invitational Team and NYFOA's Woodlands Mini Grants for Educators! There is a lot of good information on the auction and its beneficiaries at the NYFOA website. Please follow the link on NYFOA's home page, www.nyfoa.org. Please consider giving a kind donation of cash and/or auction item(s).

The NY 4-H forestry team continues to post strong results but needs our help to reach more NY youth. We've structured a "one-two punch" to help 4-H. Financially, through our auction, and with our time using our newly-developed forestry workshop for beginners. I gave the workshop for the first time on

October 23, 2016 to Livingston County families and the room was completely overstuffed with children ages 6 to well over 60! Thirty minutes of talk and sixty minutes of woodswalk, which included tree identification and tree measurements. Wow, do the kids catch on fast; it was my pleasure to be able to deliver the good news about woodlands. Oh, did I mention that we topped it all off with 30 minutes of Q&A and eating serious amounts of sweetened goodies? What fun!

Your auction donation and purchase will help the NY 4-H Forestry Invitational Team and its efforts (their detailed proposal is on the auction's website). And if you're inclined and ready to see big smiling faces, your donation of your time in your community will have big impacts on our future landowners. The presentation and worksheets are free to you for the asking ([dfaklis@](mailto:dfaklis@frontiernet.net)



frontiernet.net). Just coordinate with your Cornell Cooperative Extension and add refreshments for a complete and balanced learning experience.

Please visit the auction website at www.nyfoa.org today. Download the donation form, review it and please seriously consider giving a generous gift. NYFOA is recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)3 organization. NYFOA is already receiving donations. Donors are listed on the auction's website (at the bottom of the page) at www.nyfoa.org, unless there is a wish for anonymity.

Soon, we'll be posting pictures of the donated items at the auction website for inspection. Some of the items will be available for bidding on-line before and after the annual meeting. Some items will only be available for bidding at the annual meeting on April 8th in Syracuse, mostly to keep shipping costs down. Meeting attendees have the added advantage of being able to bid in-person and on-line, which gives them access to all donated items.

We're trying to raise \$5,000 for these fine youth forestry programs using the auction. Cash donations directly to NYFOA earmarked for the auction are greatly appreciated. If you have questions about the auction, please send me a note directly (dfaklis@frontiernet.net) or send a note to auction@nyfoa.org. If you'd like to volunteer to help implement the auction, we sure could use a few more hands so please send us a note. It's easy, fun, and many hands make light work.



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 influence 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

Managing Small Parcels

Question: We have approximately 10 acres of mixed hardwood timber. How do we go about having a consultation to effectively manage the forest, and how do we go about finding a person to log this area correctly? (Michelle S., SFC)

Answer: In New York and most of the eastern states, the greatest proportion of woodland owners have relatively small parcels. A "small" parcel size is not defined, but often considered to be less than 10 acres, or less than 50 acres. The USDA National Woodland Owner Survey offers a feature to make tables and charts about owner attributes and intentions (Google search "nwos table maker"). The NWOS data for NY indicates that 62% of owners have parcels less than 9 acres and 28% of owners have parcels that are 10 to 49 acres. The average parcel size is 18.3 acres. The 90% of owners with parcels less than 50 acres collectively control about 42% of the woodlands.

Small is perhaps best defined, from the owner's perspective, relative to what the owner wants to accomplish. From that perspective, a parcel might be too small, or not. Statewide however, 13% of owners with parcels less than 49 acres have had commercial harvests, 4% of those with parcels less

than 10 acres have had a commercial harvest. These small-parcel owners want to be active on their land, but are challenged by the scale of operations. As parcel sizes decrease, the feasibility for commercial activity also decreases, but there are still options.

The challenges of extracting woodland products, especially sawlogs or firewood, relate to the costs of

operations versus the benefit or value obtained from those products. The fixed costs include, for example, those associated with moving equipment, building landings for log trucks, arranging for log trucks, and in some communities town or municipal permits (Figure 1). Another fixed cost is the opportunity cost of harvesting a small parcel with the time to coordinate and execute the harvest, rather than setting up on a larger parcel that will provide a greater volume and value. Variable costs, or those that differ among harvests, might be less or greater on small parcels. On small parcels the skidding distance will be less and thus a reduced cost. However, there will be fewer options for landings, and a higher percentage of the harvest area adjacent to neighbors. Thus, as parcel sizes get smaller, the cost of operations on a per acre basis increases. For a business (logging is ultimately a business) to justify operating on a parcel, the value must be greater than the cost.

Woodland owners with small parcels may be placed in a compromised position given the need for value to



Figure 1. The costs for logging depends in part on the type of equipment, but for any logger there are costs for moving equipment and setting up the harvest. On small parcels, the cost per acre is higher than on larger parcels.



Figure 2. DIY harvests will often make use of small equipment belonging to the owner or a family member. Owners need to use particular care because they usually lack the skill of a professional logger and their equipment has fewer safety features than commercial equipment.

exceed cost. Some owners will decide to take no action because the changes in their woodlands would be too substantial. Owners who need to have some management applied, such as for forest health or forest products, need to find strategies to have the work done, but without overly excessive harvesting that could nullify the owner's objectives.

There are two paths an owner might take. Any given owner might take one or the other at different times for different circumstances. For lack of better terms, these paths are "Do It Yourself" (DIY) and "commercial."

Regardless of the path an owner pursues, a forester should be involved in the planning, design and oversight of the activities. Because of the smaller area and likely lower values as compared to larger parcels, foresters might be more inclined to charge a flat rate rather than percentage of the harvest value. Foresters will also know the loggers who work in an area and who might have a business strategy with lower costs than other loggers.

Owners should start with a DEC public service forester, but may ultimately need to select a private-sector forester from a list provided by the DEC.

The DIY option requires that the owner or the owner's friends have the necessary equipment, skill with that equipment, time and motivation. These are real investments and easy to underestimate. However, many owners thrive on this type of activity, or have friends who do. This option effectively reduces the costs by excluding or reducing the need to transport equipment, pay salaries, and pay overhead. Owners should be aware that their investment of time has value because they could be doing something else that might be more important or more productive.

Time and motivation are important, but if their availability is overestimated the results may not have great consequences. However, overestimating the skill or appropriate equipment for the task could result in personal injury, death, or damage to the woods. Of particular note is

the essential need to be able to use directional felling techniques when cutting trees. Also, having the right equipment to maneuver in the woods and extract the size and quantity of logs being harvested. Another reality is that the DIY small-scale logging is hard and slow work. The equipment can't move large quantities of wood (Figure 2). It is typically impractical to move commercial volumes of wood with small-scale equipment.

The DIY path results in logs at the disposal of the woodland owner. The owner may be able to process the logs for firewood, hire a portable bandsaw to make boards for sale, or sell the logs roadside. Each of these processes includes additional effort for the owner, and as regards the sale of products may increase the owner's tax liability.

Skill and the correct equipment are essential. At a minimum, anyone felling trees should have training, such as Game of Logging, to directionally fell trees. The details of the topography, soils, season, and size of trees will determine the minimum types of equipment that are needed. Video of small-scale logging are available at www.youtube.com/ForestConnect and in the discussion forum at www.CornellForestConnect.ning.com

The commercial path requires that the owner find some way to change the cost-to-value ratio. This could be through either an increase in the value or volume of wood harvested, or reducing the cost per unit of wood harvested. Increasing value might be accomplished as increasing total value, total volume, or the value per unit.

One strategy to change the cost-to-value ratio is through a more intensive harvest on the property, or focusing on just the high-value trees. Either of these approaches could be counter to the owner's objectives, is exploitive, and could degrade the condition of the woods. The forester needs to know the owner's objectives and be instructed to not compromise those objectives.

A second strategy is for the owner

continued on page 18

Wild Things in Your Woodlands

KAREN CEBALLOS

GRAY FOX (*UROCYON CINEREOARGENTEUS*)



The gray fox is easily distinguished from the red fox by a ridge of short, stiff, black hairs that run along its back, and up to a black-tipped tail. They have gray and grizzled upper parts, and the remainder of their fur is a variation of reds and browns with buff or gray underfur. They have distinctive white, black and rufous face markings. Red fur on the sides of their face, neck, ears, and tail sometimes causes this species to be confused with the red fox. Gray foxes are usually stockier and have shorter legs than their red counterparts. They weigh around 7 to 15 pounds and grow around 31-44 inches long (including the tail). Males and females look alike, though females are slightly smaller than males.

Gray foxes are small, secretive canines with the unique ability to climb trees. They can be found all over New York state, inhabiting a mixture of deciduous and brushy woodland. They also thrive in habitat with forests bordered by farmlands, where good foraging opportunities are close to the safety of forest cover. The gray fox's range extends through most of the southern half of North America, from Southern Canada to the northern part of South America in Venezuela and Columbia.

This species is fairly abundant in New York and has maintained stable populations. Though the gray fox used to be the most common fox in the east, human advancement and changes in habitat availability has allowed the red fox to become more dominant. Gray foxes do best in a mixture of forest, old fields and brushy edges, while red foxes thrive in more open habitats. Agricultural expansion increased the habitat availability for red foxes, potentially explaining their increasing

populations. However, now that more and more farmland in the northeast is being turned back into forest, some predict that these transitions may play in favor of gray foxes.

Gray foxes are just slightly different from many of today's common canines, possibly because the gray fox's ancestors separated from the other canid species 3.6 million years ago. In fact, people consider the gray fox as one of the oldest species in the Canidae family (wolves, foxes, dogs). So while this species shares some habits and appearances with red foxes, the gray fox represents an entirely separate branch of Canidae evolution.

These foxes have one of the most diverse omnivorous diets of the common canids. Small mammals like mice, voles and cottontail rabbits make up the majority of their diet, but they also eat insects, amphibians, birds, reptiles, carrion, fruits, corn, acorns and other nuts. They forage primarily at night, sniffing out rodents and fruit with their keen sense of smell. Unlike the red fox,

which prefers to hunt in open areas, gray foxes prefer to forage under thick cover. Gray foxes also differ from red foxes in their more aggressive behavior. This difference, along with their preference for thicker cover and their ability to climb trees has actually lessened coyotes impacts on gray fox populations. In contrast, the red fox's tendency to inhabit and hunt in open terrain where they are more visible has made them more vulnerable to coyotes, and red fox populations have noticeably declined where coyotes are abundant.

Gray foxes mate for life, and reproduce once a year during the breeding season, from mid-January to May. The mating pair shares the responsibility for raising offspring, and the family will generally stay together until fall. After 51-63 days of pregnancy, the female, or 'vixen,' will give birth to a litter of two to seven pups, though litters average three to four pups. Gray foxes are born blind, deaf, dark-skinned, nearly hairless, and weigh a mere three ounces. While the pups,

or kits, are confined to the den, the male fox goes out hunting while the mother stays with the pups. At three to five weeks of age, the pups will grow active and start going on short forays with the vixen. Around June (three months old), they begin hunting with their parents. While foxes are mostly nocturnal, the demand of so many hungry mouths drives them to venture on daytime hunting trips, often prompting more sightings of these normally secretive foxes. In autumn, when the young are nearly full grown, families disperse and the young foxes go to establish their own territory and seek mates, since the young can reproduce in their first year. In the wild, gray foxes will typically live six to eight years, but they can live up to fifteen years.

Gray fox use dens primarily during the breeding season, but dens can be in use any time of year. They make their dens in rocky crevices, thick brush, caves, hollow logs, and trees. They usually do not excavate their own dens, and will occasionally use abandoned dens of woodchucks and other small mammals. Gray foxes may also den in abandoned houses or beneath manmade structures like sheds or woodpiles.

The gray fox is host to over thirty different external parasites like lice, ticks and mites, and several internal parasites like roundworms and flatworms. Rabies has been reported in New York gray foxes, but canine distemper seems to be the leading disease related cause of mortality. Canine distemper is a highly contagious disease that attacks animals' central nervous system, but it cannot

be transmitted to humans. In terms of predators, humans are the primary source of gray fox mortality, through trapping and automobile collisions. Eastern coyote, bobcat, and larger raptors, like great horned owls, also prey upon gray foxes.

Gray foxes are one of only two members of the Canidae family with the ability to climb trees (the other being the raccoon dog of East Asia). Climbing trees helps gray foxes reach high-up food sources, find safe resting spots, and evade predators like coyotes. They have even been reported to den several yards above the ground in trees. Unlike other canines, gray foxes have super sharp, curved, semi-retractable claws that help them grasp tree trunks, almost like a cat. They can also rotate their forearms, and climb by grasping a tree with these flexible forearms and pushing up with their hind feet. They will climb as high up as fifty or sixty feet, and once up in the crown they will jump from branch to branch. So while you're out walking in the woods, try glancing up at the trees every now and then. Maybe one day you'll be rewarded with a glimpse of a special little fox watching you from the trees. 🦊

Karen Ceballos is a sophomore majoring in Environmental Science and Sustainability at Cornell University. She is also the Program Assistant for the New York Master Naturalist volunteer program.

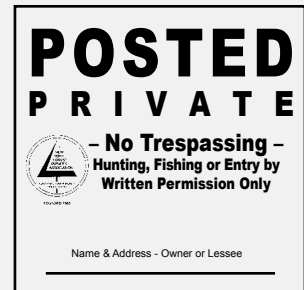
Is there a certain animal that you would like to see featured in an upcoming "Wild Things" column? If so, email Kristi Sullivan at kls20@cornell.edu

WANTED

Have you applied for EQIP cost-sharing programs through the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in the last three years? We would be interested in hearing about your experience with EQIP, especially if your application included practices to support forest regeneration, including herbicidal control of invasive vegetation and/or deer exclosure fencing. Please call or email Jerry Michael, (607) 648-2941, GoTreeGo@stny.rr.com

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Restore NY Woodlands in Action: *How EQIP Funding Can Help Us Win the Battle*

JEANNINE AND STACEY KAZACOS

Stalled Woodland Conservation Goals: **S**Our 75 acre woodlot in Otsego County is in trouble. We have a bevy of interfering vegetation ranging from honeysuckle to ferns to diseased American beech that is preventing regeneration of our woods. Several stands in our woodlot need to be thinned. We have a high concentration of deer competing for limited food sources — the most important of which includes various northeastern hardwood seedlings. Ours is a typical scenario in lovely rural but economically depressed areas of upstate New York. In the past, our woodlot was ‘high-graded’ — harvesting the best trees and leaving behind the worst due to economic needs of former owners. A quick timber harvest brought much needed cash to pay ever-increasing New York state property taxes. Deer browsing of desirable seedlings has been intensive which allows the beech and non-native invasives a foothold. The result is a woodlot characterized by shade tolerant American beech with its wide spreading branches and robust sapling networks throwing a shadow over much of the forest floor. In turn, the beech permits the introduction of prolific fern rhizomes that multiply and displace desirable sapling growth. Add the aggressive non-native invasives such as honeysuckle and intensive deer browsing into the mix and you have bleak longer term prospects for healthy woodlot regeneration.

Obtaining an EQIP Contract: Let’s set aside the doom and gloom. There is help out there for the private woodlot owner through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). EQIP is a voluntary conservation program under the farm bill that helps agricultural producers and local landowners in a manner that addresses resource concerns to meet high quality environmental standards while

working with the landowner on their specific property goals. In NY, one of many qualifying EQIP conservation objectives includes enabling the private forest owner to apply best management practices to improve his/her woodlot. In our case, we worked with the local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) district conservationist Tony Capraro. Tony, a knowledgeable and engaging conservation agent and his college intern conducted an onsite inventory and evaluation survey of our woodlot. Tony asked a lot of questions about the property, took photos and notes, and said he would look into EQIP as a possibility to address the linked needs for invasive control and timber stand improvement. After some weeks, Tony and a NRCS area conservationist conducted a “quality assurance” review and confirmed Tony’s initial findings. We thought we were ready to go.

Not so fast. In order to receive this EQIP contract we first needed a forest management plan that included clear conservation objectives. In fact, we had in hand a sound plan drafted by a consulting forester to support our 480-A status (480-A refers to a NYS law that provides 80% tax relief on woodlots over 50 acres that have a management plan in place. It’s a long term commitment that goes with the land.) Long story short, we had our consulting forester amend the forest management plan to spell out specific conservation goals and actions to address any resource concerns. Fortunately, controlling invasives and forest stand improvement can encourage conservation on several levels, to include forest health, soil and water enhancement, and wildlife habitat. Note that we had to amend the 480-A management plan **before** the EQIP application could be considered. We made the changes with the understanding that should the application be denied, we would still be on the hook for completing the terms of the amended plan. With the vagaries of funding from federal government program, we confess to having had sweaty palms until final approval.

Our Plan: Eventually, everything went through and Tony happily contacted us with the good news and had us sign the EQIP contract and conservation plan. Ours is a multi-year contract with total funding up to \$50,000. If we can finish



Jeannine Kazacos next to a diseased American beech and near several beech saplings — also targeted by the EQIP contract.

the scope of work sooner and for less money, the contract will cover the actual approved costs up to \$50K. A key point about EQIP funding is that the landowner is reimbursed only after work on a given stand is completed. Following are the main elements of our EQIP plan:

- A. Term:** The contract period would run for up to five years, from 2017 – 2022.
- B. Size:** 42 acres, divided into four stands
- C. Scope of Work:**

1. Brush management for interfering vegetation. This includes removal of undesirable brush and beech through hand, machine, and chemical means. The specific method of brush management will be determined by the types of plants being removed. The treatment plan will be worked out by the NYS forester/certified herbicide applicator and the NYS Dept of Environmental Conservation (DEC) technical service provider, also a forester.
2. Forest Stand Improvement: Once the DEC forester approves the invasive control work (usually after one or two herbicidal applications), the final phase for each stand will follow best management practices of NRCS standards to thin the woods. This work will be set up by a consulting forester and approved by the DEC forester once completed.

The Road Ahead: We are excited to implement the EQIP contract. We love



Jeannine Kazacos among a dense area of honeysuckle — control of which is part of the EQIP contract.

living and working in a rural region of upstate NY. Improving our woodlot has been a priority since we bought our place in 2007 and we have made incremental progress. The EQIP contract will allow us to accelerate what we have started and set the stage for achieving a cornerstone conservation goal: woodlot regeneration. The measures we will take under EQIP will lead directly to regeneration. By removing the interfering vegetation, the desirable native trees should displace the ferns, honeysuckle, and beech. Thinning the woodlot will open the canopy so

vital sunlight can reach the forest floor which will provide the best chance for desirable trees to retake their rightful place in the woods. Separate from the EQIP contract, we will address the problem of deer browsing of desirable trees and seedlings. Over the next 10 years we intend to plant a variety of native seedlings using a combination of tree tubes and low cost deer fencing to impede browsing. We will also allow responsible hunters limited access to our property. As active members of NYFOA, we have come to view forest regeneration methods as a ‘three-legged stool’ to include removing interfering vegetation, conducting forest stand improvement, and controlling deer browsing. In order to have successful regeneration, your forest management plan must include measures that address each leg of this proverbial stool. The EQIP program can help the private woodlot owner reach these goals with professional assistance and funding – along with healthy doses of sweat equity by the woodlot owner. 🌲

Jeannine and Stacey Kazacos are retired foreign service officers and part of the Cornell Cooperative Extension Master Forest Owners program, now living in Mt Vision, Otsego County. Before retirement, the couple had tours in some interesting places including Greece, Madagascar, Botswana, Central African Republic, Ethiopia, and Alaska -- but like upstate NY the best. Stacey is a member of the NYFOA board and has actively supported the Restore NY Woodlands initiative.

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NY Forest Owners Association

55th Annual Spring Program, Saturday, April 8, 2017

21st Century, Our Woodlands, Our Watch

Marshall Hall, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Syracuse, NY

- 8:15 a.m. **Registration and refreshments.** *Check out the displays from NYFOA Chapters and forestry oriented exhibits in Nifkin Lounge.*
- 9:00 a.m. **Welcome:** Charles Stackhouse, *President NYFOA* and David Newman, *Chair, Faculty of Forestry, SUNY ESF.*
- 9:15 a.m. **Woodland Certification Programs**
Chris Nowak, *SUNY ESF*
- 10:00 a.m. **Improving Bird Habitat Through Timber Management**
Suzanne Treyger, *Forest Program Manager from NY Audubon*
- 11:00 a.m. **Taxation and Other Forest Landowner Issues**
Sloane Crawford, *NYS DEC*
- 12:00 p.m. **Silent Auction**
- 12:30 p.m. **Luncheon and NYFOA Annual Awards Banquet**
- 2:00 p.m. **NYFOA Board of Directors Meeting**

Prepared by Conference Chairperson Rich Taber, CNY Chapter and with input from the NYFOA Board of Directors

PLEASE REGISTER BY MARCH 31, 2017 BY RETURNING THIS FORM TO ADDRESS BELOW

Name: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Chapter Affiliation: _____ Email: _____

Registration Fee: \$20 per person \$15 for students. *Please make checks payable to NYFOA or pay by credit card.*

Number Attending: _____ Total enclosed: \$ _____

Names of Additional People Attending:

Form of Payment: Check Credit Card

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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

AN UPDATE ON EMERALD ASH BORER IN NEW YORK STATE

BY MARK WHITMORE

It's been a while since I've written about the emerald ash borer (EAB), *Agrilus planipennis*, in this column and the number of questions I've been getting are unabated so I figured it was about time for a bit of a refresher. As some of you who are in the midst of countless numbers of dead trees know probably all too well, EAB has not gone away. Perhaps others are wondering what all the fuss is about since there is no evidence of it being near. Let me reassure the latter that EAB will be in your back yard probably sometime soon, and to the former, well, you've my sympathy and I hope you will pass your

stories along because New York will be dealing with dead ash trees in increasing numbers for likely the next couple of decades and the impacts will be lessened the better informed we are.

First of all, I'll address detection. I often get emails about someone's pet tree in the yard that is dying. My first question is what do other ash in the area look like? EAB will not attack just one tree, all the ash in an infested area will have similar symptoms: woodpecking on the bole and canopy thinning are the most reliable. If you think you have just one suspicious "D" shaped exit hole on a tree it is not EAB, there will be many, very many.

The best symptom to recognize is woodpecking, or blonding, on the bole of the tree. This can best be seen in late winter when the bole is wet. As the woodpeckers forage for EAB they fleck off the outer portion of the bark that is dull gray exposing bright brown color beneath (Figure 1). This can easily be seen from a distance and is the single most important symptom used by NYSDEC when delimiting an infestation. When you look at the DEC map (Figure 2) there is an inner core of an infestation and this is basically a dot to dot connection of woodpecking on the periphery detected by the DEC survey crew. Within this area there are many acres that are asymptomatic and this may be confusing but it makes sense if you consider that EAB are vigorous fliers and that there are likely a few individuals programmed to disperse long distances to start another satellite infestation. I encourage anyone with an interest to visit the heart of one of these infestations so you are aware of the symptoms and can be your own gauge of how far EAB is away from your property.



Figure 1. Woodpecker foraging for EAB on ash causing blonding. Photo by Mark Whitmore.

This is important for timing of logging operations and for treating trees to keep them alive. The insecticides with Eemamectin benzoate are definitely the most effective but I recommend treating before you begin to see symptoms. If you see symptoms in trees a couple miles away from your place it is time to treat.

If you are considering logging your woodlot ahead of EAB you've got some important decisions to make, and quick. First of all, is it worth it to take the ash out of your stand? Consider the value of other species in the stand and the cost of stand entry. Will a stand entry for the ash be premature for more valuable species that you might need to sell to pay for the job? Think about the potential damage to the more valuable growing stock. If you have a stand that is heavy to ash you might want to consider taking them out in multiple entries to allow regeneration to establish with minimal competition from invasive species that might take over with large canopy openings. Of course you will also need to consider the availability of the foresters and loggers you would want to do the job, they will be busy when EAB comes to town.

Perhaps the most important aspect of owning a woodlot from my point of view is the possibility that you might find a tree or two that have survived EAB. These trees may be resistant and be the savior of the species. I can't state strongly enough the need to pay attention and alert someone if you think you have a survivor, or "lingering ash" as the US Forest Service project is referring to them in the mid-west. It will take much time and resources to determine if they are really resistant and begin propagation but the sooner the better and NY is at the heart of white ash distribution.

There are two bills being introduced by Senator Timothy Kennedy that may be of interest to those considering the EAB predicament. Senate bill 8196-A is written to give a tax credit to landowners for removal of ash trees killed by the emerald ash borer or treatment to keep them alive. The bill will allow a tax credit for 50% of the cost of tree removal up to \$300 per tree, and also allows a tax credit for 50% of treatment costs up to \$100 per tree. There is no limit to the number of trees removed or treated, but all trees claimed in the tax

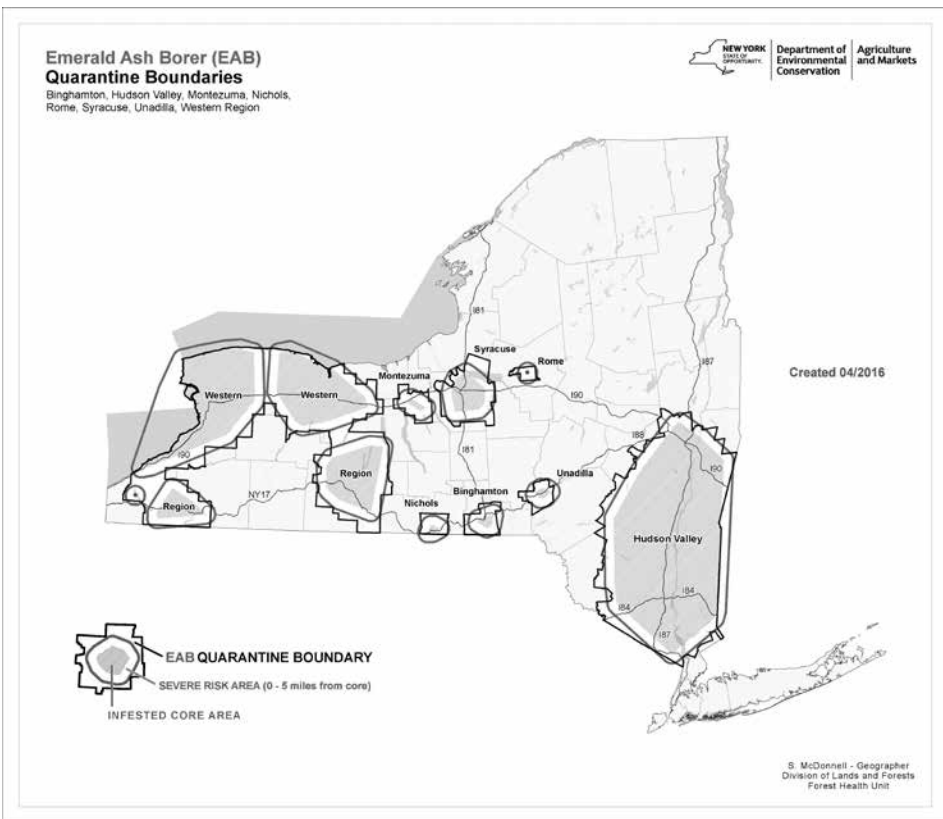


Figure 2. 2016 NY state EAB quarantine boundaries with infested core areas. Map created by NYSDEC forest health.

credit must first be inspected by an arborist or forester which could be difficult to schedule considering the potential demand for their services. A useful provision is a carryover of the credit for five years. One concern for woodlot owners, and for forest biologists interested in preserving the genetics of ash species for the long-term, is that the bill is intended for residential or mixed use properties within the state that are used by the owner as a primary residence, secondary residence, or rental. I think it would be good if the bill stated unambiguously that woodlots were acceptable for treatment so we can encourage those who wish to preserve the genetic diversity of ash species. In addition, it would be good to increase the amount of treatment credit to \$200 so larger trees can be included. This bill is still in the formative stages so contacting senator Kennedy's legislative counsel Rick Rogers (*rrogers@nysenate.gov*) may be effective.

The other, Senate bill 8197, deals with the health of an urban forest through promotion of biodiversity of plantings and although not directly applicable to woodlots owners, should be of general interest to those concerned with forest health. The

bill states: "When a municipality, parks department, highway department, or other local entity undertakes a tree planting project in public locations, they shall select and plant biologically diverse types of trees. To satisfy sufficient biodiversity, the municipality shall follow the 10-20-30 principle when the municipality is planting new trees or replanting in an area. The 10-20-30 principle states that a tree population shall include no more than ten percent of any one species, twenty percent of any one genus, or thirty percent of any one family. This percentage shall be measured by the tree population as a whole, not by any one planting project solely." This concept has been widely practiced by professional urban foresters for years. Although the proportions may be impossible to attain in your woodlot I think it is always good to consider biodiversity to increase resilience in any forest. 🌲

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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Northeast Timber Growing Contest

2016 Contest Results

DEAN FAKLIS AND PETER SMALLIDGE

We're proud to present the 2016 summary and results for the Northeast Timber Growing Contest (www.TimberContest.com). 2016 marks the end of the third full growing season and the third set of adjudicated results. Here is a list of contest participants in 2016:

Del Allen: Del Allen, Jim Bagley (Forester) (Milo, Yates Co., NY)

Blough Family Forest: Christy, Bailey, Billie Sue and Gary Blough (Ontario, Wayne Co., NY)

Dewey Family Forest: John and Jason Dewey (Unadilla, Otsego Co., NY)

Edwards Family Forest: Kurt and Kristie Edwards (Mayfield, Fulton Co., NY)

Gerry Palmer: Gerry Palmer (Guilford, Chenango Co., NY)

Piestrak Forest Lands: Josh, Jeff, and Ed Piestrak, Bruce Robinson (Forester) (Lindley, Steuben Co., NY)

Dale Schaefer: Dale and Eileen Schaefer (Canadice, Ontario Co., NY)

Schlafer Family Forest: Don Schlafer and Judy Appleton (Hector, Schuyler Co., NY)

Team Smallidge: Kelly, Nathalie, Adelaide, and Peter Smallidge (Crown Point, Essex Co., NY)

Spreutels Family Forest: Gordon and Marie Spreutels (Guilford, Chenango Co., NY)

Team Springwater: Julie Faklis, Brice June (Forester), Dean Faklis (Springwater, Livingston Co., NY)

Stackhouse Family Forest: Sarah and Charles Stackhouse (Bluff Point, Yates, NY)

Williams Family Forest: Todd, Karen, Oscar, Finn and Sophie Williams (Barton, Tioga, NY)

Dave Williams: Kathryn and Dave Williams and Karl VonBerg (Forester) (Guilford, Chenango, NY)

Winkler Tree Farm: Frank Winkler and Ryan Trapani (Forest Educator) (Andes, Delaware, NY)

The following contestants were on target to begin forest measurements 2016:

Anderson Family Forest, Cassadaga Valley School, Doolittle Family Forest, Sid Harring, Hayek Family Forest, Chris Howard, Kazacos Family Forest, John Murdock, Matt Neary, Ed Neuhauser, Dick Patton, Ron Pedersen, Sandra Rose, Semanovich Family Forest, Phil Walton, and Lew Ward.

The following are considering creating plots and taking measurements in 2017: Jerry Michael and Steve Kutney.

Welcome to the New Contestants and Future Timber Beasts!

Eighteen of NY's 62 counties are now well represented by 31 teams! And...we have a great school team, Cassadaga Valley School, under the excellent direction of Cheryl Burns.

There were four races in 2016; Hardwood – Board Foot Volume, Conifer – Board Foot Volume, Hardwood – Basal Area Increment, and Conifer – Basal Area Increment. The Hardwood – BA category received entries from 14 teams and was the

most popular category. All of the entries were normalized by the site index, which is an estimate of the height of a 50-year old tree on a particular soil type, to help create a level playing field. Sites with lower site index receive a beneficial handicap. Please visit www.CornellForestConnect.ning.com and search the blogs for "site index" to learn how to use Google Earth Pro and Web Soil Survey to determine site index and other features of the soil.

All competitors submitted their entry materials on time and in good order. The judges met during November 2016 to review the results and make the necessary computations. The rules that governed the judging process can be found at www.TimberContest.com.

Congratulations to all participants!

Below are the **2016 Northeast Timber Growing Contest Results**, with high score in bold:

Hardwood – BA

Team Smallidge	0.0510
Edwards Family Forest	0.0488
Team Springwater	0.0447
Piestrak Forest Lands	0.0429
Gerry Palmer	0.0404
Del Allen	0.0389
Dewey Family Forest	0.0362
Dave Williams	0.0354
Williams Family Forest	0.0302
Dale Schaefer	0.0284
Spreutels Family Forest	0.0251
Stackhouse Family Forest	0.0196
Blough Family Forest	0.0136
Schlafer Family Forest	0.0136

Hardwood – Board Foot Volume

Team Springwater	0.0651
Winkler Tree Farm	0.0538
Edwards Family Forest	0.0487
Del Allen	0.0440
Dave Williams	0.0428

Conifer – Board Foot Volume

Winkler Tree Farm	0.0722
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Conifer – BA

Team Springwater	0.0288
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All results were normalized by site index, so they are a bit difficult to compare using the typical units for board feet and basal

area. To give a better understanding, here is some background on the raw data:

Hardwood Site Index

Team Smallidge	59.22
Edwards Family Forest	60.63
Stackhouse Family Forest	65.00
Williams Family Forest	65.00
Dale Schaefer	68.50
Dave Williams	68.83
Piestrak Forest Lands	69.33
Gerry Palmer	69.33
Del Allen	69.51
Blough Family Forest	70.00
Winkler Tree Farm	70.00
Team Springwater	70.00
Dewey Family Forest	71.11
Schlafer Family Forest	71.92
Spreutels Family Forest	71.92

Hardwood – BA – Growth (average sq.ft. per acre)

Top Five	sq. ft.	% Growth
Team Smallidge	2.5	3.02
Edwards Family Forest	1.9	2.96
Team Springwater	4.3	3.13
Piestrak Forest Lands	2.5	2.97
Gerry Palmer	2.5	2.80

Conifer – BA – Growth (average sq.ft. per acre)

	sq. ft.	% Growth
Team Springwater	3.9	1.94

Please note that growth of just one square foot of basal area is like adding a fresh new 14” diameter tree to your woodlot! With proper silviculture, you can choose what this “new tree” is....wood on high quality sugar maple sawlogs or red maple firewood! The contest framework helps you put the growth on your best trees and use your lower quality material for projects or heat. Let the winning trees get all the light, water and nutrients.

For 2017, the word of the year for contestants should be *thinning*. The available growth will then be placed on the best growing trees and there will be fewer trees in the sample plots. This causes the *percent growth* to shoot up! Properly thinning out the slow growers is a key component of the contest and a key to the competitiveness within your forest. When trees are culled from the plots, their place is kept in the tally sheets, but their data is omitted in the computations. This way,

the amount of timber harvested from the plots can be tracked over time but the culled trees do not contribute to the annual contest scores. Here is some more growth data for comparison:

Hardwood – Board Foot Volume – Growth on 20 Trees

	bd. ft.	%Growth
Team Springwater	266.9	4.56
Winkler Tree Farm	195.0	3.76
Edwards Family Forest	72.6	2.95
Del Allen	141.5	3.06
Dave Williams	160.7	2.94

Conifer – Board Foot Volume – Growth 20 Trees

	bd. ft.	%Growth
Winkler Tree Farm	187.0	5.06

Contest participants become *Timber Beasts* when they accumulate normalized scores that total at least 1.000 across all categories. Participants accumulate points during each year that they participate in the contest. Here are the current Timber Beast standings:

Timber Beast Scores (Sum of all team scores across all categories)

Team Springwater	0.4046
Edwards Family Forest	0.2888
Team Smallidge	0.1633
Piestrak Forest Lands	0.1455
Winkler Tree Farm	0.1260
Del Allen	0.0829
Dave Williams	0.0782
Dale Schaefer	0.0637
Gerry Palmer	0.0404

Stackhouse Family Forest	0.0399
Dewey Family Forest	0.0362
Blough Family Forest	0.0314
Williams Family Forest	0.0302
Spreutels Family Forest	0.0251
Schlafer Family Forest	0.0136

Let’s work together to grow participation in the Northeast Timber Growing Contest to help spotlight the importance of growing quality timber. There is plenty of time remaining to enter *your* forest for 2017!

It takes only four (4) hours per year to begin to grow high quality timber and lots of help is available. If your forestry organization is interested in holding a contest workshop, there are free workshop materials available. The workshop will teach tips and tricks to get you started.

Any questions or if anyone needs help measuring trees, email: dfaklis@frontiernet.net. Also, check out the timber contest website at: www.TimberContest.com. Thanks and congratulations to all! 🏆

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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Figure 3. Owners who have developed good working relationships with their neighbors, through regular communication, may be able to align their individual objectives to use the same forester and logger.

to work with another landowner, ideally a neighbor, to increase the total value and volume, and also reduce the cost per acre (Figure 3). Each owner could have different objectives, and require harvests based on different silvicultural prescriptions and different harvest intensity. Although easily said, the feasibility is low for finding a neighbor who is ready to harvest at the same time, and use the same forester and logger. A similar strategy would be for the owner to join a woodland cooperative, but cooperatives are rare.

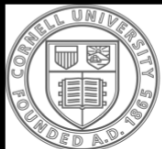
The challenges to managing small parcels are daunting. In some cases the owners may decide that a harvest isn't feasible. If the final goal is to manipulate the trees that are present to create better wildlife habitat, improve forest health, or improve tree growth for bigger trees there are non-harvest options that the owner could discuss with their forester. One such option might be the use of selective herbicides or girdling to kill some trees and allow adjacent trees better growth. In all cases, the owner needs to have a clear awareness of their objectives to avoid the potential pitfalls of the management strategies they pursue. 

Dr. Peter Smallidge, Department of Natural Resources, Cornell University Cooperative Extension. Director, Arnot Teaching and Research Forest, Ithaca, NY, 14853. Support for ForestConnect is provided by USDA NIFA and the Cornell University College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

Got Trees? Got Questions?

Visit the *Woodland Owners Forum* at:
<http://CornellForestConnect.ning.com>

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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Free programs at the NY FARM SHOW

February 23 - 25, 2017

Got Trees? Get More from Your Woodlot! Learn and Earn More.

Free programs to help landowners get more benefits from their woodlots will be presented each day during the 2017 Farm Show in Syracuse by the New York Forest Owners Association.

Meet with a forester from the State Department of Environmental Conservation or speak with a Cornell trained volunteer. Visitors are encouraged to bring their questions and pause at the booth area before or after attending a seminar program. The DEC foresters and trained volunteers are there to help with resource materials, displays and expert advice.

Learn More, Earn More seminars are free and open to all. Topics include federal cost sharing for woodlot improvements, working with foresters, improving bird habitat, heating with wood, and forest farming. Programs start on the hour and allow time for questions and discussion.

The booth is on the main corridor of the Arts and Home Center, and the seminars are held in the Somerset Room just steps away on the lower level of the center.

These programs are presented by the New York Forest Owners Association in cooperation with the NY Department of Environmental Conservation, Cornell Cooperative Extension, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry and with special thanks to each of our expert speakers.

2017 Woodlot Seminar Presentations

Thursday February 23

11 AM DEC Can Help Family Forest Owners.

Matt Swayze, NY Dept of Environmental Conservation

1 PM Assessing Impacts from Deer.

Kristie Sullivan, Dept. of Natural Resources, Cornell University

2 PM Legacy Planning for Your Property.

Shorna Allred, Dept. of Natural Resources, Cornell University

3 PM Getting Federal Aid for Woodlot Improvements.

Michael Fournier, US Dept. of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service

Friday February 24

10 AM Unwanted Vegetation in Your Woods.

Peter Smallidge, NYS Extension Forester, Cornell University

11 AM Woodlot Inventory: How Many Trees Do You Have?

Peter Smallidge, NYS Extension Forester, Cornell University

1 PM Insects and Diseases that Threaten Your Woods.

Mark Whitmore, Dept. of Natural Resources, Cornell University

2 PM The Law: Rights and Responsibilities of Woodlot Owners.

Timothy Fratesch Esq., Fratesch Law Firm, Syracuse

3 PM Getting Federal Aid for Woodlot Improvements.

Michael Fournier, US Dept of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service

Saturday February 25

10 AM Heat with Wood While Growing Timber.

Michael Kelleher, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry

11 AM Improve Bird Habitat with Smart Timber Management.

Suzanne Treyger, Forest Program Manager, Audubon New York

1 PM Working with Consulting Foresters.

Réne Germain, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry

2 PM Wilhelm Farm: A Case Study in Agroforestry.

Ann Wilhelm & Bill Bentley, Woodlot Owners

3 PM Woodlots and Income Taxes.

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Welcome New Members

We welcome the following new members (who joined since the publishing of the last issue) to NYFOA and thank them for their interest in, and support of, the organization:

Name	Chapter		
James Baxter	CDC	Barbara Heinzen	CDC
Cheryl Burns	AFC	Robert Johnson	CDC
John Costello	WFL	Edmund Ludwig	SOT
Rita Dee	SAC	Richard & Eileen Parker	CNY
John Egan	WFL	Victor A. Shear	CDC
David Engel	WFL	Nancy Sterling	WFL
Jesse V. Griffis	NFC	Shane Stevens	CDC
		Tom Winn	SOT



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Member Profile:

Jena Buckwell & Colin Butgereit

BRIANA BINKERD-DALE

Jena Buckwell grew up in Clarkson NY before attending the Rochester Institute of Technology for graphic design. After graduation, she moved to New York City to work as a designer in the fashion editorial industry. There, she met her now husband, Colin Butgereit, who had moved from his hometown of Grand Rapids, MI to work as a manufacturing manager in the 3D printing industry. Jena and Colin decided they were ready to get out of the city after a few years, and moved to the Shenandoah Valley, where their love of the outdoors and interest in small-scale farming was easy to explore. After a year in Virginia, Jena got homesick, and they decided to move to western NY where land prices were cheap and family was nearby. Colin worked in the solar industry in VA and Rochester, and is now a professional gardener and landscaper in Medina, NY. Jena retired from graphic design when they moved back to NY, and currently is employed at the Orleans County Soil and Water Conservation District as a Conservation Planning

Assistant through the AmeriCorps State and National Program.

Colin and Jena purchased their 3.32 acre parcel in February 2015. Located in Clarendon, it is secluded, while still being affordable and a short drive for work, grocery shopping, and family; all reasons why they initially searched for property in that area. At 2-6% slope throughout, it is a lot drier than other properties around Clarendon with no water features to speak of, though some areas act as small vernal pools. It is primarily surrounded by an old, unused orchard and farm land with patches of woodlot. The overstory is made up of mostly (dying) ash, a handful of cherry trees and some pin oaks, while the understory is dominated by invasive species (multi-flora rose and honeysuckle), with some viburnum and many wild raspberry bushes.

Jena and Colin both make management decisions and work on the property. Jena completed the Master Forest Owner (MFO) training in September 2016,



Colin Butgereit taking a break to pet their pasture raised pigs, used to help work through, uproot and destroy invasive species like multi-flora rose.

which has played a vital role in helping to move forward with a forest management plan. They both learn as much as they can about forest management through reading and resources like the ForestConnect webinars and attending classes and workshops to understand the challenges western NY forest owners are facing. “Unfortunately, when we bought the property we only had a vague idea of EAB and what its impact was going to be on our area. The first summer we were on the property, we noticed our leaves were not really coming in fully, and by the following summer had confirmed with the DEC that we have EAB on our property,” Colin said. “As most of our trees are ash, we have had to fell a lot of trees and are working to replant a diversity of species to replace them.”

Their first steps after purchasing the property were to clear out the debris left behind by the previous owner, and fell trees for access to their home site and septic system. While they hired contractors to install the septic system and foundation, they built every other bit of their 850 square foot passive solar off grid home themselves, with the invaluable help of Jena’s stepfather. “Basically he would come over, tell us what needed to be done next, show us how to do it, and then Colin and I would do the work and let him know when we were ready for the next step,” Jena said. They completed their home by November 2015. Their only regret is that they did



Jena & Colin’s small, passive-solar, off grid home in fall 2016.

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Colin & Jena love amphibians and were really excited to find this red eft in their tomato plants last summer.

not have time to log the site to the full necessary extent prior to building their home. Had that been possible, they feel that the logging process would have gone much more smoothly and they would have had more timber to sell. “Unfortunately, we were living in a pop-up camper from July 2015 to November 2015 and (for obvious reasons) needed to get our home finished,” Colin said.

After installing a garden and continuing to clear trees themselves near the home site in spring 2016, Jena and Colin had

a salvage cut done of their marketable ash trees at the suggestion of their DEC forester in summer 2016, which also greatly improved access to the property. “We basically did exactly what you’re not supposed to do, and just hired a logger for the harvest, with no consulting forester or written contract,” Jena laughed, reminiscing. They did find the logger they ended up hiring via his advertisement in the SWCD newsletter and on a friend’s recommendation, after interviewing several other options who came out to give estimates. Happily, it ended up working out really well; the logger ended up subcontracting the job out to someone with smaller equipment that had less impact on the site, communication was good, and Colin and Jena had faith in him through the entire process. They are currently working on cleaning up after the harvest and continuing to take down the majority of their ash trees, with a focus on any ash that is too close to their home, livestock shelters, or garden.

Following the salvage harvest, the only challenges Jena and Colin have really had is that they choose to not use heavy machinery or chemicals on their property. “While we have a very small acreage, doing everything more or less by hand can sometimes be a struggle, as can trying to control multi-flora rose strictly mechanically and biologically,” Colin said. “Fortunately, these tasks keep



Region 8 foresters make suggestions on getting a salvage cut before EAB damage becomes worse.

us busy and physically fit — no need for a gym membership!” They also have some porcine assistants, pasture raised pigs that have been clearing the land of excessive vining species and multiflora rose in movable pens since fall 2015. While neither of them had previous experience raising livestock, they got the idea from Charis, the eco-friendly meat farm they volunteered at while living in Staunton, VA. The pigs there were raised on silvopasture, and Jena and Colin saw firsthand how efficiently they uprooted undergrowth. Apparently not all breeds are created equal, however; the first batch they purchased were a Gloucestershire/Yorkshire mix (which did really well), while the second batch (Mulefoots, a critically rare heritage breed) were a lot “lazier” and didn’t work nearly as hard at rooting. Colin and Jena generally keep the pigs for 5-6 months and then slaughter them for meat.

Jena and Colin were inspired to become involved in forest management due to a desire to improve the wildlife habitat in their woodlot, and an interest in natural resource conservation. They do enjoy some recreational activities there, mostly wildlife viewing, bird watching, and hunting (primarily done by Jena’s stepdad so far). Clearing out underbrush has made wildlife viewing and hunting more possible, while the trail cleared this



Ash salvage cut being loaded onto the truck.

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summer during the salvage cut allows for access to enjoy the property more, as well as getting to work controlling invasives and planting native trees and shrubs to diversify the woodlot. Along the way, they have learned to not let others' ideas of what they should be doing on their property sway them too much. "As nature lovers, we moved to the woods because we wanted to be close to nature, not control it — while raising livestock side by side with predators can at times be stressful, we keep our objectives in mind of living with nature when we make decisions on wildlife management" Colin said. They most enjoy watching the wildlife on the property go about their day to day business, seeing the seasons change, watching how their management decisions help (or sometimes hinder) wildlife – and of course the seclusion and quiet are also very welcome.

Their advice to other forest owners is to understand what your objectives are and stick to them. "We are young and have only a year and a half under our belts as forest owners, so our advice to young/new woodlot owners like ourselves would be to ask for help, go out and meet other forest owners etc. Our advice to the older generation would be to be open with your experiences and do what you can to educate and help the younger generation learn to love and care for the woods," Jena said. They are walking the talk – though they just joined NYFOA, they have been on one woods walk already (and are looking forward to more); they've both discussed EAB with their neighbors and why it's important that they not transport firewood outside of the quarantined area; and Jena does site visits in her new role as a MFO and recently taught a class called Creating Your Forest Management Plan at Orleans County Cooperative Extension. 🌲

Briana Binkerd-Dale is a student in Environmental Biology and Applied Ecology at Cornell University. If you are interested in being featured in a member profile, please email Jeff Joseph at jeffjosephwoodworker@gmail.com

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