

# The Western Finger Lakes Forest Owner



Summer 2012

Volume 26 Number 2

## Conifer Plantation - Two by Ed Piestrak

As per the last issue, the following is the ongoing process of dealing with the 16 acre plantation in regard to the over story removal of conifers, the following was done in 2009. We secured a logger who wanted the trees for two reasons: 1) saw logs and 2) grinding them up for saw dust to sell to the natural gas companies to utilize in the drilling, sealing process of the wells.

The logger signed a contract in 2009 to harvest the trees in 2010 at \$4.00 per ton. He started the processing in the spring of 2010 but due to the “mud” factor he couldn’t continue until the summer time. He then started the job and after completing half the removal, the sawdust part of his business went to zero. That is due to the drilling companies moving to bentonite for a sealant. Thus stopped work for the summer time and his contract ran out.

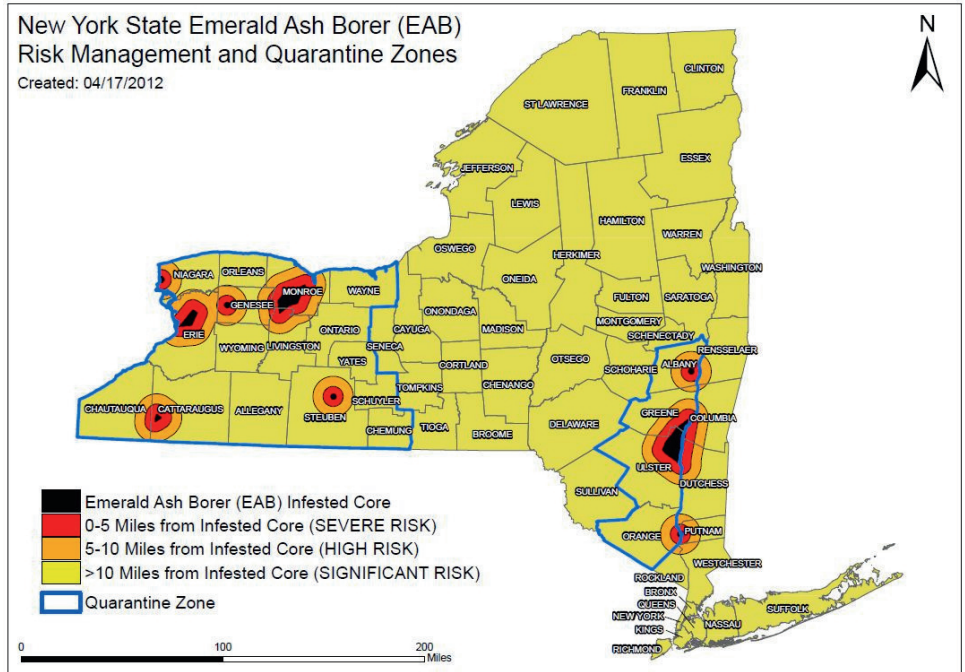
We all discussed the situation and decided to extend the contract until September 30, 2012, when it was expected that the markets would improve. So now we are with one half of the trees cut, multiple cut trees in the field landing, (they are

*Continued on page 5.*

## Western Finger Lakes Emerald Ash Borer Update

by Mark Gooding

The first discovery of emerald ash borer (EAB) in Western New York was in Randolph, (Cattaraugus County) in 2009. Additional infestations were found in Bath (Steuben), Caledonia, Chili, Henrietta (Monroe), and Pembroke (Genesee) in 2010. In 2011 the City of Rochester and some Buffalo suburbs were added to the list. There is also a large infestation in the Catskills centered in Ulster County. The infestations in Western New York are slowly expanding and will likely continue to spread throughout the region in the coming years.



In an attempt to abate the spread, DEC Forestry and its many partners have adopted the Slow Ash Mortality or SLAM program used in other states. Simply stated, the goal of SLAM is to keep as many ash trees alive as possible, in as much of New York State as possible, for as long as possible. The idea is to buy time that is needed for researchers to develop better means of controlling EAB or protecting trees, for communities and forest owners to prepare for EAB arrival and for governments to spread out the inevitable costs of dealing with EAB.

*Continued on page 2.*

## Emerald Ash Borer Update (continued from page 1)

At this point in time eradication is unlikely, so landowners should be developing strategies for managing the ash on their property to reduce the potential negative effects. The strategy a landowner pursues will depend on their objectives, the abundance and maturity of ash, what other trees are on the property and how close known EAB infestations are to their location. Landowner response will vary from being highly proactive to doing nothing. There are no right or wrong answers. Each landowner will need to personally address

their own circumstances. One thing all landowners can do is to stay informed on EAB. Your management strategy may change over time as the situation evolves. Consulting with forestry professionals to guide your actions is recommended. More information is available from multiple sources such as the DEC ([www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov)), Cornell's Forest Connect ([www2.dnr.cornell.edu](http://www2.dnr.cornell.edu)) and the national EAB website ([www.emeraldashborer.info](http://www.emeraldashborer.info)).

Mark Gooding is a DEC Service Forester.

## Welcome New Members

<b>John Adamski</b>	<b>Dansville</b>	<b>Daryl Groet</b>	<b>Woodstock, GA</b>
<b>Dane L. Brown</b>	<b>Walworth</b>	<b>William Hitchcock and William VanDuser Jr</b>	
<b>Janet Sredy &amp; Raul Chiesa</b>	<b>Monongahela, PA</b>		<b>Livonia Center</b>
<b>James Clark</b>	<b>Springwater</b>	<b>Kenneth W. Kemp</b>	<b>Webster</b>
<b>Alan Clark</b>	<b>Victor</b>	<b>Silver Lake Farm Association</b>	<b>Fairport</b>
<b>Doug &amp; Vicky Davis</b>	<b>Penn Yan</b>	<b>Donny Stine</b>	<b>Springwater</b>
<b>Larry Gaudino</b>	<b>Penn Yan</b>	<b>Dale VanEnwyck</b>	<b>Shortsville</b>

## About Us

### NYFOA Western Finger Lakes 2012 Board of Directors

**Richard Starr, Director and Chairman**  
231 Farm View Dr.  
Macedon, NY 14502  
(585) 377-4849  
pockaa@aol.com

**Dale Schaefer, Director and Vice Chairman**  
6017 County Road #37  
Springwater, NY 14560  
(585) 367-2849

**Cathy Gardner, Director and Secretary**  
7400 Corby Road  
Honeoye Falls, NY 14472  
585-624-7636  
cathygardner10@yahoo.com

**Ron Reitz, Director and Treasurer**  
6086 Canadice Hill Rd.  
Springwater, NY 14560  
(585) 367-2847  
rrlpr@aol.com

**Jim Minor, Director  
WFL Newsletter Publisher  
At-Large State Board Member**  
22 Bryn Mawr Road  
Rochester, NY 14624  
(585) 247-7069  
jcmminor@rochester.rr.com

**Ray Cavallaro, Director**  
245 Hurstbourne Road  
Rochester, NY 14609-5503  
(585) 288-3411

**Dick Dennison, Director**  
137 Wood Creek Drive  
Pittsford, NY 14534  
(585) 586-9098  
Kibbycamp@rochester.rr.com

**Eileen Schaefer, Program Director**  
6017 County Road #37  
Springwater, NY 14560  
(585) 367-2849  
dschaefer1@frontiernet.net

**Tony Ross, Director  
Anne Ross, Director and Chapter-  
Designated State Board Member**  
358 Hurstbourne Road  
Rochester, NY 14609  
(585) 288-4821  
aaross@frontiernet.net

**Walt Schuchardt, Director  
Video Librarian**  
20 Webster Road  
Spencerport, NY 14559  
(585) 352-4897

**Mike Seager, Director &  
At-Large State Board Member**  
P.O. Box 1281  
Pittsford, NY 14534  
(585) 414-6511  
seager\_michael@yahoo.com

*The Western Finger Lakes Forest Owner* is published for members of the Western Finger Lakes Chapter of the New York Forest Owners Association (NYFOA) and is published 4 times per year. NYFOA was founded in 1963 and is organized to encourage the wise management of private woodland resources in New York State by promoting, protecting, representing and serving the interests of woodland owners. The Western Finger Lakes chapter was founded in 1988 and encompasses Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne, and Yates counties.

Membership is open to anyone interested in understanding how to manage a woodlot. NYFOA membership can bring returns in the satisfaction of growing quality timber, stabilizing forest industries and markets, providing permanent jobs, increasing the value of your woods, enlarging areas of natural beauty across the state, and leaving behind a monument in living trees to bless the tomorrows for the boys and girls of today. For information on becoming an NYFOA member, contact Liana Gooding, NYFOA Secretary, NYFOA, P.O. Box 541, Lima, NY, 14485 or at 1-800-836-3566. Annual membership is \$30 for individuals and \$35 for families and includes: subscriptions to this newsletter; to the bimonthly NYFOA state-wide publication, *The New York Forest Owner*; attendance at chapter meetings; and at two statewide meetings. Membership at the Contributing level \$50- \$100 and Supporting level \$101 & up) are also offered. For more information visit [www.nyfoa.org](http://www.nyfoa.org).

Readers are encouraged to submit articles for publication in this newsletter. Articles should be mailed or e-mailed to: Richard Starr at the address to the left. Electronic submissions are preferred. Any letters should be sent to the Chair for consideration.

For event reminders and late-breaking news, **subscribe to our email list** by sending a blank email to [nyfoa-wfl-news-subscribe@npogroups.org](mailto:nyfoa-wfl-news-subscribe@npogroups.org)

**Note:** The deadline for our next, Fall, issue is September 1st.

# The WFL Summer 2012 Trail-Cam Gallery



WFL member Tim Grooms captured this photo of a fox with what appears to be 2 meadow voles at his Genesee County property.



Tim Groom's wife, Carole, suggests this might be the original fox trot.



WFL chairman Dick Starr took this photo in May of last year near his cabin's driveway... A Sign of the Season.



WFL Steering Committee member Jim Minor took this trail-camera shot at his land in Schuyler County. We recently heard about feral pigs. Well here's a feral cow that roamed his property all last winter. Here she's caught in the act of knocking down several of his tree tubes.



Another sign of the season this Spring at Jim Minor's place in Schulyer County.



Jim Minor thought he saw a bobcat last summer but wasn't sure. He captured this image this spring. This one looks smaller than the one he saw last year. Could it be the female of a pair?

## Gas Leases

by Mike Seager

**Y**ou never know what might be lurking in the depths of the county archives. My woodlot consists of two adjacent parcels of land in the Southern Tier. During a routine – I thought – search through county records for title history, I was surprised to learn that each parcel carried an outstanding lease for oil and gas exploration. Both leases dated from the 1970's – around the time of the first big oil crisis in the country, and long before I owned either parcel.

Lesson 1: Apparently, all title searches are not created equal. One of the parcels came to me through the family. I did not buy it in an arm's length transaction and so did not go through a rigorous title search. But I did buy the other parcel from strangers, and we went through all the formalities of closing a real estate transaction including a title search. The people I rely on to make sure all the legal issues are addressed – a lawyer and a title company – probably should have found it and brought it to my attention.

The terms of the lease were pretty simple. The landowner was supposed to receive a small payment each year if nothing happened. If the lease holder actually started drilling other payment schedules take effect. Nobody ever did any drilling; I don't know if previous owners were ever paid anything, but I certainly was not. The leases also stated that if payments were not made for a number of years the lease was terminated. This is what happened, so the leases were not really in effect, but there was nothing in the county records to attest to that fact.

The solution was also pretty simple. I signed an

statement saying that I had not been paid under the terms of the lease, and so it was terminated. It was a straightforward document that fit on one page with room to spare. The key was to file that statement with the county clerk so it would be found in any future title search.

Lesson 2: Having an old lease attached to your property is not necessarily a crisis, but it makes sense to deal with it properly. That probably means getting help from a lawyer.

This would all be just mildly amusing if it were not for the excitement about drilling for gas in the Marcellus shale. It does not take too much imagination to think that some gas companies could find lots of old leases similar to mine and try to exploit them. I picture them going to landowners: "Sorry we haven't paid you for the past 30 years, but here is a check for \$100 to make up for it". And if you cash the check, it might be that you then are obligated by that lease and you might have given away the gas under your property for a pittance.

I am not taking a position for or against fracking. But if you are going to allow gas drilling on your property, make sure you get a fair deal. The gas has been there for millions of years. It will still be there if you take a few weeks to get all of your i's dotted and t's crossed.

Lesson 3: If somebody tries to tell you they have a lease on your property from decades ago, don't be in a hurry to believe them, don't take any money from them, don't sign anything, and get a lawyer to help you sort through it all.

*Mike Seager is a WFL Director, Past President of NYFOA and a regular contributor to this newsletter. In his "day job" Mike is a Senior Technical Consultant at Servigistics.*

## Steal a Stihl

by Dick Starr

**O**ur annual dinner meeting is October 30, 2012. Once again NE Stihl has donated a new chain saw for the occasion. At last year's annual dinner meeting we secured Schaefer's Auction Services to auction off the new Stihl model MS 211 saw.

The WFL board of directors has decided to raffle this year's generous donation from Stihl with \$10 getting one ticket, \$15 two tickets and \$20 three tickets. It's quite possible someone will leave the meeting October 30th with a new Stihl chain saw that cost them \$10. If so, that's a steal on a Stihl.

## *Conifer Plantation - Two (continued from page 1)*

smaller ones for pulp wood only) and just waiting for the markets to improve. I am not very optimistic that the job will be completed as indicated but there is not much we can do about it in this time period. Dealing with low grade forest products is an extremely challenging situation.

Where the trees were removed the forest floor is covered with hardwood seedlings with a mix of white pine seedlings. Therefore, the over story removal was a positive process which provided excellent results. Looking ahead, should the logger not complete the process by September, we will explore felling the

remaining trees by a yet to be determined means. However, this job will be completed due to the positive results of the new developing forest in its infancy stage.

That process will be discussed in the fall newsletter 2012 in an ongoing article, thus we would like you to stay tuned.

## **Recent WFL Event**

### **Feral Swine**

by Dick Starr

**O**ur general meeting of May 1, 2012 was about feral pigs in NYS. Justin Ganowski, Wildlife Disease Biologist with USDA, was the speaker. Justin's role is non regulatory and service based without government funding. He described his job as implementation.

New York has had wild free ranging pigs since 2008. Well known as escape artists, they probably came from a hunting preserve. At the present time NYS still has relatively few feral pigs with breeding populations in six counties. Now is the time to exterminate them but there's no funding for attempting to do so. NYS has had 3 cases of pigs attacking dogs and 4 cases of people being chased. A wild pig does not consider the fight or flight question. If it feels threatened, it charges.

It is estimated there are currently 5 million feral pigs in 38 states. In 1982 they were confined to 11 southern states. First released in the Americas by Spanish explorers in 1539, pigs cause significant environmental harm. They are prolific breeders having multiple litters each year with upwards of a dozen piglets per litter. Piglets start rooting at 2 weeks and can survive on their own at 4 weeks of age.

Pigs are disease reservoirs harboring 30 diseases and 37 parasites that can affect people, pets, wildlife and livestock. E. coli problems can sometimes be traced to pig droppings which look like those of deer only 5 times larger. A pig's hoof print also resembles a deer but shorter and rounder. Some reports have a pig's sense of smell superior to deer. In an effort to control bugs on their skin, pigs will rub on trees and remove the bark in the process. Forests are damaged by rooting and a reduction in recruitment and growth of saplings.

Essentially anything with a calorie value is food to these voracious eaters. Grass, woody stuff, veggies, lawns, nesting birds, fawns, eggs are all edible. One Tennessee pig had 87 toads in its stomach. They eat more food per pound of body weight than deer. They can eat all the emerging corn planted by a farmer in a night. It's costly to replant a field only to have the pigs return for a second helping. Justin told of a wild boar that broke through a wooden fence, an electric fence and into a closed barn to get at a farmer's sows.

Part of the problem in NYS is that we have no regulations for the kind/type of fencing needed to keep these critters confined. Justin said shoot them on sight but don't hunt them. They're very clever and hunting disperses them into smaller groups which makes extermination even more difficult.

# Sugar Bear Lodge

by Dick Starr

Our 10th visit to Sugar Bush Hollow on April 28th opened with Art Kirsch, DEC deer and bear biologist, giving a summary of new regulations. In 1950 NYS total deer take was about 50,000. In 2000 it was close to 300,000. One important key in the new regulations is a commitment to forest and habitat protection.

The number of NYS deer hunters peaked in 1984 and this matters since hunting is the only large scale method available to control deer populations. In 1990 there were 600,000 licensed deer hunters and 430,000 in 2007. The average NY hunter is 51 years old and numbers are decreasing at 2% per year. Does this mean no hunters in 50 years?

Black bear continue to multiply and expand their range in NYS. The areas in which bear can be hunted will expand as well, not because the bears are in new areas so much as trying to keep them out. This is especially important near the three big city urban areas of Buffalo, Rochester and Syracuse. DEC doesn't want bear to establish in these areas of high human populations. However, black bear are shy and not aggressive like their grizzly cousins who earned the genus and species of *Ursus horribilus*. Art describes black bear as intelligent eating machines and they do love bird seed which tends to be where people are. Interesting to note that 10 days after our visit to SBH the Democrat & Chronicle newspaper showed pictures of a young bear raiding a bird feeder in Lima.

Next was a tour of Sugar Bear Lodge, the name some have given to Chuck Winship's new cabin. The living space is 1000 square feet with 1400 square feet of porch. Does Chuck envision some rocking chair time in the future? If so, there's enough room for all of us. It's not surprising that Chuck has focused much attention on the wood used to finish the cabin interior. Some was salvaged from his child hood home and no trees were cut down to provide interior finish materials. Kitchen cabinets are his own design and hand made from cherry.

Over pancakes and syrup with sausage we learned the warmer than normal winter of 2011-12 couldn't compete with the record setting year of 2011. This winter/spring was 6.9 degrees warmer than last year and syrup production was down. Chuck says no one he's aware of got a full crop this year. While getting less than hoped for the syrup is tasty and the dark is stronger. Traditionally grade A light amber syrup has



Photo courtesy of Dick Starr

## Sugar Bear Lodge

Chuck Winship's, new log cabin home at Sugar Bush Hollow.

been most popular but Chuck relates that the darker grade B has replaced it as the syrup of choice.

According to the March 19, 2012 issue of Time magazine, the 2011 U.S. syrup crop was 30.8 million pounds and that doesn't count all the back yard boilers who make enough for their own needs. This was the most since the 1940s. Quebec produced 101.9 million pounds in 2011, up from 58.8 million pounds in 2008. The US and Canada are standardizing the grading system for syrup. Since syrup producing maple trees are only found in the northeast of North America there is no competition from foreign markets. If you find maple sugar on your visit to Australia, it came from here.

*Dick Starr is President of the WFL chapter of NYFOA and a regular contributor to this newsletter. He is a retired Science teacher having spent 32 years in the Penfield School District.*

## Upcoming Events

### Seager Farm Woodswalk

Saturday, 22 September 2012, 9:00 am  
11885 State Route 70, Swain NY 14884.

We recently concluded a conservation easement on our property with Genesee Valley Conservancy, and this woodswalk will be a joint venture between NYFOA and GVC. We will start out with a discussion by Ben Gajewski, stewardship director for GVC, about conservation easements and the role they play in preserving open space.

We manage the property for a variety of goals, primarily wildlife habitat and timber production. Forester Bruce Robinson plans to be on hand to talk about the forest management plan and how the recent timber harvest advances those goals.

If time permits we can visit other projects on the property such as willow plantings on the creek for erosion control, wild apple tree release, food plots for deer, and the nut tree grove. For those who followed the articles I wrote in the WFL newsletter about our various projects, this is a chance to see them first hand.

We will spend all of the time outside and the walking could be rugged, so wear hiking boots and dress for the weather. Cider and donuts will be available.

Directions: The Seager Farm is in Allegany County on State Route 70 between Swain and Dalton.

From the Rochester area, take I390 South to Mount Morris (exit 7), then follow route 408 south through Nunda to Dalton. Turn left at the flashing light onto route 70. The farm is about 4 miles along route 70, on the right. It is the first house after you cross into Allegany County.

From the Dansville area, take route 36 south, then turn right on route 70. Follow route 70 through Canaseraga and past the turnoff toward Swain. The farm is about seven miles from Canaseraga, on the left. If you come to the Livingston County line, you just passed it.

From the west, take route 436 from Portageville toward Nunda. Turn right onto route 70. Follow route 70 through the flashing light in Dalton. Continue on route 70 another four miles. The farm is on your right, the first house after you cross into Allegany County.

## It's Free!

by Mark Gooding

DEC forestry personnel will visit your woodlands at no cost and prepare a Forest Stewardship Plan for you. Forest stewardship is the wise management and use of forest resources to ensure health and productivity for the future. This recognizes we are caretakers for future generations and may need some professional guidance from time to time. Following are names and phone numbers that may be helpful.

**General numbers:** Avon 585-226-2466, Bath 607-776-2165

Regional Forester – John Gibbs

### Service Foresters and county assignments:

Jim Bagley – Chemung, Yates and Schuyler (Bath ext 26)

Mark Gooding – Wayne, Monroe, Orleans and Genesee (Avon 585-226-5466)

Brice June – Livingston, Ontario and Seneca (Avon 585-226-5330)

Greg Muller – Stueben (Bath ext 31)

### State Lands staff – Bath office

Gretchen Cicora, Andrew Drake and Joel Fiske

## Classifieds

**Tree Tubes for Sale** - Member/Non-Member price: 4' (\$4.35/\$4.85); 4' w/ stake (\$4.90/\$5.40); 5' (\$4.85/\$5.35); 5' w/ stake (\$5.50/\$6.00). Proceeds benefit WFL chapter. (585) 367-2847.

**1947 Ford Tractor 2N (9N-8N)** - Two speed Sherman Transmission, 3 point hitch, belt driven buzz saw. \$2,300 or best offer. Dale Schaefer (585) 367-2849.

**PLEASE NOTE:** SPACE PERMITTING, THE WFL STEERING COMMITTEE ALLOWS MEMBERS TO PLACE FREE CLASSIFIED ADS IN THIS NEWSLETTER PERTAINING TO GOOD STEWARDSHIP PRACTICES. HOWEVER, ADS PRESENTED HERE ARE NOT AN ENDORSEMENT BY WFL.

## A Gift

Consider giving that special family member or friend a gift membership to NYFOA. Less than 1% of New York's forest owners are members and may not realize what they're missing. Send \$30/membership to NYFOA, PO Box 541, Lima, NY 14485



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# The Western Finger Lakes Forest Owner



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Volume 26, Number 2



A trailcam photo of a fox with prey taken at Jim Minor's property in Schulyer County. More trail-cam photos inside. We'd love to see/publish your trailcam photos. Send to Jim at the address on the inside front cover.

## Mark your Calendar!

- June 30 - Piestrak woodswalk, Lindley (see WFL Spring newsletter for details)
- August 7 – 9 - Empire Farm Days in Seneca Falls
- August 17 – 19 - Woodsmen's Field Days in Booneville
- September 15 - Fiddler's Fair at Sugar Bush Hollow
- September 22 - Seager farm Woods Walk\*
- October 30 - WFL chapter annual dinner meeting

\* See inside for details