



**NYFOA**  
New York Forest Owners Association

July 25, 2024

Senator Charles Schumer  
322 Hart Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington D.C. 20510

Congressman Mark Molinaro  
1207 Longworth House Office Bldg.  
Washington D.C. 20515

Senator Kirsten Gillibrand  
478 Russell Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington D.C. 20510

Congressman Nicholas Langworthy  
1630 Longworth House Office Bldg.  
Washington D.C. 20515

RE: New York Forest Owners Association (NYFOA) support for Rural Forest Markets Act (RFMA) in Farm Bill

Last year when the Rural Forest Markets Act was being debated in committee, we sent you a letter of support for the bill. Unfortunately, the bill died. This year it looks like it is possible to get the RFMA to be included in the baseline text of the Farm Bill and NYFOA urges your support for the enactment of a final Farm Bill that includes RFMA. The relevant bills are: in the House, H.R. 5315, and in the Senate, S. 3399.

In New York State privately owned “family forests” cover 60% of the State, over 11 million acres. Through careful, sustainable, management these working forests provide a continuous flow of wood products to support local and statewide industries. Importantly, forests offer the major way for trapping carbon and reducing greenhouse gas emissions across the State. A publicly supported program, tied into private financing, as set forth in the Rural Forest Market Act will help provide the incentives for these 700,000 private owners to manage their lands for increasing carbon sequestration.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture already issues guarantees for loans and bonds for many traditional agriculture markets and this Act would enable the Department to extend the same kind of program to small forest owners without creating a new agency. In addition, this program, aimed at family forest owners would simplify the application process and make it easier for owners to secure carbon credits for implementing sustainable management practices. Many forest owners take great pride in the management of their lands but lack the financial resources to carry out woodland improvement practices. At the same time these owners face increasing pressure from developers and others to convert their forests to other land uses, thereby severely reducing the important reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and increasing climate change with all the problems we already see.

The New York Forest Owners Association (NYFOA) promotes sustainable forestry practices and improved stewardship on privately owned woodlands in New York State. Through local chapter and statewide activities such as woods walks and tours, the bi-monthly New York Forest Owner magazine, and affiliation with other organizations with similar objectives, NYFOA helps woodland owners to achieve their management objectives for their properties and encourages the appreciation of the qualities and importance of New York’s forests.

Edward Neuhauser  
President NYFOA

Craig Vollmer  
Executive Director NYFOA