

**NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC. BY-LAWS**  
**AMENDED June 23rd, 2025**

# **New York Forest Owners Association, Inc.**

## **By-Laws**

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# **NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC. BY-LAWS**

## **ARTICLE I**

### **Name, Territory and Office**

Section 1. Name – The Corporation shall be known as the New York Forest Owners Association, herein referred to as “NYFOA” or “the Association.”

Section 2. Territory – The Association shall conduct activities primarily in New York State.

Section 3. Office – The location of the principal office of the Association shall be determined by the Board of Directors. The Association may also have offices at such other places within the State as the Board may from time to time determine or as the business of the Association may require.

Section 4. Document Storage - This principal office shall be the depository for all Association records. All records will be stored in paper or digital form as is determined by the Board of Directors. Digital files will be stored in a secure, offsite location and accessible to all board members for review. Paper documents will be filed in the office and available for review by the Board of Directors. Copies of all official letters to external parties will be filed in this office and/or by digital means as needed.

## **ARTICLE II**

### **Mission and Purposes**

Section 1. Mission – The mission of the Association is to promote sustainable woodland practices and improved stewardship of privately owned woodland in New York State.

Section 2. The Purposes of the Association include:

1. Encourage Forest and **Woodland** (aka forest) owners to identify their individual objectives, to use natural resource professionals in developing management plans with practices to help achieve those objectives, and to support owners in their implementation activities;
2. Promote public understanding of the benefits derived through sound forest stewardship, including cleaner water, improved wildlife habitat, continued recreation opportunities, and the wood products essential to meet society's every day needs;
3. Support economically sound use of privately owned forest lands through studies and education to allow enjoyment of forest benefits today without compromising the ability of future generations to also meet their needs;
4. Provide resources and information to the public and public agencies to increase their understanding of the concepts and importance of sound principles of all aspects of forest management using current science; and
5. Foster communication and cooperation with other organizations and agencies with similar purposes and among and between all participants in the forest product cycle, such as landowners; harvesters; saw mills and processors; pulp mills and manufacturers; wildlife, recreation and other natural resource interests; industrial, commercial and domestic consumers; public officials, elected representatives, and others.

## **ARTICLE III**

### **Board of Directors**

Section 1. General Management - The governance of the Association, direction of its work and control of its property shall be vested in a Board of Directors. To carry out its responsibilities, the Board of Directors is authorized, by majority vote, to do all acts necessary, incidental or convenient to the purposes, affairs or business of the Association except as specifically prohibited by law or the By-Laws of the Association, provided that the Board of Directors shall not permit any part of the net earnings or capital of the Association to inure to the benefit of any private individual. The Board of Directors may appoint, hire or contract for such employees, agents and services as it may deem appropriate to carry out the purposes of the Association.

Section 2. Numbers of Directors – The Board shall consist of a member designated from each chapter, twelve Directors-at-large and any Ex-Officio members, each selected as set forth in Section 3 below.

#### Section 3. Selection and Terms of Officers

Section 3.1. Chapter Designated Director – Each NYFOA Chapter shall designate an individual as a member of the Board of Directors in accordance with its operational guidelines.

Section 3.2. Directors-at-large – Directors-at-large shall be elected at a meeting of the Board of Directors then in office by a majority vote of the Board of Directors then in office.

A Member of the Board of Directors is considered in good standing, and therefore eligible to vote, when dues payments are current, they are in compliance with the organization's rules and regulations as laid out in the bylaws, and have less than three consecutive, unexcused absences from meetings. (Should we add this? According to Roberts Rules we should have a definition)

Section 3.3. Terms of Office – A full term for a Director (Chapter designated and Directors-at large) is three years. Directors may serve no more than two consecutive three-year terms, except in cases in which they first have been elected to complete an unexpired term prior to the first full three-year term, in which case they may serve the unexpired term followed by two consecutive three-year terms. After losing eligibility for one year, they again may be elected Director.

Section 3.4. Ex-Officio - The Board of Directors may designate individuals to serve as Ex-Officio members of the Board of Directors. The Board determines the term of office for each member so designated. Ex-Officio members of the Board shall be entitled to all the rights and privileges of Directors, except that they shall be ineligible to vote at meetings of the Board of Directors or hold elected office.

Section 4. Vacancies – Vacancies caused by death, resignation or inability of Directors- at-large to serve may be filled by the Board of Directors until the next Board meeting. Vacancies of chapter designated directors caused by death, resignation or inability to serve, may be filled by the respective chapter. Three successive unexcused absences from Board meetings may be interpreted as inability to serve. The president will confirm the status and report such to The Board for action.

Section 5. Compensation – No Director or Officer of the Association shall receive directly or indirectly any salary or compensation for his or her service as a director or officer or in any other capacity, unless specifically authorized by the Board of Directors, except that Directors and Officers may be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties.

#### Section 6. Meetings

Section 6.1. Time, Place and Location – The Board of Directors shall meet at a time, place and location as determined by the Board. At the President's discretion, a call for a special meeting may be issued with no less

than three days notice.

Section 6.2. Quorum – A quorum for a Board of Directors meeting is **50% plus one** member of the Directors currently holding office. When determining a quorum, the presence or absence of Ex-Officio members is not considered.

Section 6.3. Participation – Directors and/or members of the Board may participate in a meeting of the Board of Directors by means of a conference telephone call, video or other communications equipment that allows all persons participating in the meeting to hear each other at the same time. Participation by such means shall constitute presence in-person at a meeting.

Members of a committee may participate in a meeting by means of a conference telephone call, video, or other communications equipment that allows all persons participating in the meeting to hear each other at the same time. Participation by such means shall constitute presence in-person at a meeting.

**Section 6.4. Voting.** With the below exceptions, any action required or permitted to be taken by the Board will be voted on during an active meeting and following Roberts Rules of Order. An action is considered as passing if a majority of Board members present at the meeting vote in favor of the action.

**6.5 Exceptions.** When voting on asset distribution, bylaw amendment or dissolution of the organization, the action must be passed by a two-thirds majority of all Board members. In these circumstances, the action/motion must be provided in writing to all Board members at least 5 days prior to a meeting.

The resolution and written consent thereto by the members of the Board or committee shall be filed with the minutes of the proceedings of the Board or committee.

Section 6.6. Meeting Conduct – Board of Directors meetings shall be governed by and conducted according to the latest edition of “Robert's Rules of Order.”

Section 7. Duty of Loyalty and Conflict of Interest.

Section 7.1. Loyalty – No Officer or Director shall engage in or condone any conduct that is disloyal, disruptive, damaging or competes with the Association. No Officer or Director shall take any action, or establish any interest that compromises his/her ability to represent the Association's best interest.

Section 7.2. Conflict of Interest Definition – A conflict of interest exists when a matter to be acted upon by the Board of Directors confers a direct, substantial benefit to any Director of the Association, or business or agency from which such Director derives an income or has authority in governance.

Section 7.3. Abstention – A member of the Board of Directors shall abstain from voting or attempting to influence the vote on any matter before the Association that places him/her in a conflict of interest.

Section 7.4. Disclosure – A member of the Board of Directors shall disclose the conflict or potential conflict as soon as he/she recognizes the conflict. If self-disclosure is not revealed any member of the Board of Directors can, prior to voting on a specific matter in which a potential conflict of interest exists, inquire whether any member of the Board desires to abstain from voting because of a conflict of interest. If no conflict of interest is disclosed but the President or any other member of the Board states the opinion that such a conflict exists and the challenged Board member refuses to abstain from the deliberations or voting as requested, the President shall immediately call for a vote of the Board to determine whether the challenged Board member is in conflict of interest. If a majority of the Board present votes to require abstention of the challenged Director, that Director shall not be permitted to vote.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **Officers**

Section 1. Officers, Election, Terms – The Board of Directors shall elect a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer from within the Board for one-year terms and may elect or appoint other officers, assistant officers and titled positions as deemed appropriate. Other officers will serve one-year terms. One person may hold more than one office in the Association, except that one person may not hold both the offices of President and Treasurer. No instrument required to be signed by more than one officer may be signed by one person in more than one capacity.

Section 2. Removal, Resignation – Officers serve at the discretion of the Board of Directors. Any Officer elected by the Board may be removed from office by a majority vote of all Board members properly in office at the time of the vote. In the event of death, resignation or removal of an Officer, the President shall nominate a successor to fill the unexpired term. This nomination shall be confirmed or disapproved by the Board at the next regular meeting.

Section 3. President – The President presides at all meetings of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee, generally supervises the affairs of the Association; appoints the Executive Committee members and serves as its chairman; freely consults with the Board and keeps its members fully informed; may sign for and speak for the Association; recommends actions likely to increase the effectiveness of the Association; and performs other duties incident to the office.

Section 4. Vice President – In the absence of the President, or in the event of his/her inability or refusal to act, the Vice President shall perform the duties of the president, and when so acting shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the President. The Vice President shall perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him/her by the President and/or the Board of Directors.

Section 5. Secretary – The Secretary shall ensure the minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors are properly recorded and maintained, see that all notices are duly given in accordance with provisions of these by-laws or as required by law, and be custodian of the records of the Association. The Secretary shall perform all duties incident to the office of Secretary and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him/her by the President and/or the Board of Directors. In addition, the Secretary shall notify members of their election to office or their appointment to committees and keep a record of the transactions of the Association.

With a majority vote of the Board of Directors all or some of these responsibilities may be assigned to the organization's Administrative Assistant. With a majority vote of the Board of Directors the Administrative Assistant may be assigned the position of Secretary as a non-voting member.

Section 6. Treasurer – The Treasurer shall be responsible for the supervision of an accounting of all monies received or expended by the Association and preparation of annual budgets. The Treasurer shall perform all the duties incidental to the office of Treasurer and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him/her by the President or by the Board of Directors. He/she shall report to the Board at all meetings, according to a format prescribed by the Board of Directors.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **Committees**

Section 1. Executive Committee – There shall be an Executive Committee of the Board composed of the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer and one or more Board members designated by the Board to make a total of five Executive Committee members, three of whom shall constitute a quorum to meet between meetings of the Board of Directors whenever the business of the Association requires it. The purpose of the Executive Committee is to identify the most pressing issues, develop a long-term vision for the organization,

shape the organization's long-term vision and strategy and make time-sensitive decisions.

The Executive Committee may exercise between meetings of the Board all the powers of the Board of Directors except as may be limited by the Board and the By-Laws. No other committees shall have authority to make binding decisions on behalf of the Board.

Section 2. Standing Committees – The Board of Directors may designate standing committees to carry out the work of the Association, assign areas of responsibility, and grant needed powers and authority. The Executive Committee appoints all members and chair of all committees. Committee members need not be on the Board of Directors, but each standing committee shall have at least one member who is on the Board of Directors. A committee must include at least of three voting members of the organization in good standing.

Section 3. Temporary Committees – The **President** may designate temporary committees and name the members and chair thereof as may be deemed appropriate or convenient to carry out the purposes of the Association. A committee must include at least three voting members of the organization in good standing.

Section 4. Ex-Officio Members – The President and Vice President shall be ex-officio members of all committees. Non-members of NYFOA may be designated as ex-officio members of committees with Board approval.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **Chapters**

Section 1. Number and Boundary – The number and boundaries of chapters shall be determined by the Board of Directors in consultation with interested parties. Any changes to chapter boundaries, names, or other actions must be approved by majority vote of the Board after notifying Board members in writing of such changes at least 30 days before a vote to change.

Section 2. Financial Assistance – Chapters will receive membership compensation from the Association based upon membership with the amount to be determined by the Board of Directors upon periodic review.

Section 3. General Management – Chapter operations: a) must offer services to members and the public consistent with the mission, purposes, by-laws and policies of the Association, b) must report to the Board on meetings and other activities in a timely manner and furnish a calendar year financial report on or before each subsequent February 1<sup>st</sup>, and c) may adopt such other guidelines as it deems appropriate.

Section 4. Consultation – Chapters will consult the Board prior to undertaking any activities which may affect the Association's tax-exempt status or liability exposure, or be inconsistent with the By-Laws, and thereafter shall be guided by the Board's advice.

Section 5. Officers – Chapters shall elect or otherwise designate a Chair, Treasurer, and a member of the Board of Directors in accordance with these By-Laws and the Chapter Operational Guidelines, and such other officers as may be desired to manage chapter affairs.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Fiscal Management**

Section 1. Fiscal Year – The Association's fiscal year shall be the calendar year.

Section 2. Financial Management Authority and Responsibility – The Board of Directors, in consultation with the Treasurer, may assign financial authority and responsibility, providing that the individual with day-to-day responsibility for receiving and depositing funds is not the same individual with day-to-day responsibility for

disbursing funds.

Section 3. Bank Selection – The Board of Directors may select such banks and depositories as may be needed.

Section 4. Signing Authority – The Board of Directors shall determine who is authorized to sign checks, notes or other financial and legal instruments. The President may recommend to The Board other individuals authorized to sign and/or speak for The Association. The Board of Directors shall determine who is authorized to sign correspondence sent on behalf of NYFOA to public agencies, sister organizations, press, etc.

Section 5. Budget – Each year, the Treasurer shall submit a budget of anticipated revenues and expenses for the upcoming fiscal year to the Board for its review and approval prior to the start of the year to which the budget applies.

Section 6. Professional Services – The Treasurer has the responsibility to advise the Board when professional services are needed to assist in carrying out the responsibilities of that office.

## **ARTICLE VIII** **Indemnification**

Section 1. Indemnification – The Association to the fullest extent now or hereafter permitted by law, may indemnify any person made, or threatened to be made, a party to any action, suit or proceeding by reason of the fact that she or he (or a person of whom she or he is the legal or personal representative or heir or legatee) is or was a director, officer, employee or other agent of the Association, or of any organization served by him or her in any capacity at the request of the Association, against judgments, fines, amounts paid in settlement and reasonable expenses, including attorneys' fees.

## **ARTICLE IX** **Dissolution**

Section 1. Resolution – The Association may be disbanded by such resolutions of the Board of Directors as required by law at a regular or special meeting of the Board of Directors, providing written notice of the intended action on such resolution, together with the basis for action, is provided to each Director at least thirty (30) days before the action is to be taken on such resolution. Passage of the resolution to dissolve the Association shall require approval of **two-thirds of all** Board members in good standing and properly in office at the time of the vote.

Section 2. Continuation for Purposes of Discharge – Upon dissolution of the Association by resolution of the Board of Directors, the Association shall continue for the purpose of discharging any existing obligations and doing all other acts required to adjust and finalize its affairs.

Section 3. Distribution of Assets – In accordance with New York State non-profit corporation law, in the event of dissolution of the Association, all of the assets and property of the Association remaining after proper payment of expenses and the satisfaction of all liabilities shall be distributed, in accordance with Section 1102 of the New York State Not-for-Profit Corporation Law, as it may be amended, to further the not-for-profit purposes of the Association and/or to such charitable and educational organization as shall qualify under Section 501(c)3 of the United States Internal Revenue Code. The Board of Directors may make recommendations for distribution of assets at the time of dissolution. Final determination will be made by a majority vote of the entire Board of Directors.

## **ARTICLE X** **Conflicts**

Section 1. Conflicts – If there are any conflicts between the provisions of the certificate of incorporation and the By-Laws, provisions of the certificate of incorporation shall govern.

## **ARTICLE XI**

### **Amendments**

Section 1. Amendments – Any article or section of these by-laws may be amended, repealed or changed at any meeting of the Board of Directors by a two-thirds vote, provided that at least 30 days prior to such meeting all Directors have been notified in writing of proposed changes.