

FORESTRY AWARENESS DAY— MARCH 19, 2013

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Council of Forest Resource Organization’s Issue Summary

Without attention to the business climate in a State where many forest industry firms are located, the viability of many communities, in particular our-rural communities is in jeopardy. Without correction of some land use and taxation policies, many forest owners will lose their lands and forests and many of these will be converted to less desirable uses that degrade our environment.

The Council of Forest Resource Organizations urges executive and legislative branches to encourage and legislate (when necessary) the State’s Agencies to take the following actions to support employers and land owners in contributing to the health of the economy of New York and local communities as well as ensuring that forests continue to provide all of the States’ residents with “Open Space,” clean water and recreation. Specifically:

Forest Property Taxation

Our objective: Reform property tax and assessment programs to encourage landowners to maintain their forest land and reduce pressures on land-owners that may cause parcelizing, liquidating and/or converting land to non-forest uses.

Wood Energy

Our objective: To modify New York State’s renewable energy policies to recognize and prioritize the use of sustainable in-state residual wood supplies to meet New York’s clean energy needs.

Sustainable Forestry

Our objective: To modify State policies to recognize the value of the forest products industry and our sustainable managed forests by providing incentives for forest management and encouraging State policies which favor forest products from sustainably managed lands.

Improving and Protecting Forest Health

Our objective: To modify State policies to improve the health of our forests through a variety of measures designed to help public and private forests.

Funding and Legislative Action Letter

CFRO, in a letter dated Nov. 5, 2012, made the following requests of the Executive Office –

- Increase the DEC’s budget by \$1.5 million to enable increasing revenues from harvesting (offset by an additional \$4.85 million in increased revenues).
- Enhance the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) to \$164 million, using revenue from the State’s existing Bottle Bill and Real Estate Transfer Tax.
- Dedicate \$5 million of the EPF for invasive species and make Asian Long Horned Beetle (ALB) and Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) a priority.
- Provide \$1.2 million to fund the Wood Products Development Council (WPDC) to support expanded marketing of New York Wood Products.
- Support S 1361 that will streamline forest products contract sales. Current paperwork delays are costing the State revenues without any value added.
- Implement the 480a ii provision of tax law passed in 2008 that recognizes all American Tree Farms, Forest Stewardship Council and Sustainable Forestry Initiative Certified lands as meeting the requirements for 480a enrollment. This action will save much in the way of DEC resources for reviewing plans already certified by national and international bodies that have already certified public as well as some private forests in New York.

AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS

Adirondack Landowners Association •Audubon New York • Catskill Forest Association • Catskill Landowner Association •Empire State Forest Products Association • NY Biomass Energy Association • NY Forest Owners Association • NY Farm Bureau • NYS Sustainable Forestry Initiative State Implementation Committee • NYS Society of American Foresters • NYS Tree Farm • NYS Urban Forestry Council • SUNY College of Environmental Science & Forestry • The Nature Conservancy • Watershed Agricultural Council •For More Information, Contact: Graham Cox, CFRO Chair at glcox@audubon.org or (518) 869-9731

FOREST PROPERTY TAXATION

Objective: Reform property tax and assessment programs to encourage landowners to maintain their forest land, and reduce pressures on land-owners that may cause parcelizing, liquidating and/or converting land to non-forest uses.

Rationale: New York has significant forest assets that are privately held and stewarded. These forests contribute important natural services and economic benefits to our communities, including but not limited to clean water, recreation, forest products, and wildlife habitat. Property taxes on forestland in New York State discourage most landowners from making long-term commitments to sustainable forest management. Landowners are too frequently forced to liquidate forest assets to pay for taxes rather than manage the resource to produce a higher valued crop over time. This results in the subdivision of land and the sale of timber before this resource has reached economic maturity. Lack of timber management weakens our economy by not maximizing the value of a local resource.

Action Items: The Council of Forest Resource Organizations is asking for the following support:

As part of the FY 2013-14 state budget, include funding in state assistance to local governments and school districts for reduced property tax revenues as a result of state mandated exemptions for forest land owners. Local governments and school districts will be eligible for this assistance when the value of lands exempted, under the existing forest tax programs, exceed one percent of the taxing jurisdiction’s total assessed value. Reimbursement will be provided based on the loss in assessed value due to the exemptions minus one percent. It is estimated that at numerous towns and number of school districts will receive funding during FY 2013-14.

Implement the 480a ii provisions on forest tax assessments. We will work with DEC to implementing these changes to lessen the burden on DEC and the landowner on participating in 480a, the state’s tax abatement program for forest landowners. Under current law, DEC must consider the American Tree Farm, Forest Stewardship Council and Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) Certified lands meet the requirements for 480a. This action will be a significant benefit to DEC staffing requirements and to landowners with 50 acres or more of qualifying forest.

Request the Rural Resources Commission initiate stakeholder discussions including forest owners, the forest products industry, conservation organizations, state agencies, state legislators and others to determine how to update and enhance the 480 program. A new “480b” program could achieve greater benefits for landowners, communities, the economy and the environment.

Continue the practice of assessing Forest Preserve Lands at a comparable rate to private forestland to prevent the shift of the tax burden on to private landowners .

Wood Energy

Objective: Modify state renewable energy policies to recognize and prioritize the use of sustainable in-state residual wood supplies to meet New York’s clean energy needs.

Rationale: Although the 2009 State Energy Plan and the Scope of the 2013 State Energy Plan discuss prioritizing the use of in-state energy resources, state procurement and incentive policies are generally silent on the potential for using forest harvesting residuals, wood waste, and low-value timber to produce energy, even though supplies of this material exceed current market demand in most regions of the state. In the first round of the Combined Funding Application (CFA) and in the second round of recommendations from the Regional Economic Development Councils, biomass energy was recognized as an engine of local economic growth. Wood energy requires local feedstock, it provides continuing rural employment, in comparison with other forms of renewable energy, where the jobs virtually disappear once the installation is complete. The forest harvesting industry, suffering from a downturn in housing sector demand, is particularly in need of this support.

Wood energy is a cheaper than petroleum and propane, which are the most common sources for residential and commercial heating in large areas of the state that are not served by natural gas utilities. When managed to ensure long-term sustainability, New York’s biomass-derived fuels can help achieve clean energy goals by replacing imported fossil fuels through such applications as high efficiency heating and combined heat and power (CHP) generation. From a forest health perspective, development of demand for sustainably harvested biomass has the potential to improve the quality of timber stands while combating pests, diseases and invasive species. New York should adopt consensus guidelines for biomass harvesting that maintains the ecological value and productivity of our forests.

Action Items: The Council of Forest Resource Organizations would support the following legislative actions:

Equitable tax treatment for all biomass derived fuels, whether solid, liquid, or gaseous and review of all energy bills as they move through the legislative process to make sure that they explicitly include carbon-balanced, sustainable biomass energy among the renewable technologies being encouraged or supported *or* set technology-neutral renewable energy targets compatible with the stated goals of the incentive programs.

For example:

A.02536 (Crouch) and A.00936 (Kavanagh) call for a tax credit for solar, wind, geothermal, and fuel cell alternative energy generation equipment and installation, but do not mention biomass power, heating and CHP;

A.01938 (Englebright) and A.02428 (Englebright) support clean energy initiatives, but specifically exclude timber and forest residues from being considered “sustainably managed biomass” eligible for supports.

Amendment of Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) legislation (A 40004A) to explicitly include residential and small scale commercial biomass thermal and CHP energy systems among the list of technologies eligible for this innovative funding scheme, similar to programs in Maine and New Hampshire. And, explicitly include biomass energy systems as eligible to replace electric, oil and propane heating appliances in Green Jobs/Green NY, EmPower, Home Performance with Energy Star program

A call by legislators on the Executive Branch to explicitly identify biomass heating systems as approved and encouraged technology for state commitment to enhanced renewable energy in state owned buildings, especially where displacing heating oil or propane, and prioritize procurement of solid, liquid and gaseous biomass energy by encouraging state fuel purchases to be from in-state, renewable sources;

Inclusion of thermal biomass energy in the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) when this RPS program is reviewed and revised in 2013 by the Public Service Commission.

SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY

Objective: Modify State policies to recognize the value of sustainably managed forests and the forest products by providing incentives to forest management and encouraging state polices favor forest products from those forests.

Rationale: New York State has been a leader in promoting sustainable forestry practices and forest products from those lands. Despite having over 2 million acres certified by the leading internationally accredited programs, such as the Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Forest Stewardship Council, American Tree Farm and Programmes for Forest Certifications systems; New York State has another 13 million acres of forests that provide forest products, indicating a far greater proportion of these lands could be certified if there were proper incentives and market demands. The State of New York has a role to lead in the promotion of forest products. The State has invested in over 786,000 acres of state owned reforestation lands meeting the SFI and FSC standard and has been co-sponsor of the American Tree Farm system for decades. The 2012 passage of legislation creating a tax credit for buildings meeting environmental standards such as LEED and Green Globes is a good start to create market demand in private housing. Providing additional incentives will encourage adoption of more sustainable forest management practices by encouraging the use of forest precuts from New York State sources.

Action Items: The Council of Forest Resource Organizations is asking for the following support:

Amend S.302 that would require state purchases to favor “environmentally preferred “products to encourage NY sourced wood products, especially products labeled by FSC, SFI, and PEFC.

Provide budget support for the New York Loggers Training Inc. certification program that provides safety, environmental and business training to the forest products industry.

Provide budget support for DEC to work with the forest products industry, forest land owners, and Foresters to coordinate the development of voluntary Sustainable Forestry Guidelines for New York State.

Require DEC to modify a suite of environmental regulations that will both increase compliance with regulations, improve environmental outcomes and lower public costs of oversight and enforcement. These modifications include;

Support S.1361 that will streamline forest products contract sales. The paperwork delays are costing the State revenues without any value added.

Support efforts to provide consistency across the state and streamline statewide regulations covering forest operations, especially in the areas of stream crossings and wetland uses. This is part of reforms being initiated by the Department of Environmental Conservation to create a higher compliance with environmental regulations by having consistency and reducing staff burdens.

IMPROVING AND PROTECTING FOREST HEALTH

Objective: Modify State policies to improve the health of our forests through a variety of measures designed to help public and private forests.

Rationale: New York State’s public and private forests are at risk of serious degradation unless we act promptly to implement measures to address these threats. The threats include growing populations of wildlife, invasive species such as Asian Long Horned Beetle and Emerald Ash Borer, climate change impacts and the fragmentation of our landscape by development [of all types](#) . We must focus to improve forest health and productivity to ensure quality forest management for ecological benefits and to meet the state's future needs for forest products.. The regeneration of our future forests are at risk from an over abundance of white tailed deer in many regions.

Federal support for private forest management and invasive species protection are declining significantly. New York State must act quickly and decisively before time runs out and we experience potentially catastrophic results. The regulatory system must be modified to encourage compliance, improve environmental outcomes, and reduce public costs.

Action Items: The Council of Forest Resource Organizations is asking for the following support:

Provide DEC the authority to manage wildlife population for moose and elk so that these growing populations can be manage before they get out of control;

Require DEC to implement a robust deer management program that helps to address a serious forest regeneration problem in specific regions of the state;

Provide \$5 million in funding from the EPF to assist State agencies for invasive species management and protection with a focus on forest pests such as Asian Long Horned Beetle.



North American seed sources. The American Chestnut Foundation has also gained success in a similar hybridization program involving American and Chinese chestnut and is now distributing them on a contractual basis. We’ll have to see how it goes.

On another more positive note – the HWA does seem to be slowing down in some areas throughout the Catskills in recent years – few experts understand the reasons. However, I have noticed hemlock regenerating heavily in some areas – reclaiming forests that were once used by the tanning industry in times past. In other areas, hemlocks have been usurped by faster growing trees that regenerated after heavy cutting and/or farm abandonment. In the future, hemlocks may once again regenerate these stands since few trees can germinate and establish underneath the shade of mature trees. There is no doubt that both the tanning industry and the recent HWA have impacted the eastern hemlock tree. However, there are other factors effecting hemlock that should be considered. Similar to some other trees – hemlocks are also susceptible to deer browse especially during winter. Deer use mature hemlock stands as wintering yards for shelter from cold winds and deeper snow depths. These areas can contain extremely concentrated numbers of deer for long periods of time where browsing of tree seedlings can be extreme – including hemlock. The HWA may be a problem that cannot be solved, but the deer issue can be – it’s a matter of sunlight. The deer are hungry and their impacts upon our forests are growing each year. Deer have always relied upon the forest as a food source. What has changed is the quality of this forest. Humans in the past have relied upon deer for a source of food, clothing, and tools. Ironically deer too have relied upon humans to provide sunlight into the forest (mostly through burning in the past) in order to



Hemlock trees that have been weakened by Hemlock Woolly Adelgid are more susceptible to wind damage and can literally break in half.

provide a diversity of forest types – age classes; species composition; and size classes. Our forests today are mostly even aged and maturing – offering little in the understory for a growing deer herd. Hemlock – like oak, cherry, walnut, and hickory are finding it more difficult to make a living in the younger age classes without the forest’s chief herbivore being satisfied – the white-tailed deer. If you would like to know more about how to provide better quality wildlife habitat, call CFA. www.catskillforest.org

The 4th Annual celebration of our region’s forests located at Margaretville Village Park Pavilion. Logging Sawmill Forest Products, Forestry and Fun for all!



August 10am-12pm
American ginseng is revered throughout China for its medicinal attributes. Ginseng also grows throughout the Catskills, but oftentimes goes unnoticed. Come along and learn how to identify this long-lived herb in our own Catskill forest. **(CFA Members Free)** \$20 non-CFA member; sturdy shoes required. **Limit 20 participants;** Pre-registration required.

August 17th Ginseng Woodswalk
10am-12pm
American ginseng is revered throughout China for its medicinal attributes. Ginseng also grows throughout the Catskills, but oftentimes goes unnoticed. Come along and learn how to identify this long-lived herb in our own Catskill forest. **(CFA Members Free)** \$20 non-CFA member; sturdy shoes required. **Limit 20 participants;** Pre-registration required.

Continued on Page 14.....

September 14th Mushroom Woodswalk:
10am-12pm
Why buy Portobello mushrooms from the store when you can take a walk in the woods and pick your own for free? Learn about some of the easily identifiable & edible mushrooms found locally in our forests. Come prepared! We’ll be walking in the woods. **Limit 20 participants. (CFA Members Free)** \$20 non-CFA members; sturdy shoes required. Pre-registration required.

October 5th CFA’s Annual Meeting
9:30am-3:30pm
@ Hanah Country Resort. Support the Catskill Forests & the work CFA does. An opportunity to exchange ideas with your peers, great conversation, lunch & auction! \$40 per person. **Pre-registration/pre-payment required;** all are welcome to attend.

October 12th Game of Logging Level 1
7:30am-5pm

Yet Another “Bummer” in the Forest?

By: Ryan Trapani



Hemlock Woolly Adelgid appears on the undersides of hemlock needles. It is white and appears cottony.

Each hunting season there is a certain amount of deer that must be harvested in order to last me through the year. Normally I first hunt those areas that are both accessible and abundant in deer. These conditions are usually met in the larger, more fertile valleys where a diversity of food and cover sources is available for wildlife. Fortunately, minimum deer harvest quotas were met early on and allowed for more time to be allocated towards hunting inaccessible areas in the mountains. Hunting these areas offers another type of hunting experience. Deer behavior and physiology can differ significantly when hunting pressure is low. Sitting in a tree-stand far away from the familiar sounds of human dwelling, the forest and its inhabitants become the focus.

Still, I could not help but notice our society's culture reflected in our forest one quiet morning sitting 30 feet up a tree. Sometimes, it literally hits you right in the face.

A branch is what hit me in the face! Its needles were short, flat and soft. It was a hemlock. I chose this spot because its dark, ever-green boughs provided excellent background cover, helping to blend my human silhouette among the forest. The stream nearby and its occupants also benefited from the hemlock's cover since cooler water can hold more oxygen creating better conditions for fish and the prey they depend upon.

Unfortunately, this branch did not hold promise for the future in preserving the aforementioned benefits. It was riddled with a white, cotton-like substance along the branch and needles. I knew all too well what it was and how it

got there. It was hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA).

Our thirst for cheap manufactured products and plants from China can now be reflected on a branch of a tree high up in the mountains, whether on steep rocky bluffs or deep down in ravines. Hemlock woolly adelgid (*Adelges tsugae*) is a relative of aphids. It literally sucks the life out of trees through the needles. Hemlocks usually succumb to HWA within 2 – 8 years. The crown will begin to recede and appear less full.

HWA was accidentally introduced from Asia in 1951 by nursery stock. It began causing noticeable damage by the 1980s and is in the forest of 17 eastern US states. Its main source of food is the eastern hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) and Carolina hemlock (*Tsuga caroliniana*). Carolina hemlock is mostly isolated to the Blue Ridge Mountains of the Carolinas and Virginia. Eastern hemlock is found locally in New York State and throughout most of the eastern US. In Asia, the HWA does not cause any significant damage since it is balanced by adequate predators and the hemlocks there are able to tolerate their presence.

In a forest setting, there currently is no control for HWA. In a landscape setting, homeowners have the option of applying pesticides to the soil surrounding specific trees. Applications of pesticides should always follow the label as instructed. They usually have to be re-applied too. Landscape applications are not feasible in a forest setting due to expense and lack of study pertaining to their success.

Instead, the USDA National Arboretum began a breeding program in the 1990s. Search parties were sent over to Asia to gain research and bring back seed sources of Asian hemlocks resistant to the HWA. Fortunately, researchers have been able to hybridize one of North America's hemlocks (Carolina hemlock) with Chinese hemlock (*Tsuga chinensis*). They have developed some hybrids that are showing some resistance to HWA. More research needs to be conducted before hybrids are offered to the public for restocking.

The threat to our forest from such insects and diseases as HWA is a product of our trade with far and away places. It may also have to do with the fact that North & South America were separated from Europe, Asia, and Africa for millions of years creating flora and fauna of the former more at risk from the latter. Many exotic species have found a niche in our forest, and it often is impossible to eradicate or control them. The future may hold promise in programs similar to the hemlock hybridization programs that link resistant genes of Chinese seed sources with

The Catskill Forest Preserve – Always Changing,

but a Forest Forever

by: Ryan Trapani



Ashokan – High Point

Forests are always changing. The forests encountered at present are the product of many variables – climate, site, elevation, natural and human disturbances. The region's distinctive mountainous topography is reflected by its distinctive forests. Trees encountered at lower elevations of the Catskills typically differ from those found at higher ones. Higher elevations contain shorter growing seasons and are subject to more disturbances from wind, ice, and snow. In climbing a Catskill peak you may find yourself in a forest similar to one in Canada – balsam fir, mountain ash, and paper birch – trees tolerant to cold, harsh conditions. The mid and lower elevations contain many forest types – dependent upon both natural and human disturbances.

Human disturbances can be more subtle to the casual observer due to the forest's great resiliency. i.e. – some mature stands of trees located on **Forest Preserve** were once pasture-land used for feeding livestock. Stone walls serve as good testimony to this bygone era. When the farmer abandoned his field he left behind a legacy that can still be observed. Trees that cannot tolerate shade pioneered these areas – bigtooth and trembling aspen, black cherry, and serviceberry. As these trees matured over time only those tolerant to shade could grow underneath – maple, beech, hemlock, basswood, and yellow birch.

Before the farmers were others that made a living in these mountains – influencing the formation of the forest encountered today. The tanning industry of the 19th century harvested millions of hemlock trees for their bark. The bark was used to make a liquor that was used to preserve animal hides that were made into leather. Forests once dominated by shade-tolerant hemlocks were replaced by less tolerant – mostly broad leaf species. The young saplings that grew up afterwards were processed by hoop-shavers destined

for wooden barrels. Lumbermen felled trees for logs that were skidded out and milled into boards for a variety of wood products. The dendritic road patterns and old rotten stumps they left dominate many parts of **Forest Preserve** today. Trees that regenerated after cutting included both shade tolerant and shade-intolerant vegetation dependent upon many variables.

Before the bark peeler and tanner were Native Americans who also influenced the forests we see today. Native Americans were dependent upon the forest for not only its wood, but the food it provided. Chestnuts, acorns, hickorynuts, walnuts, and blueberries among others were gathered from the forest as well as animals. Most of these fruits and nuts came from species intolerant of shade. Fire was used to ensure their survivability. Remnants of this management remains in forests containing chestnut oak, pitch pine, sassafras, blueberry, and American chestnut.

Lastly, **natural** disturbances are always influencing our forests as well. Natural disturbances include wind, lightning, insects, disease, erosion, drought, ice, and flooding. These disturbances along with human-derived ones can significantly influence the forest we see now. However, it is these disturbances which have given us the diversity in our forests today. No matter what the disturbance is – “a forest will always be”, inside state **Forest Preserve**.



Hemlock Grove in the “Preserve”

HOW THE CATSKILLS



Picture of Wittenberg Mountain taken from the top of Cornell Mountain. The lighter colored trees in the foreground are Balsam Fir.

Yes, a fir coat – i.e. covered with balsam fir trees – not a fur coat. Ask any hiker who has climbed most of the Catskills peaks, and who has observed the forest, where the balsam fir is. It is confined to the eastern mountains, forming a band when plotted on a map (see accompanying map), from Balsam Lake Mountain eastward over the Slide Mountain area, then northeastward over Hunter Mountain to the Blackhead Range. This conifer, in contrast, is missing on all the western Catskills peaks at similar elevations, from the Beaverkill Range northeastward over Mill Brook Ridge, Dry Brook Ridge, the peaks between the East and West Branches of the Delaware River (such as Mounts Pisgah, Plattekill, and Utsayantha), and the Bearpen Range.

This writer, via a dissertation, began to inquire why this evergreen tree coats some summits and not others. The dissertation has led to a nearly life-long study, the answers to which are finally becoming clear only in the last few years. For decades, I had assumed that the fir had once abundantly coated the western peaks as well, and

for some reason(s) had disappeared. This has, for the most part, turned out not to be the case.

Also over the last few years, I have been finding balsam fir populations in the far western Catskills, but not at high elevations coating the mountain tops. Most such populations are in swamps and bogs, although a few occur in valley bottoms, on the rolling plateau between the West Branch Delaware and the Susquehanna Rivers.

But the whole East Branch Delaware River watershed, including nearly all the peaks on both sides of it, lack a fir coat. Thus, when plotted on the accompanying map, balsam fir appears in two separate bands, or strands, oriented southwest to northeast with a gap between them. I have named these bands mainly for my own convenience:

*The Fir East Pathway, the band from Balsam Lake Mountain to the Blackhead Range;

*The Fir West Pathway, the band located between the West Branch Delaware and Susquehanna Rivers; and –

*The Delaware Fir Gap, the band in between where the fir is absent.

How can this two-pathway distribution be explained with the gap between them? Part of my studies of Catskills forest history has been the sampling of peat from the bottoms, and near bottoms, of bogs. These peat samples contain preserved plant parts – needles, cones, twigs, leaves, seeds, bark, wood, roots, etc. - i.e. fossils from plants and trees that lived in the Catskills thousands of years ago. Radiocarbon dates on peat samples from about 90 bogs in the Catskill Region have been obtained from Beta Analytic, a laboratory located in Miami, Florida. So we now know what some of the trees and plants were growing in and around these bogs and when.

Nearly all the bogs that contain balsam fir today, in both the East and West Pathways, have harbored the tree all along – from shortly after the Ice Age 13700 years ago to the present. But those 21 bogs (except for three) in the Delaware Fir Gap have no fir fossils. In other words, the fir, as I had incorrectly assumed for decades, had not disappeared; rather, it was never present to begin with. Or, the tree was in the Delaware Fir Gap in such small quantities that no fossils were preserved.

Three exceptional bogs in the Delaware Fir Gap did contain fossils, but my sampling revealed only one fossil each. Two bogs, one near Stratton Falls and the other near Kelly Corners, contained a single cone scale with attached bract (unmistakenly fir – not hemlock, spruce, or pine) 11300 and 10600 years ago, respec-



not as active – staying inside to keep warm. After all, there is no grass to cut this time of year. Snow also has a way of buffering sound too. I looked back to see where I came from. I can see the deer's tracks, and the coyote tracks over them. And now my tracks cover up both. Although my tracks probably represent the oldest animal of the three, the tracks taken as a whole are much older – ancient in their pattern and hundreds of years old. This has been going on long before me, and hopefully will continue long afterwards. A walk in the woods has a way of showing me this – about how some things change and some things do not. Perhaps we are drawn to the forest because in comparison it more plainly shows these ancient patterns.

www.catskillforest.org

Calendar of Events:

March 8th Alternative Energy Workshop

9:30am-3:00pm

The Catskill Mountains are full of energy. However, there are many resources to gather energy from – solar; wind; wood; grass; garbage; and more. At the Alternative Energy Workshop, we'll discuss some of the most practical methods of energy production available to us here in the Catskills. Each has their costs and benefits that must be weighed, but will first require discussion. \$10 fee includes lunch; **Pre-registration required.**

April 27th Tree ID walk

10am-12:pm

What's in a forest anyway? Lots of trees right? Ever wonder what the names are of all these trees? Take a walk with the Catskill Forest Association and learn the names of these trees. We'll help you be able to identify trees throughout the region by deciphering each tree's unique characteristics. **(CFA members free)** \$5 non-CFA members; sturdy shoes required. **Pre-registration required.**

May 11th Forest Flowers

10am-12pm

This time of year is a great time to get out in the woods and see some flowers. Before the trees cast a deep shadow under their canopies is a time for understory plants to soak in some rays and show off some flowers. Dutchmen's breeches, spring beauty, and trilliums make up just a few of the flowers that carpet our forest's understories. Take a walk with CFA and learn more about these spring ephemerals. **(CFA members free)** \$10 non-CFA members; sturdy shoes required. **Pre-registration required.**

May 18th Forest Health & Regeneration

10am-12pm

When we think of a forest, many of us think about larger, older trees. However, this is only one type of forest, and one aspect of it. There is another layer and age class of forest that often goes unnoticed – the forest underneath which includes younger trees! Join CFA on a walk through the woods to see what's growing below the canopy and what we can do to provide a healthier, future forest. **(CFA members free)** \$5 non-CFA members; sturdy shoes required. **Pre-registration required.**

May 25th Game of Logging level 1

7:30am-5pm

Level 1 focuses on varying aspects of chainsaw safety and techniques for properly felling trees. Participants are introduced to open face felling, personal protective equipment, chainsaw safety features, reactive forces, bore cutting, pre-planning the fell, and understanding hinge-wood strength.

Individuals will be responsible to provide their own chain saw, helmet, leather boots, chaps, safety glasses or face screen, ear muffs or plugs, and to dress for the weather. Participants should pack a brown bag lunch and enough water for the day. **CFA members pay \$135** & non CFA members pay \$150. **Pre-registration/pre-payment is required.** Class is limited to 10 participants.

June 15th – Ties to the Land Workshop: Succession Planning for Forest Landowners

10am-3pm

Successful succession is a collaborative effort. *Ties to the Land* is a workshop committed to ensuring that the many individuals and associations that may be involved have access to the resources and support they need. The differences among family members in values, goals and lack of critical skills can lead to disaster. *Ties to the Land* provides the essential tools and resources that help woodland owners make the decisions necessary to achieve their objectives and pass their land to succeeding generations. *Ties to the Land* helps guide people through a successful land transfer. \$60/person includes lunch and workshop materials. Ulster County location to be determined. **Pre-registration/pre-payment required.** For more information call CFA @ (845) 586-3054 or e-mail: cfa@catskill.net.

June 29th Game of Logging level 2

7:30am-5pm

Level 2 focuses on maximizing chainsaw performance. Individuals will learn about chainsaw maintenance; carburetor setting; filing techniques; limbing & bucking techniques; spring pole cutting; & felling techniques. **Level 1 is a prerequisite.**

Individuals will be responsible to provide their own chain saw, helmet, leather boots, chaps, safety glasses or face screen, ear muffs or plugs, and to dress for the weather. Participants should pack a brown bag lunch and enough water for the day. **CFA members pay \$135** & non CFA members pay \$150. **Pre-registration/pre-payment is required.** Class is limited to 10 participants. For more information call CFA @ (845) 586-3054 or e-mail cfa@catskill.net.

July 13th Backyard Edibles & Medicinals

10am-3pm

Don't just run to the store! First, see what's growing in your backyard. There might just be something you can use to fill your stomach with, boost your health, while saving your wealth. We'll explore some of the plants, shrubs, and trees that can be used just outside your door. Who knows – maybe we'll even find an edible mushroom or two. Come along and find out. **(CFA members free)** \$10 non-CFA members; sturdy shoes required. **Pre-registration required.** For more information call CFA @ (845) 586-3054 or e-mail: cfa@catskill.net

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July 27th Catskill Forest Festival FREE ADMISSION!!

TRACKING DEER

By: Ryan Trapani



Winter – like any other season has its advantages and disadvantages. Colder temperatures force residents to find ways to keep warm. Keeping warm means either spending more money to pay for fuel or time and labor towards ascertaining it. Winter also brings more snow which must be plowed, blown, sanded, salted, or shoveled away in order to get around. Winter also demands more preparedness before going outside in comparison to the other three seasons. These are clearly disadvantages when viewed in this light. However, there are also advantages. Snow that does not have to be shoveled can be used to track animals more easily. A fresh snow can show exactly when an animal was somewhere and where it was going. If properly prepared, winter can be an excellent time to move around outside – fresh snow buffers the noise of a traveler's movements and over-heating is much less of a problem.

This year's hunting season ended without any snow on the ground the entire season. Unless one is fairly familiar with tracking animals it is often more difficult without snow for the amateur. A few weeks after the season closed, we received six or more inches of snow-fall. Fresh snow allowed me to see the woods differently – showing plainly the deer's

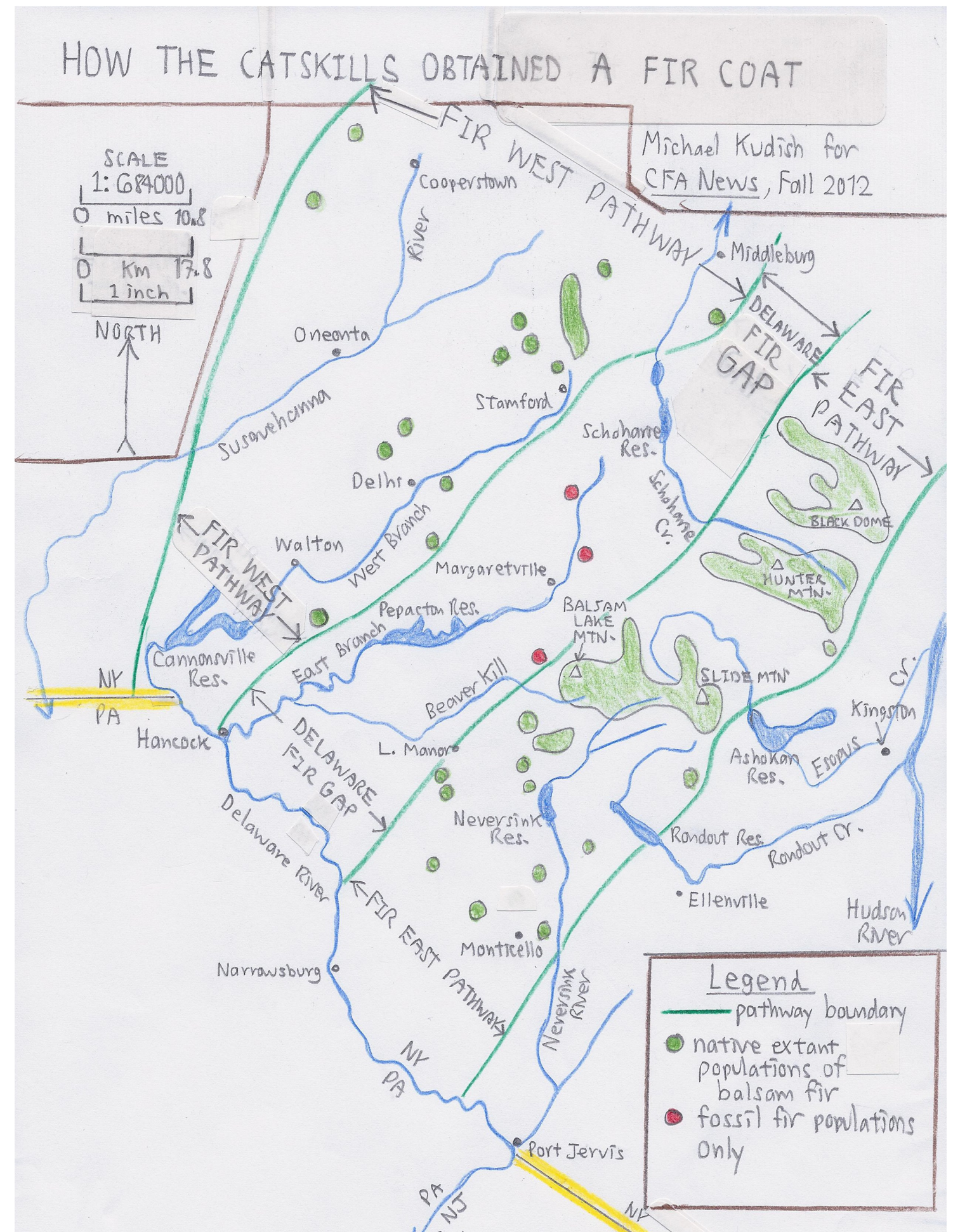
whereabouts. Since I already had an idea from hunting in the area of where the deer were, most of the tracks were not surprising. There were scattered tracks here and there, but what I was really looking for was a concentration of them. These concentrated areas – called “run-ways” or “deer highways” are more exciting since they offer a greater probability of seeing the pursued animal during the next hunting season. When I ventured into a less familiar section, I stumbled across a “run-way” of deer tracks I had not seen before. I had known the deer had traveled through this area, but was unaware of the extent. These tracks were abundant and went in both directions – meaning they were probably using it both in the morning and evening! Instead of veering off to my original plan, I decided to pursue these more. More tracks came in from another smaller deer trail, and yet another. However, these were akin to county and state roads – I was on the deer interstate!

Eventually I found that I was not the only one to have taken notice of this significant deer activity. Soon coyote tracks ebbed into the interstate and followed the tracks as well – probably responsible for all the howling I often hear close-by at night. The second predator sign was also revealing – humans. Seeing this type of old predator sign usually indicates a traditionally good place to hunt. An ancient tree stand stood off the deer highway. It contained old wooden boards, leading up to where a seat must have been at one time. It seemed more than a few decades old. Another hunter stumbled upon this highway forty or so years ago and thought like me – this would make a good place to hunt.

Although much has changed since that tree-stand was erected, the deer's traveling habits have not changed too much. It is true that deer do navigate towards the best food and cover sources – still they have areas they habitually travel through. This area serves as a pinch-point where deer are funneled into since it is wedged between a wetland and a low-lying ridge. Deer have probably been traveling this course for hundreds if not a thousand years. Each generation learns from the last about how to most easily navigate through its home-terrain – conserving the most energy and accessing critical food sources.

But deer do not live in a vacuum. Humans too have been in the area for thousands of years. Their habits reflecting the habits of their prey – mirroring the deer's movements like the coyote tracks that ebbed into the deer's. Before tree stands, perhaps it was a Dutchman – crouched under a hemlock with his long-rifle in hand in wait for his prey. Before that it might have been a waiting Native's snare-trap for an unaware deer hoof. Perhaps a band of Natives pushed the deer around this swamp to another band armed with bows and arrows.

Upon the deer highway, I stopped walking and stood under some hemlocks. It is extremely quiet during this time of year. Most of the birds and their accompanying songs have migrated to warmer, southern locations. The humans too are





Picture of a Balsam Fir.

Level 1 focuses on varying aspects of chainsaw safety and techniques for properly felling trees. Participants are introduced to open face felling, personal protective equipment, chainsaw safety features, reactive forces, bore cutting, pre-planning the fell, and understanding hinge wood strength.

Individuals will be responsible to provide their own chain saw, helmet, leather boots, chaps, safety glasses or face screen, ear muffs or plugs, and to dress for the weather. Participants should pack a brown bag lunch and enough water for the day. **CFA members pay \$135** & non CFA members pay \$150. **Pre-registration/pre-payment required.** Class is limited to 10 participants. For more information call CFA @ (845) 586-3054.

Be sure to check the web site for changes and additions:

www.Catskillforest.org - events tab, then choose between festivals and workshops!

tively. The third bog, on Mill Brook Ridge, contained a fir twig 8200 years old. There was some fir in the Gap after all, but it was very rare and has been gone for thousands of years.

Are there any places in the Catskills today where the fir is uncommon to rare? Indeed, yes. Look at the West Branch Neversink Valley between the Winnisook Club and Claryville. Look at the Beaverkill Valley between Balsam Lake (the lake, not the mountain) and Tunis Pond. Look at the bogs around Mongaup Pond State Campground. Very isolated small populations of only several trees still exist in these areas, so why not also in the Delaware Fir Gap thousands of years ago?

The question still remains: why is there a fir gap? It has to do with how this conifer migrated into the Catskills from the Poconos, in what is now Pennsylvania, about 14000 years ago. I still don't know. Can any CFA News readers be of assistance?

[If you want to learn more about the ecology and uses of balsam fir, see Ryan Trapani's article in Kaatskill Life, summer 2012, pages 72 through 76. The next CFA News article I plan to write will be on How the Catskills were Spruced Up.]

"LIKE" Catskill Forest Association on Facebook!



We're also setting up a You-Tube account. Can't wait to hear your reactions!



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Hello everyone! Hope the fall and winter treated you all well.

There are a few changes happening for CFA: One of which we are very excited about — we are developing a woodlot management planning program which will be available to CFA's members that don't have large acreages, are ineligible for, or may not want to be enrolled in the NY Forest Tax Law program, 480a. It is being designed to give a landowner a detailed snapshot of their property and all of its attributes...not just timber. These plans will incorporate GPS, mapping and inventories of forest values beyond timber volumes. They will be designed to give a landowner choices on what they manage their property for as well as suggested activities.

Another change is the addition of several new board members who are very enthusiastic. I'm sure you will observe this in the new programs being discussed as well as meet them at meetings, workshops and festivals. This board is also going to tackle the project of revising CFA's strategic plan, which needs tweaking because of changes in our forest and society.

But there is still yet another change that has both negative and positive effects on the Catskill Region. The Catskill Landowners Association has decided to disband. This is sad in that CLA was established to offer a voice for forest-owners to protect their private property rights. Several of their board members, in recognizing some of the work that we are doing in that same light felt it was best to recommend to their members to join CFA.

CFA could certainly use their membership and the many talents and knowledge that they have to offer. We are sending this newsletter out to them so that they see some of what we have to offer. CFA has good connections with many groups, statewide and in Albany, has a full-time staff to further private landowners' rights and interests, and is already looking out for private rights, especially in the area of the right to practice forestry throughout the Region.

CLA had 67 members of which 2 sit on CFA's board now and another 26 are or were members of CFA. That means that there are 39 individuals or clubs that could be served by CFA. CFA's Board and staff are hoping that the CLA Members will join CFA and make suggestions to help us further some of their issues. We are all in this for many of the same reasons and have commonality in our two organizations' goals. Please don't hesitate to ask us for help. We are looking forward to your ideas.

On a separate issue, Eric Carlson from The Empire State Forest Products Association, pointed out to me an article in the "Adirondack Daily Enterprise" concerning a 14,600 acre tract of land being sold to NYS by The Nature Conservancy. It's the famous Follensby Pond property.

In 2010, New York won a \$2.5 million federal Forest Legacy grant from the US Forest Service to help purchase the land. Coincidentally, The Nature Conservancy bought this tract from the private landowner in 2008. (No harvesting has taken place since 2008.) Now this is kind of where it gets strange to me....I thought that Forest Legacy funds were to be used for conserving WORKING forests...and, most of the land that the state is purchasing in the Adirondacks will be put into the Forest Preserve.

Groups such as ESFPA have been working for the past 2

years in Washington to push the working forest issue and in 2011 the Forest Service made a new policy shift. — Any purchase that did not allow timber harvesting under a management plan is now to be very low priority for Forest Legacy funding, resulting in no new funding being approved — the previously approved grant for Follensby expired.

The State responded to the question of why they were not pursuing the purchase, that "Due to competing priorities for land acquisition projects, the department will not have the state share of the funds for the purchase of the Follensby Pond property in the near future."

It is felt by some that opening the land to the public would give an economic boost to Adirondack hamlets & villages. Now, I ask you, how large could the economic impact be of adding 15,000 acres to the Forest Preserve when there are already 3 million acres of Preserve open? In fact local towns are against the purchase because of its effect on local employment in the forest products industry, which they feel would be far more beneficial to them.

You can read the article by typing in the following link on your browser:

<http://adirondackdailyenterprise.com/page/content.detail/id/535308/State-loses-grant-for-Follensby-land-purchase.html?nav=5017>

Have a great spring everyone, the clocks are about to change, the days are getting longer and we hope to see many of you at our events.

Naturally, *Jim Waters*



In an effort to broaden our membership rolls and increase awareness, CFA will again offer an incentive to existing members to recruit new members. Because each of us know other landowners with forested acreage or who have other interests, this is a good opportunity to recruit a new member.

CFA offers so many services and opportunities that it seems logical to encourage new membership. In addition to being part of an organization that promotes long term forest health and vitality there are many other reasons to join; onsite visits, marking for timber and firewood harvests, educational programs, the Forest Festival (held this year on July 27), "From The Forest" airing weekly at 6 PM on WIOX radio.org or FM 93.1 or Channel 20 on MTC cable, and many other educational workshops.

As an incentive to our members, CFA will give a CFA ball cap to anyone successfully recruiting a new member. Anyone reaching a friend or neighbor with acreage may contact the CFA office to receive a registration package. Upon submission of the package to CFA offices, a neat ball cap will be sent to the successful member.



Listen to "From the Forest", Wednesday evenings from 6 pm to 7 pm with Jim & Ryan. Streaming on the Internet — go to: wioxradio.org.

CFA members can now listen to archived podcasts on CFA's website: www.catskillforest.org



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Subscriptions: *CFA News* is mailed quarterly to members of the Catskill Forest Association. If you are interested in joining CFA, give us a call, visit our office or fill out and mail in the form on the back cover of this publication. Contact information is located above. Please submit address changes to Michele at the address above.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT!

For a CURRENT listing of CFA's
EVENTS you must visit CFA's Website!

[**www.catskillforest.org**](http://www.catskillforest.org)

Cover Photo:

Beaver Meadow, neatly tucked into the
Catskill Mountains. (Photo taken by Ryan
Trapani)

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Really?



Photo submitted by Becky & Mike Porter

Welcome New Members!!!

2012

July

Bradley Phillips - Denver Vega
Martin & Heather Lieberman - Halcottsville F/F raffle winners

August

Lucy Oxios - Grand Gorge
Dominick Mazza - Margaretville
Gary Rosenberger - Roxbury
Donna & Peter Michel - Delhi
Lawrence Wakin - Roxbury

September

Constance Ruehle - Gilboa
Richard Liddle - Halcottsville
Debra Un-Selkirk & Errol Selkirk - Phoenicia

October

Gwen & Young de Charette - Andes

November

Richard Kirkham - Halcottsville

December

Aaron Sokasian - Andes

2013

January

Frederick Seaman - Andes

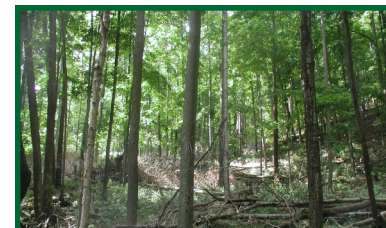
CFA Tree Marking Program!

This is a great way to get an area marked that will provide you and others with firewood as well as improve the health of your forest. You are welcome to join us during the marking to learn how to do it yourself. This could save you money down the road as it will sharpen your understanding of forest management and you will be developing your own tree selection skills. Thinning out the forest will make it more resistant to insects and disease, a better water filter, better wildlife habitat and increase the value of the timber.

WE MARK ALL YEAR-ROUND!!!

DETAILS:

1. You must be a CFA member.
2. AN "ON-SITE-VISIT" FEE OF \$200 (INCLUDES MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR ONE YEAR) PLUS MILEAGE will be charged for selecting, designating on the ground the area to be marked, and determining the acreage to be included.
3. After reviewing the forest management plan (if there is one) and taking into account the landowner(s)' objectives, a prescription for that stand will be recommended by the representative and the marking guidelines agreed upon by both the representative, the landowner(s)' forester (if there is one) and the landowner.
4. A maximum of 10 acres will be marked for each landowner in any one calendar year.
5. A FEE OF \$100 PER ACRE WILL BE CHARGED FOR THE MARKING.
6. The trees marked will be the trees that are considered "crop" trees (These are the trees that are the "keepers".) They will be marked by tree-marking paint at or just below eye height, most of the way around the bole of the tree, and on the stump.
7. It will then be up to the landowner to remove or kill all of the trees without paint. In most cases these trees will not be useful for anything but firewood. There may be an occasional saw-log tree, but unless there are a sufficient number of them, it will not be worth-while to have them delivered to a mill. The goal with this program is to improve the forest by removing the "weed trees". In some cases the trees can be left as fertilizer and wildlife habitat.
8. In the case that the landowner does not want to do the work themselves, a list of professionals will be given to them by CFA to contact in order to have the work done.
9. There is a limited amount of this we can get to, so sign up soon! Fill out the application below and mail it in. We will call to schedule.



A thinning typically removes about 4 to 5 cords per acre. If you had 10 acres marked, that would be about 45 cords of firewood being made available to you! That means that for an on-site fee and somewhere around \$10/cord you would get a rare and valuable educational experience along with the wood marked by a professional forester from CFA.

CFA is holding several special programs in chainsaw safety and use for landowners. (See the Calendar of Events on CFA's web site.)



CFA TREE MARKING APPLICATION

Name _____

Address of Property _____

Email address _____ Date _____

Phone Number and best time to call, where you can be reached during the weekday _____



PO Box 336
Arkville, NY 12406



The Newsletter of the Catskill Forest Association, Inc.



Volume 30, Number 4 - Fall 2012 &
Volume 31, Number 1—Winter 2013



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I believe in enhancing the quality of the forest land in the Catskill Region through proper forest management.
To that end, I am interested in joining the Catskill Forest Association and supporting its efforts.

Name _____
Mailing Address _____

Phone #: _____ E-mail: _____

Membership Categories (Select the level & if you'd like, make an additional donation):

Membership	\$50 + \$ _____
Contributing	\$75 + \$ _____
Business / Supporting	\$100 + \$ _____
Supporting	\$150 + \$ _____
Sustaining	\$250 + \$ _____
Benefactor	\$750 + \$ _____

Do you own land in the Catskill Region? Yes _____ No _____

Property address: _____

Telephone #: _____ County: _____
Total acres: _____ Forested acres: _____ Pond Y / N Stream Y / N River Y / N

Would you like a CFA forester to come to your property to walk it with you, making suggestions and giving you impartial and confidential advice? (IT JUST COSTS \$200 PLUS OUR MILEAGE AND THE \$200 INCLUDES A FREE ONE YEAR MEMBERSHIP.) Y / N

(If so we will call you to schedule an appointment.)

Amount enclosed \$ _____

All membership dues and donations are fully tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. A copy of the most recent financial statement filed with the New York Department of State is available upon request.

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Tracking Deer

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid

Forestry Awareness Day—March 19, 2013

The Forest Preserve

How the Catskills Obtained a Fir Coat, by
Dr. Michael Kudish

