

Forestry for Wildlife — Habitat Management

By: John MacNaught

There is a portion of my families' 80 acre property that is different from the rest of the surrounding forest. The area contains a young forest of hawthorn, apple, and sapling sized maple and ash trees growing in what was once a meadow-like abandoned agricultural field. The rest of the property is much like the surrounding forests in the area with an overstory of red maple and a carpet of fern below. Almost no regeneration is growing in the understory of this part of the property.

Walking onto the property my entire life I have rarely seen wildlife utilizing the red maple and fern, while I see deer, rabbit, grouse, turkey, woodcock, and countless species of songbirds living in the early successional hawthorn stand. As an avid outdoorsman and wildlife specialist, I wanted to take action to change the property in a way that benefits the health of the forest and wildlife living there too.

I knew some cutting had to be done to change the structure of the forest and Catskill Forest Association's (CFA) **Forestry for Wildlife** program was the answer to get it done. With the program, we first identified the trees which provide food for wildlife (crop trees) and released them from competition. This was done by cutting the surrounding trees which had crowns within ten feet or so of a crop tree and leaving them on the ground below. This not only benefitted the crop trees by allocating more sunlight to them, but also gave cover for small mammals and birds on the forest floor. Trees identified as crop trees on this property included oak, cherry, and serviceberry. Other crop trees might have included hickory, apple, or any other fruit or nut producing tree if they had been present.

Overall, we removed about 75% of the overstory and gave the forest floor added sunlight. The trees unsafe to fell were girdled in order to release a crop tree. This involved cutting two rings at least one inch into the tree. Girdling cuts the conductive tissue under the bark and the tree dies in a year or two (usually). The result is a dead standing tree (snag) which is beneficial to woodpeckers and any cavity nesting animal.

With sunlight now reaching the forest floor, shade intolerant tree species (most fruit and nut trees)



An oak tree released to full sunlight

have a chance to grow. In just a few years this area will be dense with regenerated trees providing both cover and food for wildlife. We expect regeneration to begin to grow in the next growing season, and to have a full understory of early succession habitat in a few years. Ruffed grouse will move in, along with songbirds, and small mammals too.

White-tailed deer began using the stand immedi-



Regeneration 1 year after a forestry for wildlife cut

ately after the cut, as evident from browse on the treetops left on the ground. Trail cameras were installed and many pictures of deer were taken as well as snapshots of a bobcat utilizing the area. This is the first bobcat sign we have ever seen on this property.

As vegetation grows back due to ample sunlight provided, the songbird community will change. Songbirds which utilize early successional habitats will have habitat for nesting. Most bird species will have availability of food such as berries and nuts.



Deer feeding on apples after release

The property contains dozens of overgrown apple trees which are too shaded to expend excess energy into fruit production. With a property managed specifically for wildlife, this is unacceptable. In past years I have been spending a few hours after work once or twice a month releasing apple trees from surrounding hawthorn, red maple, and ash. This is a tough job, but when spread out over many months it seems easier. The fruits of my labor has really begun to show. The trees have begun to produce a large apple crop which attracts deer from all

around to feed on. Grouse, squirrel, and black bear have been observed feeding on the apples scattered about the property also.

When managing forested habitat, hinge cuts



Released apple trees

should be used as well as felling to release crop trees. Hinge cutting is one of the most valuable methods of habitat alteration used. This involves cutting a small diameter tree (no more than 4-6" diameter) two thirds of the way through, 3-5 feet high. The tree will fall, but should remain attached to the stump. This is enough to keep the tree alive for 2-6 years. With many living tree tops on the ground, food and cover are created. This is browse for deer, cover for small mammals, and nesting habitat for some songbird species. Deer will even use heavily hinge cut areas for bedding.



Hinge-cut tree

Hinge cutting is the fastest way to create ground level cover. In just an hour or two, an acre can be transformed from a wide open stand of pole-sized trees, into a multi-dimensional stand with thick cover essential for wildlife.

With just a little effort and education, any property can be managed properly to provide the essential food and cover needed by all wildlife. Simply releasing the right trees from competition, adding much needed sunlight to the forest floor, and leaving a 'mess' behind for good cover will provide for wildlife. The Catskill Forest Association staff has the knowledge to assist you in your management goals and can provide the service of doing the work to get the right job done as well. Give us a call to schedule your forestry for wildlife today.



Hinge-cut bedding area

(845) 586-3054
www.catskillforest.org

Deerculture



Many of us are familiar with the term "agriculture." "**Agriculture**" according to Wikipedia, "is the cultivation of animals, plants, fungi, and other life forms for food, fiber, biofuel, medicinal and other products used to sustain and enhance human life."

Since 1978, another way of managing land has come into fruition too. According to founder Bill Mollison, "**Permaculture** is a philosophy of working with, rather than against nature; of protracted and thoughtful observation rather than protracted and thoughtless labor; and of looking at plants and animals in all their functions, rather than treating any area as a single product system."

In the forest setting, we have forestry. "**Forestry** is the science, art, and craft of creating, managing, using, conserving, and repairing forests and associated resources, in a sustainable manner, to meet desired goals, needs, and values for human benefit."

Both agriculture and forestry share goals that meet mainly human desires. Permaculture, on the other hand, seeks to meet human-based goals while considering the entire ecosystem. There is plenty of overlap between these approaches, and their definitions can be highly subjective, but a general understanding can be reached.

Perhaps a new subset of these management systems could be **Deerculture** (You can insert your own term if you'd like). I just made this term up – as far as I know – since I know no other way to stress the importance of deer management. You might be thinking, "Isn't deerculture too specific?" But is it? Deer are a keystone species throughout the eastern temperate forests of North America. I would argue that agriculture, forestry, and permaculture have all been compromised by the mismanagement of the white-tailed deer. Conservationist Aldo Leopold once said, "I now suspect that just as a deer herd lives in mortal fear of its wolves, so does a mountain live in mortal fear of its deer." Deer are voracious eaters. One of them can eat 4 to 6 pounds of buds per day or between 1,460 and 2,190 pounds of vegetation annually. That adds up to a lot less vegetables; hay; apples; nut trees; timber trees; maple sugaring trees; mushrooms; ginseng; nectaries for bees; forest regeneration for biodiversity; regeneration for water quality and sediment control; cover for rabbits and songbirds, foxes, bears, grouse; landscape plantings; etc. No other species affects the forest understory – and the future forest – more than the white-tailed deer; except human beings that is.

Our relationship with deer is not new; it spans thousands of years. Humans have been the primary predator of deer for a long time. Refuse pit-sites uncovered by archaeologists throughout the eastern US have found deer bones at historically known

Native American settlements quite abundantly. We can debate how balanced and abundant the deer herd was during the Native American’s dominance in North America. However, it is well documented that many natives burned the forest in order to enhance young growth which fostered both fruit and nut trees, but also cover for the white-tailed deer. In order to illustrate this historical relationship, one author – who I cannot remember – remarked about the color of a deer’s coat. It blends into brushy areas and the forest edge. The deer’s color may be no accident, but an adaptation to thousands of years of human habitat manipulation. In other words, by satiating the forests chief ruminant (deer), the forest was able to grow beyond the reach of deer, and provide benefits for other wildlife and humans alike; a keystone solution to a keystone problem. Let’s rewrite this scenario in a more familiar agricultural way.

A pasture that has too many cows will be grazed down to dirt, offering diminishing returns to the farmer; a truly unsustainable practice. Such a practice wouldn’t be good farming and certainly not “permanent agriculture.” The farmer is left with two options: (1) He could provide more pasture to feed his cows; or (2) Have fewer cows so that his pasture can recover. The goal is to match enough pasturage with the number of cows. If he balances the two correctly, then both pasture and cows will prosper; offering more benefits into the future – milk, beef, cheese, etc.

Quality Habitat is Key

Deerculture seeks the same balance into the future, but on both field and forest. We have a certain amount of deer in the Catskills and Hudson Valley that in some areas seems too high. However, there may simply be a lack of quality habitats to support them, rather than too many deer. Either deer



must be reduced, or quality habitat must be enhanced, just as the farmer’s dilemma in his pasture. So what to do? Well, we could treat deer as a pest, and simply kill them all. I don’t agree, but let’s run with that for a moment. First, deer are owned by the government (NYS DEC). Sure they claim it’s “in trust” but they are charged with their management. Second, even if the NYS DEC wanted to severely reduce the herd, they do not possess the man-power to do so directly and therefore must rely upon recreational hunting or hired sharpshooters. Yes – believe it or not – some municipalities are turning to sharpshooters. However, even if deer numbers are somewhat controlled, we’re still leaving out a large piece of the pie. NYS DEC may own the deer nibbling on your tomatoes and apple trees, but you own the land and access to them. You hold the most precious key to this keystone species – the land and how it’s managed. You own that “pasture” or back five or ten acres of woods. You own the habitat. So, how is your habitat serving those woodland goats anyway? We’ll get there. Wildlife management has done a good job at monitoring populations and setting harvesting limits thus far. Where wildlife management has failed is in *managing the habitat*. The number of deer is important, but the quality of habitat dictates how many deer the environment can hold or its carrying capacity. Habitat is what brought the deer back in the 20th century after

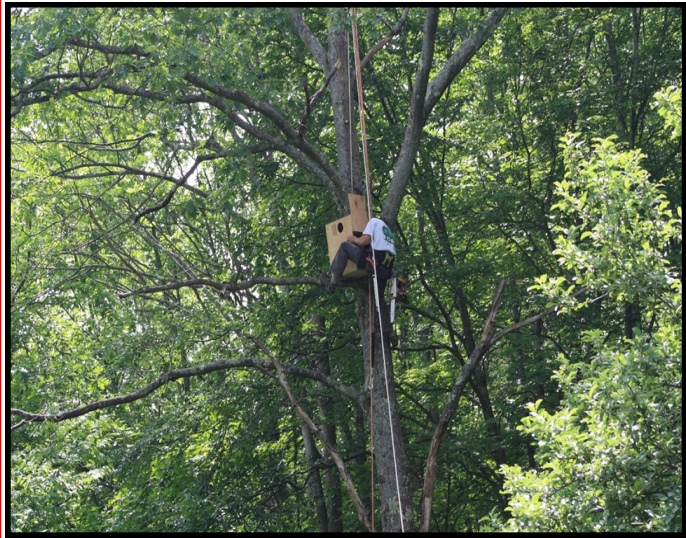
farm abandonment. Farms failed, the forest grew back and so did the deer in turn. Sure, there were some game laws attached to this regrowth, but the young forest that grew in provided the best salad bar buffet deer have yet seen in the last 150 years; and it was merely accidental. *Continued on page 11...*
Continued from page 10...

The accidental forest regrowth has now matured. Shade has set into the forest understory offering less for deer to eat. Many people prefer park-like forests and this is understandable; the forests’ cathedral-like foliated ceiling is mesmerizing, while it’s easy to walk through too. However, as our addiction to mature forest spreads, the white-tailed deer’s stomach groans, creating barren deerscapes rippling through forests, backyards, farms, and gardens. We believe the lack of habitat management has led to

***High-Nesting Bird
Bird-Box Program***

Some bird species, like barn owl, barred owl, American kestrel, wood duck, etc. have specialized nesting requirements. This may involve a nesting site high in a tree or even over water, all places that are difficult to access to hang a nesting box. CFA will provide a specialized nesting box and hang it for you through our ***Forestry for Wildlife*** program. CFA staff will come to your property to hang any type of bird nest box, almost anywhere! American kestrel and owls are some of our personal favorites.

**Give us a call today to schedule your
Forestry for Wildlife (845) 586-3054.**
Check out CFA’s video of it at the following link:



<https://vimeo.com/130974497>

October, 2015	
Option 2	Option 3
480-b: Forest Certification	480-b: Sustainable Forest Management Program
25 acre minimum, qualifications as specified by DEC-recognized program. If allowed by the certification program this may include open space lands (i.e., wetlands.)	25 acre minimum, with at least 10 acres or 25% of total acreage being forested land
Certificate of Eligibility	Certificate of Eligibility
Forest Certification Program (DEC-recognized, per regulations) participation confirmation	DEC verification of completion of Qualifying Forest Management Practice, on 10 acres or more, as per DEC-approved plan
Possible inclusion of group certification options to be considered in development of implementing regulations	Qualifying Forest Management Practices will be: 1. Commercial timber harvest; 2. Precommercial stand improvement cutting; 3. Invasive or competing vegetation control; 4. Tree planting with or without site preparation, as necessary; 5. Riparian forest buffer establishment or enhancement
10-year rolling	10-year rolling
70% reduction for year of annual commitment, unless eligibility revoked for non-compliance	40% reduction for year of annual commitment, unless eligibility revoked for non-compliance
Maintain forest certification, per program requirements	Submit annual <u>Verification of Continued Eligibility</u> Form to DEC and Assessor
Submit annual Commitment for next 10-year term, which includes <u>Verification of Continued Eligibility</u> to DEC and Assessor, with copy of annual audit report to DEC (not notarized)	Submit annual commitment for next 10-years to local assessor (not notarized)
	Future Forest Management Practices, identified in regulations, within 10-year commitment term, may only be done under another DEC-approved plan
No stumpage tax	No stumpage tax
None required	None required beyond initial qualifying Forest Management Practice, under approved plan. Additional management practices encouraged, and allowed, subject to DEC-approved Forest Management Practice Plan, prepared by DEC-approved Forester.
Same as current 480-a	Same as current 480-a

Revised 480-a "3-options" spreadsheet - PROPOSED

Option 1		
Title	Current 480-a	"Revised 480-a"
Acres	50 acres of qualifying forestland minimum	50 acres and up, as is now
What DEC issues:	Certificate of Eligibility	Certificate of Eligibility
Entry Requirements	Approved Management Plan with 15-year work schedule	No new entries to 480-a program after passage of revised law.
Term	10-year rolling	10-year rolling
Assessment reduction	80% assessment reduction for year of annual commitment, unless eligibility revoked for non-compliance	80% reduction - as is now - for year of annual commitment, unless eligibility revoked for non-compliance, for 10-year phase-in period. After 10-yrs, go to 60% reduction
Annual req.	Submit annual commitment for next 10-years to local assessor	Submit annual commitment for next 10-years to local assessor, not notarized, with copy to DEC
	Submit Harvest Plans to DEC for approval on any harvest planned according to work schedule	Submit Harvest Plans to DEC for approval on any harvest planned in work schedule within 10-year "work window" (amended requirement)
	Conduct all scheduled pre-commercial work according to work schedule	Conduct all scheduled pre-commercial work within 10-year work schedule window (amended requirement)
	5-year management plan updates required	10-year management plan updates required (instead of 5-year cycle, amended requirement)
Stumpage tax	Stumpage tax eliminated upon passage of 480-a revision	Stumpage tax eliminated, upon passage
Required management activities	As prescribed by forester in DEC-approved management plan. Work must be completed in year specified in approved work schedule . DEC can mandate if not completed.	Same as 480-a: as prescribed by forester in DEC-approved management plan. Work must be completed within work schedule window (amended requirement). DEC could mandate if not completed.
Penalties	2.5 times taxes that would have been levied, up to 10 years, plus interest	Same as current 480-a

severe deer impacts today. We need to get back into our woods and provide some sunlight into the forest understory. We need to provide cover and more browse for deer in order to remediate impacts outside the woods. We need to cut some trees to save others; both vegetative and animal. We need to also have a discussion about other potential solutions to this deer issue; its effects are widespread upon rural land uses. What about densely populated areas where deer culture and recreational hunting seems impossible? Perhaps selling venison should be legalized instead of importing it from New Zealand. Perhaps hunting rules and regulations should be further liberalized. Maybe landowners need more incentives to enhance wildlife habitat. We will be discussing these topics at this year's event: ***The Growing Deer Debate***, held October 31st at Margaretville Central School, Delaware County. For more information on attending this event, please contact CFA @ 845-586-3054.

You may not be able to control your neighbor's deer, but in the mean-time you can at least improve your forested habitat for wildlife today by taking advantage of CFA's ***Forestry for Wildlife*** program. We'll try and overwhelm that deer belly just yet. www.catskillforest.org



Deer Processing Workshop 12/12/2015

So you harvested a deer, now what? Paying to have a deer processed can get expensive, so why not learn to do it yourself? And what's better than learning first hand? The Catskill Forest Association will be hosting a deer processing workshop Saturday, December 12th 10am – 1pm with licensed guide, Sonny Somelofski. We will teach you how to process venison from skinning to packaging on a harvested deer, start to finish. Call the Catskill Forest Association at (845) 586-3054 to register. Members free, non-members \$10.

Purchase a personalized, four foot log bench for \$100 from CFA!



In an effort to broaden our membership rolls and increase awareness, CFA is offering 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 25), "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.

CFA Hat – \$15



BETTY'S BOG: THE BURNING AND THE BORING

by Michael Kudish

In January of 2014, I was reorganizing my CFA files – all the newsletters and correspondence that had accumulated since I joined the organization in 1987. I happened to come across a notice, received August 6, 1992 of a “Wetland Tour – What Wetlands Mean to Landowners – Saturday, August 22, 1992”. The notice continues with: “Betty Suter, CFA member, will host the group at her property in West Saugerties”.

In 1992, I was teaching at Paul Smith's College and could not join Betty's wetland tour. Could the wetland possibly be, or include, a bog? The notice sparked my attention.

I have been studying Catskills regional bogs for twenty years, using tree and other plant fossils preserved in peat and radiocarbon-dated, to reconstruct forest history beginning at the end of the last ice age. Could Betty's 20-acre wetland be deep enough, at least two feet, to have accumulated peat old enough to warrant sampling? Because the wetland is located in West Saugerties, at elevation 590 feet at the base of the Catskills Escarpment just north of the mouth of Platte Clove, could the peat contain any charcoal to tell us when forest fires, set mostly by Mohican and Esopus peoples, had occurred? Would Betty allow a crew to come in and sample it 22 years later?

Michele Fucci, CFA's office manager, put me in touch with Betty who is fortunately still a CFA member. Not only was Betty (formally, Dr. Elizabeth Suter – with a Ph.D. degree, not an M.D.) interested in my project, but she wanted very much to join us in the field and learn more about her lands and wetlands. And so she did – twice.

On June 14, 2014 Betty and three us explored and probed the wetland as a reconnaissance. Yes, it did have peat, but not deep enough to date all the way back to the end of the ice age (at least four or five feet

and 15,000 to 14,500 years old). The peat was deep enough, however, to make it worthwhile to return to sample. We marked the deepest points, 36 inches, and surveyed the current vegetation – dominated by black gum, eastern hemlock, and yellow birch, along with an array of shrubs including highbush blueberry, mountain laurel, mountain (Nemopanthus) and winterberry hollies. I needed to determine what tools to bring for the second visit; sampling tools depend on the depth of the peat.

Then on September 7, 2014 Betty and three of us revisited the bog, this time hauling in our tools. We relocated a deep point – with 36 inches of peat overlying glacial till - bored down, and pulled up a cylindrical core 20 inches high. And there they were! Two distinct black bands in an otherwise brown peat core, surely indicating charcoal resulting from major forest fires. The deeper band, at a depth of between 28 and 29 inches, radiocarbon-dated to 5,640 years. The shallower band, at about 23 inches, dated to 4,430 years. This told us that Native Americans were already burning Hudson Valley forests 5,640 years and 4,430 years ago, converting the northern hardwoods (beech-maple) to a southern hardwood forest (oaks, hickories, chestnut, mountain laurel) with some pitch pine.

This came as no surprise, because other fires had swept up from the Hudson Valley and left charcoal bands in four bogs on top of the Escarpment between Platte Clove and North Point. These burns occurred over a long period, with radiocarbon dates of 6,420, 4,340, 1,250, 870, and 350 years. A few of the fires over the millennia were probably set by lightning, but there is good evidence that the great majority were caused by people.

The only disappointment in Betty's Bog was that there was no great abundance of fossil plants preserved in the peat. Most peat had decomposed to the point where identification of the plant parts was impossible. Peat older than about 5,700 years most likely had fully rotted and disappeared. Those few fossils which could be identified were hemlock needles, cones, and possibly bark, along with yellow birch bark. This suggests that the vegetation around and in Betty's Bog has changed little during the last 5,640 to 4430 years.

Why the portion of title of this article “The Burning and the Boring”? Obviously, the “burning” refers to Native American activities thousands of years ago. “Boring” refers to the process of pushing and twisting a tool down into the peat to obtain a peat sample. www.catskillforest.org



A bog or really more of an immerging grassland in the Adirondacks. It was so beautiful that I couldn't help but use the picture. (photo by Jim Waters)

480-a
o. Assessment reduction proposed at 40% for all eligible and enrolled land.
Remember that these are only discussion points and will most likely produce legislation and regulations that differ some. There has already been some changes suggested, but this gives us a little more information on the DEC's general direction for proposed legislation. There has been discussion of including a 4th option, which would be just like Number 3 except it would include a management plan and have a slightly higher tax break. Another possibility being discussed is that the penalties associated with leaving the program discourages people from entering. One proposal made was to reduce the amount of penalty based on how long a property was enrolled. For example if you opted out in the first 5 years there would be the 2 & 1/2 times the taxes saved with interest that is now in place, then if a property was enrolled for 10 years, it would go down to 2 times plus interest, then if it were enrolled for 15 years the pen-

CFA / NYFOA JOINT EFFORT ON A DEER EXCLOSURE



New York Forest Owners' Association members working with The Catskill Forest Association, Inc.'s members

Recently the Catskill Forest Association (CFA) teamed up with the New York State Forest Owners Association (NYFOA) to construct a deer enclosure fence on a CFA/NYFOA member's property in Margaretville, NY. Catskill forest association staff worked with the landowner for several days, felling many trees to open the canopy to a minimum of 50% sunlight in a 1/4 acre area to ensure enough light could reach the forest floor for regeneration to grow. We then skidded out the logs to be used as firewood for the landowner. The Catskill forest association had help from both CFA and NYFOA members the day the fence was constructed making the entire process go quickly. The fence went up in just three hours.

The purpose of this fence is to keep deer out of a 1/10th acre area for a few years. We expect the area inside the fence to regenerate a variety of tree species and herbaceous plants, while the outside will remain looking browsed like the rest of the surrounding forest. Pay at-

alty would be reduced to 1 & 1/2 times the savings plus interest and so on.

Of course, the regulations developed by the DEC to implement the legislation will be yet another story. **On pages 6 & 7 is a Revised 480-a “3-options” spreadsheet.**

If you would care to discuss any concerns you may have, feel free to contact me at jwaters@catskill.net.

tention to our Facebook page, Catskill Forest Association, and find us on **Instagram@catskillforest** as we post the growth of this project over time. We will also be looking for volunteers to help us gather data to monitor the growth of the forest understory inside and outside the fence over time. Join us for woods walks this coming spring, summer, and fall and see the growth yourself! Or just contact us for a personal tour of the fence area at any time.

(845) 586-3054 / www.catskillforest.org



The finished product

The very next evening!



DEC Takes Another Stab At Improving 480-a

By: Jim Waters

I have to commend the DEC on their most recent attempt to improve a law that has been largely ineffective in achieving its initial intent. Their goals of the proposed changes to reform RPTL 480-a are:

1. Increase the acres of forestland, wildlife habitat and open space conserved and enhanced under our incentive program.
2. Reduce the barriers to landowner participation and enrollment.
3. Recognize, promote and provide incentives for participation in credible, comprehensive third-party forest certification programs that include science-based standards, annual, third-party audits by accredited auditors, at the ownership level, and a written audit report documenting any non-compliance.
4. Focus management and oversight attention on "Forest Management Practices", particularly timber harvests, by requiring "DEC-approved Forest Management Practice Plans" that ensure sustainable, science-based forestry which improves forests, rather than degrading them.
5. Reduce violations or need for plan amendments related to mandatory work schedule issues, which lead to increased management workload and potential for significant penalties.
6. Increase DEC's oversight and field inspections of enrolled properties and required or approved management practices, to ensure plans are being followed, practices are properly implemented, commitments are being upheld, and expected public benefits are received in exchange for the tax reductions provided.

The DEC has hand-picked stakeholders to get input from at several meetings around the state. The key points that they are using for discussion follow:

1. Current 480-a

- a. Existing 480-a will be continued for anyone in it now, with continued 10-year rolling commitments, no sunset provision
- b. No new enrollments will be allowed into current 480-a (under an "Approved Management Plan")
- c. Stumpage tax requirement to be eliminated
- d. Regulation changes are planned to reduce costs, increase participant flexibility and reduce administrative workloads
 - i. Replace the mandatory work schedule with 10-year "work windows"
 - ii. Extend the required 5-year plan updates to a 10-year cycle
- e. Assessment reduction reduced, commensurate with reduced costs, from 80% to 60%, after 10 years
- f. Option to get out entirely, penalty-free, in year 1, or convert to another 480-b option, penalty-free, at any time.

2. "480-b: Forest Certification"

- a. Participation will be accepted for new Forest Tax Law program enrollment under new "480-b" program

- b. Must be a DEC-recognized program (criteria to be in regulation)
- c. May include some forms of group certification as well as individual (again, as defined in regulations)
- d. 25 acre minimum required
- e. 70% assessment reduction provided
- f. Same "10-year rolling commitment" as 480-a now

3. "480-b: Sustainable Forest Management Program"

- a. Created with broader management objectives
- b. Management not limited to "timber crop production"
- c. Objectives will include:
 - i. Sustainable forest management
 - ii. Wildlife habitat maintenance and improvement
 - iii. Open space conservation
- d. Acreage minimum reduced to 25, with at least 10 acres of forest or 25% forest, whichever is greater
- e. "Eligible land" expanded to include any land not developed or not in active agricultural use
- f. Entry will be based on completion of a DEC-approved, "Qualifying Forest Management Practice", on at least 10 acres of forest
 - i. Practice Plan must be developed by "DEC-approved Professional Forester" (to be established in regulation)
 - ii. "Qualifying Forest Management Practices" will be specified in regulation, and will include:
 1. Commercial timber harvest on > 10 acres
 2. Precommercial forest stand improvement cuttings:
 - Thinning
 - Weeding
 - Crop tree release
 3. Invasive or competing vegetation control
 4. Tree planting with or without site preparation, as necessary
 5. Riparian forest buffer establishment or enhancement
 - g. Subsequent Qualifying Forest Management Practices allowed, and encouraged, but may only be done according to another DEC-approved, activity-specific Practice Plan
 - h. Other wildlife habitat improvement practices will be encouraged and will not require DEC approval (except for listed "Qualifying Forest Management Practices"
 - i. No overall "Forest Management Plan" required, but encouraged.
 - j. No mandatory work schedule required.
 - k. No mandatory timber harvesting required.
 - l. No mandatory 5-year plan updates or required plan amendments
 - m. No stumpage tax on any commercial timber harvests
 - n. Same "rolling 10-year commitment" as under

THIS SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2015 !!!



PRESENTS

THE GROWING DEER DEBATE

Discussing Solutions for Deer Impact on the Environment



ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

"No other threat to forested habitats is greater at this point in time—not lack of fire, not habitat conversion, not climate change. We can argue about which threat is more significant than another, but no one who walks the eastern forests today can deny the impact of deer to forest condition." **The Nature Conservancy, 2013**

The Growing Deer Debate Conference:

Seeks to raise awareness of deer impact on the environment in the Catskill Mountain Region & throughout the eastern US.

In this day-long event, a variety of experts, professionals, & authors convene to discuss out-of-the-box & cutting edge solutions to tackle this growing issue.

Morning sessions will analyze the multi-faceted issue of deer impact on the environment, while the afternoon will focus on creating solutions; challenging conventional methods in which deer have traditionally been managed.

OCTOBER 31st, 2015
9am – 4pm

@ Margaretville Central School
415 Main St., Margaretville, NY

REGISTER EARLY & SAVE!

\$25—Pre-Registration
Student Discount — \$15

To Register Call: 845-586-3054

THE SPEAKERS (in order of appearance)

RYAN TRAPANI is CFA's Education Forester. An ISA Certified Arborist & Certified Deer Steward, QDMA, Trapani is a regular contributor to many local publications such as Kaatskill Life, Shawangunk Journal & Mother Earth News.

JIM STERBA is author of *Nature Wars: The Incredible Story of How Wildlife Comebacks Turned Backyards into Battlegrounds*. Sterba has been a foreign correspondent, war correspondent & national correspondent for more than four decades, first for *The New York Times* & then for *The Wall Street Journal*.

TOM RAWINSKI is a botanist with the USDA Forest Service. A former Director of Ecological Management at the Massachusetts Audubon Society, Rawinski has written scores of technical reports & publications. In 2001 he received the New England Wild Flower Society's Conservation Award.

EDWARD STRINGHAM, Ph.D. is Davis Professor of Economic Organizations & Innovation at Trinity College. He was President of the Association of Private Enterprise Education, & a board member for the Center on Entrepreneurial Innovation & the Center on Culture & Civil Society at the Independent Institute. An author & editor of numerous publications, Dr. Stringham is also a winner of several awards including the Templeton Culture of Enterprise Best Article Award.

DAVID DRAKE is Associate Professor of Wildlife Ecology & extension Wildlife Specialist with the University of Wisconsin. Drake co-authored the article from *The Wildlife Society Bulletin: Regulated Commercial Harvest to Manage Overabundant White-Tailed Deer: An Idea to Consider?*

RUBEN CANTU is a certified Wildlife Biologist & Certified Professional in Rangeland Management. He has 27 years with the Texas parks & Wildlife Department as a Wildlife Biologist. Now retired, he created Habitat Advantage, LLC & is co-owner of Wildlife Consulting, LLC. Past president of the Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society, executive board member of the Texas Wildlifew Association, on the White-tailed Deer committee, & member of the Texas Section Society Range Management. Authored & co-authored various publications about wildlife throughout his career.

THIS IS HOW CFA CAN HELP YOU!!!

(As well as how you can help preserve the forest and all of its benefits for generations to come.)

STEP 1 —

Become a member of CFA. It's only \$50 per year.

- Quarterly Newsletter
- Help over the phone or when you come in to the office on anything that deals with owning forest property, from legal, trespass and surveying issues to hiring foresters & loggers, to management for various objectives...just about anything you can think up! Test us!
- Most workshops and woodwalks are free for members.

STEP 2 —

Sign up and schedule an On-Site-Visit.



A CFA Forester will visit your property to discuss your intentions with the trees, woodlot or forest on your property to establish realistic goals and objectives with you. The forester will walk your property with you to give you insights and answer questions. A discussion will then ensue to come up with options for management treatments.

- ♦ For anyone with an interest in their property & trees.
 - ♦ 1/4 of an acre to 1,000+ acres
- ♦ Just bring an open mind and enthusiasm for doing something
- ♦ Bring along others & make it an event!

Fee for new CFA Members — \$150 plus mileage. (Offer expires after 30 days from membership sign-up)

Fee for CFA Members after 30 days — \$200 plus mileage. Fee includes a one year membership renewal.

STEP 3 —

Select from a list of programs specifically designed for you. (Details on next page)

- Woodland Use Guide
- Tree Marking Program
- Forestry for Wildlife Program
 - Trail Cam Program
 - Owl Box Program
- Apple Tree Grafting Program (Call for details—winter and spring only.)



"LIKE" [Catskill Forest Association](#) on Facebook!



We've also set up a Vimeo account where we post videos for you to enjoy.

(vimeo.com/channels/fromtheforest) — no spaces!

In addition, check out the www.watershedpost.com site, click on "sponsored content", then "From the Forest".



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

I have some good news from Michele, but not so good for CFA...Michele is taking up her roots with CFA and the Catskills, which she's grown to love, to take advantage of being able to sell her home and move closer to her daughter and son-in-law...not to mention a warmer climate!

I hired Michele just one month after I was hired... more than 14 years ago! I recognized CFA's need for someone who had exceptional dedication, great organizational skills and an incredible aura of professionalism. She has met all of my expectations and more. Michele has been an instrumental influence on how CFA has evolved. She has helped us grow in more ways than I could ever express in this short message. Many have gotten to know Michele as the voice and face of the organization. I, and I'm sure all of you, will sorely miss Michele. She will be leaving us mid December.



We will be advertising and holding interviews over the next few weeks for a replacement (Very difficult shoes to fill). Hopefully we will have a new candidate in place by the first of December in order to be trained by Michele for the first two weeks of December.

On another somewhat negative note, CFA's Endowment Fund Administrator, Nicole Day Grey is also moving on, but not away. Her business is now thriving and she feels that she can not give the attention that managing CFA's endowment fund deserves. CFA is now searching for an administrator to look after the Endowment Fund, the new Scholarship Fund and CFA's own investment account. **If any of you are interested or**

know someone who you could refer, contact me at jwaters@catskill.net.

Now for the good news!!! CFA has received a donation of \$50,000 to establish a scholarship fund for students from the Catskills going to a college or university to study forestry. CFA's Board of Directors is establishing a committee to review the legal documents and set up the workings of this scholarship fund.

— And still, more good news is that the O'Connor Foundation has thrown out a challenge to us to raise \$25,000 for CFA's endowment fund. It's been quite some time since we have done any endowment fund fund-raising. They have been generous enough to offer us a match of one dollar to one dollar, up to the \$25,000 limit. CFA's Board of Directors will be working on this challenge and you will be hearing from them soon. What a great time to donate! We have almost 2 years to meet their challenge.

I hope you all have a wonderful fall, and I hope that this newsletter finds you all well.

Naturally, *Jim Waters*

CFA 'T' shirts:

Adult & Children Sizes



\$10!



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





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John MacNaught, *Wildlife Specialist*

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.

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

www.catskillforest.org

Cover Photos:

[photos by Jim Waters &
John MacNaught]

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Welcome New Members!!!

2015

July

David & Andrea Gelber - Meredith
Gert & Peter Coleman - Middlefield
Matt Frisch - Arkville
Paul & Andrea Singer - Big Indian
Victor Fairbairn - Margaretville
Eleanor & Mark Lundeen - Shandaken
Laura Cruickshank - Big Indian
Carmen Lopez - Fleischmanns
Jenn Starib - Andes
Caroline Longo - Unadilla
Brandy Denning - Festival raffle winner

August

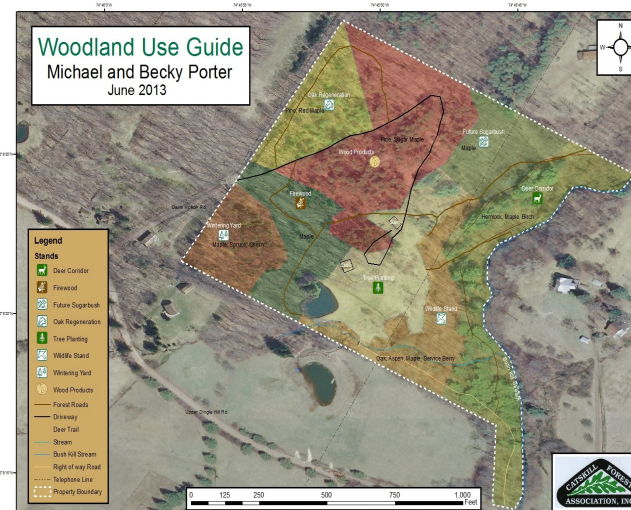
Hank & Lisa Russ - Walton
Andrew Hulley - Hartwick
Jeff Alder - Margaretville
Susan & Fred Herzog - Halcott Center
Robert Brooks - Halcottsville
Nancy & James Furey - Andes
Catskill Dream Team - Andes

September

Stacie Skelley - Arkville
Justin McLean & Shannon Bowen - Stone Ridge
Eray Artan - Inwood

October

Louis Okonski - Troy



CFA Woodland Use Guide!

Detailed maps, stand descriptions and recommendations, unique features' locations and descriptions. Lots of pictures included. GIS mapping and GPS locations of all features! (Call CFA to see a sample Woodland Use Guide.) **AN "ON-SITE-VISIT" FEE OF \$200 (INCLUDES MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR ONE YEAR) PLUS MILEAGE** will be charged.

The cost of your individual Guide is given after an onsite visit and evaluation is done.
Every property is different.

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.



AN "ON-SITE-VISIT" FEE OF \$200 (INCLUDES MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR ONE YEAR) PLUS MILEAGE may be necessary for selecting, designating on the ground the area to be marked, and determining the acreage to be included. Otherwise the cost is just mileage plus \$100 per acre. **This program is only done on 10 acres or less per calendar year per**

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 you would get a rare and valuable educational experience along with the trees marked by a professional forester from CFA.



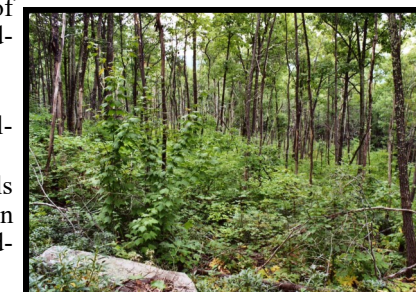
CFA Forestry for Wildlife Program!



- A technique used to improve the quality of habitat to provide the essential needs of the wildlife that you are interested in.
- Fruit and nut bearing trees and shrubs are favored to increase the food variety and availability for wildlife.
- Increasing understory cover will make animals feel safer while feeding, traveling, and bedding on your property as cover protects animals from predators.

Price estimates are developed at the end of an on-site visit. Every property is different.

DOES YOUR FOREST LOOK LIKE THIS?



WOULD YOU LIKE IT TO LOOK LIKE THIS?

For more information on any of CFA's Programs, call us at (845) 586-3054 or email us at cfa@catskill.net. Our office is open from 9am 'til 4pm Monday—Friday. If you would like to sign up for a program, circle the program(s) that you are interested in, fill out the info on the back of this page and mail the entire page to us at PO Box 336, Arkville, NY 12406



PO Box 336
Arkville, NY 12406

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 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.



CFA NEWS



The Newsletter of the Catskill Forest Association, Inc.

Volume 33, Number 4 - Fall 2015



This Saturday!

The Growing Deer Debate Conference:

Discussing Solutions for Deer Impact on the Environment
Saturday, October 31st 9am-4pm Margaretville Central School



For tickets and itinerary visit
catskillforest.org or call 845.586.3054



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