

CFA NEWS



The Newsletter of the Catskill Forest Association, Inc.
Volume 28, Number 1 - Winter 2010



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:



**Council of Forest Resource Organizations
& Forestry Awareness Day**



Tapping's Not Just For Canadians



2010 Forest Festival Planning



Why is Vermont "Greener"?

CFA TREE SALE!

See Page 8 or call CFA



CFA News
Volume 28, Number 1
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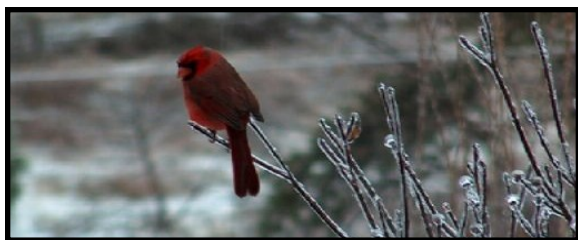
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Subscriptions: *CFA News* is mailed quarterly to members of the Catskill Forest Association. If you are interested in joining CFA, give us a call, visit our office or fill out and mail in the form on the back cover of this publication. Contact information is located above. Please submit address changes to Michele at the address above.



Cover Photo: Taken by Ryan Trapani from Van Wyck towards Slide Mountain. The best way to get views of the Catskill Mountains is by hiking in the winter, while the leaves are gone.....but dress in layers, don't get sweaty and bring snow-shoes.



From Jim's back yard, towards the Dry Brook valley.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT!

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

www.catskillforest.org

Table of Contents:

New Members.....	2
Executive Director's Message.....	3
Council of Forest Organizations Advocacy Agenda and Forestry Awareness Day.....	4 thru 8
CFA Tree Sale.....	8
Tapping's Not Just For Canadians.....	9 & 10
2010 Forest Festival.....	10
Why is Vermont "Greener"?.....	11 & 12
Website Info	12
CFA's Tree Marking Program.....	13
Membership Application.....	Back Cover

Welcome New Members!!!

December 2009

Harold & Linda McCartney – New Kingston
 Dennis Lapiotis – Olivebridge
 Scott Frank – NJ

January 2010

James Brown – Philadelphia, PA
 Sandra Foster – Delhi
 Robert Herbst – Margaretville

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Hello everyone! This winter is proving to be a relatively cold one with very little snow accumulation. That's perfect weather for getting out into the woods. No leaves makes it easy to view long distances through the forest and shallow snow depth makes it easier to walk, especially with a good pair of snowshoes. (The kind that have grips on them to prevent you from sliding back ½ step for every step you take forward.) With these

near perfect conditions it is easy for us to perform "On-Site-Visits" and to mark crop trees for improvement cuttings. Just give us a call or drop us an email and we'll schedule this work for you.

There are several new things that CFA is doing this year...



1. We are launching a new program on edible forest gardening. You will be able to learn how to create your own perennial polyculture. Once established, your forest garden will provide you for years to come with nuts, berries, fruit, and herbs as well as fiber, fuel, fodder, pharmaceuticals and fertilizer. It takes minimal maintenance and does not require a lot of acreage. CFA will be establishing its own demonstration garden in Margaretville. Check out the event calendar on CFA's web site for workshops dealing with forest gardening. (www.catskillforest.org)

2. The Catskill forest component at last year's Cauliflower Festival was such a success that CFA is putting on a separate Catskill Forest Festival this summer. Mark your calendars for Saturday, July

17th! It's sure to be a great time for all. Equipment demonstrations, forest related businesses and goods, educational displays - some of them interactive, recreational activities, food & drink. You will not want to miss this! (See page 10 for more info.)

(More on these two endeavors in the Spring issue of the "CFA News".)

3. Another event that CFA will be undertaking this fall is a "State of the Catskill Forest" symposium, where invited participants and experts (as many as 200) will explore several topics concerning our forest...from its health to its fragmentation and the struggle of various demands that society is placing on it. Included will be representatives from local, state and federal government, land use planners, the academic world, private landowners and those who have a wide range of interests in the forest, from recreation, hunting and fishing to tourism, water quality, wildlife, development, open space and mitigation of climate change. Proceedings of this conference will be available afterwards. I believe the outcomes of this symposium and its charettes will prove to be extremely valuable for CFA and others in planning. This effort is in its early stages of planning and we are seeking sponsors and partners at this time.

4. We are also looking into providing landowners with a new service to supply them with some economic relief as well as other benefits. CFA may be establishing a hunting lease program, where we will help CFA members to lease out all or a portion of their land for hunting. Please let us know if you would be interested in this by emailing us at cfa@catskill.net.

We hope to hear from you on these topics and see you at some of our events. It's always a pleasure to have you stop by CFA's office in Arkville, or hear from you in our BLOG section of CFA's website.

Naturally,

Jim Waters

WHAT A DEAL!

Gifts For A New Member:

Package 1 -- Any of the Membership Levels at a 20% discount for the first year.

Package 2 -- Package 1 together with an on-site visit for \$80 (\$20 off the normal rate of \$100) plus the normal mileage fee of \$.50 per mile.

Package 3 -- Packages 1 and 2 together with tree marking at \$40 per acre (\$5 off the normal rate of \$45 per acre) for a maximum of 10 acres.

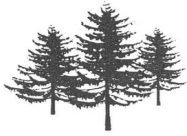
Gifts For Current Members:

Package 4 -- An on-site visit for \$80 (\$20 off the normal rate of \$100) plus the normal mileage fee of \$.50 per mile.

Package 5 -- Package 4 together with tree marking at \$40 per acre (\$5 off the normal rate of \$45 per acre) for a maximum of 15 acres.

This offer expires on the 1st of August, 2010. All visits and marking appointments need to be scheduled by the 1st of September, 2010, but may be scheduled after that date. Call Michele at (845) 586-3054 to arrange the gift timing. CFA will give you a gift letter or mail it directly to the recipient with a message from you. All gifts must be pre-paid to CFA.





COUNCIL OF FOREST RESOURCE ORGANIZATIONS

*Landowners, Forest Products Industry, and Professional Foresters
Working Together to Improve New York's Forest Resources*

AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS

- Adirondack Landowners Association • Catskill Forest Association • Catskill Landowners Association • Empire State Forest Products Association
- NYC Department of Environmental Protection • NY Forest Owners Association • NY Society of American Foresters • NYS Farm Bureau
- NY Sustainable Forestry Initiative Implementation Committee • NYS Tree Farm System
- NYS Urban & Community Forestry Council • SUNY School of Environmental Science & Forestry
- The Forestry Program of The Watershed Agricultural Council

The Catskill Forest Association remains to be an active supporter and member of the Council of Forest Resource Organizations (CFRO). This is one of the ways along with being a member of The Empire State Forest Products Association (ESFPA) that CFA performs its advocacy work on the state and regional levels. CFRO is made up of almost all of New York's groups involved in managing New York's 15 Million Acres of working forest. It provides these groups with one powerful voice. CFRO has now taken over the responsibility of organizing Forestry Awareness Day in Albany each year. This is a way to get our messages out to our legislators in an organized way and with a common theme.

This year CFA's Executive Director, Jim Waters, was elected Chair of CFRO. There has already been a lot of effort put into developing the following Advocacy Agenda for 2010 and there is more work to be done.....

CFRO's 2010 Advocacy Agenda

"New York's Forest Economy: Helping to Improve New York State's Fi- nancial Recovery in 2010"

During its planning sessions for the 2010 legislative session, members of the Council of Forest Resource Organizations (CFRO) realized that there were two overriding policy concerns for New York State: **(I) Balancing the state budget while maintaining vital programs and services; (2) Maintaining and enhancing employment throughout the State.** CFRO members believe that New York's forests and the industries and activities that depend on them can help meet both concerns. Hundreds of companies employ over 60,000 people in wood-using, recreation, and other forest-related industries. Forests cover over 65% of New York State and over 85% of these forests are privately owned. In urban areas, trees cover over 50% of the land and provide shade, improved air quality, and a better quality of living for millions of New Yorkers.

Without attention to the business climate in the State where many forest industry firms are located, the viability of many rural communities is in jeopardy. Without correction of some land use policies, many forest owners will lose their lands and forests will be converted to less desirable uses that degrade the environment. The Council of Forest Resource Organizations urges the following executive and legislative actions to support employers and landowners in contributing to the health of the economy of New York and local communities.

I. Balance State budgets while maintaining vital programs and services by developing the following progres-

sive strategies for the forest products industry and other forest-related economic sectors.

- a. Maintain support for forest-related programs especially the Dep't of Agriculture and Markets newly created Wood Products Development Council.
- b. Provide DEC with the necessary resources to sustainably manage the State Forests in line with the April 2007 State Comptroller's report especially in the areas of meeting recommended harvest levels.

II. Maintain and enhance employment throughout the State by developing policies that bolster forest health and enable private owners to continue owning and managing their forest lands for long-term sustainability.

- a. Aggressively combat invasive pests which are compromising the health and economic viability of our forestlands through coordinated efforts with State and Federal agencies.
- b. Adopt policies that recognize and utilize the benefits of forests in reducing green house gases (GHG) as called for in principle in Executive Order 24.
- c. Develop property tax and assessment legislation that is fair and equitable and prevents forest owners from having to liquidate their forest resources.
- d. Examine regulations covering forest operations and uses of wood especially in the areas of stream crossings and wetland uses.
- e. Limit proposed restrictions on existing and new outdoor wood boilers while maintaining high quality air in rural areas.
- f. Urge the Attorney General and DEC to vigorously enforce laws governing timber theft and expand associated educational programs.

FORESTRY AWARENESS DAY

Monday, April 26th, 2010

Legislative Office Building (LOB) of the Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY

When a tree falls in the woods, does anybody in Albany hear it?

- Are property taxes, forest health and the right to manage your forest land important subjects to you or your business?
- Are you concerned about the future and economic viability of forestry in new York State?
- Is there a forestry topic that you want to ensure people in Albany know about?
- Do you depend upon the forest to make a living or at the minimum rely on to help pay the carrying costs of owning property?

Your help would be greatly appreciated by Jim and the 14 organizations that make up the Council. All that is asked of you is to show up at FAD in Albany on the 26th of April to go along on legislative visits. This event is well organized with pre-set appointments being made by groups of six, led by a trained member of one of the CFRO organizations. The day starts out with an issue briefing on the 2010 Advocacy Agenda at 9:30am. Box lunches will be available. It's fun and you will learn a lot. Please volunteer for this very important event by calling Michele at CFA's office by April 16th -- 845-586-3054!

Thank you!

Scheduled events and topics include:

- Forestry Exhibits
- Legislative Visits
- Forestland Taxation Issues
- Destructive Invasive Species
- The Role of managed Forests in Carbon Sequestration & Climate Change



Governor Patterson and
Dept. of Ag & Markets'
Commissioner Pat Hooker.

1 (a) Wood Products Development Council

Recent legislation has established the Wood Products Development Council and has directed it to: "work with wood-using manufacturers to increase the economic contributions and employment opportunities related to the practice of forestry and manufacture of wood products in New York State. The council shall give priority to increasing private investment in working forests; maintaining access to working and family forests; coordinating policy and permitting issues with state agencies; academia and the private sector;

working to improve public understanding of and appreciation for forestry and forest products; and increasing export and market opportunities for New York forest products."

It is an effort to focus public and private resources to resolve issues and improve the competitiveness of forest products manufactures here in New York. The Commissioner noted the challenges that the current economic downturn has created for the public sector, as well as the private sector....and noted this was all the more need to work cooperatively to increase our competitive position.

Landowners will benefit by enjoying a better market for

their products and a better environment to own and manage their forest land in. This could place forestry on a level acknowledged by the State as equal to agriculture.....after all it is agriculture.

We are asking the legislature to monitor, support and further the efforts of the Wood Products Development Council. The Council will consist of 10 individuals representing forest landowners and various industry sectors. The Departments of Ag and Markets, Environmental Conservation and Empire State Development are also represented on the Council. The Council will help guide State efforts to further promote the wood products industry and increase the economic contributions resulting from forest products manufacturing.

1 (b) Meet Recommended Harvest Levels on State Forests

The DEC manages approximately 750,000 acres of state forests (not in the Forest Preserve). These forests were acquired in the early to mid nineteen hundreds under The State Reforestation Law of 1929 and the Hewitt Amendment of 1931 for the purpose of: "reforestation and the establishment and maintenance thereon of forests for watershed protection, the production of timber and for recreation and kindred purposes". Since the time these state forests were established, the forests have been managed for the multiple purposes described above. Timber harvesting has been an important tool in the maintenance of forest health, recrea-



tional opportunities, an avenue for consistent revenues to the State through the sale of forest products and the sustaining of forest industry jobs in the job starved Upstate portion of New York State. In 1992 The DEC determined that the annual sustainable harvest for the State forests was 17,675 acres. During the 1990's and 2000's, DEC has downsized its workforce significantly due to political and economic pressures. During this time, the field forestry unit of the DEC has been reduced from 46 to 33 as documented by a New York State Comptrollers report in 2006. Auditors found that the DEC harvested half of the allowable cut from April 2001-Marach 2006 which cost the taxpayers of New York State approximately \$4.85 million per year in potential revenue from timber sales. All the while, the state-owned forestland system grew by almost 20,000 acres. Due to shortages in forestry staff and other competing priorities for the time of foresters, DEC could not fully achieve its forest management goals. In an August 2009 follow up to the 2007 audit, the Comptroller's office noted the addition of 15 additional foresters would enable the DEC to reach its allowable cut and the potential revenues would increase more due to the increase in forestland and subsequent allowable cut to approximately \$5.2 million.

We are asking the legislature to provide the DEC with the necessary resources to sustainably manage the State Forests in line with the April 2007 State Comptroller's report (and August 2009 follow up) especially in the areas of meeting recommended harvest levels. That is add 15 additional foresters to work on revenue sales to generate badly needed revenue from a renewable resource and sustain jobs in the forest industry in job strapped Upstate region of New York State. Direct the DEC to focus the efforts of the existing staff to the management of State Forestlands and allow the DEC to increase the value of local sales from \$10,000 to \$50,000 to facilitate the sale of forest products, keep costs down and reduce the time it takes for the contract approval process.

II (a) Invasive Pests

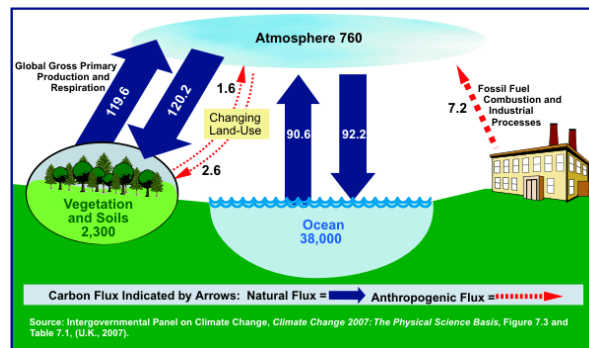
Invasive exotic insect species such as the gypsy moth and the elm bark beetle as well as invasive non-native plant species have severely damaged NYS's lands, forests and watersheds. Serious pests of concern such as the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, the Asian Long horned beetle and Emerald Ash Borer have recently arrived in NYS and threaten to severely impact both NYS's public and private lands, forests and urban areas. Our state natural resources provide us with important environmental benefits such as clean water, soil stability and wildlife habitats and must be protected. From a financial perspective alone, our healthy private forest lands contribute more than \$4 billion annually to the State's economy, the statewide public parks secure ongoing tourism revenues and urban property values are impacted.



We are asking the legislature to:

- **Support planning for and implementation of a more effective early detection and emergency response system so we will have a greater ability to limit impacts on forested environments.**
- **Reinforce the importance of ongoing citizen awareness and education regarding pest identification, potential threats to forests and urban communities by these species, the reason for limiting the movement of firewood to contain the spread of known invasive species and other important messages.**
- **Continue to support the eight local PRISM (Partnerships for Regional Invasive Species Management) teams that address invasive forest insects, plants and diseases. They are lead by the state DEC and Agriculture and Markets in their local detection, inventory and eradication efforts.**
- **Accelerate the Asian Long-Horned Beetle survey and eradication efforts in quarantine areas of New York City and Long Island as well as the Emerald Ash Borer in Western New York. Containment of these pests is vital to the survival of many state industries, ranging from maple syrup to furniture, that depend on our vast and valuable maple woodlands.**

- **Request that federal agency partners increase monitoring and inspections for all invasives at New York's ports and border.**
- **Fund the DEC's new Office of Invasive Species every year with contracts for important projects including research and an information clearinghouse regarding invasives in and near NYS.**
- **Encourage the Governor and NY's US Senators to support increased Federal funding.**



Green House Gasses - Recognizing the Role of Managed Forests to Combat Climate Change

Climate change is perhaps the most daunting environmental issue facing the world over the next century. While the impacts of climate change may be some time in the future, the need for action is immediate, because of the cumulative nature of greenhouse gasses. That is, today's emissions accumulate in the atmosphere to cause tomorrow's problems. In recognition of this Governor Paterson through Executive Order 24 called for reducing the emissions of greenhouse gasses in New York by 80 percent from 1990 levels by the year 2050. The Governor assigned the task of developing a plan by December 1010 to reach this ambitious target to the Climate Action Council. New York has already taken major strides in reducing emissions as a participant in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and through DEC's Office of Climate Change which has been working with state agencies, local governments, community groups and businesses to implement adaptation measures to address climate change impacts.

Forests play an important role in solving the greenhouse gas emission problem through sequestering carbon dioxide and converting it to oxygen, and offer the prospect of playing even a greater role. Nationally forests sequester about 10% of US industrial carbon emissions. Management of New York's forests should be a key component of the Climate Action Plan. The sale of legitimate forest carbon credits from private land encourages responsible and sustainable long-term management practices.

We are asking the legislature to encourage The Climate Action Council to include in its recommendations the following:

- **Insure that forestry is recognized as an offset strategy in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative both by the Executive Branch and the Legislature.**
- **Adopt sustainability criteria for New York's forests for use in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and other Climate Action Plan recommendations involving forests.**
- **Make income from the sale of carbon credits exempt from state and local taxes.**

II (c) Fair and Equitable Real Property Assessments on



Forest Land

The practice of municipal assessors applying current commercial market values on standing timber is detrimental to the long-term sustainability of the forest resource in New York, particularly as it pertains to the future ability of forests to grow and provide high-quality

timber products and the social and economic benefits derived from these products. In addition, most, if not all assessors undertaking such valuations, are severely under qualified to fairly and accurately assess the market value of standing timber, and that this results in local assessment rolls and individual tax bills that do not conform to the concept of real property tax equity contained in State Office of Real Property Services (ORPS) mission statement: *"Lead the State's efforts to support local governments in their pursuit of real property tax equity."*

Throughout the history of New York's modern real property tax system, assessors that develop and maintain municipality assessment rolls have, with few exceptions, disregarded the contributory commercial market value of standing timber during their annual or periodic valuations of parcels of real property located in their municipalities. This has been the norm even though assessors know (or should know) that there is authority to consider the contribution trees make (either commercially or as an aesthetic amenity) to the value of a parcel, just as they consider the value that buildings or other improvements contribute.

A new generation of local tax assessors across the state has heard the call of the State Office of Real Property Services regarding "equity in the roll", and there has been a recent and sudden surge of complaints by some forest owners living in certain towns (particularly in western New York), that their property tax assessments have risen due the "new" practice of applying the contributory value of timber to their heretofore vacant land values. This practice has caused a sudden and marked increase in tax bill level for many forest owners. In addition, and perhaps more importantly, these tax increases add to other economic and social incentives for forestland owners to reduce tax burdens and the overall cost of rural living. Forestland owners reaction to the addition of timber assessments may manifest itself in two chief ways (both of which run contrary to sustaining traditional open space benefits and goals espoused in the 2006 New York State Open Space Plan and 2004 Local Open Space Planning guide):

- 1) Selling land for purposes often other than forested open space, and
- 2) Liquidating the value of standing timber without regard to long-term ramifications.

Further irritating the issue is the concept that there is often inequity in a given forest property assessment compared to neighboring parcels due to little or no knowledge on the assessor's part about the actual inventory of trees and/or their market value from one property to the other.

The chief limiting factor to accurately and fairly appraising the value of any real property is the development and maintenance of an accurate and defensible inventory of the property. This element of the assessors' duties is considered fundamental in mandatory assessor training programs provided by ORPS. For most types of real property (e.g.—houses, commercial properties, manufacturing facilities), developing an inventory is, for the most part, a straightforward and easily verifiable process that can be carried out with little or no specialized training.

Developing an inventory of timber on any given property for purposes of determining market value is, on the other hand, a high level skill requiring specialized tools, equipment, and training. Proper timber inventory requires an ability to determine a wide set of individual tree characteristics for many trees over an often vast land area.

The difficulty and cost of obtaining a fair and accurate timber inventory not only affects the ability of the assessor to provide and maintain fair and accurate forestland assessments, it also

affects the ability of landowners to challenge the assessor's assessment during the annual grievance process.

We are asking the legislature to enact and promote property tax and assessment legislation that is fair and equitable and prevents forest owners from having to liquidate their forest resources.

II (d) Forest Operations Regulations

There are increasingly burdensome regulations being placed on private forest owners than own over 90% of the State's working forest that provides most of the needs of an industry that boasts more than 53,000 employees with a payroll of just under \$2 billion. This industry contributes \$3.7 billion to the state gross



product and represents a capital investment by the forest products industry of \$430 million a year. In 2001 the value of shipments of forest products from New York totaled nearly \$8 billion. More than 7 percent of all manufacturing jobs in NY are attributable to the forest products industry. This has increased by nearly 2 percent over the last 25

years.

These regulations are making it prohibitively expensive to continue managing the land in a sustainable manner. It is more difficult for forest owners in New York State to manage their forests and hold on to them.

We are asking the legislature to encourage the DEC not to implement regulations or put in place cumbersome, time consuming permitting structures that put forest management and timber harvesting into jeopardy. We would like the legislature to encourage the DEC to incorporate the same permitting structure as Region 5 has in all of its other regions. Also, legislators need to be aware of and prohibit any legislation or regulations that unfairly and detrimentally effect the management and harvesting of forest products.

I (e) Outdoor Wood Boilers

The DEC is in the process of releasing another set of draft regulations that seek to strictly regulate the use of outdoor wood boilers in New York State.

While these draft regulations are an improvement over the earlier versions of the Department's proposal, the regulations continue to place unreasonable siting restrictions on outdoor wood boilers for much of the year. The draft regulations also fail to take into account EPA and industry standards for stack height and air emissions, and would essentially prohibit the use of many boilers for several months of the year, including during late spring and early fall months.



Many homeowners and farm operations have installed these units in response to the high costs of heating oil and natural gas.

Many upstate, rural landowners have the ability to harvest their own wood from their land to fuel the units to heat their homes, businesses and hot water from their own renewable resource.

With over ten thousand of wood boiler units in use today in New York, these draft regulations would essentially force many owners of these units to forgo their investment of at least \$5,000 to purchase and install the unit. In turn, these owners could either purchase a costly new outdoor wood boiler that conforms to the new DEC regulations or return to using oil or natural gas for heating. With the considerable challenges facing the upstate economy and volatile oil prices, this would have an enormously disadvantageous economic impact on many homeowners and agricultural operations across the state.

We are asking the legislature to encourage the DEC to limit proposed restrictions on existing outdoor wood boilers that provide affordable heat and hot water from renewable forestry and wood stand resources for rural families.

II(f) Timber Theft

Despite recently increased penalties for stealing trees, and clarifying what constitutes theft, the illegal cutting of standing trees continues as a major problem across the State. Timber thieves recklessly diminish the forest environment that all New Yorkers need for watershed protection and wildlife habitat, and their crimes tarnish and undermine our broad based wood products industry. Targeted steps to prevent timber theft and to assure violators are permanently stopped are essential. Consistent and effective enforcement is a cost-conscious path. Recent thefts by a convicted repeat offender in Central New York as widely reported by the *Syracuse Post-Standard* illustrate again the need for continuing vigilance.



We are asking the legislature to promote a sharper state and local enforcement focus to curb timber theft crimes and facilitate education and self-scrutiny by all in the

wood products industry. In addition we are asking them to Reactivate the Timber Theft Taskforce of the Joint Legislative Commission on Rural Resources to develop further recommendations to curb theft; to encourage adoption of a "code of ethics" on harvesting and buying/selling wood products by and applicable to landowners, loggers, foresters, and mills; to produce the training video for local law enforcement and judicial officials. (Funds were appropriated, content was developed by DEC, but production was disapproved.); to examine the need to prove "intent to steal" in prosecuting timber thieves by the Legislative Codes' committees - a unique standard hampering law enforcement; and, to facilitate the Attorney General taking cases when District Attorneys do not have resources to prosecute as a means to reduce brush-off of crimes as civil matters.

CFA TREE SALE!

CFA is offering RPM (Root Production Method) restoration/conservation grade native hardwood trees. These native hardwoods and shrubs are well known for their extraordinary fast growth, high survivability and earlier seed production. Read more about the advantages of RPM trees and how they are grown at www.rpmecosystems.com

1 yr. old
RPM
grown root
mass



1 yr. old
convention-
ally grown
root mass

Bur oak

Quercus macrocarpa can produce acorns longer than any other American oak species (up to 400 years). It can grow on a variety of sites such as dry uplands or moist bottomlands. Though bur oak is less commonly known locally here in the Catskills it is hardy to Zones 2 – 8. The acorns are considered "sweeter" than other acorns. RPM trees may produce acorns within 5 years! The acorns provide an extremely valuable source of food for a variety of wildlife including squirrels, songbirds, rabbits and deer. Bur oak is a large tree that can grow up to 100 feet tall and is also tolerant of pollution and compacted soil from nearby impervious surfaces such as driveways and roads.

10" diameter potted trees -
ready to plant.

Sugar maple

Acer saccharum is the New York State Tree and for good reason. It is a deciduous tree that can grow up to 100 feet tall or more and live over 300 years old. The crowns of sugar maple are dense and conical and lend themselves well as shade trees. In the fall, its foliage turns to a brilliant gold or orange. Although other trees can be tapped for their sap, the sap of sugar maple is the sweetest of them all. Although it can take over 30 years or more for a sugar maple to reach tapping maturity, many of us benefit today from our ancestors who had the forethought of planting for benefits they would never reap. These RPM trees will grow large enough to tap much sooner! Although they are fun to watch grow. Sugar maple is a little more site selective than other trees. It prefers well-drained soils and will thrive in calcium rich soils. Trees that are planted in open sunlight will yield higher sugar contents than those that are crowded.

ORDER FORM: (No credit cards)

First paid, first filled. **Limited quantities!**
We will be getting these small trees in sometime in April. You will be required to pick them up at CFA's office in Arkville.

Name _____

Sugar Maple

Bur Oak

Email _____

Total _____ trees Phone _____

(\$25 for members / \$45 non-members.)

Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Tapping's Not Just for Canadians



When strolling into a mature forest, covered with snow and lying silently except the few black capped chickadees flying around, the last thing that comes to mind is something sweet and flavorful. Even the deer find it difficult to find nutrition in a mature forest in the dead of winter. The deer tracks bee-line towards the nearby roads and houses where more trees and shrubs can be foraged upon. Calories seem to be lacking in such a place, or are they? Encased between wood and bark is something sweet that only humans can tap into when the weather is just right: America's first natural sweetener. Of course I'm writing of maple syrup. Though it's really not maple syrup when it's inside the tree, but instead a slightly sweetened sap approximately 2% sugar content to be more specific.

Until the 20th century, any good, patriotic American would use only maple syrup or granulated maple sugar as a sweetener. In fact, Thomas Jefferson praised the sugar maple since the sugar derived from it could help substitute slave labor in the West Indies where sugar cane came from. He also wanted to show up the Brits across the pond on what we had and what they really didn't. Until the Civil War, the United States made more maple syrup than any other country including our neighbors to the north. This is not surprising since sugar maple is of better quality in the US. Canadians are just better at *tapping their potential*.

The people of the State of New York are the largest consumers of the delicious tree sugar. Ironically, the Empire State has more potential taps than any other state in the union. Sorry Vermont, but it's true. We could out produce any state if there was a will and a way of reducing the high costs of owning and managing forestland. The lack of forest management and disturbance has actually helped red and

sugar maple respectively become our most popular trees in the state since they both can grow in the shade of other trees. Sugar maple was number one at one time in abundance. I suspect its numbers have been reduced not by climate change but instead by the preference white-tailed deer have for it over red maple. Oak on the other hand require disturbance such as through fire and have continued to decline. Deer also like them.

Enough background! What, when and where should tapping commence? Typically, sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*) is tapped. Sugar maple is also known as hard maple, but I have also heard of some calling it rock maple. Sugar maple usually has the highest sugar content of the other maples. Another advantage in tapping sugar maple is that the buds break dormancy later than the other maples. This is an advantage because during bud break sucrose is converted back to starch and results in a sour taste often referred to as *buddy sap* indicating the end of the sugaring season. Red maple (*Acer rubrum*) can also be tapped, but usually has lower sugar content. Silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*), Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*), boxelder (*Acer negundo*) and black maple (*Acer nigrum*) can also be tapped. Black maple is almost identical to sugar maple in quality of sap and lumber, but is usually found more commonly in the mid-west lake states.

Technically, tapping can occur anytime after leaf-fall under the appropriate temperatures. Typically, tapping is concentrated around the month of March when the daytime high temperatures are in the 40s or above 36°F and when the low night-time temperatures are below freezing. The process of sap flow is still somewhat mysterious and unknown. However, there are a few feasible theories put out there by the Canadians who rigorously study these processes.

In order for a tree's living cells to survive the winter, they must not freeze. The tree avoids freezing by the presence of a liquid *anti-freeze* substance provided in sap. The small amount of sugar in the sap prevents the cells from freezing. When the temperatures drop below freezing, sap is pulled upward into the tree throughout the crown to protect the soft living tissues. As temperatures rise, sap begins to move downward. When the sap moves downward it is under pressure and if the bark and cambium are tapped during this time, sap can be gathered by humans, concentrated by boiling and circulated onto many pancakes, cereals, and other meals throughout the land.

The sugar content is based upon other factors, mainly sunlight. The larger the crown and the greater the amount of sunlight the tree received during the previous growing season, the more photosynthesis will occur. Photosynthesis is another process that trees perform that humans do not entirely understand. What is understood is that photosynthesis produces carbohydrates or energy that can be used by the tree to sustain life. Not just its own but ours as well. Carbohydrates are used by the tree to sweeten sap, ward off insects and diseases and maintain and invigorate root and crown function. Extra carbohydrates are allocated to fiber or wood growth, just as humans allocate extra energy into fat. This is why the fat trees are not necessarily the older ones, but are sometimes the healthier ones.

Tapping can occur anywhere on a tree. The top of the tree could be tapped, but ladder tapping is highly inefficient, but somewhat comedic. Tapping usually occurs near breast height. The main point is to avoid tapping into wood that is stained from prior tapping. Tapping into stained or brown sapwood greatly enhances rotting of the tree and

yields significantly less sap. Therefore, tap at least 2 inches horizontally and 16 inches vertically from prior taps. When drilling a tap the shavings should be white. Modern taps are much smaller than previous taps. 5/16" taps are becoming the norm in sugaring operations because they limit the amount of non-functional sapwood and prolong the life of the tree for many decades. Unlike other crops, the same tree can be harvested for its sap repeatedly by grandfather, son and grandson.

So, if you have the time this spring, tap a maple. March is a time of year when winter blues have reached their peak. Maple sugaring can change this. The maple sugaring season indicates that spring is coming. Though maple producers are glad to see the spring on its way, they don't want it to come too fast, but gradually, to yield the most and highest quality sap. It's also a great time for friends and family to get together and discuss important topics around the boiler such as photosynthesis; sap-flow and the future of American politics.



Historically, land in our region was cleared for farming practices. Today, our region is dominated by forests since many of our farms have been abandoned. Our forests provide us with incredible benefits that are often overlooked or taken for granted. Some of these benefits include:

- Source of Timber
- Maple Syrup & Sugar
- Food
- Recreation
- Water Filtration
- Fuelwood
- Economic Growth
- Air Quality

Most of these products are provided by Forest Landowners that society has and will depend upon for its resources.

**Brought to
you by:**



Last year a Forestry tent was set up at the Cauliflower Festival in September hosted by the Catskill Forest Association. Due to the feature's great success, the 1st Annual Catskill Forest Festival will be scheduled for Saturday, July 17th at the Pavilion in the Village of Margaretville, Delaware County, conveniently located on State Route 28 just 15 minutes west of Belleayre. Margaretville is centrally located in the Catskill Mountains. Events here draw people from throughout the region.

The purpose of the event is to foster an appreciation for the many benefits our **Working Forests** provide for our local **communities** and **society**.

At the festival there will be:

- Maple Producers
- Wood Products
- Forestry Equipment
- Firewood Processor & Sawmill
- Forest Management Education & Services
- Arts & Crafts Made From the Forest & More!!
- Recreation Vendors

Help the Forest Festival grow and help promote our region's working forests by sponsoring this event. This event relies mostly on support from the region's forest industry.

Sponsorship Levels

Maple Syrup (\$100)

- Receive a Sign @ Festival Indicating Support Level
- Listed in Forest Festival Program

Maple Cream (\$500)

- Receive a Sign @ Festival Indicating Support Level
- Listed in Forest Festival Program
- 1 year membership to Catskill Forest Association

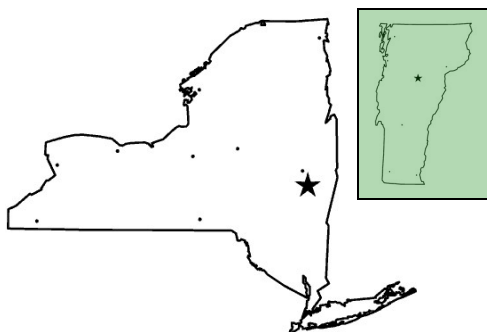
Maple Sugar (\$1,000)

- Receive a sign @ Festival Indicating Support Level
- Listed in Forest Festival Program
- 1 year membership to Catskill Forest Association
- Free Booth Space
- Recognition of Sponsorship & Advertising on CFA's website and any other advertising and marketing activities

Call Michele at CFA's office (845) 586-3054

Why is Vermont “Greener”?

- by CFA's Education Forester, Ryan Trapani



Growing up in New York State in the Wallkill Valley has made me realize the value of land. It's expensive! My father has told me that no one really owns land, but instead rents it. He was referring to the exorbitant taxes he pays each year in the Town of Gardiner, Ulster County. Similar to renting, if my father fails to pay his taxes, the land is taken away. It's that simple. The property tax issue becomes significantly worse if you are a producer and wish to make a living off the land. Certain costs are fixed, such as capital to acquire the land and its associated interest payments, taxes, and maintenance operations that must be paid for each year whether tending a forest for a source of timber, apples, or a small organic vegetable farm. What happens when these fixed costs become too expensive? The land may have to be parcelized, which leads to fragmentation or rights are sold away in a conservation easement. The entire property may even have to be sold in fee to another buyer with objectives and goals that are not in tune with the local community or productive management. As a result, parcels become smaller, more development occurs and the community is stripped of those landowners who produce locally grown products. The community becomes a consumer-based one that will need to procure resources and products from elsewhere. Is this sustainable?

In the 1970s, the Vermont State Legislature faced this issue head on. The legislature heard testimony that farm

and forestland was being sold for development because the property tax bills could no longer be supported by the returns from working the land. In order to help mitigate this situation, the legislature enacted the *Use Value Appraisal (UVA)* program. Traditionally, land such as in New York State is assessed by its *fair market value* or *highest and best use*. Market value is determined by recent sales of comparable land. Therefore, if someone can afford to buy a parcel that is similar to yours near your property for more money, your property can be reassessed for a greater value and create an increase in your property tax bill. The UVA program shifts the assessment from a market value to a value that the property is *currently being used for*. If the property is currently being used for forest management that creates a crop of timber or for cropland it is assessed on this value instead. For this reason the UVA program is also known as the *current use* program.

In order to be eligible for the program a landowner must have at least 25 contiguous acres. However, a minimum of 2 acres are excluded if a home is on the property. Therefore, 27 acres is the minimum acreage for enrollment if you have a dwelling there. The property owner must hire a consulting forester who develops a forest management plan. The forest management plan must be followed by thinning and harvesting trees when scheduled for in the plan. A report must be filed with the state detailing management activities and the state must be allowed to inspect forest management practices to ensure good forest management standards are being upheld. Farm land can be eligible in the program too, but does not require a management plan or inspection of the property. Farmland that is enrolled in current use can be less than 27 acres if the sale of crops grosses \$2,000 annually. If an enrolled property owner does not comply with the current use criteria he or she can be charged a *Land Use Change Tax*.

Overall, the program has been greatly successful in Vermont and has helped preserve its working forests and farms. One of the fixed costs of management such as property taxes has been held lower so that profit margins for sustaining locally grown businesses and economies are more feasible and sustainable. Refer to **Table 1** -- “Effect of Enrollment in UVA Program on Property Tax in 6 Vermont

***Table 1 -- “Effect of Enrollment in UVA Program on Property Tax in 6 Vermont Towns.”**

Town	County	Without Use Value		At Use Value		Difference	
		value per acre	tax per acre	value per acre	tax per acre	value per tax	tax per acre
Bennington	Bennington	\$1,108	\$20.21	\$135	\$2.49	\$973	\$17.73
East Haven	Essex	\$354	\$7.62	\$105	\$2.26	\$249	\$5.35
Fair Haven	Rutland	\$466	\$11.17	\$135	\$3.23	\$331	\$7.94
Shelburne	Chittenden	\$6,255	\$117.20	\$142	\$2.67	\$6,112	\$114.54
Townsend	Windham	\$603	\$12.34	\$128	\$2.60	\$476	\$9.74
Turnbridge	Orange	\$1,449	\$26.73	\$132	\$2.43	\$1,317	\$24.30

*Information provided by Northern Woodlands

Towns."

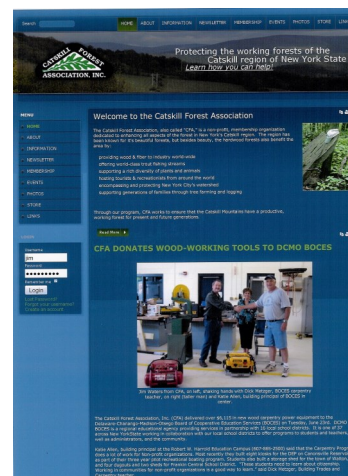
From **Table 1** one can easily compare the savings that the UVA program provides Vermont's forest and farmland owners. New York State does have programs for forest and farm owners. However, there are some key differences. First, forest owners who want to enroll in the New York State Forest Tax Law (480a) program in order to re-assess the value of their property to forest land must have 50 forested acres. In Vermont the minimum is 25 acres. This eliminates most forest owners, since the average parcel size in the Catskills is already approximately 17 acres. Agricultural assessments exist in New York as well, but farmers must gross \$10,000 annually. In Vermont, the minimum is \$2,000. In New York, if a town does not have at least 3% of its parcels enrolled in the 480a program, lower tax bills on enrolled property is shifted to neighboring properties in that town to make up the difference since the town still requires tax revenue. In Vermont, the state picks up this burden and reimburses the assessment difference to all towns.

Vermont has taken progressive steps in meeting the property tax issue and preserving its working farms and forests. This problem in both states will continue to worsen as more people move to rural areas and demand more services that require higher tax revenues. Parcel sizes in both states continue to decrease, while the number of parcels increase often leading to land that is more difficult to manage for production forcing local markets elsewhere. In New York the remedy to this situation has been for our public agencies such as the State of New York in acquiring forest preserve lands in the Catskill and Adirondack Parks. However, this land is taken out of production and resources have to be acquired from, yet again, somewhere else. For example, most New Yorkers buy their maple syrup not in the Adirondacks or Catskills which have plenty of sugar maples, but from Vermont! Why? Well, in Vermont **working** landscapes have been preserved (not trying to preserve trees) which leads to sustainable forest and agricultural practices and sustainable local economies and communities. A comparison of Adirondack and Catskill communities with those of Vermont would show that Vermont's are in a better economic position and that their forests are healthier. Another example would be the paper companies of the Adirondacks that have packed up and left behind vacant buildings and ghost-towns. In New York we are building museums about old wood product businesses that used to be vibrant paralleling healthy communities. In Vermont, they are making things. In New York, we are looking at our forests as museums. In Vermont, they are managing them, because they can afford to. We need real property tax reform if we truly want to be environmental stewards of our region and state. The old notion of fence and forget inside a preserve is not working. We can do better! Find out more about how to manage your forest @ www.catskillforest.org or give us a call @ (845) 586-3054.

Information provided in part from *Northern Woodlands: The Place You Call Home: A Guide for Caring for your Land in Vermont.* "Current Use: Property Tax Program Helps Keep Working Land Well-Managed."



**NEW CFA WEBSITE: www.catskillforest.org
CHECK IT OUT!**



If you have not received an email with your user ID and password or if you have lost it please send an email to: cfa@catskill.net with the following information:

Name
e-mail address
Home Address
Telephone Number

Without this information you will not be able to access the areas open to members only or purchase from the store with the member discount.

Soon we will be posting the Newsletters there and adding more items to the store. We need to crawl a little before we can run.

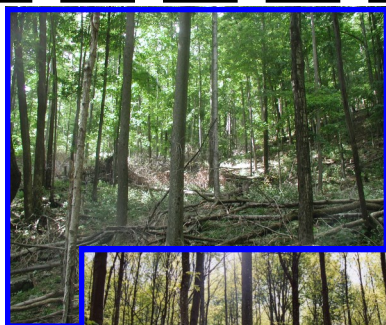
CFA Tree Marking Program!

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 \$100 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 \$45 per acre will be charged for the marking.
6. \$15 of this \$45 can be claimed as a tax deductible contribution to CFA, a 501-c-3 not-for-profit organization.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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.)



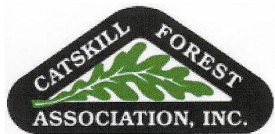
CFA TREE MARKING APPLICATION

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

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 and spend 3 hours walking your forest, making suggestions and giving you impartial and confidential advice? (It just costs \$100 plus our mileage to do so.) 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.