



CFA NEWS

WINTER 2020

VOL 33, No.1

A PUBLICATION OF THE CATSKILL FOREST ASSOCIATION, INC.

2020 EVENTS



VIEW ALL EVENTS AND REGISTER ONLINE AT WWW.CATSKILLFOREST.ORG

Hanford Mills Tour

January 27th, 11 am - 2 pm
51 County Highway 12
East Meredith, NY 13757

Apple Tree Pruning Demonstration

February 22nd, 2 pm - 4 pm
2257 County Highway 37
Fleischmanns, NY 12430

Backyard Sugaring

March 1, 10 am - 12 pm
133 Orchard Street
Margaretville, NY 12455

Apple Tree Grafting Demonstration

April 25th, 10 am - 12 pm
Mountain Top Arboretum
4 Maude Adams Rd, Tannersville, NY 12485

Choosing Timber Trees

April 25th, 10 am - 1 pm
Please check website
for location details

Chainsaw Sharpening & Maintenance

May 16th, 10 am - 12 pm
CFA Office, 43469 NY-28
Arkville, NY 12406

Forested Stream Buffer Walk & Tree Planting

May 23rd, 10 am - 12 pm
Margaretville Pavilion, 36 Bridge St
Margaretville, NY 12455

Forest Survival Training

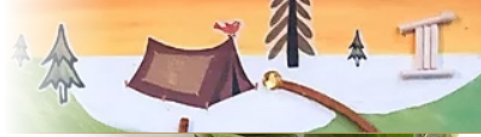
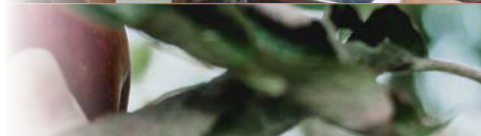
June 6th, 1 pm - 4 pm
Dirt Road Camp, 487 Dirt Road
Delancey, NY 13752

Backyard Edibles & Medicinals

June 13th, 10 am - 12 pm
Michael Kudish Natural History Preserve
3515 Tower Mtn Rd, Stamford, NY 12167

Tree ID with Ryan Trapani

July 11th, 10 am - 12 pm
Margaretville Pavilion, 36 Bridge St
Margaretville, NY 12455





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WINTER 2019

Vol 38, No. 1

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Daria Chadwick

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From the Director of Forest Services

RYAN TRAPANI

BEING DELIBERATE IN THE WOODS IN 2020

I still remember the largest black cherry forest in the Catskills I've ever seen; It was back in the summer of 2004, but I'll get back to the cherry later. My friend Matt just finished reading a book by Dr. Michael Kudish – *The Catskill Forest: A History*. I have since gotten to know Dr. Kudish quite well. He writes for this very newsletter in your hands! Matt was all about "old growth" forest and yellow birch, being a fairly shade-tolerant tree was what he was hunting for. After settling on a spot from Mike's book, Matt, my ex-girlfriend, and I took off and bush-wacked up the hill.

Welcome, New Members!

Rachel Winard
Randy Moore
Julia Ragolia
Adam Trescott
Christen Johansen
Ursula Hegewisch
Hak Yeoul Jang
Rich Gilbert
Patricia Sprott
Peter Samartano
Christopher Fraioli
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Jeremy Zmuda
Thomas Schott
David Weinraub
Fern Hoffman
Jean-Baptiste Michel
Maura O'Connor
Taylor Storms
Tom Quatroni
Wanda Cawein
Richard Stohlman
Mark Vamos
Lori Cioffi
Liam Pleven
Laura LaSpaluto
Jeff England
Michael Wiegand
Zach Baum

The southern side of the slope wasn't anything special, or even much different than we'd seen together as Assistant Forest Rangers for the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. Logging roads crisscrossed the slope while the understory contained beech whips and striped maple saplings. The older trees were medium-sized – and poor quality – red maple, white ash and a few scattered red oaks. I knew from looking at the stumps and residual trees that the forest had been “high-graded” decades ago. In other words, the best quality oak and maple were harvested, while “crummy” beech, maple, and ash left behind. In high-graded stands, there almost always seems to be an abundance of beech and striped maple whips too. Finally, we reached the top of the ridge and began our descent down towards the stream. The other side was more the same, until we reached near the stream.

Maybe you're confused about why I started off the article mentioning big black cherry and then a wild goose-chase for big yellow birch. As Mike's book indicated, we did end up finding some of the largest yellow birch any of us had seen before. For the most part, the yellow birch trees were hovering near the stream. This makes sense, since yellow birch is a shade-tolerant tree that requires a little more sunlight than, say, a hemlock; The stream provides just enough. However, when yellow birch reaches extremely mature age-classes, its bark metamorphosizes from golden papery bark to the block-like burnt potato chips reminiscent of black cherry. We were aware of

this change but were fooled when confronted with actual black cherry of enormous size.

One Man's Lost Farm is Another Tree's Growing Space

None of us were really expecting black cherry, since cherry is shade-intolerant. Naturally, black cherry seems to be mostly found on ridgetops since that's where naturally occurring microbursts or hurricanes occur, creating light conditions ripe for growing cherry. But, down by the stream in an area sheltered from the wind? Also, most of the forest in this area was stocked heavily with shade-tolerant trees – yellow birch, sugar maple, red maple, American beech and eastern hemlock; All indicators of limited disturbance from humans. But why black cherry?

Some time later, I spoke to an older State Forester who grew up hunting in that area. I told him about the cherry found within the seemingly “undisturbed” or “untrammelled” forest by man. He said, “Well, something happened in there. Someone was doing something to have those cherries grow.” I now believe I was overlooking some things since my first few visits.

For starters, there were a few farms in that area. I'm not talking about big farms where plain-as-day rock walls are running through the woods; These were small subsistence farms supposedly with a pig or two, one cow and some buckwheat for a winter-hardy grain. According to the unofficial town historian of this area, “Hay was the only thing to come off that mountain, but



The Catskill Forest Association's Annual Giving Tree Fundraiser

Thank you to all those who have already donated to our second Annual Giving Tree Fundraiser! We cannot thank you enough for your support of CFA.

A reminder that we are still accepting donations:

Donate online:

catskillforest.org/donate

Donate by mailing to:

Catskill Forest Association
PO Box 336
Arkville, NY 12406

Donate over the phone:

(845) 586-3054

Thank you!



some (people) unfortunately starved to death up there.” And that brings us to our cherry. I was still sort of skeptical about crediting those cherries solely to farm abandonment until two years ago.

More “Benefits” from Accidents

I was bushwacking downstream in this same area when my eye focused in on a piece of charcoal, and I could feel a smile cracking my face; I’d walked there many times before, but never noticed. I’ve seen charcoal further upstream off a tributary where some oak was growing, but never this far down. After seeing some smaller “trails” that were probably bark roads used for stripping hemlock bark in tanning leather, I’m thinking this charcoal soon came into creation afterwards. Barking hemlocks left a lot of down trees. When bark is removed from a tree’s trunk, it can be

much drier than it normally would be, making conditions ripe for a big ole fire. And hence, the charcoal. And hence, growing conditions for our fine cherry.

I hate to admit this, but I have learned that many environmental feats are accidental. The beautiful black cherry that Foresters mark for veneer and cherry flooring is mostly an accident; That’s right, an accident. In the above scenario, it probably was both farming (and its abandonment), and fire that created enough sunlight for cherry to grow. However, in most of the Catskills – and probably the northeast – cherry is an accidental byproduct of farms going under in the 20th century. I’m not saying there hasn’t been hard work done by Conservationists and Preservationists in the past, but that most of the forest we see today is growing because someone merely “let it go.” Sure, there are areas that have been managed by forest industry, but most of New York State was cleared for agriculture in the last 100 years. And when the forest regrew, the wildlife and its numbers rebounded soon after.





Game laws helped, but it was forest regrowth that was much more significant; Just my opinion.

The point here is that I believe the last 100 years of forestry – in the northeast – has been mostly accidental or borrowed from farm abandonment. I'd love to take credit (as a Forester) for all the beautiful cherry and oak out there, but most of it survives as a legacy from more “disturbed” times or economic failures. The next 100 years though will not be about forest regrowth, at least not in the Catskill Mountains or most of New York State. It will be about what “kind” of forest. The next 100 years will demand deliberate management of forests. We have learned that simply having forests and “letting them go” for too long, doesn't always work out. For instance, black cherry, oak, blueberry and many other edible

and timber-valued plants cannot survive without large disturbances offering sunlight, whether provided naturally or by humans. Wildlife species that demand younger growth forest will also require deliberate management which would otherwise be grown over and fade away. This time around the hard work in Conservation will have to take place more so in the woods, instead of in faraway offices drafting legislation or statutes.

Recently, CFA has been engaged in deliberate management for increasing critical wildlife habitat. We have been making 80% canopy reductions in order to foster younger growth and cover for New England cottontails, woodcock, a variety of small mammals, and even recently rare bats. The USDA is also funding landowners to make these cuts through their EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program). Even hunters are experiencing the “growing pains” of mature forests upon their prized game; Deer numbers have plummeted across the older growth sections of the state despite a plateau in deer impacts upon vegetation. In order to create quality habitat or a nice cherry counter-top or oak floor going forward, it will have to be deliberate. Let's do it in 2020.

May The Forest Be With You,

Ryan Trapani

**Director of Forest Services
Catskill Forest Association**



INTRODUCING:

THE PORTABLE SAWMILL PROGRAM

NEW - JANUARY 2020



Tree Coring
Wooden Posts
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Apple Tree Pruning
Apple Tree Protection
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THE PORTABLE SAWMILL PROGRAM

DARIA CHADWICK

At the time this article was written, two hundred and thirty-seven days of winter, spring, and the too-short, dog days of summer had already passed in 2019. Within that time, the Catskill Forest Association had visited two hundred and forty-six individual properties in the Catskills. Total property visits account to many more, as CFA often visit the same properties 2 or 3 times throughout the year.

It's fascinating to put these numbers down on paper and realize just how much demand there is for what we do. What I find more fascinating however, is the information we bring back from all the properties we visit and the situations we come across. The uniqueness of each property is something that has been mentioned in *CFA News* before, and I'd like to briefly revisit that concept again here.

Take the following real-life examples we've seen from members A, B and C:

- Member A has some trees that are relatively close to the home. The trees are quite large, and the member would like them taken down. There's concern about potential property damage.
- Member B has a few ash trees that are soon to be lost to the Emerald Ash Borer. Unfortunately, there aren't enough trees that would make it worth a timber sale.
- Member C had a storm come through the property. The storm took down a lot of red oak in the forest and the wood is valuable. The member wants to utilize it but isn't sure how.

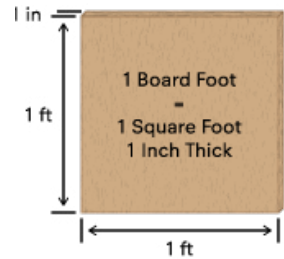
Although each of these situations are different, it's our duty to think beyond each individual circumstance and consider our role even further in helping landowners with issues like these.

So: what could we do to solve the problems of members A, B, and C? And, instead of simply solving the problem, how could we curate a solution that also produces an opportunity? How can these opportunities tie directly into what we encourage – good and proper forest stewardship?

We believe we've found an answer to these questions, and as such, we are delighted to introduce to you the newest addition to our services portfolio: "The Portable Sawmill Program". In a few words: we bring a portable sawmill directly to you and your property, and mill the desired logs to lumber there and then.

Whether you'd like lumber for construction, for crafting furniture, for selling, whatever the cause – we're here to help.

We'll help educate you about the process, guide you in identifying the correct specs to align with both your goals and for what is reasonable for the logs at hand. We'll include both the stacking and sticking of lumber at your location. Take a look at the following chart – this will give you an idea of how many board feet are contained in a typical log of various sizes.



If you are interested in learning more, contact us at cfa@catskillforest.org or give us a call at (845) 586-3054.

Diameter of log, small end, inside bark (inches)	Length of Log (Feet)						
	8	10	12	14	16	18	20
	Content of Log (Board Feet)						
13	55	70	85	100	115	135	150
14	65	80	100	115	135	155	175
15	75	95	115	135	160	180	205
16	85	110	130	155	180	205	235
17	95	125	150	180	205	235	265
18	110	140	170	200	230	265	300
19	125	155	190	225	260	300	335
20	135	175	210	250	290	330	370
21	155	195	235	280	320	365	410
22	170	215	260	305	355	405	455
23	185	235	285	335	390	445	495
24	205	255	310	370	425	485	545

Last month - in partnership with our friends at Stubborn Mule Logging - CFA put on a demonstration for the students of Port Jarvis High School over in western Orange County. Students were educated about the entire milling process, from choosing a tree for timber, to transporting the logs, to milling the lumber. Thank you, Port Jarvis!







From the President's Desk

MIKE PORTER

A few weeks ago I spent some time at the CFA office doing the menial task of copying and pasting titles and descriptions of CFA's radio shows. I was copying them over to new files, files soon-to-be published as part of our brand new, "From The Forest" podcast. With nearly a decade worth of material, and showing no signs of slowing, we wanted to make these informative, entertaining shows more readily available to both members and non-members alike.

While working on copying over those titles and descriptions, I realized just how many of these shows have had experts in their fields - experts from all over the country - deliver their professional and personal opinions on the topic in discussion. There isn't a

show I've listened to yet that I haven't learned something new.

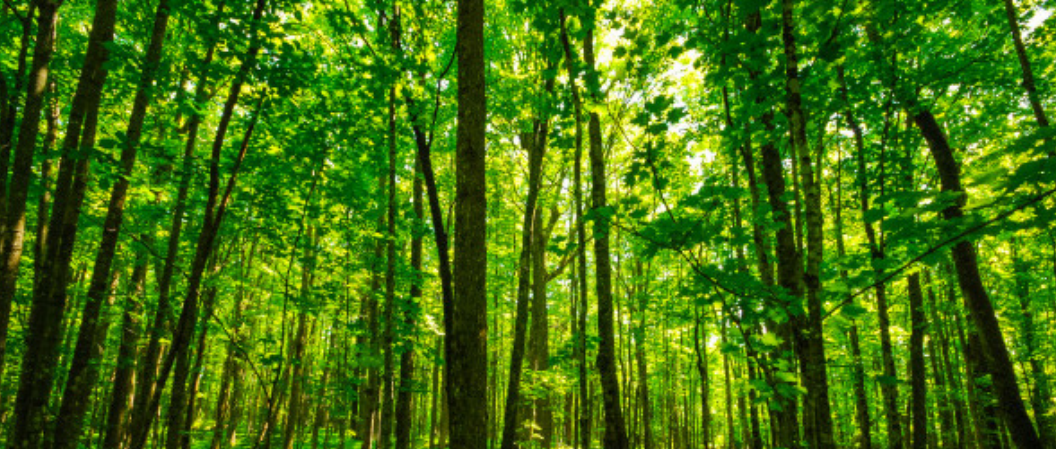
As I "wandered" through the list of shows and their descriptions, I thought about the ones that had the most impact on me personally.

Of all the nearly 300 shows on the list, a show where Ryan interviewed Charles Mann, the author of "1491" and "1493" easily comes to mind. His books dealt with the Pre-Columbian Americas and the Post-Columbian world where the impacts on both scenarios have been explored. That show opened my eyes to all the misconceptions about Native Americans and their civilization. Without writing a treatise on the findings, I would simply have you go show available and the podcast and listen for yourself.

"From the Forest" has had a very positive impact on me, and I have been curious to hear what others have to say about the show. I'm glad to be able to share this feedback we received from our members regarding "From The Forest", and hope it will encourage you, reader, to take advantage of this wealth of easily-digestible information and have a listen to our new podcast.

KB, a fairly new active member, has shared that he not has missed a show since his introduction to "From the Forest." Though he is fairly new to listening, his favorite show was "Reading the Forested landscape" with Professor and Author Tom Wessels.

KB said: "I never imagined that you could stand in the woods and use what he [Wessels] calls forest forensics like a crime scene to understand tree blow downs, rock piles, rock walls etc. to know what happened in the past. When



he talked about certain downed trees in a pattern and a particular storm or hurricane from history I practically jumped out of my chair with excitement and wanted to get out in my woods to see what I could try to figure out.”

CM, a forester with NYC DEP, has started listening to the podcasts as he commutes to work. “I really liked the old logging stories with John Hoeko, out of Fleischmanns and I’m looking forward to listening to the regular shows with Hoppy Quick, he’s one-of-a-kind and in my opinion will be one of those guys with a larger than life personality whose folk art will be prized long after we’re all gone.”

OY wrote, “The show’s I’ve listened to are all very informative, entertaining and intelligent.”

JB wrote, “I believe your library is probably a wealth of information, with subject matter served in manageable, delicious portions; folksy humor, etc. But many months ago, I gave up trying to navigate the archive. It was not being updated. And I could not listen “live” on Wednesdays. It appears that you have outsourced the project, now. Appreciate it! I now look forward to catching up!”

RG shared his enjoyment with efforts

to make “From the Forest” saying, “It’s a fine way to check in with you folks in the forest!”

BT wrote, “I used to be able to spend a lot of time up in that area but due to work and family obligations that time is very limited now. Your show helps bring me back to the Catskills and clear my head.”

LM shared that she would like to learn more about bees and the honey they manufacture.

SF likes the shows on wildlife and would like to listen to shows about camping and making woodlots more wildlife friendly.

BT says: “I have since been listening to the podcasts of the radio show and I am addicted. I love the outdoors but I am not a hunter. All of the shows are entertaining and John and Ryan make a great team. The guests have all been terrific and the topics have all been interesting and educational. For a guy who loves the woods but does not have the opportunity to get out on a regular basis, the show fills a need to know what’s going on in the mountains on a weekly basis. Thanks again for the work you all do and I look forward to listening to more shows.”

JR says: "I have not listened to ANY From The Forest episode that I didn't enjoy. You seem to pick consistent winners with respect to speakers and topics. I especially enjoy the discussions about forest management as it pertains to wildlife habitat improvement, but that is a given since it is one of my personal passions. Keep up the good work."

As demonstrated from the testimonials above, there are so many topics available to enjoy and learn about. We encourage members to listen and learn a little more about what's going on in their woods.

If there's a particular topic you'd like to learn more about, and there isn't a show about that topic - contact us! We're always looking for new topics, and we'll look for experts that can help answer your questions. Contact us at cfa@catskillforest.org.

HOW TO LISTEN:

Remember that you can listen to "From The Forest" live on Wednesday evenings from 6 - 7 PM on WIOX Radio, and live online at www.wioxradio.org.

New shows are uploaded weekly to our online applications. Listen online to the archives and to new shows at:

www.fromtheforest.podbean.com
www.catskillforest.org/radio

Or, find "From The Forest" on your preferred podcast application and download episodes directly onto your device. Can't find us on your favorite app? Let us know, and we'll make sure to get it there for you. Happy listening!



Return To The Year 1720

BY MIKE KUDISH

The emerald ash borer may create a return to the forest of 1720 - three hundred years ago - when the interior of the Catskills was not yet settled by Europeans.

The vast majority of white ash (*Fraxinus americana*) today are on abandoned farms, along fencerows between pastures, and along roadsides. They appear so abundant because they occur where people are most active - living, working, playing, traveling - up to elevations of about 2000 to 2500 feet. Above about 3000 feet, white ash is, and always has been, absent because the soils hold so little water.

But at the higher elevations at more remote locations today, especially in first growth forests, white ash is not widespread and abundant. It occurs as

individual trees or in small groves of trees, often distant from one another. Because of the isolation, it may take many more years for the emerald ash borer to reach them, and for some of the most remote groves, perhaps not at all. In addition, some of the trees up high may have more resistance to the borer.

But what was the Catskills of 300 years ago like, before European settlement? White ash must have been distributed in a pattern throughout the whole region then as it is today only at the remote higher elevation locations. Because of the competing and more shade tolerant hemlock, sugar maple, and beech, the moderately shade tolerant white ash could grow only where the other three species permitted it: in locally naturally disturbed small forest openings (i.e. sunny pockets) created mainly by blowdown, ice storms, heavy wet snow, landslides, and floods. The ash as a pioneer species then was established as widely-scattered individuals and in small groves in the valleys and on the lower slopes as well as at the higher elevations.

This pattern persisted until the European settlers arrived mainly during the last two decades of the 18th century and the first two decades of the 19th. The creation of farms created an explosion in the ash population until about a decade ago when the emerald borer arrived.

INDEX TO MICHAEL KUDISH'S CFA NEWS AND KAATSKILL LIFE ARTICLES

Often folks ask me for detail on a particular tree species, on the forest

history of a particular mountain, or a more general question on forest ecology. Often it is more useful for them, instead of a verbal or e-mail response, to read an article I had written on the very subject several years prior – especially when there is a distribution map or diagram included. But those making the inquiry do not know that material which may answer their question is already available and do not know where to find it. This is true not only for *CFA News*, but for articles I have written for *Kaatskill Life*, *Catskill Tri-County Historical Views*, *Catskill Center News*, and publications of the *Mountain Top Arboretum*.

I thought it would be time now to begin an index to my articles – starting with those in the *CFA News*. Because the number of CFA members has increased so rapidly during the last three or so years, many new members may not have easy access to back issues in their home libraries and archives. I have 39 articles now dating back to 2008, and many more in the other publications. Because the index is lengthy, it will require several future issues of the *CFA News* to accommodate it all. I plan to index not only individual tree species, but also subjects such as Native Americans and their burns, bogs, and forest ecology.

Because CFA's Ryan Trapani has written also so many articles on individual tree species especially for *Kaatskill Life*, perhaps a separate index to his writing might be useful.

Programs & Services

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Program	Description	Cost
CONSULTATIONS	One hour property visits for all private Catskill landowners with membership registration, and now with membership renewal. Get impartial and confidential advice about what your property holds, understand your management options, identify trees, and get an overall evaluation of forest health.	\$25
APPLE TREE PRUNING	Pruning is key to establishing healthy fruit trees. Healthier trees yield better quality & quantity produce.	\$100/HOUR
APPLE TREE GRAFTING	Bring an old apple tree back to life, and even get multiple types of apple to grow on the same tree.	\$50/STEM (2-7 GRAFTS PER STEM)
INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT	<u>TREE SAVER</u> Works to save trees from invasive insects such as the Emerald Ash Borer (ash trees) Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (hemlock trees) and more, through the use of affordable chemical treatments. Use your consultation to figure out your options and receive an on-site quote. <u>FOREST SAVER</u> Works to save forests from invasive plants such as honeysuckle, multiflora rose, and Japanese barberry that can overwhelm forest floors and replace native vegetation.	ON-SITE QUOTES AVAILABLE
TIMBER MANAGEMENT	Comprehensive timber management for a healthy and resilient forest that works for you.	\$40/HOUR
NEW! PORTABLE SAWMILL PROGRAM	A portable sawmill brought directly to your property, milling trees to lumber on the spot.	BY QUOTE
WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT	Create fruitful forests for the wildlife on your property through cutting..	\$150/HOUR
MAPPING PROGRAM	Custom, personalized maps of your property highlighting areas of interest such as log roads, water features, hiking trails, and more. Styles in physical or topographic. <u>Drone flights optional.</u>	BY QUOTE
FOREST BIRD PROGRAM	<u>HIGH NESTING BIRD BOXES</u> We'll make a home and hang a box up high for owls, kestrels, ducks and more. <u>CANOPY BIRD FEEDERS</u> Squirrel-resistant and bear-resistant bird feeders. Hung way out on the tree canopy, installed on 1/16" steel wire. The simple pulley-system makes refills easy.	\$200.00 \$100.00
TRAIL CAMERAS	Ever wonder what kind of wildlife is around when you're not?	\$25.00

CATSKILL FOREST
ASSOCIATION, INC.
PO BOX 336
43469 State Highway 28
Arkville, NY 12406
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Become a member at www.catskillforest.org/membership or send a check/cash with this application to:
Catskill Forest Association, Inc. PO Box 336, Arkville, NY 12406. Dues & Donations are fully tax deductible.

NAME: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

PROPERTY ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

TOTAL ACRES: _____ FORESTED ACRES: _____ POND [] STREAM [] RIVER []

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BASIC (\$65)	CONTRIBUTING (\$150)
Access to CFA Services; Events free/discounted; CFA News Subscription; CFA Member Property Sign;	SAME AS BASIC + 20% Discount on Services; CFA Totebag
BUSINESS (\$200)	SUSTAINING (\$500)
SAME AS BASIC + 10% Discount on Services; CFA Website Listing; Referrals; Advertisements; Free Booth at Forest Festival	SAME AS BASIC + 30% Discount on Services; CFA Backpack

ADDITIONAL DONATIONS

GENERAL OPERATING FUND	\$
ENDOWMENT TRUST FUND	\$
SCHOLARSHIP FUND	\$

Total Amount: \$_____