

NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION SOUTHERN TIER CHAPTER WINTER 2013-2014 NEWSLETTER

CHAPTER MEETING DECEMBER 11TH, NY FOREST TAX LAW 480a, AND EQIP COST SHARE FUNDING FOR FOREST STEWARDSHIP.

Consulting Forester Roy Hopke works with many forest owners whose woodlands are enrolled in the **Forest Tax Law 480a program**. Come and hear Roy talk about the nuts and bolts of the 480a program: eligibility requirements, application process, legal and reporting requirements, anticipated tax savings and penalties for violations or early withdrawals. Some forest owners consider 480a too burdensome, but others of us wouldn't be able to own our properties today without it. Roy will cover the pluses and the minuses, and take your questions.

The second part of this evening's program will cover cost-sharing programs under the **Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)**. Jerry Michael has been representing NYFOA on the Forestry Advisory Committee for the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) in New York State. The committee recommends stewardship practices that will be considered for EQIP cost share reimbursement, administered by NRCS. For 2014, there will be a focus on controlling invasive and interfering vegetation, which supports NYFOA's "Restore NY Woodlands" initiative.

NRCS District Conservator Elena Steele will discuss details of stewardship practices eligible for cost sharing and the process of applying for EQIP funding.

This meeting will take place in the auditorium at Cornell Cooperative Extension, 840 Upper Front Street, in Binghamton. Doors open at 6:30, program begins at 7:00. Bring a neighbor !

ANNUAL POT LUCK DINNER WILL BE HELD ON MARCH 19TH

Join us for one of the most popular events of the year. Bring a dish to pass and your own table service. We will provide beverages and a sheet pizza to supplement your gourmet offerings. We always look for something other than a "nuts and bolts" program for our annual dinner, and this year we are pleased to have **renowned naturalist, writer and photographer Rick Marsi** join us. Many of us have followed Rick's weekly column in the Press & Sun-Bulletin for many years, and have enjoyed his books and photo-essays. The subject of Rick's talk will be "A Day in the Life of a Wetland".

This will be a great program for the entire family, so bring the kids and grandkids!

In the meantime, check our Rick's website: www.rickmarsi.com (cont.)

Our Pot Luck Dinner meeting will be held at Cornell Cooperative Extension in Binghamton this year. Doors will open at 6:00, dinner served at 6:30 and the program will begin at 7:30. Please call (607) 648-2941 to make reservations so we can plan for seating and beverages...

WOODSWALKS PLANNED

We plan to hold additional woodswalks with a "Restore New York Woodlands" theme next May. Details will be announced in our Spring 2014 Newsletter.

THANK YOU !

Many thanks to Bob Atten and Mike Dionne for hosting, and Dave Williams and Consulting Forester Mike Gray for leading our well-attended woodswalk in Chenango County on September 14th. Thanks also to Tom Gerow, Head of Procurement for Wagner Lumber Company, for his very informative presentation on the factors that impact the market and pricing of sawtimber. Tom was the featured speaker at our Chapter meeting on November 5th.

INVASIVES UPDATE

The closest Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) infestation in our part of the Southern Tier is in Unadilla and covers a part of four of the five Counties making up the Southern Tier Chapter. Authorities think the infestation has been established for a few years so it could have spread a considerable distance by now. Look for woodpecker activity in the tops of your ash trees as this is usually the first sign.

The Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) has been found in hemlocks in Ross Park Zoo in Binghamton, the Binghamton University Nature Preserve in Vestal, and numerous other places. Winter temperatures of 5 degrees below zero can destroy a generation of HWA, but these low temperatures are no longer occurring every winter in this area. Guidance from Penn State Extension suggests that releasing (thinning around) your biggest and healthiest hemlock specimens may help them tolerate infestations by HWA.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

The following new members have joined NYFOA Southern Tier Chapter so far this year:

Charles & Priscilla Anderson – Mount Upton, Mike Blasko – Greene, John Briglin – Sherburne, Elaine Case – Cortland, Lynn & Shirley Finch – Port Crane, Jay Hennessey - . Bridgewater NJ, Jon Hurlbut – Whitney Point, William Nuhn – Auduban NJ, Charles Oliver – Neneveh, Ralph Pitman – Marathon, Chris & Steve Reiser – Wantage NJ, Jerry Schwartz – Glen Aubrey, William Thompson – Montague NJ.

We hope to see all of you at future Chapter programs and woodswalks.

Message from the Chapter Chair

Many landowners are not just interested in growing timber, they want to encourage wildlife as well. The management of eastern poplar (also called aspen or “popple”) through clear cutting is the best approach because no other tree provides the range or quality of food resources (bark, buds, and leaves) on a year-round basis. In southern tier of New York most of these trees are beyond their useful life. The net result is less grouse and woodcock on our properties.

The poplar is a shade intolerant species. It's one of the first to grow when a field is no longer used for agriculture. Tom Gerow, a forester and speaker at the November meeting commented that in our area the plowed ground from abandoned farmland is most likely to be abundant with poplar. The plow marks are still visible in the soil. This is true of my own property and my observation as an avid grouse hunter. Empty fields can be returned to forest land more quickly by plowing and letting nature take over.

Poplar must have full sunlight for vigorous, healthy growth. Cutting programs designed to benefit wildlife must include removing virtually all of the shade trees from an area. Habitat maintenance has to be a continuous affair that can be combined with your timber or fire wood cutting operations. Management recommendations include cutting everything in north south blocks that are dispersed throughout property. Grouse like edges. Creating a crossword puzzle cutting plan will create the most edges on your property. The blocks should be from one to ten acres.

Eastern poplar mostly occurs as clones, growing from interconnected root systems. They reproduce by root suckers, which depend upon nutrients stored in the root system to support their first season's growth. It's best to cut poplar in the fall, winter or early spring when leaves are off the trees and in a dormant state. Cutting while the sap is rising in April, May and June can severely hamper plant regrowth. Sprout growth from poplar roots is controlled by an auxin growth hormone produced by the tips of growing branches. When that hormone is produced root sucker growth is inhibited. If you want poplar regrowth you must cut everything to the ground. The auxin growth hormone will not inhibit regrowth and the root suckers will sprout.

The poplar has another function in the forest. These fast growing trees prevent side branching of traditional timber trees such as oak, cherry and maple. If your poplar trees have reached their useful life you can let them die in normal forest succession. You may also want to girdle them to speed up the succession process. Girdling allows the auxin growth process to inhibit growth until the tree dies. Shade from timber trees also prevents regrowth at this point.

More information can be obtained on managing poplar for wildlife from the Ruffed Grouse Society (www.ruffedgrousesociety.org).

Steve

The NYFOA Southern Tier Chapter (SOT) includes Broome, Chenango, Cortland, Delaware and Otsego Counties. SOT sponsors several workshops and woodswalks each year, often in cooperation with county Cornell Cooperative Extension offices. SOT publishes a Fall, Winter and Spring Newsletter to announce programs and other educational information for members.

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MEETINGS & PROGRAMS
POT LUCK DINNER