

THE OVERSTORY

SOUTHERN ADIRONDACK CHAPTER NEWSLETTER



Volume 18, Number 3

Fall 2008

From the Editor's Desk... Just in time for Thanksgiving if not Halloween, this issue leads off with John Sullivan's announcement of a well-rounded December 6 workshop on trees, taxes and the better angels of our nature. Other news includes an important tree pest update, a highly successful woodswalk by the Washington County Gregorys, an enhanced forestry webcast program, DEC's beefed up mapping technology and a brand new Adirondack educational center. Have a great Thanksgiving, and don't forget to send us your thoughts for the Winter 2009 issue!

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Does Money Grow on Trees? Find Out at "Forest Finance 101"

Save the date and tell your friends and neighbors: on Dec. 6, just in time for end-of-the-year planning, NYFOA's Southern Adirondack Chapter will co-sponsor an all-day workshop for forest landowners in which seven speakers will cover the financial basics of managing your woodland property, including property and income taxes and estate planning.

When: Saturday, Dec. 6, 2008 - 8:30am-4:00pm

Where: Holiday Inn Turf, South Canada Street, Lake George

Registration Fee: \$20 - Lunch Included

Call 518-623-3291 or 518-668-4881 to pre-register

Pre-registration is required

HERE ARE THE HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Forest Management** is all about good planning, and that involves both forestry and finance...
Keynote Speaker: Peter Smallidge, NYS Extension Forester
- **What About the Kids?** (Long-term planning and estate planning)
Thom McEvoy, University of Vermont Extension Forester & Associate Professor
- **Property Tax Management:**
Is '480-A' the way for you?
Steven Warne, Forester
Rich McDermott, Forester, NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation

What about Conservation Easements?

Laurel Gailor, Natural Resource Educator, CCE Warren County
Ethan Winter, Conservation Director, NE Land Trust Alliance

■ **Income Taxes and Planning**

Stephen D. Goodman, Forester, Internal Revenue Service

■ **Bring it All Together: Q & A Panel**

The day's speakers will organize and run a panel to answer your questions.

This workshop is being co-sponsored by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Warren County, New York Forest Owners Association, Southern Adirondack Chapter, and New York Tree Farm.

Adirondack-Based Facility Will Serve Northern Forests

The Adirondack Region is about to further its long tradition as a unique environmental, educational and historic resource, as the Masten House in Newcomb, Essex County becomes the site of a new educational facility for environmental research, forest management and related disciplines. The program will serve the entire Great Northern Forest, including the Adirondacks, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine.

To be operated by the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF), the facility will be a training and research center for government policy makers, scientists, business leaders, educators and others concerned with environmental and economic issues associated with the 25 million-acre Northern Forest. The program is a joint undertaking of the Open Space Institute, the Department of Environmental Conservation and ESF. It will serve the needs of the general public, particularly college and secondary school students, as well as various professional audiences. To be known as the *Northern Forest Institute for Conservation Education and Leadership Training*, it is being heralded as a world-class facility, dedicated to developing new leaders and stewards for this unique natural resource.

As the new program takes shape, it is interesting to note that its future home once served as a guest retreat for one of the nation's foremost conservationists. In September 1901, Vice President Theodore Roosevelt vacationed there with his family, just prior to assuming the Presidency following the assassination of President William McKinley. While returning from a climb up near-by Mt. Marcy, Roosevelt was advised that McKinley lay gravely ill out in Buffalo, and might not survive his assassin's pistol attack. The Vice President was rushed by buckboard to a special train at North Creek Village, where he learned that McKinley had expired. Roosevelt quickly boarded his waiting train, which carried him west to be sworn in as the nation's new Chief Executive. Mr. Roosevelt would undoubtedly be pleased to learn of the special role now planned for his long-ago vacation site, particularly in light of the important environmental challenges currently facing the Adirondacks.

Timber Trespass: Knowing the Legal Framework

Timber Theft is a terrible crime, and obviously can't be wiped away by reading dry legalese. Having the applicable laws as hand is, however, a vitally important starting point toward relief. The various statues are now available in a special State Legislative report, at www.NYSTimberTresspassLaws.

Woodswalk at the Gregorlys'

Forty-six folks showed up at the woodlot of Betty and Peter Gregory on a beautiful September day for some chat, chow and – ah yes – some ideas about managing their own lands. That number may not be a record, but it was enough to make the woodswalk one of the most pleasant in recent memory.

The management issues were discussed at length by Peter Gregory, logger G. Robert Baker and forester John Hastings, who pooled their efforts to successfully bring off a Summer-Fall pine harvest two years ago. So what's the issue? The Gregory lot is steeply sloped and cut in two by a deep ravine, and the space available for a log landing is severely restricted. How severe is that? Tight enough to prevent G. Bob from turning his skidder around after dropping a hitch of logs. Instead, Peter won the approval of the neighboring landowner for a trail that allowed Baker to drive forward – and up a steep hill -- to pick up the next load.

One by one, owner, logger and forester resolved other issues and completed the harvest. The light now falling on the forest floor has resulted in good maple regeneration – one of the harvest goals.

Not so pleasant was the event that followed the planned harvest – a second “harvest” conducted by the winds of Mother Nature, felling 70 more trees that had to be carefully extracted from the jumbled mess. To the credit of all, the wood was successfully salvaged without injury to people or machine.

Woodswalk completed, the members and guests cheerfully tucked into a potluck picnic made more pleasant by the Gregorlys' careful preparation.

Webcast Forestry News

Dr. Peter Smallidge, Cornell University's Extension Forester, has provided the following helpful update on web-based forestry seminars. Of particular interest is the November 2008 launch of a brand new monthly seminar series, offered through the Natural Resources Extension Service of Penn State University. The Penn State program will complement Cornell's on-going *ForestConnect* series, initiated in May 2007. Both programs are designed to help forest owners and professionals build their knowledge and skills in forest management, through high-quality learning experiences that don't require travel or work schedule disruptions. Here's an overview of how they work, including the latest offerings.

Logistics are the same for both programs. Participants are asked to register once, without charge, in order to connect with the monthly on-line meetings. Registrants are then able to view and listen to each live seminar broadcast in real time, and to interact with the instructor through an internet-based “chat” feature. The only equipment required is a computer with sound capability and a high-speed internet connection.

Schedules for the two seminar series also follow similar patterns. The *ForestConnect* programs are broadcast at noon and again at 7:00pm on the *third Wednesday* of each month, excluding July and August, while the *Pennsylvania Forest* programs are offered at the same times on the *second Tuesday* of the month, also excluding the summer months. All webcasts are recorded, so that registrants who aren't available for a particular live broadcast may access it later at their convenience. Recordings carry the

full seminar presentation and discussion, lacking only the real-time interactive feature. Handouts, if used, are also available after each broadcast.

Dedicated websites for each program, including schedules of past and future seminar offerings, handout lists and registration instructions, may be accessed as follows:

For Cornell University: www.forestconnect.org

For Penn State: www.rnrext.cas.psu.edu/PAForestWeb/.

Current offerings: November 2008's webcast schedule was adjusted to accommodate three programs, because of a technical difficulty with the October Cornell broadcast:

- **Monday, November 10:** *Diseases of Forest Trees in the Northeast*. This was a re-broadcast of Rebecca Hargrave's October 15th *ForestConnect* program, which had experienced problems with audio. Ms. Hargrave is affiliated with the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chenango County.
- **Tuesday, November 11:** *Timber Taxes*, offered through the Penn State program.
- **Wednesday, November 19:** *Argentina Forestry*. This Cornell presentation by Brett Chedzoy of the Cooperative Extension for Schuyler County capitalizes on Mr. Chedzoy's varied experience with both natural and plantation forestry practices in Argentina.

****We think you'll enjoy these interesting and informative seminar broadcasts!****

DEC's Gateway Program Offers "Maps For All Seasons"

GIS tools and systems are beginning to "come of age" for the non-expert, through a computer-based mapping program announced recently by the Department of Environmental Conservation. Dubbed "The Mapping Gateway" and accessible at www.dec.ny.gov/pubs, the program combines the Agency's previous web mapping applications with an attractive range of new capabilities, including a full-featured, interactive data inventory and map viewer. The new system seemingly offers "something for everyone" interested in exploring local geography or the environment using GIS technology. DEC "customers" expected to benefit from its many features include:

- **Anglers**, who will be able to explore some of the State's popular lakes, rivers and other water bodies electronically, viewing such features as depth contours, water surface area, mean depth and available fish species. Additional water sites will be added over time.
- **Birders**, who can locate and explore designated Bird Conservation Areas, including species and habitat characteristics found at each location.
- **Hikers and hunters**, who will find printable maps of Wildlife Management Areas and State-owned forests to guide their woodland tramps, while they use something called a *State Lands Interactive Mapper* to create custom maps of recreational trails found on DEC lands.
- **Local Residents**, who will be able to pinpoint any active, contaminated sites in their communities currently under investigation and/or remediation by DEC.
- **GIS professionals**, who can learn the whys, hows and wherefores of data collection associated with the new system.

MORE ON FOREST PESTS: THE BATTLE CONTINUES

As discussed in earlier Overstory issues, New York State is involved in a major effort to detect, control and eradicate various flying and crawling tree predators, based on recent sharp increases in their numbers and their growing impact on our woodlands. Unfortunately, the initiative has had mixed results to date, because many of the pests are hard to detect, are relatively unknown in this region and have few if any natural enemies. The potential for significant environmental and economic damage remains high, and requires constant vigilance by forestland owners and professionals from all quarters. Our coverage of the battle continues here, with a tip or two on how you can help.

Asian Longhorned Beetle A highly destructive enemy of such important forest species as birch and maple (all varieties), this tiny native of China, Japan and Korea was first noted in the U.S. in 1996, on maple and horse chestnut trees in Brooklyn New York. Fast forward to Fall 2008, when a major infestation was discovered a few miles from New York's eastern border. The focal point was Worcester MA and environs, where some 3000 infested trees were found in an area of about 60 square miles. Investigators believe the infestation may have gone undetected for as long as 8 years, illustrating the problems of early discovery and the need for stepped up vigilance. While the Worcester Longhorns are currently confined mostly to urban and suburban areas, this massive insect presence is clearly "on the doorstep" of the extensive woodlands surrounding the cities, towns and villages of this highly populated western Massachusetts area. It is no trick to imagine this destructive bug launching a voracious foray into the adjoining woods, where its favorite host trees are heavily represented. Aside from the commercial hardwoods mentioned, the Longhorned's "diet" regularly includes poplar, willow and horse chestnut, further reflecting its versatility and persistence.

DEC representatives note that Worcester is the fourth major ALB infestation site in the U.S., following New York City, Chicago and New Jersey. The tab for eradication efforts currently stands at some \$35 million. While no infestations have been spotted to date in Upstate New York, the potential avenues for attacks on our forests are clear.

Emerald Ash Borer: This diminutive "specialist" in the world of forest pests has also taken center stage in our northeastern forests, where its emerald green shell and coppery red or purple abdomen have become all too familiar to both land owners and forestry professionals. Originally discovered in Michigan in 2002, the insect is well known by now as a major threat to all North American Ash species (white, blue, black and green), and has been observed in States and Provinces bordering northern, western and southwestern New York (See related DEC website).

Like the Longhorned Beetle, the EAB is the target of a major counter-offensive, in the lab as well as in the streets and woods of the Northeast. While no infestations have been noted to date in New York State, the EAB is also breathing down our necks. It is now a regular in the urban and non-urban forests of Michigan, Pennsylvania, Ontario and Quebec, among other States and Provinces. DEC's EAB web site (see below) includes a map showing 50-100 mile "buffer zones" where the bug is under particular scrutiny because of its close proximity to New York's woodlands.

As with the Asian Longhorn, early detection is the key to successfully controlling and

eradicating the green-backed menace. Toward that end, DEC has begun setting “traps” for the EAB at selected locations around the State, hoping to collect and study individual insects before the species becomes established. So far, the bugs haven’t shown up in any of the test traps, but investigators stress the need for on-going vigilance, and welcome the public’s help with their sleuthing efforts (see DEC contact information below).

Firewood Regulations: Ordinary firewood was identified early on as a major avenue for spread of invasive forest insects and diseases, particularly those noted above. In New York State, the problem was addressed initially through emergency DEC regulations governing possession, sale and movement of firewood, outlined in a Summer 2008 *Overstory* article. Enacted last June, the regulations basically require that firewood be transported into and within the Empire State under strict limitations, and/or that it be heat treated to kill off invasive insects, fungi and pathogens. Originally scheduled to expire last September, these temporary regs have been extended through February 2009, and are expected to become permanent following a 60-day public comment period slated to begin in December 2008. ***Important: Please remember that these temporary regulations will remain in full force and effect, State-wide, throughout this enactment period.***

Additional information on these and other forest pest initiatives is available through the DEC Division of Lands and Forests, and at the web sites listed below:

DEC Contacts

Bruce Allison Jason Denham
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
Division of Lands and Forests
625 Broadway
Albany New York 12233-4253
(518) 402-9425

Related Links

www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7255 (Asian Longhorned Beetle)
www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7253 (Emerald Ash Borer)
www.dec.ny.gov/regulations/2359 (Firewood Regulations)
www.emeraldashborer.info (EAB)

Getting Involved: DEC could use your help in the fight to spot and stop these invasive pests. Please contact Mr. Allison or Mr. Denham if you see evidence of beetle infestation or other suspicious activity on your property, or if you have significant numbers of ash trees. The ENCON reps will discuss the possibility of locating EAB trap(s) on your land, and/or taking other steps to evaluate and deal with your situation. Your interest and assistance will be much appreciated.

Forest Guild Report – Biomass Harvesting

The Guild’s recent report, “*Synthesis of Knowledge from Biomass Removal Case Studies*”, available in PDF form at www.forestguild.org, offers an interesting overview of this new woodlands management tool. Watch for additional coverage in future issues of the *Overstory*.

To Post Or Not to Post

Most people have at least a passing familiarity with the concept of “posting” private forest lands, essentially meaning that the owner has elected to limit or prohibit public access to the property. Opinions on such practices can vary widely, and there are certainly pros and cons. Posting for the purpose of controlling activities such as hunting, fishing and trapping is generally effective, when carried out according to guidelines found in the NYS Environmental Conservation Law. Most people, for example, will respect and heed “posted” signs placed conspicuously along the boundaries of an area considered closed to the public.

Responsible public use of private property does carry certain advantages however, and they are well worth the property owner’s consideration. By and large, people who enjoy outdoor recreation are likely to respect others’ property as well as the environment. Responsible guests can help the owner care for the land, by reporting storm damage, forest pests, timber trespass and other problems. Regulated hunting also helps control wildlife populations, avoiding disease, environmental damage, crop destruction and highway accidents.

On balance, then, should you allow access to your woods? If so, by whom? The general public? Only people whom you designate, such as friends, relatives or business associates? Under what circumstances should entry be allowed? If you do decide to restrict or limit access, are there legal requirements that must be observed? For example, must your land be formally posted (signed) in order to prohibit others from entering on or using it?

A good place to start researching these and other questions about private land access is the DEC internet website (www.dec.ny.gov), which includes a concise, plain-language overview of the topic. At the DEC home page, enter “posting” in the subject index, then click on “DEC Search” and choose the first listing offered (“Posting info for landowners and hunters”). Note that a PDF version is available.

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| Saratoga County: Brian Clothier, | 518-654-6620 |

Editor’s Note: A reminder: If you would like to receive your *Overstory* electronically rather than by regular mail, simply e-mail Bob Manning, at bobmanning@frontiernet.net.

Upcoming SAC Events

“Does Money Grow on Trees?” – Forest Finance 101

8:30 am – 4:00 pm Saturday, December 6 2008

Holiday Inn Turf, South Canada Street, Lake George NY

Annual Meeting, Southern Adirondack Chapter, NYFOA

10 am Saturday, January 24, 2009

Crandall Public Library

251 Glen Street, Glens Falls NY



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An early morning mist covers *Follensby Pond*, the Nature Conservancy's spectacular new acquisition in Franklin County. Much more to come!

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A publication of the Southern Adirondack Chapter, New York Forest Owners Association