

Vermont Tree Farm Newsletter



Vermont Tree Farm Committee Members

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*Jayson Benoit
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*Richard Bizzozero
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Reflections on the Tree Farm Program

By Alan Robertson, Tree Farm Committee Co-chair

With the start of a new year it's interesting to review what the committee has accomplished in 2015 and what we will tackle in 2016. A little history review is needed first.

In 2011 the American Forestry Foundation (AFF), the parent of the American Tree Farm System (ATFS) underwent a reorganization of the Tree Farm program. They felt this was necessary because of the lack of growth of the program and the cost to both the states and the AFF of the administration. Actually, the program had been largely free, but had a lot of administrative issues which the states found hard to justify to "volunteers." Vermont had previously been given permission to charge for these administrative costs which helped us weather this problem.

The reorganization took the form of a Landowner Engagement Strategy (LES) which included four pilot states and revisions to the structure of Tree Farm membership. You could be a "lite" member with no land and/or no requirement for third party certification or, through increasing dues and requirements, you could be a "gold standard" donor giving a lot of money every year with some freebees (like free attendance to the conventions) and full adherence to standards and requirements for third party certification. After a year, a review of the results in the pilot states revealed the LES concept was a total failure. No one liked the levels or the watering down of the Tree Farm values, and the membership requirements didn't do anything to solve the costs to the state committees or the AFF.

The LES was abandoned and AFF decided to keep the changes to a minimum by forcing the states to face up to their shortcomings, and move them into a structure with dues and responsibilities. If the states would decide, and step up, AFF would reward them with more annual funding and assistance. This new system of two levels of belonging was called "States Voice/ States Choice" and Vermont chose the full certification model over the simple recognition model which was, basically, the old Tree Farm system. We sent you a letter on our decision to be fully certified in 2013 and have been working towards a more credible and strong Vermont program since that time. Most states also chose the fully certified model.

Now, back to my review of our progress....

First, we started 2015 with the goal of completing the "States Choice/States Voice"

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Inspectors Log

by Kathy Beland

Star Date 3.25.16

Where No One Has Gone Before - or.. “ Dammit Tree Farm- I’m only a forester.”

The year 2016 brings to the forefront what certification of Tree Farm properties will look like moving forward, starting with Vermont’s selection to be a part of the Third party Audit process with PriceWaterhouseCoopers as the Auditor. For those who are the forester of record on selected Tree Farm properties, you may have experienced participation in our previous audits, or you may be new to the process this year. There are many details that are required from the forester and the landowner to complete an audit. And sometimes, we as foresters may look at those details as onerous. I mean, you’re only a forester, right? Well- not exactly!

Your Tree Farm Inspector certification in 2015 has placed a responsibility on your shoulders to adhere to the standards set forth by the American Tree Farm System and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC.) Most of you spent a day with me and Paul Harwood reviewing all of those requirements. From that point forward, you are either continuing or becoming: an ambassador and salesperson for the Tree Farm program; a gatekeeper for its standards; a cheerleader and a teacher to your Tree Farmers; a record-keeper for the program and yes- always a forester. Likely, many of you are already using these skillsets with all of these responsibilities in other venues, not just Tree Farm.

The most important parts in maintaining the integrity of Tree Farm is in completing a field inspection and filing the inspection report- the dreaded 004. With that in mind, I have some common mistakes that are occurring as we embark on the voyages of the 004, “seeking out new life and civilizations, to boldly go where no one has gone before.” Oops- lost myself for a minute on the Star Trek set.

First and foremost, if you have the capability such as a smart phone, iPad, iWhatever, please, please download the 004 App. It makes this process so much simpler for everyone involved. Contact Nephtali Chavez at nchavez@forestfoundation.org, for your user name and

password after you download the Konformance App from the App store, to get started. Be bold! Fear of technology is not always the easiest thing to overcome, believe me- I know!

If you don’t have any of those “I” machines, then the pdf form is the next best thing. You can complete and submit the inspection online, and all you need is a computer and the internet. Now, if you don’t have that, you may be in trouble, but I suspect that most of you have computers and internet! I mean Paul Harwood does, and I thought he was the last holdout in Vermont. The bottom line for both of these methods of 004 completion and filing is just that- the bottom line. It costs Tree Farm money every time Erin Lorentz or Kathleen Wanner have to manually re-enter every item the inspector checked, and every note of explanation into the 004 online for it to be submitted. Completing the 004 electronically also minimizes the ability for the inspector to leave any question blank or mistakes in transferring information. It is a time and money saver, for the State Committee, the inspector and most importantly for the Tree Farmers. We are trying to keep costs low, and this can be a money pit for Tree Farm if done incorrectly and inefficiently.

Here are a few more items of concern in our quest for 004 completion and program integrity:

- **Field Inspections:** If you have not been to the Tree Farm in the past 180 days (that’s 6 months), you CANNOT use a date from 1 year ago as your field visit. I am quite sure that we reviewed this point many, many times. Electronically, the App will not let you complete the 004 if this date is incorrect.
- **Location of management plan:** For whatever reason, many of you miss this question. Just type in- landowner, county forester, or your name or business name.
- **Forest Health Issues-** even if it is none, you need to state “none;” and then Acres is 0; and that it will be monitored.
- **FORI (Forests of Recognized Importance):** This quite likely is my least favorite acronym in the world. I know that we all have opinions of this standard, and because there is no established database for FORI for us to research, leaving that question blank seems like the most likely choice. If you are researching, rare,

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(SVSC) process the American Forest Foundation (AFF) requires all the states to undertake to insure they are fully capable of running a credible, third-party-certified management system. That process includes the cleanup of the Vermont entries in the AFF database, the development and documentation of administrative responsibilities in the committee, the identification of financial needs and how to satisfy them, completion of a strategic plan, and an acknowledgement of the many annual duties and tasks which must be completed to maintain our standing.

Vermont was well ahead of the pack on several aspects of SVSC and we tackled the database issues first. That immediately proved harder than we thought. I should mention that the database content, and the database itself, has been a problem both locally and nationally for several decades. Database issues and the difficulty of tracking and completing five year anniversary re-inspections caused Vermont to lose control of the program in the 1990s and early 2000s and the opportunity to fix half of the problem was a welcome requirement. We spent a lot of time trying to develop a phone protocol to use on you, our Tree Farmers, which would net us all the information we needed.

We also worked on several other requirements like a communication plan, a leadership manual for committee continuity, fundraising, Tree Farmer of the Year and Inspector of the Year selection criteria, committee bylaws (we are a subcommittee of Vermont Woodlands Association), and a Tree Farmer recruitment class. We also had to work on all the other “stuff” we would normally face like forester training (we had new standards in 2015 requiring training all our foresters), accomplishment of required annual inspections, and work on fundraising, grant applications, and member recruitment. It turned out that calling Tree Farmers to complete database cleanup conflicted with the training of foresters on the new standard because the foresters needed to know the new standard before they could judge whether the existing plans of Tree Farmers met the new standard. So the database cleanup got off to a late start.

Adding to the workload, Vermont was chosen late in the year to undergo a REAL, THIRD PARTY INSPECTION by AFF in 2016. We had undergone third party assessments in 2009 and 2013 and didn't expect to do that again until 2017 at the earliest. That selection meant the database would be under even more scrutiny because the “third party” that comes to Vermont uses that database to select the Tree Farms to be inspected. It turns out we were chosen because

we looked better than the rest to AFF- No good deed goes unpunished...

But enough whining! Vermont is getting through the database cleanup. Many of you have received a call from either me or another member of our team. Many of you will be receiving such calls over the next few months. We are about 60% through the actual calling of every Tree Farmer in the state. More importantly, we have completed all of the oldest, most problematic properties and are now calling “known individuals” to simply verify information, get e-mails, and dates of management plans, and review program changes we anticipate like the annual dues rising to \$30/year by 2018.

The information we are getting is really important and for the first time in literally decades we are beginning to have confidence in KNOWING the size and health of the program. Right now we are looking at a state program with roughly 430 Tree Farms that are fully certified. We have another 70 or so Pioneer Tree Farms. These are properties generally only lacking an inspection (there's the problem with reinspections, again....) by the owner's forester to be back in the fully certified fold...But there's more to that which I'll address in a couple of paragraphs....We have decertified almost 100 properties in the past three years, most of them in 2015. Our foresters and our Administrative staff have worked very hard on this aspect and that number of reinspections (the Pioneers) left to accomplish is smaller than it's been in many years. Northern Woodlands magazine published a letter to the editor several years ago by an individual that questioned the credibility of the AFF certification system. In his opinion, no one ever got thrown out. Well, that's not true. We do, if the plan isn't followed or the inspections aren't completed, and the proof is available to anyone who wishes to review the records. Vermont has a very good, very credible program, and it will only get better.

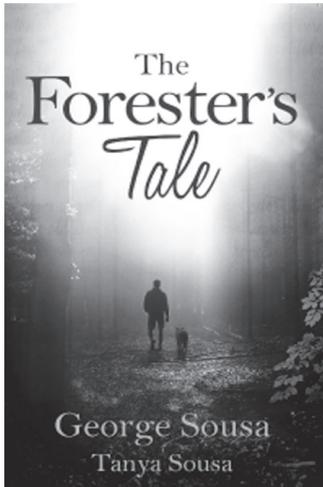
So in 2016 PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) will come to Vermont in June to inspect 19 properties for conformance to the AFF standards of sustainability. Prior to that, we will collect (and eventually return) copies of management plans from the 19 tree farmers so that PwC can check them against what's happening in the field. Much later in the year we'll find out how we did, and be told the good and the bad, and we'll get that out to you as quickly as possible. In 2013 that was handled badly by the inspection company and it took too long to tell you that we had an outstanding inspection.

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Book Review by Kathy Beland

It was timely that this book came to me...



A quote on the back of the book states: "The Forester's Tale" is a uniquely romantic and modern parable about the true success that arises from doing what the soul is led to do." I kind of thought it might be stories of experiences in the woods, not a book with deep meaning!

Initially, I had a hard time just getting into Sousa's story, but began to enjoy his descrip-

tion of the forest and his wanderings, and the natural world around him. The author created the story of a man who had his share of business success, only to lose his business, home and eventually his wife to cancer, caused him to drop into a deep state of despair and withdraw from the world he had known, by becoming- you guessed it- a hermit forester. Prior to all of that though, he had lost sight of the most important parts of his life, especially his personal gifts from God.

Through his weaving of his dreams and visions with biblical passages, life stories, and descriptions of the forest he walked through, the heart of his story began to connect with me and it became difficult to set it aside. For me the biggest compliment a book can have is that I can't put it down. I finished it within a 24-hour period. The author(s) drew me in, made me root for the forester and his soul struggles, and reconnect with some of my own thoughts and dreams and passions and gifts, that I was not actively pursuing.

Quite possibly, my favorite quote in the book was, "Things unfold as they should when you listen." Well- that is a powerful statement. To listen. What a novel concept! We all have a tendency to talk a lot and say very little, but when it comes time for listening, many just can't do it. There is just too much white noise in some peoples' heads to allow them to hear anything else other than their own thoughts or feelings or ideas. Most would not even understand the concept of listening to another person's advice, let alone a Godly voice that speaks to them through visions, dreams or parables.

This story may not have been what I expected, and I was worried that there would not be the ending I thought there should be, but I was pleasantly surprised. At one point in the story, the author made the point, that if you aren't going to make the decision you need to make, and keep putting it off, God will make it for you. I have had too many experiences in life to know that to be true!

If you are just setting your feet in front of you at the beginning of your career, walking out the end of your career, or just at one of many crossroads in your life, take the time to read this story of hope. It may just be the kick in the pants you need.

New Landowner Engagement Project Brings Multiple Partners Together

The American Forest Foundation, VT Tree Farm Committee, and VT Audubon recently launched a new landowner engagement project in our four southern counties. The project focus is wildlife, particularly birds, and includes a volunteer outreach component. Vermont Coverts Cooperator Training is a perfect fit and we are working together to build a cadre of trained volunteers. If you'd like to make a difference in your community, then please consider participating in an upcoming Cooperator Training!

2016 Vermont Coverts: Woodlands for Wildlife Woodland Owner Cooperator Training

Do you love your woodland? Enjoy seeing birds and other wildlife and want to learn how a healthy forest can enhance wildlife habitat, provide recreational and timber benefits? Are you interested in reaching out to others in your community? Then join us for the Coverts 3-day Woodland Owner Training. It will allow you to connect with resource professionals and other landowners just like you while learning how you can improve your woodland. The training program is offered in the spring and fall. The spring dates are May 20-22 and will take place at the Farm and Wilderness Camp, Plymouth, VT. The fall dates are September 9-11 and will be held at Kehoe Conservation Camp in Hydeville, VT. Space is limited so register now! To learn more, see a sample agenda or download an application visit our website at www.vtcoverts.org. You can also contact us by calling Lisa Sausville at 802-877-2777 or e-mail lisa@vtcoverts.org.

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In addition to those inspections we'll be doing the annual required inspections – 13 this year, statewide – which must be done by the end of the year. If your tree farm is in this list of required inspections, you've already been notified. Our inspectors and staff will be very busy, and the outline above doesn't even include the 70 reinspections we would need to accomplish to wipe out the re-inspection backlog.

That backlog isn't from forgetful or lazy efforts on anyone's part. It's an indication of the conflict between the Current Use (CU), ten year plan cycles and the AFF 5 year reinspections policy and anniversary of their update of the standard. Trees grow slowly in New England and the state feels that a ten year cycle is the appropriate time between plan updates. Our foresters like that. AFF changes their standard every 5 years, though, and also requires a 5 year check of the management plan through a "re-inspection" and the submission of an AFF 004 form. In practicality, that means foresters and landowners may be tasked more often than the state would require updating plans or certifying that the plan and property are in good standing. That additional effort can cost, and take a significant amount of effort which, for consulting foresters and landowners, is a potential problem in scheduling and maintaining an efficient use of income earning time. A case can be made for the skepticism associated with that 5 year requirement, or standards change. The most recent standards change was almost insignificant, and for many Tree Farmers with a good management plan meeting a recent AFF standard, the need for a 5 year check is almost unnecessary.

The committee feels your pain in those cases. To us, a more important 5 year requirement is to make contact with you to insure we have your correct address, phone number, e-mail, forester, and management plan date. Losing relevant contact with our Tree Farmers and relying on you or your forester to maintain contact with us hasn't worked. Our committee will be making those 5 year reminder and update calls on the anniversary of your last Tree Farm "contact" (probably an inspection or a new plan in current use) from now on. By doing this we think you'll get better service and information from us and it will insure we don't lose you.

If you elect to not have an official Tree Farm inspection (that generates an AFF 004 from your forester) every 5 years, and decide to have your forester do the inspections on anniversaries of or actions associated with your current use plan, that will work for us. We will simply, and administratively, move you into the Pioneer status. You'll be in

the program but your land won't be third-party certified. Once we receive the 004 from your forester associated with the current use plan or other activity we'll automatically place you back in the certified column. This dramatically improves our credibility with the program at the national level and means the Pioneer population won't be selected for inspections. At the local level, from a practical standpoint, it won't mean any decrease in your commitment to manage your property sustainably or not be a valuable member of the Vermont program. And if you change your mind about being in the Pioneer status the simple submission of an updated 004 inspection form by your forester means you're back in the certified column.

2016 has been and will continue to be very busy for the program; we hope to have nothing but good news at the next update. If you have any questions please feel free to call or e-mail me (802-438-5495 or kathy.njtinc@gmail.com) or the office (802-747-7900 or kmwanner@comcast.net).



The American Tree Farm System Celebrates 75 Years!

The American Forest Foundation is celebrating the 75th anniversary of the Tree Farm Program in 2016 and the Vermont Committee is throwing a party as its contribution to the effort!

PLEASE mark on your calendar to save **Sunday, August 28, 2016** for attending the 75th Anniversary Picnic at Shelburne Farms on Lake Champlain. The 10 AM to 4 PM **family event** (rain location in the Coach Barn) will include a catered picnic, fun activities, tours, walks, and other stuff as we figure it out. There will be a charge for Tree Farmers but **foresters come free** as part of our way of saying thanks for all your help and support.

We are still organizing the event so if you have ideas, want to volunteer to plan or put on the event, or donate to help finance the party please contact Kathleen at 802-747-7900 or email info@vermontwoodlands.org. Stay tuned for more details as we get closer to summer!

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Our thanks to Tree Farm Inspectors for their recent actions!

Since the new standards rolled out in 2015 and all Tree Farm inspectors needed to retrain, we've seen a total of 56 tree farm actions. Of the 67 foresters who participated in the training, 28 have completed at least one tree farm action and 16 have completed two. Remember that the program requires inspectors to complete at least one actions every two years to maintain their active status. We also welcomed 21 new tree farms to the program in this time period. We're off to a great start! Our thanks to the following foresters .

*Kathy Beland
Rose Beatty
Pat Bartlett
Jayson Benoit
Markus Bradley
Caitlin Cusack
Beth Daut
Wesley Everts
Charlie Hancock
Steve Handfield
Paul Harwood
Robbo Holleran
Frank Hudson
Ryan Kilborn*

*Jeff Langmaid
Betsy Lesnikoski
Lynn Levine
Ian Martin
Kyle Mason
John McClain
David McMath
Len Miraldi
Randy Wilcox
Jared Nunery
Jim Roberts
Rich Root
Don Tobi
David Wilcox*

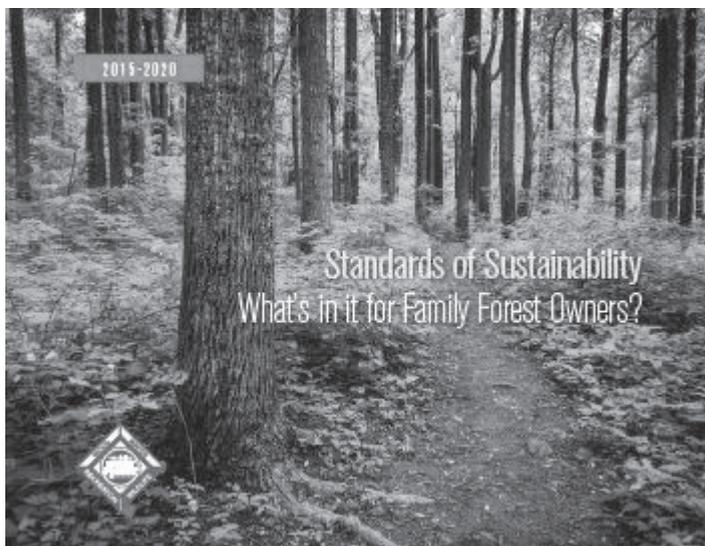
Welcome to our new Tree Farmers!

It's always a pleasure to welcome new woodland stewards to the ranks of our Vermont Tree Farm System. You join an elite group of landowners who share a passion for the land and a desire to leave it better than you found it.

You have all met the Standards of Sustainability and now have the right and privilege to display the Tree Farm sign. Do so with pride. You've earned it.

Several of our newest Tree Farmers have not yet received their welcome packets and certificates but inspections have been completed and 004 enrollment forms sent to the office. If you have not yet received your tree farm sign, please contact the office (802-747-7900 or info@vermont-woodlands.org) or your forester. The Tree Farm signs are graciously stored for us in the offices of the County Foresters and we are happy to assist you in getting yours.

- 1669 Vermont Land Trust, So. Starksboro
- 1673 Diane & Peter Cooney, Wallingford
- 1674 Town of Landgrove, Landgrove
- 1675 Anthony Lazzara & Kathy Brule-Lazzara, Morgan
- 1677 Janet Fish, Wells
- 1678 Marc Scorca, Poultney & Middletown
- 1679 Keith N. Johnson Realty Trust, Barnet
- 1680 Town of Landgrove, Landgrove
- 1681 David Scribner, Tinnmouth
- 1682 Avis Bruce-Burley, Woodford
- 1685 David & Mary Val Palumbo, Hyde Park
- 1686 Corey Jones & Heidi Krantz, Craftsbury
- 1687 Corey Jones & Heidi Krantz, Wolcott
- 1688 Brad Greenough, Groton
- 1689 Jonathan & Diana Seaman, Windham
- 1690 New England Forestry Foundation, Braintree
- 1691 David & Robin Smith, Barre/Orange
- 1692 Peter & Claudia Clark, Waldon





Sharing Nature with Children by Rebecca Phelps, State Coordinator

Tomorrow's leaders need to be equipped for tomorrow's challenges, and we must adequately prepare our children for the future they will inherit. That requires a commitment to providing children with conservation education that helps them become the educated thoughtful leaders of tomorrow. To protect the future landscape of Vermont, we need to touch the lives of the youngest Vermonters.

America is in the midst of one of the most profound and rapid societal shifts in history. Today's generation of children is the first to grow up indoors. Their plugged-in lives are often devoid of exploring the natural world. Consider these facts:

- American children ages 3 -12 spend 27 percent of their time each week watching television, and only 1 percent outdoors (Hofferth & Sadberg, 2001)
- Children ages 8 – 18 engaged in over seven hours of media time (e.g., watching TV, listening to music, using the Internet/computer, playing video games) each day (Rideout, Foehr & Roberts, 2010)
- Approximately 17% (or 12.5 million) of U.S. children and adolescents aged 2—19 years were obese in 2008 (Ogden & Carroll, 2010)
- In 2000 two-thirds of the public failed a basic environmental quiz and 88 percent failed a basic energy quiz (Coyle, 2005)

If children are detached from nature, how will they learn about, understand, and value nature? How will the next generation care about the woods and be stewards of its resources?

Raising an environmentally literate generation of problem solvers will help ensure that tomorrow's decision-makers are prepared for the challenges they will likely face. Studies have shown conservation education engages students in learning, raising test scores, and encouraging youth to pursue careers in environmental and natural resources.

You can be part of the solution by sharing your woods with children in your community. Are you interested in making the difference in the lives of these children?

What you can do:

- Volunteer to be a guest presenter in your local school. Share your knowledge and passion for Vermont woods and inspire the next generation of woods explorers.
- Host a field trip on your Tree Farm for students. Walk the land and share your stories of the work you have done to make your woods beautiful and productive.
- Host a Project Learning Tree workshop on your land. Have educators gather and learn about your sustainable forest practices, the wildlife that live there, and your values as a landowner. These teachers will bring these important messages and the award winning Project Learning Tree curriculum back into their classrooms.

Contact Rebecca Roy, Vermont Project Learning Tree Coordinator for help in making connections in your local school, to schedule a Project Learning Tree workshop, or to add your name to a list of potential Tree Farm field trip locations distributed to teachers during Project Learning Tree workshops.

Email: rebecca.roy@vermont.gov

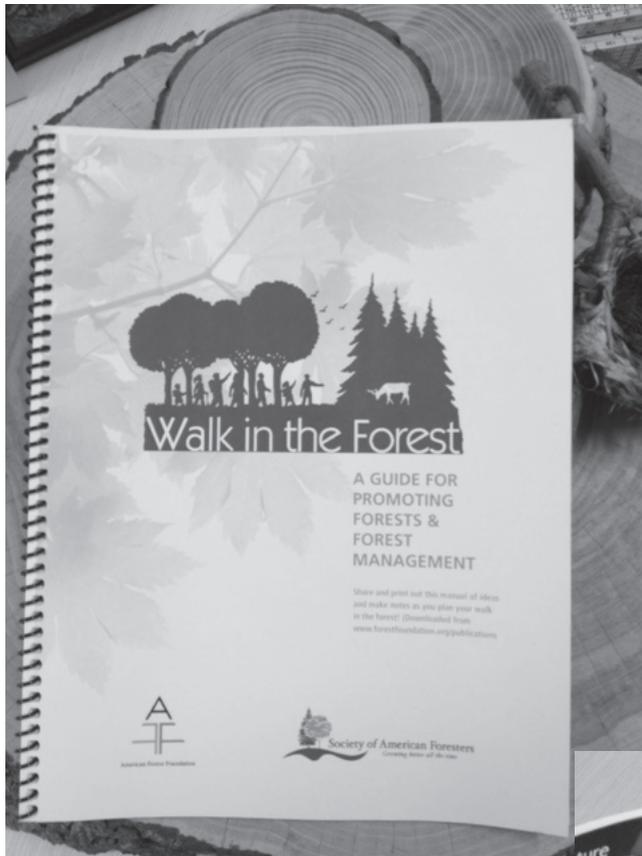
Phone: 802-522-0780





Take a Walk in Your Woods

Do you enjoy watching your woods slowly and quietly fill with snow on winter evenings? Do you wait in eager anticipation for fresh spring leaves to emerge, bright and green overhead? You enjoy your woods in every season. There is new tool available to help you share the peaceful beauty you have maintained in your woods.



Research shows that meaningful experiences in the woods results in stewardship behavior in people. You can help foster the love and care of Vermont woods by sharing your special places with people of all ages. The Society of American Foresters and the American Forest Foundation recently published Walk in the Forest, a guide for promoting forests and forest management.

Walk in the Forest helps audiences of all ages unplug from their busy lives and witness the wonder of nature. You can be the person to make this happen by using this guide to plan

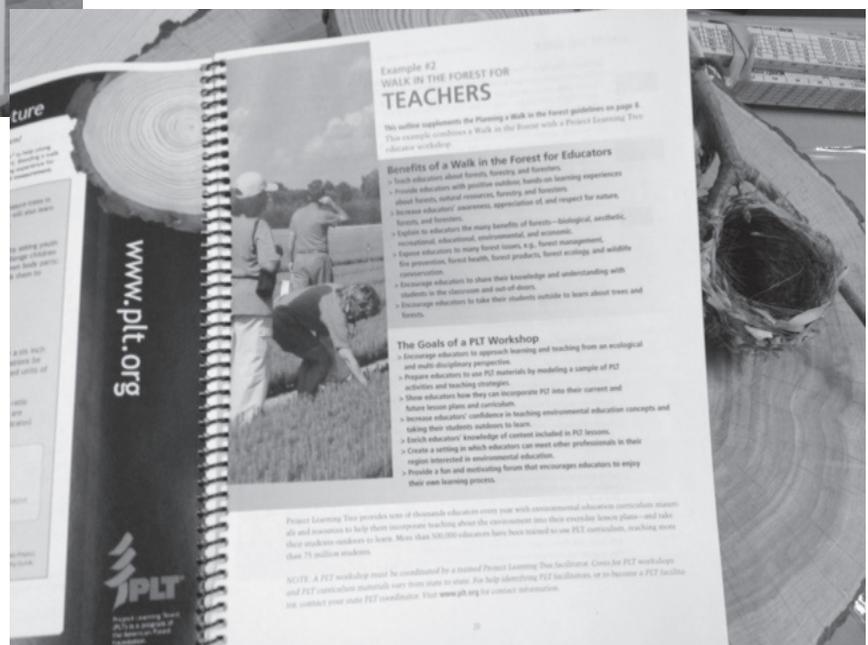
your own walk. This booklet focuses on four main concepts: trees and forests have many benefits; forests are dynamic and change composition over time; foresters maintain the integrity of the forest while providing benefits to society; private family forestland owners have multiple and diverse objectives and their investments benefit the public.

This free guide provides everything you need to plan and execute a successful walk in your woods, including checklists of things to think about, and step by step detailed instructions to plan your event. There are special sections targeting specific audiences: children, teachers, local leaders, Tree Farmers, and family landowners. Guidance for walk promotion is also included.

Curious and ready to get started? Call or write for your free copy of Walk in the Forest. This guide is available digitally or as a spiral bound hard copy.

Please contact Rebecca Roy, Vermont Project Learning Tree Coordinator for your free copy today:

rebecca.roy@vermont.gov
802.522.0780



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Vermont SFI Legislative Breakfast

by Darcie Johnson

On Friday, March 11th Vermont Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) held its 5th annual Legislative Breakfast at the Vermont State House. SFI is a forestry certification program to assure the general public that lands in the SFI program are managed and harvested in accord with sound forestry principles. Forest, paper, and wood products made from SFI Forests may carry a label to demonstrate so. Certified Tree Farm forestlands are recognized, automatically, as SFI approved, and of SFI certified.

The annual SFI Legislative Reception and Breakfast allows for our members and associates to come together at the State House Cafeteria and spend time talking with one another and with Legislators on important Forestry issues.

This year the timing of our breakfast was perfect as critical issues to the Forestry Industry have been the focus of the Administration and the legislature to propose reforms that would create additional regulations with which landowners, foresters, loggers, and truckers must comply. By having our members there to offer their strong voices in educating legislators, clarifying false perceptions, support positive change, and, when necessary, oppose negative change, we were able to address many of these issues.

Afterward we held a meeting of the Vermont SFI Committee, and all concerned look forward to building a stronger SFI, to improve understanding and awareness of about the importance to working forests, and the people who work them, to sustaining the Vermont economy, environment, culture and character to all who depend upon, and enjoy the benefits of working forests.

We really appreciate everyone who joined us at the breakfast. A special thank you to Rob Holleran who brought the tree cookies for the display.

If you were unable to join us this year please mark your calendar for next year and email Darcie Johnston at Darcie@johnstonconsult.net to be added to our VT SFI/SIC email list. Our next event is the Logger Expo in May. We hope to see you there.

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- threatened and endangered species or natural communities, or significant wetlands or habitat, or high conservation value forests, using the ANR atlas, then you are researching FORI. Please use VT ANR Atlas as your source.
- Special Sites: This is similar to FORI. However, the resource consulted may be the landowner because there is a cemetery on the property, or sugarhouse foundations, etc.
- Follow guidance about what to “skip if no” and answer everything else!
- Location: Please enter legal 911 address, or if you are using the APP you can automatically click and it will enter GPS coordinates. The whole point being that the property can be found with information provided on the 004.

If we were only foresters, we wouldn't be involved in Tree Farm or any other organizations. When we decided to enter the field of forestry, we all thought we would just hang out in the woods, and not deal with people and listen to the birds and see wildlife all day long. The reality is that we can't say that we are just foresters, because we are accountants, and negotiators, and salespeople, and planners, and ambassadors and teachers and professionals and we are also Tree Farm Inspectors.

We can boldly go out and encourage landowners to have their land be certified Tree Farms, but if we as the Corps of Inspectors are not keeping up our end of the bargain by completing an 004 form correctly or at all, then the integrity of Vermont Tree Farm certification is at risk. You have the tools. You have the Standards and Guidance. You have support to answer questions. You have the 004. You may even have the technology. You aren't only a forester. You are a Tree Farm Inspector.



Vermont Tree Farm Program
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PO Box 6004
Rutland, VT 05702-6004

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Your Call to Action

It is because of you all that Vermont's Tree Farm program exemplifies a commitment to on-the-ground stewardship. It is because of the Tree Farm Committee that we have strong ties to the American Tree Farm System in Washington, DC and a well-managed program. It is because of the Vermont Woodlands Association that we have the funding necessary to support the many tasks and projects required to maintain third party certified status. Let's see how we can combine our assets to do an even better job. There are many opportunities for you to help as a committee member, outreach volunteer, newsletter contributor, tour host, mentor, etc. There is an opportunity for you to become a member of Vermont Woodlands Association. Our sponsoring organization does so much more than provide financial support and every member makes us even stronger. If you are already a member, thank you! If you are not, please visit our website at www.vermontwoodlands.org and consider joining. If every Tree Farmer was a VWA member or every VWA member was a Tree Farmer, together we would be a powerful Voice for Forestry!