

Maine Tree Farm NEWSLETTER

Winter 2019/2020

A publication of the Maine Tree Farm Committee

Issue No. 20



State Senator Erin Herbig (left) and the the Newell Family (courtesy of Maine Woodland Owners).

Newell Family Hosts 65th Annual Forestry Field Day

On September 7, Don Newell and his family hosted the Maine Tree Farm and Maine Woodland Owners' 65th Annual Forestry Field Day at their 200-plus acre woodlot in Unity and Thorndike. Over 200 family forest landowners and community members braved the strong winds and rain produced by Hurricane Dorian to celebrate the Newell family's being named the 2019 Maine Outstanding Tree Farmers.

The event featured several tours designed to educate the public on forestry issues and to encourage them to utilize sustainable forestry practices. Don Newell led a tour into an area of his forest that he has been actively managing for 40 years. At this tour stop Dr. Kevin Spigel, of Unity College, gave an informative talk about surficial geology and its influence on the forested area.

Rob Nelson, Newell's consulting forester, led a group to discuss active stewardship projects on the property, especially those funded through United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Service (USDA NRCS). One of the stops on this tour featured a low impact forestry demonstration of modern logging equipment and techniques used to limit damage to soil and vegetation.

Several walking tour options were offered. Aleta McKeague of the Waldo County Soil and Water Conservation District discussed invasive plant species often found in woodlands and management techniques used to control

Continued on page 2

The presentation of the 2020 Maine Outstanding Tree Farm of the Year will be at 12:45pm on January 15 at the Maine Woodland Owners Annual Meeting during the Agricultural Trade Show in Augusta. Commissioner Amanda Beal of the Department of Agriculture Conservation and Forestry and State Forester Patty Cormier will be in attendance and Governor Janet Mills has been invited.

Field Day (continued)

them. Sally Stockwell of Maine Audubon and Amanda Mahaffey of the Forest Stewards Guild offered a Forestry for Maine Birds tour to share why birds are used as an indicator of forest health and what to look for when managing a woodlot with birds in mind. Dave Rocque, Maine's State Soil Scientist, brought participants to "soil pits" on the property that illustrate the importance of soil to forest health and dynamics.

A central exhibitors tent included table displays from SAPPI North America (an event sponsor), the Maine Chapter of the Society of American Foresters, the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (who donated tables and chairs for the day), the American Forest Foundation, OESCO, Inc. (supplier of woodlot management tools and a longtime Field Day sponsor), and Kennebec Lumber Company.

The Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry staffed informational booths from the Maine Forest Service (MFS) and the Maine Natural Areas Program. A MFS Forest Ranger, entomologist, and forester were on hand to answer questions and refer folks to additional resource professionals. The Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife's Operation Game Thief trailer offered opportunities to learn the differences between a Forester, a Forest Ranger, and a Game Warden.

Many Unity College students joined the Forestry Field Day programs. When not enjoying the tours and education exhibits, they delivered Project Learning Tree Activities to the children at the event under the guidance of Dr. Kayla Higgins, Unity College's Experiential Education Coordinator. Pat Sirois, Director of Maine's Sustainable Forestry Initiative, displayed the always popular flume table that is used to demonstrate best management practices and the effects of undersized culverts and erosion on waterways.

The recognition portion of the event was held after lunch. Maine Tree Farm Committee Chair Andy Shultz, and Maine Woodland Owners President Paul Sampson each thanked their respective members for attending and supporting the event.



*Don Newell (left) greeting Senator Susan Collins (right).
(courtesy of Maine Woodland Owners)*



*Field Day participants braving the rain as they depart on a wagon tour.
(courtesy of Maine Woodland Owners)*

Senator Susan Collins addressed the assembled group “to celebrate the great heritage we have in the State of Maine.” She said “[The Newells] epitomize what Tree Farmers do in Maine,” going on to explain that they “manage the forest sustainably, are generous to future generations, and open the land to public use, which is unusual compared to other parts of the nation.” She extended her congratulations not only to Don Newell and his family, but to all Tree Farmers. Senator Angus King, who was unable to attend sent his congratulations to the Newells via a representative from his office.

State Senator Erin Herbig of Belfast, who represents the local area in Augusta, offered a legislative sentiment to congratulate the family. In her remarks, Senator Herbig quoted an often-used phrase of Don’s: “you should really come check out my woodlot.”

Patty Cormier, recently appointed Maine State Forester, presented the Newell family a certificate for a free Stihl chainsaw. When introducing him, she explained that “Don has been bitten by the bug of woodland stewardship.” Cormier also presented State Senator Russell Black, the 2018 Maine Outstanding Tree Farmer with his award for being named the Northeast Regional Finalist for last year’s National Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year competition.

Don Newell closed the speakers’ portion of the event thanking everyone in attendance for braving the weather. He was humbled by the remarks of the speakers, going on to say: “No one did what we did for recognition. We did it because it was the right thing to do.” And then he and the other guides went back to the woods for another set of tours.

Community Features



INSPECTOR PROFILE: Barrie Brusila

Representing Counties:

Knox, Waldo, Lincoln, Sagadahoc,
Kennebec, Cumberland

Involved since: 1985

Other Organizations:

Maine TREE Foundation Board
Society of American Foresters
Maine Woodland Owners
Founding Member —
Forest Stewards Guild

Featured Inspector: Barrie Brusila

I’ve been a Tree Farm inspector since 1985. It’s part of my forestry consulting work, which I have been doing since 1980. My husband, Mitch Kihn, and I established Mid-Maine Forestry, a forestry consulting company, in 1995. We provide a variety of services for non-industrial landowners including individuals, families, towns, and land trusts. Our work includes (but is not limited to) woodlot reconnaissance, forest management plans, timber inventory, timber marking, stumpage sale administration and supervision, and timber stand improvement. We work in cooperation with state and federal agencies in administering forestland cost-share programs. Mid-Maine Forestry is a Certified Resource Manager, certified by SCS Global Services to Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) standards since 1998.

I am a Tree Farm Inspector as a service to our clients. Three of my clients have been Maine Outstanding Tree Farmers of the year: Clark Granger (2003), Andy Abello and Amanda Russell (2010), and Hidden Valley Nature Center/Bambi Jones and Tracy Moskovitz (2014.) Bambi and Tracy went on to become the Northeast Regional Tree Farmers that year as well. I am very proud of the work they all do, and grateful to work with them. In fact, I’m grateful to work with all my Tree Farmer clients, whether they win awards or not. Tree Farmers enjoy periodic visits from their foresters, those distinctive green and white signs, and recognition for the good land stewardship they conduct.

A Tale of Two Tree Farms (Forestry Teachers' Tours)

By: Christine Anderson-Morehouse, Maine Project Learning Tree Coordinator



Teachers on Maine TREE Foundation's annual Teachers' Tours listen as Tree Farmer, Bob Vigue, describes the management of strategies of his woodlot in Castle Hill.

Imagine that you are a schoolteacher from southern Maine and you've never experienced "forestry" before. You're confused because you've seen several green and white "Tree Farm" signs around your local area, but unlike typical farms, there appear to be no rows of crop trees that would indicate that a farm was present anywhere in sight. You are probably asking the question:

What exactly IS a "Tree Farm" (and what is "forestry" for that matter)?

Maine TREE Foundation's annual Forestry Teachers' Tours in the north Maine woods are an eye-opening and extremely informative experience. They are also an important opportunity for natural resource professionals to spread the word across Maine about the importance of sustainable forest management on forest lands large and small. A key learning that ties all teacher tour visits together is the notion that a landowner sets objectives for their property (often several different objectives) and then chooses from a variety of management strategies to meet those goals.



Tree Farmer Jim Bergeron discusses the process of working with NRCS to receive project funding for bridges, like the one the teachers are standing on.

A prime example this past summer was evident during a visit to Jim Bergeron's Tree Farm in Dallas Plantation near Rangeley. Together with his forester, Bob Carlton, Jim proudly hiked the group across his new bridge, explaining that it was engineered by NRCS (Natural Resource Conservation Service) to allow passage by aquatic organisms while withstanding the recent, all-too-common big weather events. The group emerged into an open area planted with conservation mix surrounding a pond stocked with fish and above it, a spruce/fir forest in which "rabbitat" (rabbit habitat slash piles) were dispersed. It came as no surprise when Jim and Bob explained that Jim's management priorities were wildlife and recreation. Jim's enthusiasm was evident every step

of the way on this tour and teachers left feeling both excited and informed about what it looks like to be a “Tree Farmer”.

Further north in Castle Hill (northwest of Presque Isle), a different teacher tour was hosted by Tree Farmer Bob Vigue, ten years retired as a Seven Islands Land Company forester. His 70 acres had recently been harvested for the first time since WWII when the logs were used for “potato house wood”. Bob’s work is species specific, cutting every popple (“a great aspen market up here with two oriented strand mills”), clearing old spruce at risk of blowing down while saving some as seed sources, and managing for sugar maple on the higher ground. When asked how his mindset as a forest manager had changed since retiring as a forester for one of Maine’s largest landowners, Bob easily explained that “To be on my own woodlot is a lot more fun! This is nirvana because I can do much of the work myself.”



Bob Vigue guiding a group of teachers through his woodlot.



Jim Bergeron describing the importance of his properties “rabbitat.”

Whether you own forty acres or a hundred, please consider hosting others in your area for a visit to your Tree Farm so they can hear about your vision and your goals and come away with an idea of what it means to do “forestry”. A perfect opportunity is available in January with three free workshops in different areas of Maine to support Tree Farmers in creating a plan to share their Tree Farm story with an audience whether a group of school teachers or students, land trust members, or others in the community. Register for the workshop today by using this link: <https://tinyurl.com/yxgnflnj>



TREE FARM PROFILE:

Mr. & Mrs. R. A. Vigue Tree Farm

Owner(s): Bob Vigue
Town, County: Castle Hill, Aroostook
Tree Farm Since: 1979
Acres: 62



TREE FARM PROFILE:

A. W. Bergeron Family Tree Farm

Owner(s): Jim Bergeron
Town, County: Dallas Plantation, Somerset
Tree Farm Since: 2010
Acres: 67
Honors: 2018 Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation District Cooperator of the year

Jim Bergeron, owner (left) and Bob Carlton, Forester (right).



Maine Tree Farm Committee Awarded Three Grants in 2019

This year, the Maine Tree Farm Committee was awarded funds for three grant projects. The first two were awarded by the American Tree Farm System as part of their outcome-based grants program. The first will provide funds to develop Project Learning Tree workshops specific to Tree Farmers. The other will support a Tree Farm Forester (aka Inspector) engagement initiative. The third grant, officially awarded to the Maine Forest Service by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, provides funds to conduct enhanced outreach to landowners, including Tree Farmers, in Eastern Maine.



Project Learning Tree for Tree Farmers

Project Learning Tree (PLT), created in 1976, is a nation-wide award-winning environmental education curriculum. In January 2020, three workshops will be held across the state for Tree Farmers interested in learning PLT activities and techniques for engaging audiences and sharing their Tree Farm story with local teachers, students, and community members.



The goal is to develop Tree Farmers who are a resource for schools and organizations in their local communities. Here is the workshop schedule:

- **Augusta: Maine Forest Products Council, January 8**
- **Standish: Sebago Lake Protection Office, January 23**
- **Brewer: Fields Pond Nature Center, Tuesday January 28**

If you or someone you know is interested, use this link to register: <https://tinyurl.com/yxgnflnj>

Tree Farm Foresters

Tree Farm Foresters, also known as Inspectors, are the backbone of the Maine Tree Farm Program. They volunteer their time and energy to engage landowners in the program. While these foresters are eligible to receive a small stipend for their time, many forgo this opportunity.

The funds from this grant will be used to recognize our current corps of foresters and to encourage foresters not already involved to join. More details to come.



Landowner Outreach in Eastern Maine

In partnership with the Maine Forest Service and the Forest Stewards Guild, the Maine Tree Farm program will be reaching out to woodland owners in Eastern Maine. Thanks to a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's New England Forests and Rivers Fund, this three year project will test new strategies to boost the stewardship of woods, waters, and wildlife in the Eastern Maine region. The goals of the effort are to get more woodland owners engaged with their woods.



A Message from the Chair

Hi everyone. As the year (and the decade) changes, I want to offer my thanks and appreciation to all who contribute to the success of the Maine Tree Farm Program, now, in the past, and in the years to come. Foresters, landowners, donors, and everyone in the Tree Farm Community — we are all volunteers in one way or another, and that is one of our strengths — we're in it because we want to be!

Of course, it's still worth asking the question-- why do we participate? The answers are as diverse as the woods, wildlife and waters in Maine. Some people are in it for that iconic 'Sign of Good Forestry,' some are in it for the resources Tree Farm provides to landowners, and some support us just because they are excited about woodland stewardship! Why are you a Tree Farmer or Tree Farm supporter? We would love to hear from you, about how we can make the program better for you.

The members of the Maine Tree Farm Committee continue to reflect and evaluate our effort and direction. Maintaining a certification program with volunteers is challenging, and our financial support is always a concern. If there is something the Committee can do to improve, we want to know. We challenge you to challenge us! What are your thoughts about forest certification? Would you like to prioritize more one-on-one site visits? More events? More newsletters? More Tree Farm merch?

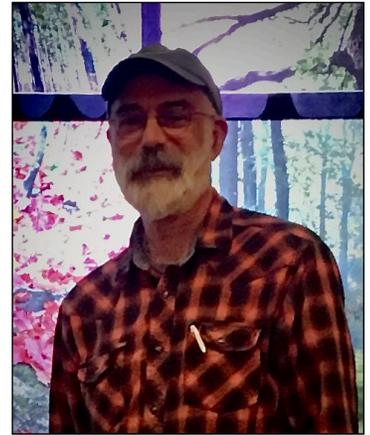
If you have thoughts about any of this, please contact myself or Logan Johnson (by phone: 207-613-6837 or email: coordinator@mainetreefarm.org) to discuss these questions and give any suggestions on how to make the program better!

We appreciate all our donors, past, present, and future — without you, we would not exist. And a special thank you to Tree Farmers who contribute to our members appeal. We will make sure that money is going back into landowner contacts and volunteer recognition and events. We hope to hear from you and see you in the woods!

Sincerely,



Andy Shultz, Chair
Maine Tree Farm Committee
chair@mainetreefarm.org



Andy Shultz

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

We need volunteers to help staff the Tree Farm booth at the following events:

Maine Agricultural Trade Show:
January 14, 15, and 16 – Augusta, ME

As a thank you for your service, all volunteers will get a Tree Farm t-shirt or coffee mug! Please contact Logan Johnson (Program Coordinator) if you are interested in volunteering email coordinator@mainetreefarm.org or call 207.613.6837.





**Maine Tree Farm Committee
American Tree Farm System
535 Civic Center Drive
Augusta, ME 04330**

*The American Tree Farm System is a program
of the American Forest Foundation*

Thank You Tree Farm Supporters!

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Yes! I will support the Maine Tree Farm Committee with a donation of:

\$100 \$75 \$50 \$10 Other: \$

If needed for your record keeping, please check here if you require an invoice be generated and sent

Please make checks payable to: The Maine Tree Foundation

Mail checks to: Maine Tree Foundation, 535 Civic Center Drive, Augusta ME, 04330

Please indicate *Maine Tree Farm* on the check

Donate online using this link: <http://mainetreefarm.org/contribute/>

Thank you so much for your support!

Please note: The Maine Tree Farm Program works very closely with the Maine TREE Foundation for administration support and fundraising. By making checks payable to the Maine Tree Foundation you will be able to take advantage of their non-profit 501c (3) status. **100% of your donation will go to the Maine Tree Farm Program.**