

Maine Tree Farm Newsletter



Everything you need to know about the

2023 Forestry Field Day

In July, New England Outdoor Center, at Hammond Ridge Tree Farm, was the home base for one of Maine TREE Foundation's 2023 Teachers' Tours.

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A Note from the Tree Farm Committee Chair



Hello and happy summer to all tree farmers, inspectors and supporters! As a program we elect a new chair every two years and for the next two you'll be seeing me in that seat. Prior to this you may have contacted me as

the Oxford County Chair, which I have been leading for nearly 10 years and will continue to do so.

With everything going on in the world over the past couple years, as well as some admin changes, we have been less active than normal, however moving forward we have some exciting changes! For the first time in organization history, we are our own entity now officially named the "Maine Tree Farm Program" and are officially registered as a 501 c3 non-profit organization. We will continue to have close ties and a strong relationship with Maine TREE Foundation, however now we will have our own identity and your contributions to the Maine Tree Farm Program are tax deductible!

A new program that we have been working on over the past couple years and hope to increase members is a forest "Hub" program; currently with one in the Downeast Region and another in the Sebago Lakes Region. These hubs are designed to get tree farmers together similar to the old Tree Farm Family days as some may remember and bring folks together regionally. With any luck we'll have more events coming soon and hopefully expand to numerous other regional hubs.

This spring we were lucky enough to hire a new coordinator; Gavriela Mallory, who will help administer the program, along with other duties for Maine TREE. We welcome her and look forward to having someone in this position to help us as a committee and program as a whole.

Finally, this year's Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year as previously announced is Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust; congrats to them! Our team is planning an exciting field day at their property for September 10, 2023. We hope you'll join us!

Thanks to all who remain members of the program, our inspectors and supporters near and far! Please feel free to reach out to myself, Gavriela, or an inspector anytime if you have questions!

Jessie Duplin, Chair
Maine Tree Farm Program

Collaborating Towards Brown Ash Resilience in Maine

Written by Gavriela Mallory



Mike Parisio, Amanda Mahaffey, Tom Newell, and Tyler Everett discuss brown ash and identifying signs of emerald ash borer.

At the beginning of March, Maine TREE Foundation co-hosted a field tour at Carleton Pond forest, a Greater Augusta Utility District Tree Farm. The program was part of Maine's Forest Climate Change Initiative project, a collaboration between the Maine TREE Foundation, the Forest Stewards Guild, and the University of Maine's Center for Research on Sustainable Forests. Carleton Pond forest is home to regionally rare and valuable brown ash stand, an increasingly threatened phenomena as emerald ash borer (EAB) grows its presence in Maine. UMaine PhD candidate Tyler Everett is conducting an experiment on this site to investigate pathways to brown ash resilience. Tyler, along with Tom Newell, Forester & Basket Harvester; John Daigle, UMaine Professor of Forest Recreation Management; and Mike Parisio, Maine Forest Service entomologist, spoke with attendees about the importance of brown ash and the growing threat of EAB.

Brown ash is an ecologically significant wetland species and has held a foundational role in the cultures of Wabanaki Peoples for millennia. The pliable and even nature of ash

tree rings makes this tree uniquely suitable to pound, split, and weave into baskets. Emerald ash borer, a pest first detected in the United States in 2002 and Maine in 2018, is causing rapid ash decline nationwide. Researchers in Maine and elsewhere are working diligently to identify adaptive pathways to ensure ash is maintained on the landscape. Tom Newell cored a tree to demonstrate the process of identifying basket-quality specimens, and Mike Parisio established a trap tree on site, a technique used to monitor for the presence of EAB. Attendees were left with a toolbox of strategies for managing ash on the landscape and hope for a more resilient future.

Tyler and John, along with an array of partners, including the Maine Indian Basketmakers Alliance, recently established the Ash Protection Collaboration Across Wabanakik (APCAW), an alliance "committed to identifying research-informed strategies to protect the future of ash in the Dawnland that align with Wabanaki priorities." While EAB detections continue to emerge across Maine, the group's message is one of hope. Seed collection efforts, integrated pest management strategies, and growing public awareness all contribute to the potential for a future of resilient ash ecosystems.

At the Carleton Pond Tree Farm, a coyote was spotted dashing through the stand as Tyler described his experimental design, which incorporates a strip harvest with intentional planning to maintain high-quality ash on the landscape. Tom Newell cored a tree to demonstrate the process of identifying basket-quality specimens, and Mike Parisio established a trap tree on site, a technique used to monitor for the presence of EAB. Attendees were left with a toolbox of strategies for managing ash on the landscape and hope for a more resilient future.

Interested in learning more about brown ash resilience in Maine? Register for upcoming workshops and webinars from APCA at www.umaine.edu/apcaw



Tom Newell and Tyler Everett describe the characteristics of basket-quality brown ash trees.



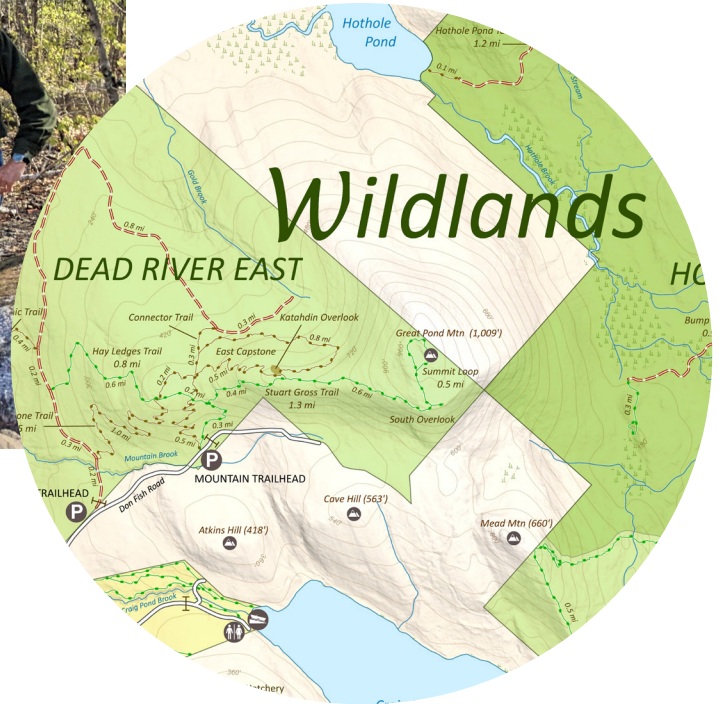
Maine's Forest Climate Change Initiative tour group walks through the Carleton Pond Tree Farm.

Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust

will host this year's field tour at their Wildlands Tree Farm



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Dead River Trail Head
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www.mainewoodlandowners.org/forestry-field-day

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2023 Forestry

Join us! Sunday, September 10th

Field Tours



Forester Roger Green will lead a tour of woods management projects on site including American beech removal, crop tree release, heavy thinning, light marked thinning and pest management efforts. This tour will not require walking.



NRCS District Conservationist, Chris Phinney and Alec Beeson will lead a tour and discussion of bridge, water bar, and trail construction with an eye towards stream connectivity and fish passage.



Orland's own Phineas Peake and Landon Fake will lead a tour of multiuse trails on site. Following lunch, mountain biker Adam Craig will lead a group ride and discussion of mountain bike trail construction.



Join Joe Roy from Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife as he discusses managing for forest songbirds, American woodcock, and ruffed grouse. He will cover establishment, monitoring, and upkeep of these habitats.

Tour itineraries may shift slightly depending on weather and trail conditions.

Schedule

8:00 am - 9:00 am	Registration, exhibitor tent, donuts, & coffee
9:00 am - 9:30 am	Welcome & overview of the day
9:30 am - 11:30 am	Guided tours, exhibitor tent, & demonstrations
11:30 am - 1:00 pm	Lunch, award recognition, & door prizes
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Guided tours, entertainment, & socializing

ry Field Day

September 10, 2023

Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust:

About the 2023 Outstanding Tree Farmers



Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust representatives, Roger Greene and Chris Johnson, accept the 2023 Outstanding Tree Farmer award from Commissioner Amanda Beal and Jesse Duplin (photo credit: Jim Britt/Maine DACF)

Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust is a land trust founded in 1993 to conserve land, water, and wildlife habitat for the communities of northwestern Hancock County. Their goal is to protect wildlife habitat and biodiversity, rural character and scenic beauty, working forests and farms, and opportunities for outdoor recreation and education.

The vision of the founders was to conserve the large, undeveloped area on and around Orland's Great Pond Mountain, called the Wildlands. After an initial acquisition of 4200+ acres in 2005, the Wildlands has since grown to over 5000 acres. The original 4200 acres, which had been treated harshly by the previous owner, is now a textbook example of restoration forestry.

Roger Greene, a Maine forester and the Forest Science and Management Consultant to the Trust, puts it this way. "Though it's an easy thing to say that it will take a long time for this forest to begin generating any level of sustainable income, it's quite another thing to attempt to get there. The desired forest condition is a generally mature, all-aged forest with continuous cover, with balanced areas of new and advanced regeneration and a sustainable harvest rotation of perhaps 125 years."

The landowning objectives of the Trust are:

1. Maintain and enhance water yield quality and wildlife habitat.
2. Provide a sustainable level of income from forest product sales to offset operating costs to the extent possible.

3. Provide educational opportunities to schools, colleges, and the public.
4. Create and maintain access, trails, and scenic vistas for public recreation.

The goals align perfectly with the words on the four sides of the Tree Farm Sign: "Water, Wood, Wildlife, Recreation!"

In the past 15 years, the Trust has remained steadfast in its commitment to the rehabilitation of the land, with over 1,300 acres of non-commercial thinning and numerous road and stream-crossing projects completed, and more on the way. These accomplishments are the result of many volunteer efforts, donations, and a partnership with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

NRCS funds have been crucial to these efforts, as the next income-generating harvest will likely not occur for 30 to 35 years.

While working hard to renew the productivity of their woods, the Trust has kept the land open to the public for recreation use. The Trust has sponsored numerous events, both for professionals and for the local community. In addition to numerous forest tours, the Trust has made presentations to the Bucksport Garden Club, exhibited at the Maine Science Fair, hosted a Water Quality Workshop



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(with the University of Maine), a Forestry for Maine Birds workshop (with Maine Audubon), a two-part Penobscot Valley Senior College session, and a Forestry 101 4-week course (with Blue Hill Heritage Trust). The Trust also sponsors trail maintenance and chainsaw safety workshops and maintains numerous interpretive signs on forestry and other topics.

All of these efforts and events serve to educate and inform people about sustainable forest management and the Maine Tree Farm Program. The Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust is well-deserving of the title “2023 Maine Outstanding Tree Farmer!”



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FARM CREDIT EAST



Teachers Visit Tree Farmers

Written by Logan Johnson



Kyle Burdick discusses the Maine Tree Farm Program with participants of the 2023 Forests of Maine Teachers' Tour

Each summer Maine TREE Foundation offers the Forests of Maine Teachers' Tours. Through two tours held in July, educators explore Maine's forest while generating ideas to implement forest-based education with their students.

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This year's tours were held in the Katahdin and Downeast Regions of the state. The Katahdin Region Teachers' Tour was based at New England Outdoor Center, part of the 1,400-acre Hammond Ridge Tree Farm in township T2 R8, just north of Millinocket. On the first night of the tour, owner Matt Polstein welcomed the group to the property and shared their management objectives, which prioritize contributing to the economic development of the region.

On the Downeast Region tour, the group visited Baskahegan Company land in Northeast Washington County. Recognized as a "Heritage Tree Farm," Baskahegan is the largest active Tree Farm in Maine, with over 60,000 acres enrolled in the program. The group also visited Musquash Tree Farm in Grand Lake Stream, with 40 acres of woodland on a 200-acre property. There, Ed McGrath, the owner of the Tree Farm, shared why he owns the Tree Farm and his long-term management plans for the property property.

Forests of Maine Teachers' Tours highlight the significance of Maine's forests and the stewardship they require to support future generations. Through visiting Tree Farms and their Tree Farmers, teachers come to understand the diverse nature of woodland owners in Maine and the various scales at which they operate. Teachers also grow



Forest of Maine Teachers' Tour participants at Musquash Tree Farm in Grand Lake Stream with Tree Farmer Ed McGrath

their understanding of options for getting their students outside. Not every community in Maine has access to large tracts of single ownership forestland. However, most communities have Tree Farms. Connecting teachers with this network of committed forest stewards opens up possibilities for getting students outside and connected with nature.

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The Importance of Maine's Family Forest Owners

Written by Gavriela Mallory



Forestry 101 participants at Blue Hill Mountain.

Family-owned woodlots comprise over 30% of Maine's forest, more than a quarter of the state's total area. As climate change, a growing population, and a shifting forest economy feed conversations about the future of the Maine woods, family forests are a significant piece of the puzzle.

The future Maine forest we hope to foster supports persisting economic, ecological, and social well-being state-wide. This imagining is often summarized as sustainability. A sustainable Maine forest produces forest products that provide good jobs and support families. A sustainable Maine forest holds habitat for species ranging from migrating warblers to moose. A sustainable Maine forest provides enough clean water to support a growing population.

Family woodlands are often relatively small, particularly when compared to commercial and investment ownerships. The median size of family-owned forests state-wide is 38 acres, small enough to be perceived as negligible when considering the sustainability of 17 million forested acres in Maine. However, collectively, these woodlots are anything but negligible.

The challenge, from the perspective of sustainability statewide, is that family forests are not managed collectively. One 38-acre parcel cannot produce every type of forest product needed to feed Maine's economy, nor can it provide habitat for all of the creatures occupying the northwoods. For this broad swath of Maine to meet our collective needs, family forest owners need access to the resources necessary to make informed, place-

based management decisions. We also need to build relationships and work together.

Organizations across Maine are working to cultivate this collaboration and ensure family forest owners have the tools they need to manage their woodlands intentionally. Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust, Blue Hill Heritage Trust, and Maine Woodland Owners recently collaborated to offer a 6-part Forestry 101 series to small woodland owners interested in developing a deeper understanding of their forests and forest-management decisions.

Sandy Walczyk, Conservation Forest Manager at Blue Hill Heritage Trust, described the project saying, "Blue Hill Heritage Trust (BHHT) is a community-based land conservation organization that believes strongly in practicing and teaching stewardship of our natural resources. We recognize the importance of private land management in promoting ecological, economic, and community health. BHHT sees landowners as partners in our effort to protect and improve natural resources. Hosting educational events like the Forestry 101 course allows us to help landowners better understand and steward their resources, which improves the community that we all share."

On a Saturday in early April, Maine TREE staff joined the Forestry 101 course for a woods walk at Blue Hill Mountain. Participants walked the property together, discussing methods of reading the forested landscape, tree identification, and the vast array of considerations that play into a management decision.

Beyond providing family forest owners with helpful information, programs like the Forestry 101 workshop foster community, an integral factor in promoting sustainability. This community can serve as a place to go with questions and ideas, a substantial dataset as new forest pests enter a region, and a hub for available resources. Regional communities also allow landowners to think bigger than their 38 (+/-) acreage. Understanding their neighbors' management approach and objectives can enable a landowner to see more clearly how their woodlot is an integral piece of a much larger puzzle.

The Maine Tree Farm Stewardship Hub model works towards a similar goal of fostering regional community between family woodland owners. Stewardship Hubs are an extension of the Maine Tree Farm Program, a statewide stewardship recognition program known for its green and white sign of good forestry. Hubs act as regional network nodes for Maine Tree Farmers. The model allows the Tree Farm Program to not only encourage connection between family forest owners and their woodlands but also encourage connection between woodland owners and



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Forestry 101 participants discuss management decisions.

their neighbors. The first of its kind, Sebago Stewardship Hub is hosted by Loon Echo Land Trust in Bridgton. Sebago Stewardship Hub hosts annual educational and community events, similar to the Forestry 101 workshop, to provide landowners with opportunities to learn, connect, and appreciate their regional forest.

Funding at the state and national levels has also been directed toward providing family forest owners with the resources they need to make informed decisions

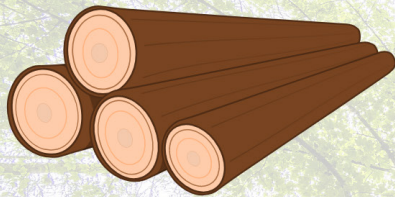
about their woodlands. WoodsWISE East, a collaboration between Maine Tree Farm, Maine TREE, Forest Stewards Guild, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, and Maine Forest Service, is a regionally concentrated incentive program supported by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Explicitly focused on eastern Maine, WoodWISE East funds events, like the Forestry 101 series, that provide resources and bolster networks in the project region.

As Forestry 101 participants returned to the fields at the bottom of Blue Hill, Maine TREE staff discussed the value of developing regional community. Over lunch, facilitators and participants told stories about their own forest management journeys and shared available tools and resources. "The spring 2023 [Forestry 101] course has been wonderful so far, and we are grateful to be out in the woods with such an engaged, enthusiastic group," Walczyk reflected on the series' success. It's clear that this collaborative effort has been a substantial step towards sustainable forest management in eastern Maine.

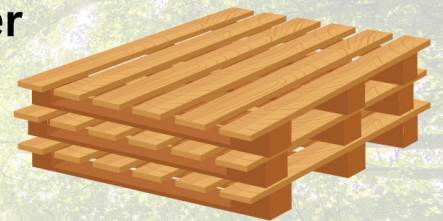
Interested in connecting with your regional community of family woodland owners? Reach out to Maine TREE's Forest Program Manager at gavi@mainetree.org.



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Upcoming Stewardship Hub Events

August 25, 1-4pm: Downeast Lakes Land Trust is hosting their inaugural Stewardship Hub event. Join us in Grand Lake Stream for a discussion of managing woodlands for habitat with Maine Woodland Owners St. Croix Chapter Leader, Ernest Carle, and Ruffed Grouse Society's Todd Waldron.

September 10, 8am-3pm: Join Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust, Maine Woodland Owners, and the Maine Tree Farm Program for the 2023 Forestry Field Day! This year's field day is also the inaugural event for the Lower Penobscot Bay Stewardship Hub. Stewardship Hub name plates will be available for local tree farmers.

September 22 - 25: Join the Maine Tree Farm Program at the Common Ground Fair in Unity. The fair is a great opportunity to connect with forest professionals and other tree farmers and to learn about happenings in your region. Interested in volunteering at the Tree Farm table? Reach out to coordinator@mainetreefarm.org

September 30: Sebago Stewardship Hub is hosting their annual Woodland Owner Appreciation Day in Naples. Learn more about the event at mainelakes.org/events

October 20, 1-4pm: Downeast Coastal Conservancy is hosting their inaugural Stewardship Hub event in partnership with Maine Audubon. Join us in Machias for a Forestry for Maine Birds workshop and field tour.

To learn more about events and opportunities reach out to us at coordinator@mainetreefarm.org

We are so excited to announce that the Maine Tree Farm Program is now a recognized 501(c) 3 not for profit organization. Your generous contributions allow us to support family forest owners across Maine and invest time and energy in the future of the Maine woods. Thank you!

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