



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension

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Department of Natural Resources
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www.ForestConnect.info
www.CornellMFO.info

Dear Prospective 2018 MFO Candidate:

Thank you for considering the Master Forest Owner (MFO) Volunteer program. The MFO Volunteer program offer you the opportunity to learn more about your woodlands, and how to help other owners like you become more informed and sustainable about their management decisions. The MFO Volunteer program is designed to train woodland owner volunteers in support of the sustainable management of NY's private woodlands.

Because this program emphasizes your role as a volunteer it is important to acquaint you with the support provided through Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE), and its expectations of volunteers. MFO volunteers do not offer technical assistance, perform management activities, or give professional advice. Rather, they meet with owners to listen to their woodland goals, concerns and questions; volunteers then offer sources of assistance, and encourage woodland owners to work with professionals. The success of this program is grounded in the power of approximately 150 peer woodland counselors.

Volunteers can be from any background, young or old, resident or absentee, large or small parcels, with varied woodland experiences. Candidates receive a bit of forest management training, but the program is primarily designed to help them develop as volunteers for peer-to-peer counseling to encourage sustainable woodland management.

The 2018 training will be September 26 – 29 at the Cornell University Arnot Teaching and Research Forest in Van Etten, NY (www.arnotforest.info). The \$125 (\$200 per couple) fee helps defray the cost of publications, food, and equipment for the 4-day training. Volunteers may stay at the Arnot at no additional cost. The training combines classroom and outdoor field experiences on a variety of topics.

If you would like to become a volunteer, please follow these steps:

1. *Talk with your regional director, listed below. Explain your interest in working as a volunteer, and ask any questions you have.*
2. *If you haven't already been visited by a volunteer, arrange for a visit to your property by an existing MFO volunteer. The MFO regional director can identify an existing volunteer who can make a visit.*
3. *Complete the application at the "Become a Volunteer" tab at www.CornellMFO.info*
4. *Make plans to participate in the annual training at the Arnot Teaching and Research Forest. The training emphasizes on-the-ground learning about woodlot management and how to be effective as a volunteer.*
5. *After the training, commit to making 5 visits to other woodland owners in your area. You can help stimulate visit requests through some of the other activities*

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listed here. Visits are usually scheduled by your regional director based on location and the interests of the owner requesting the visit. In addition to these visits, volunteers often participate in other activities such as attending county fairs, participating in New York Forest Owner Association field tours, or writing articles or blogs.

The MFO program team of directors is here to serve you, as you serve others. In addition to the annual training of new volunteers, we provide annual regional refresher training, email and phone responses to your requests, mentoring opportunities with experienced volunteers, guidance on how to prepare for a visit, notice of new events and resources, and more.

Thank you again for your willingness to consider becoming a volunteer. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Peter Smallidge, *Statewide Program Director*, pjs23@cornell.edu, 607-592-3640

Diana Bryant, *Statewide Program Support*, dlt5@cornell.edu, 607-255-2115

Region: Capital/Eastern ADK

Kristopher Williams – kbw44@cornell.edu, 518-885-8995

Counties in Region: Albany, Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren, Washington

Region: Catskill/Lower Hudson

Ron Frisbee – rf369@cornell.edu, 518-622-9820

Counties in Region: Columbia, Delaware, Dutchess, Greene, Orange, Otsego, Putnam, Rockland, Schoharie, Sullivan, Ulster, Westchester

Region: Central/Western ADK

Kristina Ferrare – kaf226@cornell.edu, 315-424-9485

Counties in Region: Cayuga, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego, St. Lawrence

Region: Northwest

Emily Staychock – ecs268@cornell.edu, 315-536-5123

Counties in Region: Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Ontario, Orleans, Livingston, Monroe, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming, Yates

Region: Southern Tier

Brett Chedzoy – bjc226@cornell.edu, 607-535-7161

Counties in Region: Allegany, Broome, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Chemung, Chenango, Cortland, Schuyler, Steuben, Tioga, Tompkins