

# NY Master Forest Owner Program



***Yours for the asking!  
A free, no-obligation visit  
from a volunteer neighbor.***

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The Master Forest Owner (MFO) program provides private forest owners of NYS with information and encouragement necessary to manage their forest lands. Over 150 experienced volunteer MFOs are available, ready to assist neighbor forest owners with the information needed to manage their forests. All MFOs are graduates of a 4-day training program, where they learn about sawtimber and wildlife management, forest economics, and ecology.

## **Are you interested?**

NYS Forest owners may contact an MFO for information about the program and discuss opportunities for obtaining more satisfaction from one's woods. At your request, an MFO will arrange a visit with you at your woodlot to get a first-hand look and discuss sources of assistance or information. MFOs are experienced and knowledgeable individuals who can put you in touch with the right people to meet your goals. The MFO can also be instrumental in helping you develop a management plan for your property.

For a listing of MFOs in your area, contact your Cornell Cooperative Extension County office, your Regional NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Forestry office, or see the website: [www.CornellMFO.info](http://www.CornellMFO.info).

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## Why is this Program Necessary?

Over 14 million acres of woodland in NYS are privately owned. That's over 3/4 of NY's forests!

It is estimated that less than 1/4 of the state's private forest holdings are purposefully managed despite the educational programs and technical services available. Sound stewardship is necessary to optimize the benefits of this vital resource. Forests represent a precious commodity that, if wisely managed, can generate a variety of economic, ecologic, and aesthetic values to forest owners and their communities, for generations.

## Program Results

The program has helped over 2,700 forest owners via on-site visits since its inception in 1991. Based on surveys of visited forest owners:

- 30% have benefited economically from advice given by MFO volunteers
- 40% have or plan to write a management plan
- 40% have or plan to create wildlife habitat
- 40% have or plan to harvest sawtimber with the help of a professional forester
- 55% have or plan to meet with a professional forester
- 55% have or plan to seek out additional forestry information
- 65% have or plan to set goals and priorities for forest management

In addition, MFOs annually participate in hundreds of community service efforts involving forestry education.

For more information on the program contact:

Peter Smallidge

NYS Extension Forester & Arnot Forest Director

Fernow Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853

Phone: 607-592-3640 E-mail: pjs23@cornell.edu

### Sponsors:

- New York Forest Owners Association
- NYS-DEC Division of Lands & Forests
- The Robert H. Wentorf, Jr. Foundation
- USDA Renewable Resources Extension Program
- Cornell Cooperative Extension

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