

# Preface

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The stewardship of private forest land provides countless opportunities for the owners, their communities, and society more broadly. Forest owners who embrace a stewardship ethic may look to their forest to produce a variety of benefits, from solitude to wildlife to timber to maple syrup and more. Yet these forest owners also recognize that stewardship requires deliberate efforts to ensure the desired benefits are sustained. We prepared this bulletin as a starting point to help forest owners understand and initiate the skills they will use as forest stewards. This bulletin will help forest owners better understand how their forests function, what options they have for achieving their objectives, the people and organizations that can guide them, and the actions they can take to help their forests move towards their vision. Thus, this bulletin initiates the process of enhancing forest stewardship and complements the many good publications that provide additional details on how to implement stewardship practices.

This bulletin has grown over the last many years through the input and support of many people. The basis started in the mid 1990's with an effort to develop a FAQ sheet for common questions that landowners posed to Cornell Cooperative Extension educators. Since most simple questions lack a simple answer an article series was initiated. That grew into a joint initiative between CCE and the New York Forest Owners Association (NYFOA) to develop articles on meaningful topics and share those articles statewide through both organizations. This bulletin represents a compilation of edited articles that were developed during the last 7 years. We recognize and appreciate the thoughts and opinions shared by many people in CCE, NYFOA, and NYS Department of Environmental Conservation during this time.

We thank the authors for sharing their material with us. The authors are noted on each chapter. Except as noted in the bulletin, photographs are from the collections of the editors. Other photo credits are due to Tom Barnes, Steve Morreale, Jeff Ward, and Steven Wolf.

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