

Massachusetts Forest Update

August 2017

Forest Alliance Members Speak Out for Wood Heat at APS Hearing

At an overflow hearing on the draft Alternative Portfolio Standards developed by the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources in Holyoke on August 7th, a number of MFA members provided testimony about the benefits of wood thermal energy and why it should be eligible for Alternative Energy Credits under the APS regulations.

More than 60 people attended the scheduled two hour hearing at Holyoke Community College, many who berated DOER for including wood heat systems among those eligible for AECs. The hearing ended up going more than 3 hours.

MFA Executive Director Nathan L'Etoile and President Charles Thompson led off the hearing and presented testimony in favor of the wood heat credits, as did other foresters, loggers, and landowners. A dozen others spoke in defense of the wood heat credits.

George Jones from Seaman Paper Company in Westminster gave a very effective presentation about how switching to biomass energy helped save their paper mill when other mills went out of business due to the abrupt spike in energy costs for oil and propane a few years ago.

Jones said that Seaman was able to stop burning 1.8 million gallons of low sulphur oil it needed to operate its plant by switching over to burning 31,000 tons per year of biomass chips, half from ground up clean pallets and half green chips. Switching to biomass also reduced the mill's emission of sulphur dioxide by 99 percent and nitrogen oxides by 15 percent.

For more information, see www.massforestalliance.net

Emissions Claims Up in Smoke

Members may have noticed that just prior to the August 7th APS hearing in Holyoke discussed above, there were a number of articles in newspapers around the state questioning whether wood burning was clean enough for APS credits. The articles cited supposed data from the federal Environmental Protection Agency that was said to show that Massachusetts had more air pollution from wood combustion than any other state in New England, and that Worcester County had the 8th highest amount of PM2.5 emissions from residential wood smoke in the nation. The EPA data was released by the Partnership for Policy Integrity of Pelham, which has been campaigning with other groups to oppose the state allowing APS credits for wood heat.

A subsequent article in the August 12th *Worcester Telegram & Gazette*, however, presented a very different story on wood smoke emissions. Officials from the Mass. Department of Environmental Protection, which has air monitoring stations around the state and which does daily measurements of emissions, said that actual emissions measurements by the state show that Worcester County and all of Massachusetts meet both annual and 24 hour federal standards for PM2.5 emissions, and that road dust actually produces more PM2.5 emissions than wood burning does.

It turns out, according to the *Telegram* article, that the EPA statistics cited are not based on any measurements of actual emissions, but rather estimate potential emissions based on the number of dwellings with fireplaces or wood stoves and assumptions about how much emissions they would produce if operating. By that logic, the Charlemont Inn, which has been closed for years, would produce so many tons of wood smoke emissions per year because it has a number of fireplaces that could burn wood and Franklin County would be listed as having higher emissions because of that.

To read the *Telegram* article, go to <http://www.telegram.com/news/20170812/worcester-county-8th-highest-in-us-for-woodfire-pollution>

Controlling Beech Tour in Hawley on August 19th

American beech is an important species for wildlife in northern hardwood forest stands, but it can be a very difficult species to control. Most of the beech in the region suffers from beech bark disease, a fungus spread by an insect that feeds on beech. The extremely shade-tolerant beech reproduces extensively by sprouting from its roots; the sprouts are genetically identical to the parent, and will be susceptible to the disease. Over time, beech sprouts often develop into thickets, and may crowd out other more valuable and desirable species, creating a low value beech monoculture sometimes described as “beech hell”.

The Cox family’s Taverntop Trust Tree Farm in Hawley was severely damaged by the 2008 ice storm; with the pending arrival of the deadly emerald ash borer, forester Scott Sylvester recommended regenerating the woodland by harvesting the damaged hardwood overstory trees and the large ash. As part of the 2015 harvest, more than 400 cords of beech in the understory was also removed to try to give other hardwood species a chance to seed in and grow.

The Mass. Forest Trust will hold a Beech Control Tree Farm Tour at the Taverntop Trust property in Hawley from 9 to 11 am on Saturday, August 19th to see the results of the harvest and subsequent beech control efforts, and discuss how other landowners can utilize similar techniques to avoid having their woodlands overwhelmed by beech sprouts over time.

Participants should meet at the junction of South and Plainfield Roads. Long pants and bug spray are recommended. The tour will be postponed in the event of heavy rain.

For more information, see the MFA website at www.massforestalliance.net or call Greg Cox at 413 339-5526.

Upgrade Your Wood Stove Through the Wood Stove Change-out Program

Deadline Extended to September 25th

Got an older wood stove that you'd like to replace with a newer, cleaner, more efficient model? If you do, now's the time to check out the state's 2017 Wood Stove Change-out Program.

The Baker-Polito Administration has provided \$450,000 for the 2017 Commonwealth Wood Stove Change-out Program to help homeowners replace older, more polluting wood stoves with cleaner burning, more efficient stoves. Homeowners who buy new EPA-certified clean burning wood stoves through the program can get between \$500 and \$1,750 to help with the cost, and between \$1,500 and \$3,000 if they qualify as low-income. Either wood stoves or pellet stoves can qualify for the cost assistance, provided they meet the EPA standards.

Information about the Wood Stove Change-Out Program can be found online at www.masscec.com/woodstove The Wood Stove Change-out Program is administered by the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center with assistance from the Department of Environmental Protection and Department of Energy Resources. Since 2012, the program has helped homeowners replace 1,400 wood stoves statewide.

EPA-certified stoves require one-third less wood on average than older models to produce the same amount of heat, while releasing 70 to 90 percent less particulate matter, which has been shown to exacerbate health conditions like asthma, heart disease and lung cancer. Residents installing new stoves can expect to save an average of \$5,000 over the lifetime of the stove. Each woodstove switched out for a newer model is equivalent to eliminating the particulate emissions from five old diesel trucks.

While the majority of program participants purchase new woodstoves, over 40 percent opted for pellet stoves in 2016. In addition to burning very cleanly, these modern appliances automatically feed fuel into the fire, and many have built-in thermostats that allow owners to adjust the room temperature just as they can with central heating systems.

To qualify for a rebate, a resident must have an operational, non-EPA-certified woodstove. To apply, the resident should visit a participating woodstove retailer or contact a participating stove professional such as a chimney sweep, who will handle the rebate application process on the residents' behalf. Residents can find a local

participating woodstove professional by viewing the list of woodstove dealers<<http://www.masscec.com/woodstove>> who have registered to participate.

Rebate applications will be accepted until September 25, 2017.

Mass Town Forest Conference in Sheffield on September 23rd

The Town of Sheffield and the Massachusetts Department of Conservation & Recreation will host the 2017 Massachusetts Town Forests Conference at Sheffield Town Park on Saturday, September 23rd from 9:30 am to 4 pm.

The event will include tours of Sheffield Town Forests and local businesses that use wood products. There will be demonstrations of portable sawmills, woodworking and timber framing also.

The town forest tours will demonstrate sustainable forest management, timber harvesting, wildlife habitat management, invasive plant control and trail creation.

The wood business tour will demonstrate wood heating, specialty wood products and raw wood material businesses.

Lunch and light refreshments will be provided. There will also be a beer tasting sponsored by Big Elm Brewing of Sheffield.

This program is hosted by the Town of Sheffield, Mass DCR, the Sheffield Land Trust, and the Massachusetts Forest Alliance.

For additional information, contact Tom Ryan at 413 784-1828 x1243 or email tom.ryan@state.ma.us

Take the Tree Farm Tax Survey

Significant tax reform is currently being discussed by the U.S. Congress. The American Forest Foundation (AFF) is closely watching the process and proposals. AFF wants to make sure that Tree Farmers and other landowners are a part of that discussion.

AFF has put together a survey for landowners based on different parts of the tax code affecting woodland owners. AFF invites Tree Farmers and other landowners to give their input on the different tax provisions by taking the AFF tax survey.

To take the survey, click on the following link: [tax reform survey](#). Already filled it out? Share it with your family and friends.

AFF plans to use the survey results to shape their advocacy efforts in Washington for the upcoming tax reform debate. Individual responses will be kept confidential, but will be aggregated to share with lawmakers.

Please take a moment to help AFF determine which federal tax issues matter the most to family forest owners.

Dave Tenny, President of the National Alliance of Forest Owners, had a recent article on tax reform and forests in *The Hill* which can be read at <http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/economy-budget/345819-timber-provides-certainty-amid-tax-reform-questions>

Massachusetts Forest Legacy Seeking Applications

The Massachusetts Forest Legacy Program is now accepting project proposals for consideration in the federal fiscal year 2019 application process. The Forest Legacy Program is a partnership between the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation and the USDA Forest Service to protect environmentally important forests from conversion to non-forest uses. The federal government may fund up to 75% of project costs, with at least 25% coming from private, state, or local sources.

The MA Forest Legacy Program FY 2019 Request for Proposals application instructions are posted at www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/conservation/forestry-and-fire-control/forest-legacy-program-rfp-fy19.pdf

Additional background information on the Forest Legacy Program is available at <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/conservation/forestry-and-fire-control/forest-legacy-program.html>

Proposals must be submitted by 5:00 pm on September 11, 2017.

For more information, please contact Lindsay Nystrom, MA Forest Legacy Program Coordinator, lindsay.nystrom@state.ma.us or at 508-792-7714 x114.

NHESP Issues New Natural Heritage Atlas

The Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program (NHESP) has released the 14th Edition of the Massachusetts Natural Heritage Atlas. The Atlas contains maps of Priority and Estimated Habitats which can be downloaded from the NHESP website. Town maps have been sent to planning boards, conservation commissions and building inspectors for communities where Priority Habitats have been listed.

Priority Habitat is based on the known geographical extent of habitat for all state-listed rare species, both plants and animals, and is codified under the [Massachusetts Endangered Species Act](#) (MESA). Habitat alteration within Priority Habitats may result in a take of a state-listed species, and is subject to regulatory review by the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program.

Estimated Habitats are a sub-set of the Priority Habitats, and are based on the geographical extent of habitat of state-listed rare wetlands wildlife, and codified under the [Wetlands Protection Act](#) (WPA), which does not protect plants. State-listed wetland wildlife species are protected under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act as well as the Wetlands Protection Act.

Priority and Estimated Habitat maps are used for determining whether a proposed project must be reviewed by the NHESP for MESA and WPA compliance.

It is the responsibility of the landowner or project proponent to determine if their project falls within Priority Habitat or Estimated Habitat and requires review. Failure to file under MESA constitutes a violation of the Act and is subject to a possible [fine](#) .

For more information, see <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dfg/dfw/natural-heritage/regulatory-review/regulatory-maps-priority-and-estimated-habitats/>

Want to Identify a Critter or Plant? Get the iNaturalist App for your Smart Phone

How many times have you seen a butterfly or plant you don't recognize but would like to know what it is? A new smart phone app may be able to help you.

The *iNaturalist* app was developed so users can take a photo with their smart phone of a mystery animal or plant, and the app's artificial intelligence program will identify what you are seeing. So far, more than 117,000 species have been identified with data from the app.

To learn more, go to www.inaturalist.org

Employment:

Flooring Shop Manager

Hull Forest Products seeks a well-organized and motivated individual with proven management experience to supervise our wide plank wood flooring shop and optimize material flow within our manufacturing system. Ideal candidate will be a team leader with good logistics, inventory management, production/material flow skills, as well as computer skills. Woodworking experience is a plus if candidate is capable of learning precision machine set-up and working alongside team members as needed.

The flooring shop manager:

- Is responsible for optimizing the flow of materials through our flooring shop to maximize weekly production and minimize machine down time. The manager makes sure other team members are using their time wisely and maximizing their productivity.
- Coordinates current and upcoming production needs with the sales dept. and the dry kiln manager to promote efficiency in the drying, sorting, handling, and stocking of flooring inventory.
- Ensures timely and accurate fulfillment of sales orders.
- Communicates order status and other pertinent information to the flooring sales dept.
- Directs the safe, efficient, and organized operation of the flooring dept. to achieve order fulfillment and production target levels.

This is a full-time position with hourly pay/ medical benefits/ 401k.

Email resumes to: employment@hullforest.com

Hull Forest Products, 101 Hampton Road, Pomfret Center, CT 06259

www.hullforest.com

An equal opportunity employer.

NHTOA Seeks Program Director

The New Hampshire Timberland Owners Association seeks a Program Director. If you have a logging or forestry background, enjoy the outdoors, enjoy working with people, and want a chance to apply your skills working for a 106-year-old organization that promotes private and public working forests by encouraging responsible land management and supporting a strong forest products industry this is the job for you.

The Program Director, working closely with partner organizations, develops and administers New Hampshire's Professional Loggers Program and other educational and outreach workshops in all aspects of logging, forestry, and forestry/wildlife management.

This position requires excellent communication (written and verbal - public speaking a must) and organizational skills. The Program Director must have a basic understanding of logging, logging equipment and forestry. The Program Director must also have an understanding of adult learners, group facilitation, and educational needs assessment.

The Program Director also assists with the NHTOA's membership, fund-raising, and some policy and research efforts.

This position is based out of the NHTOA's office in Concord, N.H. This position requires statewide travel. Compensation will be commensurate with experience.

A complete job description is available [here](#). Please send a resume and a letter of interest describing what attracts you to this position and how it would fit into your schedule to: Jasen Stock, NHTOA executive director, 54 Portsmouth Street, Concord, N.H. 03301. No phone calls, please. Applications will be accepted until August 31, 2017.

Boiler/Kiln Operator

Allard Lumber Company in southern Vermont is looking for an experienced boiler operator and/or kiln operator. This is a full time position with duties that will include, but are not limited to, the operation of our conventional dry kilns, as well as our high pressure, wood-fired boiler. Cogeneration knowledge and mechanical abilities are strongly preferred.

Position includes paid vacation, sick time, 401K, and medical insurance options. Applications may be obtained from Allard Lumber, 354 Old Ferry Road, Brattleboro, VT 05301.

For information, call Trevor Allard at 802 254-4939 x 27, or email trevorallard@allardlumber.com

<p>MFA Forest Update: Now accepting ads, both graphic and text ! Contact MFA to learn more, or place your ad.</p>
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Upcoming Programs and Training

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| August 19 | Beech Control Tree Farm Tour – Hawley |
| August 22 | Agritourism Safety Workshop -- Charlton |
| August 23 | Harvard Forest Summer Institute for Teachers – Petersham |
| August 24 | Project Learning Tree workshop -- Belchertown |
| August 26 | Christmas Tree Growers Annual Meeting – East Bridgewater |
| August 27 | Western Mass Lumberjack Championship -- Cummington |

- Sept 9 **Project Learning Tree workshop – Carlisle**
- Sept 13-14 **Northern Hardwoods Silvicultural Workshop – Bartlett, NH**
- Sept 13 **Forester Licensing Board meeting – Amherst**
- Sept 23 **Massachusetts Town Forest Conference – Sheffield**
- Sept 23 **Project Learning Tree workshop – North Easton**
- Sept 29 - Oct 1 **Horse Logging Workshop & Forest Management – Cornish, NH**

Additional information about these and other events will be posted at www.massforestalliance.net as information becomes available.