

# Massachusetts Forest Update

## February 2018

### Come on a Winter Harvest Tour!

Are you considering having timber cut on your property in the near future? Do you have questions about the process involved or different types of equipment used to cut and remove the wood?

If so, you may want to come on one of MFA's Winter Harvest Tours in February and March. MFA and DCR are holding a series of tours of active logging operations to show landowners how different types of harvest are conducted and how they can have wood cut while protecting the environmental values of their properties.

Each tour will begin with a short inside portion where MFA staff and DCR foresters will explain the harvest process, what regulations landowners must comply with, and how the logging plan has been set up to meet the state's requirements for protecting wetlands, streams and sensitive habitats.

After the inside portion, the tours will visit a nearby harvest site and see how the work has been carried out on the ground using different types of forestry equipment.

The first harvest tour will be held in **Ashfield on Friday, February 16<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 9 am at the town hall on Route 116.** The logging operation being featured is being done by a father/son team using chainsaws and a cable skidder.

The second tour will be held in **Southampton on Friday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>, beginning at 9 am at the Edwards Library on East Street.** The logging operation being featured is a combination shelterwood/ group selection harvest of mature timber on the nearby Holyoke Water Works property using hand felling, grapple skidders and forwarders.

Additional tours are being set up in Hampden and Worcester counties in March.

These tours are free and open to the public. Participants should dress for the weather conditions and be prepared to hike up to a mile in rough terrain. Tours will be held during light precipitation but will be cancelled in event of heavy rain or snow.

Preregistration for the tours is encouraged so participants can be notified if a tour needs to be postponed or cancelled. To preregister, call Greg Cox at (413) 339-5526 or email [gcox@crocker.com](mailto:gcox@crocker.com) .

## Chainsaw Workshops Scheduled for Spring

MFA is helping DCR put on a series of *Chainsaw Safety Training* workshops this spring at 6 locations in central and western Massachusetts. The free two-day workshops will feature instruction by Bill Girard, a trained Game of Logging instructor. Five of the workshops will cover GOL Levels 1 and 2, and the 6<sup>th</sup> will cover Levels 3 and 4.

MFA is now looking for workshop locations in western Franklin, western Hampshire, western Hampden and eastern Hampshire counties. As part of the workshops, we would need to be able to fell and cut up about 25 trees per workshop, so we need property owners who are willing to have trees cut for training purposes (the landowners will keep the wood to use after it is cut). On a practical basis, we need to be able to park 8 to 10 vehicles nearby, and reasonable access from road. We would prefer to be able to hold part of the workshops under cover, like a garage, in case of rain, although we can always set up tents and tables for this purpose.

If you would be willing to host one of the workshops on your property, let Greg Cox know by calling (413) 339-5526 or email [gcox@crocker.com](mailto:gcox@crocker.com). We plan to begin holding the workshops in late March and continue through late May. Each workshop will be limited to 8 participants.

## Speak up for Forestry and the Environment at State Budget Hearing in Amherst February 26<sup>th</sup>

The Legislature's Joint Committee on Ways and Means will be holding 8 hearings around the state focused on various pieces of the FY2019 budget. **On Monday, February 26<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM, the committee will hold a hearing at UMass – Amherst at the Old Chapel** on budget matters relative to the environment, energy, and transportation, including the budgets of the following agencies:

*Dept. of Agriculture*

*Dept. of Environmental Protection*

*Dept. of Public Utilities*

*Mass. Dept. of Transportation*

*Registry of Motor Vehicles*

*Dept. of Conservation and Recreation*

*Dept. of Energy Resources*

*Dept. of Fish and Game*

*Mass. Aeronautics Commission*

*Merit Rating Board*

The hearing will chaired by Senator Jamie Eldridge and Representative Steve Kulik.

The forestry community should have a presence at the hearing, the bigger the better, that thanks the administration for its focus on forestry, and supporting increases to the service forestry, forest health, and forest fire control budgets, the creation of a single point of contact within EOEEA for natural resource based issues, continued support for UMass Extension, and continued investment in wildlife habitat investments, the ability for DCR to continue to use more retained revenue from forest management for the improvement of our forest health, forest management, and forest based recreation.

## **Mass Wildlife to hold 2 Timber Showings on February 16th**

The Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife will hold two timber sale showings on MassWildlife lands at the Muddy Brook Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in Hardwick, and the Birch Hill WMA in Royalston & Winchendon. The two showings will occur on the same day, **Friday, February 16, 2018**.

The public showing at the Muddy Brook WMA in Hardwick will occur at 9:00 am on 2/16/2018. The Muddy Brook sale includes 176 MBF of sawtimber, 230 cords of hardwood firewood and 2,667 tons of chipwood from 45 acres at the Muddy Brook WMA. Whole tree harvesting is required on all 45 acres of this sale to reduce fuel loads for prescribed burning. For information about this sale, contact Mass Wildlife habitat biologist Benjamin Mazzei at (413) 768-9090.

The public showing at the Birch Hill WMA in Royalston & Winchendon will occur at 1:00 pm on 2/16/2018. The Birch Hill sale includes 593 MBF of sawtimber, 357 cords of hardwood firewood, and 6,366 tons of chipwood from 158 acres at the Birch Hill WMA. Whole tree harvesting is required on 101 acres of this sale to reduce the fuel loads for prescribed burning. For information about this sale, contact Mass Wildlife habitat biologist Tom Wansleben at (603) 903-4794.

These timber sales are designed primarily to enhance wildlife habitat, and MassWildlife wishes to thank private sector loggers and wood product companies for their interest in and assistance with completing these important operations.

## **Keystone Project Training Application Deadline is March 5<sup>th</sup>**

The Keystone Project is an intensive, 3-day, retreat style training which focuses on forest ecology and stewardship, wildlife management, and land protection.

The Keystone Project educates forest owners and local leaders who have a significant impact on their communities. Keystone Cooperators can own forestland, be involved in the care and stewardship of a property, or be an active community leader.

This spring, the program will take place on: **Thursday evening, April 12<sup>th</sup>, through Sunday afternoon, April 15<sup>th</sup>** at the Harvard Forest in Petersham. The application deadline is: **Monday, March 5<sup>th</sup>**.

For more information about the Keystone Project, see <https://masskeystone.net/>

Contact Paul Catanzaro at [paulcat@umass.edu](mailto:paulcat@umass.edu) or (413) 545-4839 if you have any questions

## **Please Help with the Tree Farm Database Update Project**

If you own a Tree Farm, you should have been contacted recently about helping the American Tree Farm System update its records about your Tree Farm. All Tree Farmers should have received a postcard from Edge Research asking them to participate in the online update of their contact information and basic information about their Tree Farm. The postcard would list a specific code number for your Tree Farm so when you log in, the information displayed is about you and your property.

If you have not been contacted about updating your Tree Farm information, please let Greg Cox know by calling (413) 339-5526 or email [gcox@crocker.com](mailto:gcox@crocker.com)

## **New Smartphone App Available for Northeastern Woodland Owners**

*About My Woods*, a free smartphone application, is now available for download. The application provides woodland owners in New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island with a new tool to help learn about their woods. Foresters, loggers and others who work in the woods will find it useful too. The app has just been completely updated.

Developed by the State Foresters of the northeastern states to help family forest landowners learn more about their land and connect to professionals who can help them, *About My Woods* is a great way to connect with the information that landowners need.

One of the unique features of the app is the ability of a landowner to pinpoint a spot on the map – either where they are located or any other spot in the region – and access maps and information specific to that location. Maps include soils, land cover type, protected lands, watershed and satellite view, providing users with instant and mobile access to information specific to individual parcels and locations. With complete coverage in the northeast region, landowners can access maps specific to their interests.

In addition to maps, the *About My Woods* app helps find local professionals – including state forestry educators, landowner organizations, Tree Farm committees, and land trusts active in the state and region.

Users are also be able to use the app to identify common wildlife, trees, wildflowers, and invasive plants and insects. High-quality photos, coupled with in-depth descriptions, provide the user with an indispensable tool for understanding their woods.

This past year, 7 brand new forest stewardship videos were produced specifically for *About My Woods*.

Available for both Android and iPhones (and tablets), you can get the app by going to the App Store (Apple) or Play Store (Android) and simply typing "About My Woods" in the search bar.

You can also go to [www.aboutmywoods.org](http://www.aboutmywoods.org) and see the app instructional video to learn how to use *About My Woods*. A link to a web version also can be found there.

## **Wood Energy News**

### **Eligible for Retroactive APS Credits (Alternative Energy Certificates) ?**

If you installed a biomass unit that may qualify for APS credits between 2015 and 2017, the **deadline for reporting to claim your credits is March 16, 2018**. The filing requirements are detailed at <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/alternative-portfolio-standard-rulemaking>.

### **State Announces Renewable Thermal Infrastructure Grant Program**

The Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources just released notice of the availability of \$3 million in funding for Renewable Thermal Infrastructure Grants (COMMBUYS bid # BD-18-1041-ENE01-ENE01-22914) to provide financial support to businesses or services that seek to establish or expand distribution or manufacturing of renewable thermal technologies or associated supply chain infrastructure in Massachusetts.

#### **What Grant Funds can be used for:**

The program will provide funds directly to manufacturers, distributors and/or installers to implement needed renewable heating and cooling infrastructure. Eligible projects may include wood pellet delivery vehicles, portable flail debarking equipment, dry wood chip processing equipment, biofuel manufacturing or distribution equipment, equipment certification costs, geothermal drilling equipment or other equipment needed to advance the goals of the program.

#### **What is NOT eligible:**

Grant funding cannot be used for feasibility analysis, engineering design studies or onsite equipment like boilers.

Maximum award under this program is \$1,000,000, with the minimum award being \$100,000.

### Qualifying Technologies and Fuels

We've highlighted woody biomass here. Check the DOER website for information about the full list of qualifying technologies.

Woody Biomass: Supply chain infrastructure that supports utilizing woody biomass for thermal processing and/or space conditioning. Eligible biomass must be forest derived residues and/or thinnings harvested sustainably, or non-forest derived clean wood fuels. The program will support manufacturing and distribution of premium wood pellets and dry woodchips, and the installation services, manufacturing and testing of advanced, low-emissions, high efficiency woody biomass central heating systems.

Biogas: Biogas produced from anaerobic fermentation or gasification of organic matter is eligible. This program will support infrastructure development association with this technology for use in heating.

Other Technologies and Fuels: Technologies and fuels that support wider adoption of renewable thermal use will be considered, including district heating with a renewable thermal fuel, manufactured biomass fuel, and dedicated energy crops.

Funding will be based upon a competitive solicitation and preference will be given to applications that support woody biomass systems. If there are not enough applications for woody biomass technologies, funding will be made available to other renewable thermal technologies.

Proposals must demonstrate at least a 50 percent cost share (match) based on the total project cost.

### **Application deadline is April 13, 2018**

For information and documents about this program opportunity, log onto COMMBUYS ([www.commbuys.com](http://www.commbuys.com)), register for a user name and password, then click on Open Bids and select the category "Grants" on the dropdown menu. The PON will be listed as above and you can click on the listing for more information.

Grant Contact for this PON is Jonathan Parrott. His phone number is (413) 658-8117 and fax is 617 727-0030. His email is [Jonathan.Parrott@state.ma.us](mailto:Jonathan.Parrott@state.ma.us) .

### **Wildlife**

## Funding Available to Help Protect Wetlands

NRCS has announced the availability of funding to help landowners protect and restore wetlands in Massachusetts. The funding is provided through the [Agricultural Conservation Easement Program](#) (ACEP), created by the 2014 Farm Bill to protect critical water resources and wildlife habitat, and encourage private owners to maintain land for farming and ranching. Through the voluntary sale of an easement, landowners limit future development to protect these key resources. ACEP's Wetland Reserve Easements allow landowners to successfully restore, enhance and protect habitat for wildlife on their lands, reduce damage from flooding, recharge groundwater and provide outdoor recreational and educational opportunities.

Eligible landowners can choose to enroll in a permanent or 30-year easement. Tribal landowners also have the option of enrolling in 30-year contracts. In federal fiscal years 2014-2017, 527 acres of wetlands were protected in Massachusetts under ACEP Wetland Reserve Easements.

**Interested landowners should apply by Friday, March 2, 2018.** Contact your [local USDA Service Center](#) for more information. To learn about ACEP and other technical and financial assistance available through NRCS, visit [www.ma.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.ma.nrcs.usda.gov).

NRCS is a federal agency that works hand-in-hand with the people of Massachusetts to improve and protect soil, water and other natural resources. The agency has offices in USDA Service Centers in Greenfield, Hadley, Holden, Pittsfield, Westford, West Wareham and West Yarmouth, which work with local conservation districts and other partners to serve farmers and landowners in their area.

## 2018 Arbor Day Seedling Program

The *Massachusetts Tree Wardens & Foresters Association* sells tree seedlings to fund its scholarship program and to promote Arbor Day and tree planting. Seedling purchasers include municipalities, garden clubs, private firms, arborists, and other interested individuals and organizations. Proceeds from the seedling sales support annual scholarships for college arboriculture students.

Seedlings may be distributed to schoolchildren and other Arbor Day participants. The seedling gifts may be part of a ceremony or presentation that promotes Arbor Day and the value of trees to people and the environment. Buyers have also used seedlings as favors at weddings and as promotional items at Earth Day activities.

The 2018 order form is now available. The seedling **order deadline is April 15**.

Find out more at <http://masstreewardens.org/arbor-day-seedling-program/>.

## Employment

**Stove/Wood Pellet Technician** – Sandri Energy is seeking a Stove/Wood Pellet Technician for its growing wood pellet operation. Knowledge of pellet/wood burning stoves needed, plus willingness to train on installation and maintenance of wood pellet boilers. Light carpentry and/or electrical skills helpful.

Apply in person or send resume to: Sandri Energy, 400 Chapman Street, Greenfield, MA 01301

For more info, see <http://www.sandri.com>

### ***Stream Crossing Specialist - Department of Fish & Game, Division of Ecological Restoration***

The Department of Fish & Game is seeking a Stream Crossing Specialist.

The Stream Crossing Specialist will promote river health and restoration by leading a state-wide effort to improve habitat continuity, climate resiliency, and public safety at road-stream crossings. Major responsibilities of the position include training and assisting municipal infrastructure managers and other stakeholders with planning, design, permitting, funding, and construction of stream crossings that meet improved design criteria for aquatic/terrestrial organism passage and storm hazard reduction. The position will also serve as DER's technical expert on the design and construction of road-stream crossings.

For more information and to apply, see

<https://massanf.taleo.net/careersection/ex/jobdetail.ftl?job=18000019&tz=GMT-05%3A00>

## Ask an Expert

Got a nagging question? A serious one, or a casual one? Think that others might have that same question? Send an e-mail to our executive director with "ask an expert" in the subject, and we'll try and identify an expert, ask them the question, and publish their answer in the next Forest Update.

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



- February 14      **Innovative Harvesting and Utilization of Whole Urban Trees webinar**
- February 16      **MFA Winter Harvest Tour – Ashfield**
- February 16      **Mass Wildlife Timber Showing – Hardwick**
- February 16      **Mass Wildlife Timber Showing – Winchendon**
- February 20      **Harvesting Timber? Think Taxes workshop – Concord, NH**
- February 21      **Mass Tree Farm Committee meeting – Williamsburg**
- February 23      **MFA Winter Harvest Tour – Southampton**
- February 24      **Project Learning Tree workshop – Worcester**
- February 27      **Your Land, Your Legacy workshop – Concord, NH**
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- March 2          **MFA Winter Harvest Tour – location TBD**
- March 6          **Community Forestry Conference -- Amherst**
- March 9          **MFA Winter Harvest Tour – location TBD**
- March 10        **Project Learning Tree Workshop – Turners Falls**
- March 10        **Wood Bank Workbee – Petersham**
- March 13        **Restoration of Degraded Forests – webinars**
- March 16        **Healthy Forests, Healthy Habitats conference -- Sturbridge**
- March 17        **Foresters for the Birds lecture – Wales**
- March 20        **Harvard Forest Ecology Symposium -- Petersham**
- March 24 – 25    **Safe Chainsaw Operation Workshop – location TBD**

*Additional information about these and other events will be posted at [www.massforestalliance.net/calendar](http://www.massforestalliance.net/calendar) as information becomes available.*