

Massachusetts Forest Update

February 2017

Local News

Come see Taylor Forest Wildlife Improvement Harvest February 11th

Want to see how new forest habitat can be efficiently created to help birds and other threatened wildlife? If so, come to Mass Forest Trust's Wildlife Habitat Improvement Harvest Tour on Saturday, February 11th, in Ashfield and Hawley.

MFT was recently awarded a Habitat Management grant by Mass Wildlife to create 30 acres of early successional habitat at the Taylor Forest in Hawley and Ashfield for wildlife species which have been declining.

With the funding, MFA has contracted with John Conkey & Sons to cut and remove the low value timber on the property, setting the stage for new forest growth that wildlife find increasingly lacking in Massachusetts.

The logging work began in early February and is expected to be completed before month's end. The Taylor Forest Habitat Improvement Tour will be held on Saturday, February 11th, from 10 am to noon. The tour will show part of the woodland that hasn't been cut yet, an area just cut, and then travel to a nearby woodland parcel where similar early successional habitat was created in 2004, to see how the forest develops and changes rapidly over a short period.

The tour will be led by forester and wildlife biologist Tom Brule.

Directions: Take Route 112 or Route 116 to Ashfield Center.

At the 4 corners on Route 112, go west on Hawley Road and bear right to continue up through Apple Valley.

Follow Hawley Road 4.7 miles from the 4 corners to the Hawley Fire Station at the intersection of Ashfield and Plainfield Roads

We will go to the harvest site, then to the site harvested in 2004.

Participants should dress for the weather and snow conditions. With more snow forecast for Thursday, snowshoes and poles may be useful. The tour will be postponed if heavy snow or rain is falling, with the snow date of February 12th at the same time.

For more information or to check on the tour's status, call Greg Cox before 9 am at 413 339-5526 or 413 475-2883 cell.

Members Talk Forestry with Senator Hinds

On Friday, January 27th, MFA held an informal members get-together with new state Senator Adam Hinds at Jay Healy's sawmill in Charlemont. Hinds was recently elected to the Senate, replacing Ben Downing, who retired.

Hinds' district includes all of Berkshire County, plus Rowe, Heath, Charlemont, Hawley, Buckland and Shelburne in Franklin County; Cummington, Goshen, Chesterfield, Williamsburg & Huntington in Hampshire County; and Chester and Blandford in Hampden County. Hinds is a native of Buckland who now lives in Pittsfield.

Members told Hinds about the challenges of owning woodlands or running a forest business in an urban state. Other topics discussed included coping with invasive insects, low PILOT payment reimbursements on state lands to small towns, and the need for better markets for low quality trees to improve management.

Hinds said he wanted to increase the utilization of woodlands in Massachusetts, both to create jobs in rural areas, and to help the state switch to a low carbon economy. He suggested putting together a list of five current concerns for forest landowners and businesses that he and his staff could work on.

MFA gets Mass Wildlife Grant to Improve Habitat at the Taylor Forest

The Massachusetts Forest Trust (MFT), MFA's land trust and charitable affiliate, was one of 13 landowners recently awarded a total of \$ 313,243 in Habitat Management Grants by MassWildlife to improve or increase habitats that are threatened or in short supply in the state.

MFT will receive \$ 47,950 to create early successional habitats and control invasive species on 32 acres of its 110-acre Taylor Forest property in Hawley and Ashfield. The grant will pay for harvest of low quality and damaged timber to create critical forest habitat for species like ruffed grouse, woodcock, chestnut-sided warblers, eastern towhees, as well as cottontail rabbits and snowshoe hare.

MFA has managed the Taylor Forest since it was donated to the Massachusetts Land League (now MFT) in 1992. Management plans have prescribed cutting on the property to regenerate aspen and other hardwoods that are important for many species of both game and non-game wildlife. It has been difficult to get this work done through a traditional timber sale, and became even more impractical following extensive damage by the 2008 ice storm; the value of the trees to be removed would not come close to paying harvest costs, *especially without good biomass markets*. The Habitat Management grant will help MFT to pay for the trees to be removed to create conditions for regeneration of the hardwood stands. MFT applied for the grant with the support and cooperation of the Ruffed Grouse Society (RGS).

Harvesting on the property began the first week of February and is expected to be complete by March. MFA and RGS will document the operation and use the property to demonstrate and promote habitat management techniques to improve habitat for species like grouse which require ongoing creation of young forest habitat to sustain viable populations.

Mass SWET to hold Modern Wood Heat Tours in Berkshire & Worcester Counties in March

The Massachusetts Statewide Wood Energy Team (SWET) will hold two Modern Wood Heat Tours in March, featuring wood heat installations in Berkshire and Worcester counties.

The first tour on March 15th will visit Mass MOCA's large pellet system in North Adams and Gould Farm's new woodchip-fired district heating system in Monterey, as well as other installations. The tour will include a lunchtime program on options for getting financial assistance from the state in converting to modern wood heat.

The second tour on March 30th will visit wood-fired systems at Narragansett Regional High School in Baldwinville, Briggs Elementary School in Ashburnham, Mt. Wachusett Community College in Gardner, and Harvard Forest in Petersham. It will also include a presentation about woodchip-fueled combined heat and power.

For more information about either tour, see www.massforestalliance.net/modern-wood-heat or email Bryn Gingrich at bgingrich@massforestalliance.net.

Heavy Gypsy Moth Damage Predicted Again in 2017

Following the widespread defoliation from gypsy moth last year, state environmental officials predict another season of higher than usual caterpillar feeding in 2017. Based on egg mass surveys throughout the state, gypsy moth populations are likely to be much higher than the low threshold seen in the last decade. Recent drought conditions have limited the effectiveness of a soil borne fungus, *Entomophaga maimaiga*, which has helped keep populations in check since the last large outbreaks of the 1980's.

The 2016 gypsy moth population spike resulted in defoliation on 349,000 acres statewide in Massachusetts. Damage ranged from light feeding and minimal leaf loss to severe damage with total stand defoliation. Gypsy moth populations in Massachusetts have generally experienced cyclical patterns and have been controlled by natural factors, including weather, native and introduced enemies, and the resilience of our forests to withstand defoliation.

Though trees are able to survive being defoliated once, successive years of heavy insect feeding or the addition of other stressors such as drought, can lead to long-term health issues or mortality. In areas that have been defoliated repeatedly by gypsy moth, forest health specialists recommend targeted treatments using a biological control pesticide such as *Bacillus thuringiensis* spp. *Kurstaki* (BT) to reduce populations to manageable levels.

Individuals interested in pursuing treatments should hire a licensed arborist or pesticide applicator to protect their trees in a safe and effective manner.

(Adapted from DCR's The Citizen Forester)

Keystone Project now Accepting Applications

The Keystone Project is an intensive, 3-day, retreat style training at the Harvard Forest which focuses on forest ecology and stewardship, wildlife management, and land protection. The training consists of both indoor and field sessions, as well as informal time to learn from fellow participants. The Keystone Project educates forest owners and community leaders. In return for this valuable educational opportunity, participants agree to return to their communities as a local resource and commit at least 30 hours of time to one or more conservation projects of their choosing.

This spring, the program will take place on Thursday evening, April 6 through Sunday afternoon, April 9, 2017. The application deadline is March 6, 2017. The Keystone Training will be held thanks to the generous financial support of Harvard Forest, the North Quabbin Regional Landscape Partnership, and UMass Extension. For more information about Keystone or to download an application, click [here](#). Contact [Paul Catanzaro](#) or 413-545-4839 if you have any questions.

Forestry Scholarships Available from Farm Credit East

Farm Credit East, a long-time supporter of MFA, each year awards \$1,500 scholarships to qualified students who are committed to a career in agriculture, commercial fishing, or the forest products industry. Scholarship decisions are made on the basis of a submitted essay, experience, course of study, and extracurricular activities.

Eligibility requirements include:

Students must have a permanent address within Farm Credit East's territory.

Students must be pursuing post-high school education (full time) in the fall of 2017, leading to a career in agriculture, commercial fishing, or the forest products industry.

Individuals must demonstrate significant progress toward and a clear intention for a career in agriculture, commercial fishing, or forestry through their career plans, experience, program of study, and extracurricular activities.

The deadline for electronic submission of completed applications is April 5, 2017. Only online applications will be accepted.

Visit www.FarmCreditEast.com/Scholarship for more details and an application.

Employment Opportunities

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Habitat Biologist/Forester

The Department of Fish and Game, Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, seeks applicants for the position of Habitat Biologist (Game Biologist III).

The Habitat Biologist works across the state as a member of the Division's Wildlife Section under the supervision of the Habitat Program Leader in the implementation of the agency's Biological Diversity Initiative (BDI) to provide a range of grassland, shrubland, and forested habitats for species and communities of conservation concern. The Habitat Biologist will: develop, plan, bid, and administer a range of habitat management activities on state lands using both private sector vendors and MassWildlife staff in coordination with BDI team members, including Natural Heritage Restoration Ecologists, Wildlife Section Project Leaders and District staff throughout the Commonwealth; and provide technical assistance on habitat enhancement to private and public landowners and organizations.

Qualifications Required at Hire:

1. Demonstrated ability to identify trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants commonly associated with forest and field habitats of southern New England, with a demonstrated understanding of rare plants, native plants, and invasive, exotic plants.
2. Demonstrated ability to compose, bid, and administer competitively bid contracts with private sector vendors.
3. Demonstrated ability to delineate wetland resource areas.
4. Demonstrated ability to interpret and utilize topographic maps.
5. Demonstrated experience with GPS receivers, GIS mapping, and database management to maintain accurate records.
6. Demonstrated ability to communicate effectively in oral expression and to write clearly and concisely.
7. Demonstrated ability to work independently, to supervise other workers, and to work effectively with a group.
8. A Bachelor's degree with a major in forestry, wildlife management, or a closely related field with a minimum of four years of professional experience preferred.
9. A Massachusetts Forester License is preferred. Candidates capable of obtaining a MA Forester License within 6 -12 months of hire will be considered.

To learn more about the position and its requirements, look up the posting at <https://massanf.taleo.net/careersection/ex/jobsearch.ftl>.

Enter 1600087Z into the Job Number box toward the top of the screen, then scroll down and click on Search for Job. You can also enter Habitat Biologist into the Key Words box.

Forester Wanted

Well-established consulting forester/land surveyor seeks assistance with forest management and land surveying projects in the Monadnock region and beyond.

Forestry or closely related degree required for this full-time position with benefits including medical, dental, life, short and long-term disability insurance and a matching 401k savings plan are available. We also offer paid vacation, sick leave, and holidays.

Applicant must have own transportation, clean driving record and be able to pass a background check.

Required skills: basic computer and field forestry skills (tree id, measurements, forestry tools), ability to write a coherent report, ArcView GIS mapping, navigation with hand compass and GPS. Land surveying experience a plus. I am willing to mentor an applicant desiring licensure as a land surveyor. Salary commensurate with experience.

Send resume and transcript to Dennis D. McKenney, New England Forestry Consultants, dmckenney@cforesters.com .

Upcoming Programs and Training in February & March

Click on an event title for more information

- February 10 [Woodland Connections for Women - Charlemont](#)
- February 11 [MFA Habitat Improvement Harvest Tour - Ashfield](#)
- February 14 [Managing Single-Aged Forests - webinar](#)
- February 15 [Mass Tree Farm Committee - West Brookfield](#)
- February 16 [Invasive Forests & Agricultural Pests workshop -- Hadley](#)
- February 19 [Homestead Woodlot Management Workshop - Deerfield](#)

- February 20 [Project Learning Tree workshop - Worcester](#)

- February 22 [Nature's Temples: Complex Old Growth Forests - Boston](#)

- February 23 [Forester Licensing Board meeting - Amherst](#)

- March 2 [Management of Invasive Forest Pests workshop -- Hadley](#)
- March 3 [Timber Tax Filing for the 2016 Tax Year - webinar](#)

- March 8 [When Maple Producers get Conflicting Guidance on Climate - webinar](#)
- March 13 [Preparing for Emerald Ash Borer -- Huntington](#)
- March 14 [Creating Age Diversity in Forests - webinar](#)
- March 15 [Modern Wood Heat Tour & Program - Berkshire County](#)
- March 21 [Harvard Forest Ecology Symposium -- Petersham](#)
- March 25 [Mass Land Conservation Conference - Worcester](#)
- March 30 [Modern Wood Heat Tour & Program - Worcester County](#)

For information about these and other events, visit www.MassForestAlliance.net/calendar