

## ROOTS AND RESULTS: CONNECTING RESEARCH WITH PRACTICAL MANAGEMENT

2026 NYSAF Annual Meeting  
January 28-30, 2026

Double Tree Hotel, Syracuse, NY

**Meeting WIFI: Syrdt20**

### Wednesday January 28, 2026

Noon – 4pm	<p><b>MEETING REGISTRATION OPEN</b></p> <p><b><u>Grand Ballroom Foyer</u></b></p>
Pre-Meeting Workshop A 12:30pm – 4:30pm	<p><b>Workshop A: Invasive Species, Pesticides Recertification “Integrated Pest Management and a Framework of Response to Address the Threat of Invasive Species in the Forest Setting”</b></p> <p><b><i>Ari Giller-Leinwohl, Terrestrial Invasive Species Manager, Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP); and Kristopher Williams, Director of the Capital Region Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (CR-PRISM)</i></b></p> <p>Together Ari and Kristopher will outline Integrated Pest Management practices as a framework of response to prevent and control the harmful spread of invasive species. The program is geared toward conservation managers seeking to update their best management practices for field work. Topics will address the threat of invasive species, a framework of response using a tier designation and conservation values, Integrated Pest Management Practices by mode and method will also be explored using product recommendations for terrestrial invasive species and forest pest. A portion of the program will review High Threat Invasive Forest Pest of Concern. Take-home resources will be provided. Participants will develop an understanding of the importance and need to have a framework in place to respond to invasive species.</p> <p><b><u>Michigan Room</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>NYS DEC approved 4 pesticide credits in the following categories: 2, 3a, 9, and 10.</b></li><li>• <b>4.0 SAF CFE Category One credits</b></li></ul> <p><b>SPONSORED BY ESFPA &amp; NY SFI</b></p>
Pre- Meeting Workshop B 12:30pm – 4:30pm	<p><b>Workshop B: Urban Forestry</b></p> <p><b><i>Dan Gaidasz, Urban and Community Forestry Technical Coordinator, NYSDEC; and Helen Forgione, Natural Areas Conservancy (NAC)</i></b></p> <p>This workshop will look at where we are at the state level with the Urban and Community Forest Program, where we are hoping to go, and an update on the grants program. Davey Resources Group will give a presentation on some of the new technology they've been testing in the field, followed by a presentation by the Natural Areas Conservancy to talk about their work on urban natural areas.</p> <p><b><u>Ontario Room</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>4.0 SAF CFE Category One credits</b></li></ul> <p><b>SPONSORED BY GUTCHESS LUMBER</b></p>

<b>Pre-Meeting OFFSITE Field trip 1 11:00am – 3:30pm</b>	<p><b>Off Site Field Trip 1: Mastering Marking Guides: Hands-On Solutions for Complex Forest Stands. <i>Dr. Christopher Nowak, SUNY ESF</i></b>  Learn innovative methods for developing marking guides to control forest stand density, structure, and species composition and character when stocking charts are unavailable. Explore two complex 100-year-old mixed-species stands—one with a chart and one without—and apply your knowledge through hands-on field marking. Participants will also use Excel tools in class to reinforce concepts and create practical solutions. Requirements: a laptop with Excel spreadsheets (or similar program), Field attire as warranted and bring your own lunch. <b>SUNY ESF Campus, Mount Olympus and Heath Park.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>4.0 SAF CFE Category One credits</b></li> </ul> <p><b>SPONSORED BY KEISTER CONSULTING, INC.</b></p>
<b>2pm – 5pm</b>	<b>Exhibitor Set-up, <a href="#">Superior/Erie Rooms</a></b>
<b>5:00pm – 8:00pm</b>	<b>NYSAF Board of Directors Meeting, <a href="#">Champlain Room</a></b>

## Thursday January 29, 2026

All General Sessions will be in the [Michigan/Ontario/Huron Rooms](#)

<b>7:30am- 5pm</b>	<p><b>MEETING REGISTRATION OPEN</b>  <a href="#">Grand Ballroom Foyer</a></p>
<b>7:15am – 8:45am Continental Breakfast Buffet in <a href="#">Superior/Erie</a></b>	
<b>SPONSORED BY FORECON</b>	
<b>8am – 5pm</b>	<p><b>SILENT AUCTION AND RAFFLE <a href="#">Superior/Erie</a></b></p>
<b>General Session 1 8:45am – 9am</b>  <b>9am – 10am Keynote Address</b>	<p><b>Welcoming Comments &amp; Presentation of NYSAF Chair's Commendation Award</b>  <i>Marianne Patinelli-Dubay, SUNY ESF &amp; NYSAF Chair</i></p> <p><b>Introduction, Jill Rahn, SUNY-ESF &amp; NYSAF Chair-Elect</b></p> <p><b>Erin Kessler, Executive Editor for <i>Northern Logger Magazine</i></b>  Erin has extensive experience interviewing loggers, sawmillers, timberland managers and processors of primary forest products in the Northeastern and Lake States region. Her role has brought the perspective of folks out in the woods, inside the mill, and operating the equipment to the desks of executive directors and the breakroom tables of nearly every forestry office in the northeast. Erin will share her experiences of conducting site visits, interviews, and outreach efforts and how she is able to successfully communicate complex issues and advocacy efforts in the <i>Northern Logger Magazine</i>.</p>
<b>10am – 10:30am Morning Coffee Break <a href="#">Superior/Erie</a></b>	
<b>SPONSORED BY LANDVEST</b>	
<b>General Session 2</b>  <b>10:30am – 12pm</b>	<p><b>State of New York Forests &amp; Forestry</b>  Moderator: David Newman</p> <p><b>John Bartow, Executive Director ESFPA</b></p> <p><b>Fiona Watt, Director of Division of Lands and Forests, NYS DEC</b></p>

12pm – 1:45pm Luncheon in **Crossroads Ballroom**

**Awards Presentation: Moderator: David Newman, SUNY ESF**

- **NYSAF Forester of the Year**
- **NYSAF Society Commendation**
- **NYSAF Distinguished Service**
- **NYSAF Forestry Communications and Education Award**
- **Young Forester Leadership**
- **Honoring 50-year members**

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<b><u>Breakout Sessions 1</u></b>	<b>Breakout 1A: Branching Out: Connecting Future Foresters with Mentors.</b> <b><i>Dominic Cappa, NJ Forest Service</i></b> Students and early-career professionals, connect with potential mentors early on in the meeting. This session will allow students to connect with professionals in various fields in a round-robin style format to learn more about potential careers and get advice on next-steps. Use this opportunity to get advice on your resume, build connections, and improve your communication skills. <b><i>Michigan Room</i></b>
<b><u>Breakout Sessions 1</u></b>	<b>Breakout 1B: Protecting Yourself and Your Crews Against Tick-borne Illnesses.</b> <b><i>Dr. Thangamani SUNY Upstate Medical University</i></b> <b>Moderator Rebecca McBride, Finch Paper</b> Tick-borne illnesses are on the rise in New York. Dr. Thangamani will discuss the trends their lab is seeing and how to protect yourself and your crews from these little buggers and the testing resources that are available to you. <b><i>Ontario Room</i></b>
<b><u>Breakout Sessions 1</u></b>	<b>Breakout 1C: Nobody Gets Left in the Woods.</b> <b><i>Patrick Sadler, Woodwise Forestry; Eric LaClaire, Baillie Lumber; Mark Mowrey, Prentiss and Carlisle; and Gabrijel DeBrita, Ballie Group</i></b> <b>Moderator Eric LaClaire</b> What's in your vest? This panel will look at what is in the average forester's vest, and perhaps what you should have in your vest. We will then take some time to discuss our new pilot program "Nobody Gets Left in the Woods." Last year was an incredibly devastating year for many of us as we mourn the foresters who were gone too soon. Let's come together as an industry and make sure everyone makes it out of the woods this year. <b><i>Huron Room</i></b>

3:15pm – 3:45pm Afternoon Coffee Break **Superior/Erie**

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<b><u>Breakout Sessions 2</u></b> <b>3:45pm – 5pm</b>	<b>Breakout 2A: Recruiting the Next Generation.</b> <b><i>Allison Brusa, SUNY ESF; Victoria Duval, Director of Member Engagement and Professional Development for SAF; and Steve Day, Day's Timber Harvesting</i></b> <b>Moderator Gabriel DeBrita</b> What are we doing to recruit the next generation and how can we do better? Three young professionals will discuss what they've done to promote the industry and how they got their start. They will also discuss barriers to entry and ways we can help break those down. <b><i>Michigan Room</i></b>
<b><u>Breakout Sessions 2</u></b> <b>3:45pm – 5pm</b>	<b>Breakout 2B: Women in Forestry: Honoring our Past, Strengthening our Future.</b> <b><i>Claire Mann, Audubon NY; Emily Reichert, LandVest; and Laurie Raskin, DHW Forestry</i></b> <b>Moderator Claire Mann</b> This session will explore the historical role of women in forestry, discuss why continued support for diversity is essential to the profession, and highlight existing women-in-forestry networks across the country. We will also introduce NY Women in Forestry, a new initiative aimed at fostering connection, mentorship, and professional support for women in New York's forestry community. After the presentation, attendees are invited to participate in an open discussion to share ideas, offer feedback, and help shape the goals and direction of this emerging group. <b><i>Ontario Room</i></b>

Breakout Sessions 2 3:45pm – 5pm	<b>Breakout 2C: Graduate Student Presentations</b> Moderator: Dr. Christopher Nowak- SUNY ESF <b><u>Huron Room</u></b>
5:15pm – 6:30pm	<b>Student Poster Reception</b> (hors d'oeuvres & cash bar) in <b><u>Crossroads Foyer</u></b> <b>SPONSORED BY ADIRONDACK LEAGUE CLUB</b>
5:15pm – 6:30pm	<b>Post Meeting Field Tour Information Session</b> <b>Marking for Today's Equipment</b> <b><i>Patrick Sadler, Woodwise Forestry; and Donn Downey, ForestMetrix</i></b> This pre-field tour session will provide an overview for Friday's field tour, providing background on why changes in our marking styles are needed, how to plan your harvest, and troubleshooting your tools. <b>Pre-registration is required for the field tour.</b> <b><u>Champlain Room</u></b>
5:30pm – 7pm	<b>NY Institute of Consulting Foresters Meeting</b> Chris Prentis, Organizer <b><u>Shelby Board Room</u></b>
6:30pm – 8pm	<b>SUNY ESF Alumni Social, <u>Niagara/Seaway</u></b>
8:30pm – 9:30pm	<b>Log-A-Load Cornhole Tournament</b> Grab a partner and sign up for the log-a-load for kids cornhole tournament. Play will be done in bracket style. All proceeds will go towards log-a-load for kids. <b><u>Grand Ballroom Foyer</u></b>

## Friday January 30, 2025

All General Sessions will be in the **Michigan/Ontario/Huron Rooms**

8am – 11am	<b>MEETING REGISTRATION OPEN</b> <b><u>Grand Ballroom Foyer</u></b>
<b>9 am – 10:45 am SILENT AUCTION AND RAFFLE <u>Superior/Erie</u></b>	
<b>7am – 8:15am Breakfast Buffet <u>Crossroads Ballroom</u></b>	
<b>SPONSORED BY NSRC</b>	
8:30am – 8:50am	<b>Chapter Caucuses:</b> Adirondack Chapter: <b><u>Champlain Room</u></b> Central Chapter: <b><u>Adams Basin</u></b> Iroquois Chapter: <b><u>Crossroads Ballroom</u></b> Lower Hudson Chapter: <b><u>Crossroads Ballroom</u></b> Western NY Chapter: <b><u>Crossroads Ballroom</u></b> Student Chapters: <b><u>Crossroads Ballroom</u></b>
General Session 3 9am – 10:15am	<b>General Session 3: Working toward Restoration of Threatened Native Hardwoods:</b> American chestnut, beech, elm, and more. <b><i>Dr. Andrew Newhouse, SUNY ESF; Sophia Suriano, Graduate Student at SUNY ESF; and Madi Montalvo, Research Technician at SUNY ESF</i></b> <b>Moderator Timothy Yeatts</b> Chestnut blight is often a textbook example of the destruction to forests that can be caused by an introduced pathogen. In recent decades, many other prominent tree species have also

	<p>succumbed to pests and diseases, and the list of threatened trees continues to grow. Our biotechnology research team at ESF has developed an American chestnut tree with enhanced blight tolerance, which is being tested in various restoration scenarios. We are now applying our experience with chestnut toward other threatened species, including American elm (Elm Yellows) and American beech (Beech Leaf Disease). This work offers much-needed hope at a time when we often hear more about emerging problems than success stories. This session will include chestnut project updates including recent research findings and considerations for forest restoration, as well as ongoing research by ESF graduate students.</p> <p><b><a href="#">Michigan/Ontario/Huron Rooms</a></b></p>
<b>10:15am – 10:45am Morning Coffee Break <a href="#">Superior/Erie</a></b>	
<b>SPONSORED BY LYME ADIRONDACK FOREST COMPANY</b>	
10:45am	<b>FINAL BIDS DUE FOR SILENT AUCTION</b>
Breakout Sessions 3 10:45am – Noon	<p><b>Breakout 3A: The Road to 25 Million Trees. How Community Reforestation Grants Will Help Us Get There.</b> Moderator Nick Siciliano  <i>Andrew Gascho Landis, Ph.D., Associate Professor State University of New York at Cobleskill; Steve Harris, Syracuse City Arborist; Martin Larocca, Sustainability Manager at Binghamton University; and Jessica Raspitha, Land Resources Program Manager Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe</i>  The CoRe grant awarded \$15 million in funding for reforestation and afforestation projects across NY. Our three panelists will discuss their planned Community Reforestation projects from the grant proposal stage to implementation.</p> <p><b><a href="#">Michigan Room</a></b></p>
Breakout Sessions 3 10:45am – Noon	<p><b>Breakout 3B: Artificial Intelligence (AI) For Foresters: Tools That You Can Actually Use!</b>  <i>Donn Downey, Forest Metrix</i>  <b>Moderator Emily Reichert</b></p> <p>Donn has become an early adopter of AI tools in natural resource work—not out of trend-chasing, but out of a deep commitment to working smarter, not just harder. Donn will show you some of the tools he has been using and how you can use them to be more efficient out in the field and in the office.</p> <p><b><a href="#">Ontario Room</a></b></p>
Breakout Sessions 3 10:45am – Noon	<p><b>Breakout 3C: Connecting Ecological Silviculture and the Family Forest Carbon Program.</b>  <i>Chris Zimmerman, Forest Restoration Strategy Lead, The Nature Conservancy; Dr. Tony D'Amato, UVM Extension; and Jack Lampman, The Nature Conservancy.</i>  <b>Moderator Joseph Rupe</b></p> <p>This session will connect the Family Forest Carbon Program to the implementation of Ecological Silviculture. We will first give an overview of the Family Forest Carbon Program that is designed to increase net carbon stocks in privately owned forests and provide consulting foresters with the knowledge they need to determine if their landowners are a good fit for the program. Dr. Tony D'Amato will then discuss an upcoming publication on ecological silviculture for carbon outcomes and provide examples of forest management projects compatible with the Family Forest Carbon Program.</p> <p><b><a href="#">Huron Room</a></b></p>
<b>Noon – 1:30pm Business Meeting with Box Lunch in <a href="#">Crossroads Ballroom</a></b>	
<b>SPONSORED BY MOLPUS WOODLANDS GROUP</b>	
Post-Meeting OFFSITE Field Trip 2 1:30pm – 4:30pm	<p><b>Off Site Field Trip 2: Marking timber for today's equipment.</b>  <i>Pat Sadler Woodwise Forestry; and Donn Downey, Forest Metrix</i>  Participants will travel to a nearby woodlot managed by consulting forester Pat Sadler where they will participate in a real-world marking scenario. Field clothes will be needed. Transportation to the field site is not provided. Pre-registration is required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>3.0 SAF CFE Category One credits</b></li> </ul>

<p><b>Post- Meeting Workshop C</b> 1:30pm – 3:00pm</p>	<p><b>Workshop C: 480-a Additional Information for Consulting Foresters. Jason Drobnack, NYS DEC</b></p> <p><b><u>Huron Room</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>1.5 SAF CFE Category One credits</b></li> </ul> <p><b>SPONSORED BY NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION (NYFOA)</b></p>
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