

INTO THE WOODS

NEW ENGLAND FORESTRY FOUNDATION | SPRING 2019

NEFF Kicks Off 75th Anniversary Celebration

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Happy 75th anniversary, NEFF.

Please join us at our June 1 Annual Picnic and Meeting to celebrate three quarters of a century of working to protect New England's forests. A little over five years ago, leading into our 70th anniversary, we looked back at NEFF's accomplishments and set a strategic path that could lead us to our ultimate objectives—protecting the vast majority of New England's remaining forests, which is more than three times what is already protected—and bringing Exemplary Forestry practices to the entire New England landscape. With your help we implemented a comprehensive set of programs under our Exemplary Forestry Initiative. Now as we look forward from our 75th year we see a clear path ahead and believe we are close to what the business world calls an inflection point—that moment of opportunity where events provide the possibility to make huge gains.

NEFF has accomplished great things in its history. In 1944, shortly after our founding, we hired a cadre of foresters and sent them out to all corners of the region to offer professional forestry services. We filled an important gap and accomplished our goals. By the 1990s, many individuals and private companies offered forestry services. NEFF claimed victory and moved its foresters off into a thriving private business that continues today as the New England Forestry Consultants. We use them for much of our forestry work. Then we turned our attention to the large land turnover that was churning in the northern part of the region. NEFF stepped to the fore again to pioneer the use of large conservation easements to protect broad, ecologically important landscapes. The 770,000-acre Pingree easement and the 335,000-acre Downeast Lakes easement showed the way forward and made us one of the largest land trusts in the country.

Now we are engaged in the next big NEFF leap forward—one that could accomplish our historical mission of widespread protection and management.

Climate scientists tell us we have no more than 10 years to bring carbon emissions under control or the planet will face tremendous disruption and suffering. Forest protection and forestry are the two keys to overcoming this desperate situation. I just returned from the International Mass Timber Conference, where the construction sector acknowledged it was one of the planet's major carbon polluters and it needed to immediately engage in a dramatic revolution in how we build. The mantra was, "We can no longer afford to build with concrete and steel. We have to turn to wood to house the world's growing urban population."

NEFF has arrived at a new inflection point. The world is asking for assurance that forestry can sustainably provide the additional wood products to replace concrete and steel. Fortunately, we have spent the last 75 years laying our foundation and the past five years specifically preparing to answer this question. Our work in our Community Forests proves that Exemplary Forestry works over long periods of time. We have developed, published and are promoting our Exemplary Forestry Standards as a guide for the kind of forestry that should be connected to the wood building revolution. We were the early adopters when we launched our Build It With Wood program five years ago, and our forestry modeling and life cycle assessment work on wood buildings shows how wood can play a key role in solving the climate crisis in the next 10 years.

So NEFF continues to innovate around its core two-fold mission of promoting the highest quality forestry and conserving New England's forests. What's constant across 75 years? The support of New England citizens like you who value our forests and understand their importance to the future of the region. Thank you for carrying us this far.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Perschel".

Robert Perschel
Executive Director

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News & Notes

Commemorative Logo

Did you spot the special logo on the cover of this newsletter? We'll be using it throughout 2019 to commemorate NEFF's 75th anniversary. You'll find more information about the anniversary on the next page.

Save the Date!

Join us Saturday, June 1, for our Annual Meeting, a picnic celebration at NEFF's Prouty Woods in Littleton, MA. Enjoy good food and company, listen to an engaging presentation by Harvard Forest researcher and Brandeis University Associate Professor of American Environmental Studies Brian Donahue, go for a walk in the woods, and help us celebrate NEFF's anniversary. Visit newenglandforestry.org/connect/events for more information and to register.

Into the Woods Schedule Change

NEFF was founded in July, so we're turning this summer's *Into the Woods* newsletter into a special edition that will arrive in mailboxes in July instead of June.

View from Peter Bullock House by
Lars Blackmore/Ameridane Press.
See page 9 for more information.





NEFF KICKS OFF 75TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

SEE WHAT'S IN STORE FOR THIS BANNER YEAR, AND LEARN ABOUT
THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS THAT LED TO
THE CREATION OF NEW ENGLAND FORESTRY FOUNDATION

WRITING BY Tinsley Hunsdorfer

In the 1930s and 40s, an eclectic group of foresters and outdoor enthusiasts led by Harris Reynolds grew concerned about clear-cutting and destructive management on private New England forestlands. Much of the region's once vast and ecologically rich forests had only just begun to regenerate after centuries of deforestation, and parcel owners often acted with an eye to quick profit or simply lacked an understanding of how to care for a forest.

In response, Reynolds and his cohort decided to form a region-wide charitable

organization devoted to the practice, teaching and promotion of sustainable forest management, and so the New England Forestry Foundation was born July 12, 1944 to help private forests thrive. Its land protection efforts kicked in soon thereafter when in 1945 NEFF accepted its first donated forest—the Lincoln Davis Memorial Forest in New Hampshire—and opened it to the public.

The organization and its many supporters and partners have accomplished a great deal in the subsequent 75 years, and the time has come to honor this history.



Lincoln Davis Memorial Forest, then and now

NEFF will be celebrating its 75th anniversary in a number of ways throughout 2019. In upcoming newsletter issues and on the organization's website, readers will be able to journey through the first 75 years and take a look at what's next for NEFF, all while meeting key historical figures. Keep an eye on NEFF's social media channels and e-newsletters for updates about online-only content, and plan to attend June's Annual Meeting to celebrate this joyous occasion alongside other members of the NEFF community.

Get started with the following look at what motivated NEFF's incorporators to take action on behalf of New England forests, and how they structured NEFF to address the damage being done to private lands.

NEFF's Niche

At the time of European settlement, forests covered 90 percent or more of New England—41 million forested acres from the region's southern oak-pine forests to its northern mountain hardwoods that would soon see radical change. Forests were first heavily harvested and then cleared to make way for agriculture, and by the mid 1880s, this clearing had eliminated forests on up to 70 percent of Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island; 60 percent of Vermont; 50 percent of New Hampshire; and 20 percent of Maine. When farming largely moved to the more productive Midwest, however, forests began to regenerate on New England's resilient soils.

Little stood between recovering forests and unchecked exploitation of natural resources, and around the turn of the 20th century, concern for these vulnerable lands resulted in growing support for environmental protection efforts that addressed New England forest degradation. The Massachusetts legislature authorized The Trustees of Reservations land trust in 1890, concerned citizens formed the Massachusetts Forest and Parks Association in 1898 and the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests in 1901, the Forest Service established New Hampshire's White Mountain National Forest in 1918, and, most relevantly to NEFF's founding, Congress passed the Norris-Doxey Cooperative Farm Forestry Act in 1937.

This act marked one of the government's first attempts to improve private, individually owned forestlands; it funded state foresters tasked with providing management and harvesting advice to landowners. It was also deemed inadequate by experts like Reynolds, who felt that in place of piecemeal advice, landowners needed hands-on management services and

long-term support that promoted forest health. New England Forestry Foundation stepped in to fill this gap with a comprehensive private-sector forestry program.

Designing A Forestry Organization

While Reynolds didn't found NEFF until 1944, his inspiration for its aims dated back—somewhat humorously—to his August 1913 honeymoon in Germany. He and his new wife, Alice Hecker Reynolds, spent the trip touring European community forests as Reynolds took detailed notes on the organizational structure and personnel needed to implement the facilities' long-running and methodical approach to forest management.

Reynolds and partners at the Massachusetts Forest and Parks Association eventually designed a system of forest management centers for NEFF, in which trained consulting foresters would take responsibility for specific geographic regions. One NEFF forester might be stationed in New Hampshire's lakes region, while another covered eastern Massachusetts.

These foresters' jobs were two-fold. First, they offered clients a full suite of management services, including creating site-specific management plans, arranging finances, supervising harvests, and inventorying the volume and type of wood on a property. Second, they reached out to local woodlot owners and community members about the benefits of scientific forestry that balanced timber revenue

with forest health. These two job functions often overlapped, as foresters educated clients about the sustainable management approach being used on their properties, and the foresters' work in turn served as a demonstration of NEFF's mission to the wider public.

For those who founded NEFF, education was the true heart of this forestry work—not just offering services, but spreading the word about a better way to manage working forests.

This commitment to forestry outreach is still with NEFF today, but by the early 1990s, NEFF's concept of itself began to change. The profession of consulting forestry was well-established in New England by then, and it was not clear that a non-profit organization needed to continue providing forestry services



NEFF Directors meeting in New Hampshire (1945). Back row, left to right: Unknown, Hugh P. Baker, William P. Wharton, J. Milton Attridge, Nathan Tufts, James L. Madden. Front row, left to right: Farnham W. Smith, Ralph C. Hawley, Harris A. Reynolds.

New England Forestry Foundation Incorporators

Harris A. Reynolds

Founder, First Secretary* of NEFF, 1944–1953;
Executive Secretary of Massachusetts Forest
and Parks Association, 1911–1953

Hugh P. Baker

First President** of NEFF, 1944–1951

Edwards B. Draper

Chairman, Special Committee of
Organization, NEFF

Farnam W. Smith

President of NEFF, 1961–1970

Sheldon E. Wardwell

President of NEFF, 1951–1961

William P. Wharton

President of Massachusetts Forest
and Parks Association, 1936–1960

George W. Wheelwright

Director of NEFF, 1944–1960

**Equivalent of today's Executive Director position*

***President of the Board of Directors*

References and Further Reading

Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists and the Ecology of New England
William Cronon
Hill and Wang, 2003

New England Forestry Foundation: A History
M. Richard Applegate
New England Forestry Foundation, 1982

The Northeast's Changing Forest
Lloyd C. Irland
Harvard University Press, 1999

Stepping Back to Look Forward: A History of the Massachusetts Forest
Charles H.W. Foster, Editor
Harvard University Press, 1998

directly to landowners. NEFF leadership restructured the organization to face this new reality. The consulting foresters became a new for-profit corporation that's still hard at work in the region: New England Forestry Consultants, or NEFCo. This allowed New England Forestry Foundation to redirect its efforts to education, advocacy and land protection. This exciting era of NEFF's history will be covered in detail in the summer 2019 issue of *Into the Woods*.

NEFCo and NEFF have remained close since this time of transition. NEFCo foresters manage most of NEFF's lands, maintain NEFF's forestry certification through the Forest Stewardship Council, and help NEFF with the design and implementation of new forestry initiatives such as the Pooled Timber Income Fund. The two organizations share similar acronyms, and until 2016 shared the same logo. Most importantly, the staff members of both organizations retain a deep belief that forestry is in many ways the earliest form of environmentalism, as well as a critical component of current and future efforts to protect the natural world.



Celebrate NEFF's 75th anniversary at this year's Annual Meeting! Held Saturday, June 1, at NEFF's Prouty Woods, this fun picnic gathering will highlight NEFF's history and feature

engaging presentations, walks in the woods, and plenty of good company. For more information and to register, visit newenglandforestry.org/connect/events.

The First Forests

The first forest that NEFF owned started life as the Lincoln Davis Memorial Forest, but its official name has expanded over the years to Lincoln Davis-Cabot-Morse Memorial Forest thanks to generous and strategic donations of New Hampshire forestlands. Dr. Lincoln Davis deeded the property's first 607 acres to NEFF in 1945, Thomas Cabot and Virginia Wellington Cabot gave an adjoining 176 acres in 1964, and Clarissa Morse gave an additional 146 acres in memory of her husband, Lovett Morse, in 1985. It's now a haven for wildlife, a favorite destination for locals, and a part of the 21-mile Wapack Trail, which crosses into the forest and two next-door properties protected by NEFF conservation easements.

NEFF took ownership of its second forest in 1952 when the Wonalancet Associates and Alice Walton donated a combined 95 acres to create the Edgar J. Rich Memorial Forest. Soon thereafter NEFF's land protection program picked up speed, with another eight properties joining its network of community-based forests in the 1950s, including the Chamberlain Reynolds Memorial Forest on Squam Lake in 1953.

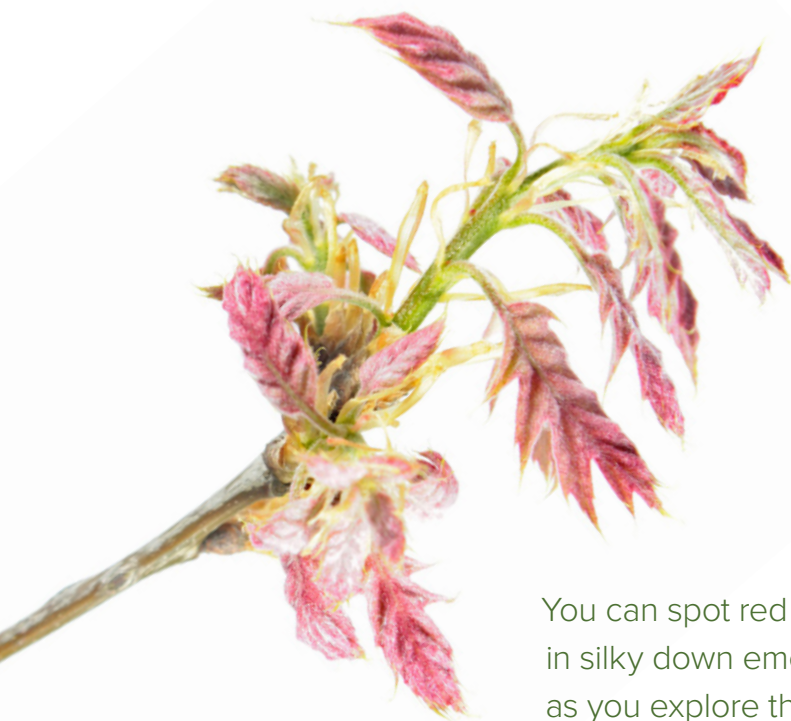
These forests not only provided members of the public with easy-to-access recreation opportunities and a chance to connect with the natural world, but also helped NEFF further its forestry education work by serving as demonstration sites for sustainable management. They demonstrated how active forestry can coexist with recreation—the first step in NEFF's ongoing efforts to show how well-managed working forests simultaneously provide a host of benefits, from clean water to sustainable wood products.

NEFF's founding and first few years as a non-profit organization marked a turning point for private New England forestry and the conservation of working lands. These accomplishments were made possible by a community of people who cared deeply about forests—just like the many people and partner organizations who support NEFF today. As a member of this community, be sure to join NEFF's staff and Board of Directors in this year's celebration of 75 remarkable years of history that have set the stage for great things to come. 🌱

MEET THE NORTHERN RED OAK

WRITING BY Whit Beals

Have you ever found yourself struggling for traction on a dry slope while on a fall walk in a hardwood stand? The cause of that slipperiness might have been freshly fallen Northern Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*) leaves, which have waxy surfaces, or an abundance of the tree's acorns, which in some years cover the forest floor with "nature's marbles." Both the acorns and the leaves tie to the oak's evolutionary strategy.



AGE AND SIZE

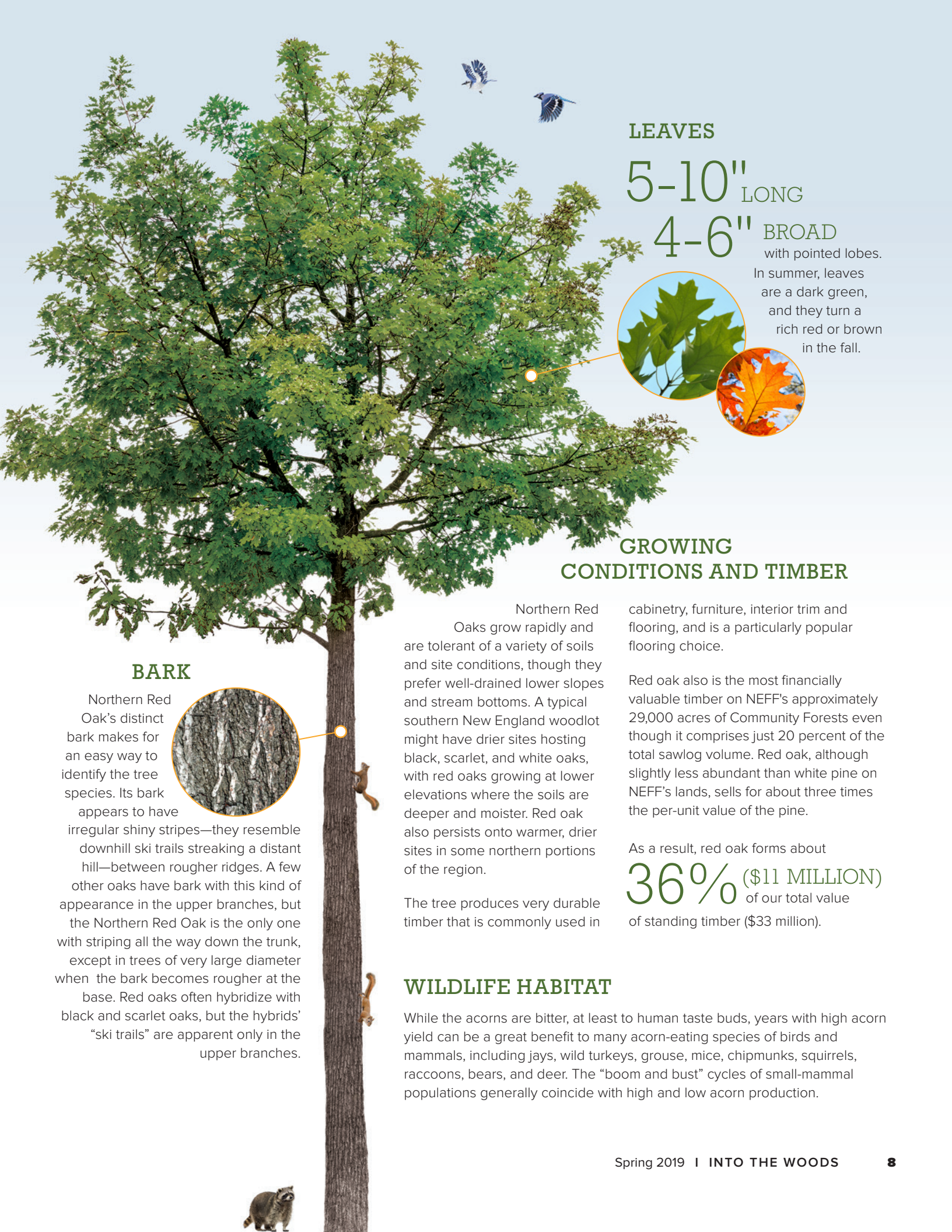
In forests, these trees grow straight and tall to a height of about 100 feet, though

EXCEPTIONAL TREES WILL REACH **140'**
and their trunks reach up to **40"** DIAMETER

According to the US Forest Service, they may live up to **400** YEARS OF AGE

Red oaks evolved in concert with the now extinct Passenger Pigeon. It is estimated that 2 to 5 billion of these plump birds once inhabited the eastern forests. Their primary fall food was red oak acorns, and they would descend on forests in the midst of heavy acorn crop years—called mast years—in such abundance they would break off oak branches, building kindling on the forest floor. Similarly, the waxy oak leaves are fire prone once dry. This adaptation, combined with the life history of the Passenger Pigeon, helped create conditions for surface fires that oaks can often resist, but that may kill competing species.

You can spot red oaks in spring, when beautiful pink leaves covered in silky down emerge from the trees' buds. Keep an eye out for them as you explore the woods this season.



LEAVES

5-10" LONG

4-6" BROAD
with pointed lobes.

In summer, leaves are a dark green, and they turn a rich red or brown in the fall.



GROWING CONDITIONS AND TIMBER

Northern Red Oaks grow rapidly and are tolerant of a variety of soils and site conditions, though they prefer well-drained lower slopes and stream bottoms. A typical southern New England woodlot might have drier sites hosting black, scarlet, and white oaks, with red oaks growing at lower elevations where the soils are deeper and moister. Red oak also persists onto warmer, drier sites in some northern portions of the region.

The tree produces very durable timber that is commonly used in

cabinetry, furniture, interior trim and flooring, and is a particularly popular flooring choice.

Red oak also is the most financially valuable timber on NEFF's approximately 29,000 acres of Community Forests even though it comprises just 20 percent of the total sawlog volume. Red oak, although slightly less abundant than white pine on NEFF's lands, sells for about three times the per-unit value of the pine.

As a result, red oak forms about

36% (\$11 MILLION)
of our total value
of standing timber (\$33 million).

BARK

Northern Red Oak's distinct bark makes for an easy way to identify the tree species. Its bark appears to have irregular shiny stripes—they resemble downhill ski trails streaking a distant hill—between rougher ridges. A few other oaks have bark with this kind of appearance in the upper branches, but the Northern Red Oak is the only one with striping all the way down the trunk, except in trees of very large diameter when the bark becomes rougher at the base. Red oaks often hybridize with black and scarlet oaks, but the hybrids' "ski trails" are apparent only in the upper branches.



WILDLIFE HABITAT

While the acorns are bitter, at least to human taste buds, years with high acorn yield can be a great benefit to many acorn-eating species of birds and mammals, including jays, wild turkeys, grouse, mice, chipmunks, squirrels, raccoons, bears, and deer. The "boom and bust" cycles of small-mammal populations generally coincide with high and low acorn production.

FROM HISTORIC HOME TO NEW FORESTS

THE STORY BEHIND CHRISTIAN STROOP'S GENEROUS BEQUEST TO NEFF

WRITING BY Frank Lowenstein

PHOTOGRAPHY BY Lars Blackmore/Ameridane Press

In June of 2017, Jörg Christian Stroop contacted NEFF at the recommendation of an old friend who was also a NEFF Board of Directors member. Christian wanted to discuss the fate of the Peter Bullock House, which he owned, located in Grafton, New Hampshire.

Grafton is one of those quiet New England towns that the modern economy has forgotten. If one draws a line on a map from Hanover to Concord, New Hampshire, and another from the western White Mountains to Mount Sunapee, then Grafton sits near the crossing of those two lines. It's a location that allows easy access to all those areas, while staying far enough away to avoid their hustle and bustle.

But in the 1770s, when the Peter Bullock house was built, the main coach road from Concord to Hanover ran right beside the house, which became a prosperous tavern. Built by Hezekiah Bullock, the house eventually came to be known by the name of his son Peter, who ran the tavern and then a farm from his father's death in 1822 until his own in 1871.

Although the coach road was the height of 18th century civilization, the house from its start featured ties to the forested landscape that surrounded it. The walls in the former tavern room and the front rooms are paneled with wide boards that frame the granite fireplaces. Original wide board softwood floors and hand-hewn beams showcase other gifts from the local forest.





Over its 200-plus years standing beside Bullock's Crossing Road, the house acquired some other features—buckshot holes in the paneling of the old tavern room speak to rowdier times. Historic photos show porches added and then removed, providing shade and outdoor space when the house was a resort known as Aunt Lottie's Summer Home. In those days, coaches had given way to a rail line, located a few miles downhill in the valley now occupied by US Route 4. The resort's eight dollar per night fee included free transport to and from the rail line. Eventually people took to the highway as their primary means of transport, and then even that highway became obsolete with the construction of Interstate 89 about 10 miles to the south. The Peter Bullock house sat—grand, but in gradual decline, ever farther from the flow of modern life.



This was how Christian had found it in 2008, and he set about restoring the property with energy and verve. He cleared the pastures and built fences around them, and had a post and beam barn put up. The woods roads through the 117 acres that surround the house were cleared of fallen trees and made suitable for horseback riding, hikes with his beloved dog, and cross-country skiing.

The greatest attention was saved for the house, however. Working with New England architect Katie Sutherland, he planned a nearly complete rebuilding. The walls were stripped to their framing, the beams and sills repaired, the double-layered original floors translated to a complete and intact single layer, and modern insulation, wiring, and high quality—largely German—infrastructure were added. Christian carefully preserved historic features including some original glass, pocket shutters to protect the inside of some windows, and the gun shot damage to the original tavern room paneling.

But in 2017, even as the house found new life, Christian found that his own life would be cut short. Facing perhaps only months to live, he had to determine what would happen to his land and home. He decided on a planned gift to New England Forestry Foundation. Christian did his research—meeting with NEFF staff and Board members on four separate occasions, including NEFF's 2018 Annual Meeting, before finalizing

his intentions for the gift. In a letter to his lawyer confirming those intentions, he wrote that he hoped NEFF would retain the forest land and “manage and preserve it consistent with NEFF’s organizational objectives and mission.” If NEFF decided to separate and sell the house from the land—as the organization currently plans—the proceeds of that too, he wrote, should be used “to acquire additional conservation land consistent with NEFF’s organizational objectives and mission.”

In December 2018, Christian passed away. Through his generosity and vision, the Peter Bullock House, constructed 200 years ago from the woods of New England, will contribute to the conservation of even more land, allowing NEFF’s Exemplary Forestry greater reach and influence. The forests around the house will remain in NEFF ownership as the Christian Stroop Memorial Forest, as he wished, and like all of NEFF’s Community Forests, will be open to the public for quiet enjoyment.

Someday as you walk the trails on this property, you will find a quiet bench overlooking Mount Cardigan—a view Christian never tired of. NEFF plans to dedicate the bench in the late spring or summer of 2019, just a year after he and I struggled to move a massive grill out of the garage and around to a deck overlooking that same mountain. That way, he explained, in his last few months he could enjoy that view nearly every night.

NEFF staff and Board remember Christian with gratitude, and we will do our best to honor him, and all our supporters, by doing the best for New England’s forests. 🌿

NEFF offers many planned giving options, some of which can work with an individual’s tax or estate strategies, and may offer lifetime income to designated beneficiaries. If you would like more information about planned giving or about the Peter Bullock House please contact Penny Flynn at pflynn@newenglandforestry.org.



A fir tree on a Downeast Maine property NEFF is working to protect. This is one of the trees approved for use in structural cross-laminated timber. Photo by Lauren Owens Lambert.

FOREST-TO-CITIES CLIMATE CHALLENGE

WRITING BY Frank Lowenstein and Bob Perschel

“There are no separate systems. The world is a continuum,” wrote famed environmental thinker Donella Meadows in her book, *Thinking in Systems: A Primer*.

“Where to draw a boundary around a system depends on the purpose of the discussion,” she continued. And with respect to how to best use forests to combat climate change, New England Forestry Foundation believes the boundary of the system is bigger than the forest.

We need to look at the benefits to climate from activities in the forest, and also how our forest products are used, which requires a system boundary that encompasses both the cities and forests of New England. In 2019, we will launch our Forest-to-Cities Climate Challenge to bring new commitments to reducing the climate crisis through better management and use of New England's forests from both rural and urban forest owners, admirers, and recreational users.

Meadows gained fame as principal author of *The Limits to Growth*, a much-debated 1972 work that projected severe economic losses if use of resources continued to increase exponentially. Today, scientists sound increasing alarm bells over climate change's economic impact and the growing risk of un-natural disasters, derived largely from our continued use of fossil fuels. And many individuals are trying to make changes in their own lives to reduce their climate impact—an effort mirrored by forward-thinking corporations, cities, states, and nations.

In order to maintain a safe climate for future generations, NEFF contends that thinking about the way forests interact with climate needs to change. Right now, forests worldwide store more of the principal greenhouse gas carbon dioxide than has been added to the atmosphere through the burning of fossil fuels throughout history. If those forests are not both maintained as forests and managed to address climate change, then our current wicked problem will become much worse. That's one more reason why NEFF conserves New England's forests, and why we're promoting our Exemplary Forestry standards that can increase carbon storage in the forest while expanding production of climate-friendly, sustainable wood products.



Potential Forest-to-Cities Climate Commitments

NEFF's Forest-to-Cities Climate Challenge seeks to build mutually reinforcing commitments to wood construction that link suppliers, builders, and investors across the full geography of New England. Beginning later this year, NEFF will be working with individuals and companies in each sector to design these commitments so they work with the constraints that limit activities in that sector and reinforce commitments from other sectors. For example, an architect might commit to discussing mass timber options with clients on new projects, and to specifying a preference for locally and sustainably produced raw materials in any mass timber projects they are managing. An investor might commit to exploring financing for new mass timber construction in Boston or surrounding Massachusetts Gateway Cities. And a forest landowner might commit to applying NEFF's Exemplary Forestry standards in order to provide high quality, sustainable local material for mass timber construction.

Since 2015, NEFF's Build It With Wood program has sought to expand the use of those products in construction, and to draw a new system boundary that better reflects how forests, wood markets, construction, and the atmosphere interact. The Forest-to-Cities Climate Challenge will take the next step in bringing together a community around this inclusive approach to climate change.

Exemplary Forestry

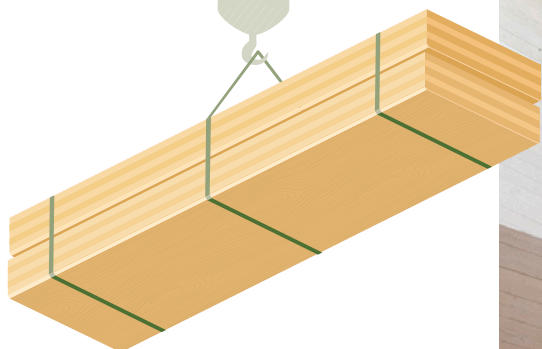
Exemplary Forestry is the first side of the new climate boundary. The techniques of Exemplary Forestry allow landowners to grow twice as much new wood every year as typically is achieved in New England forests, while also keeping plenty of carbon on the

land in living forests. For example, NEFF's Community Forests—which have been subject to Exemplary Forestry management for years to decades—typically have the equivalent of more than 30 tons of carbon dioxide per acre, while the average across the state of Maine is about half that.

New Technologies

The next side of the boundary comes with new technologies—but not ones that demand a new app or a specialized computer. The technologies needed to help abate climate change are techniques for gluing lumber from forests into wood beams and wall panels of extraordinary strength, durability and fire resistance.

12 STORIES



Mass Timber Construction

Using those new technologies of mass timber in construction is the final aspect of the new boundary, and it delivers a quadfecta of wins—a win for the forest, a win for the rural economy, a win for urban quality of life, and a win for the planet's health. With respect to planetary health, construction using these large panels and beams—called mass timber construction—helps two ways. First it lets wood replace climate-destroying steel and concrete, and in addition, much of the carbon originally stored by the tree gets locked up in the building, safely out of the atmosphere. One global study led by Professor Chad Oliver of Yale University estimates we could offset as much as 31 percent of the world's carbon emissions by using the productivity of our managed forests to build with wood. That is a huge number, comparable to the expectation of what solar, wind or energy conservation might contribute to bringing global warming in check.

But mass timber construction can do more than save the planet. It can also increase the livability and affordability of our cities. As cities grow, housing gets more

5 STORIES



Common Ground High School, New Haven, CT, Gray Organschi Architecture.
Photo by David Sundberg ESTO.

expensive because buildable land becomes scarce, driving suburban sprawl as people seek affordable space on the fringes of the city. But another potential way to access inexpensive space is to go upwards. Developers have historically used ordinary wood studs to build up to five stories tall, but anything taller than that has required concrete and steel, which are generally not affordable for buildings less than 12 stories tall. This creates a density gap between five and 12 stories that results in fewer housing units near cities, where

public transport can work—which in turn means the gap creates both more traffic congestion and more sprawl on the urban fringe. Since 1985, New England has lost about one million acres of forest land to suburban sprawl driven by this dynamic.

The new wood beams and panels allow construction of affordable buildings five to 12 stories tall. And buildings that tall and even taller are in use today—a 14-story apartment building in Bergen, Norway, an 18-story dormitory on the campus of the University of British

Columbia in Vancouver, Canada, and a new eight-story mixed-use building in Portland, Oregon, to mention just a few of dozens of examples. These tall wood buildings allow mass timber to improve urban quality of life by creating more housing near cities and transportation centers, reducing sprawl and commute times, and lowering housing costs. There's even a third climate benefit associated with less sprawl and traffic congestion: fewer cars idling in traffic jams.

If the wood used in tall wood buildings comes from New England forests then we also start to see more benefits for the region's forest and rural economies. The forest industry can produce good jobs, and greater demand for high-quality wood products could help provide landowners with financial incentives to manage their forests well. Reduced sprawl on the urban fringes will help keep land forested by reducing pressure on landowners from rising taxes as more and more people move to formerly pastoral towns, increasing costs for municipal services and education expenses.

Over the next 50 years, some four billion people will move to cities. If we build their homes and places of business out of concrete and steel, we will cook the planet for sure. Tall wood buildings are an easy transition that does not require sacrifice or unproven technologies; they are one of the few certain ways to not only prevent pollution of the atmosphere but actually reverse it by pumping carbon out of the atmosphere.

Over the next few months, NEFF will hire a Forest-to-Cities Climate Challenge Organizer and begin to line up commitments from diverse constituencies linking the city to the forests in a joint effort to build renewable, sustainable, and even compostable(!) wood buildings to protect our climate and our future. Join us! 🌱

The DeNormandie Challenge

Do you know someone who would be interested in New England Forestry Foundation's mission? Why not give them a gift membership in honor of NEFF's 75th anniversary?

To be successful for the next 75 years we need to raise our profile, expand our reach, and increase our capacity to sustain New England's forests, improve their management, and help mitigate climate change. For this reason, we have launched a new member acquisition campaign to broaden our base of support and build a pipeline of future support.

To demonstrate the organization's commitment to expanding our membership, NEFF Board President Philip DeNormandie has issued his second annual challenge to the full Board to bring in five new members each through gift memberships. Last year, the challenge resulted in 100 percent participation from the Board, and those members are now renewing. This year's efforts are well underway and we'd like to invite you, as a NEFF member, to participate too.

Making a gift membership is easy. You can use our secure online form at support.newenglandforestry.org/donate using the Tribute section to let us know who the gift is for. Or you can use the return envelope in the center of this newsletter—just be sure to include a note with the name and address of the recipient. We'll send a note to the gift recipient to let them know the membership is from you.

The threat to New England's forests is real and NEFF's message is compelling—with your help to get our message out, we are confident this effort will prove to be successful and help NEFF to do even more for New England's forests and people.



Frank Lowenstein



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