

The Watershed Agricultural Council's Forestry Program 2017 Forest Landowner Education Summary and Evaluation

Executive Summary

The WAC10 Contract between the Watershed Agricultural Council, Inc. (WAC) and the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYC DEP) directs WAC to "...implement a forest landowner education strategy... in order to foster a new generation of watershed stewards." (WAC10, pg 4) This report summarizes the activities WAC has undertaken in 2017 to implement its Forest Landowner Education Strategy as outlined in Task 3.C.3. These activities include a Forest Stewardship Self-study Course for landowners, A NYC Watershed Master Forest Owners Program, and one annual landowner workshop in both the Catskill/Delaware and Croton Watersheds. This report is also a deliverable for the WAC Forestry Program (Task 3.C.3.a). The WAC Forestry Program remains grateful for NYC DEP's ongoing support of its efforts to foster a new generation of watershed stewards.

Background: A Forest Landowner Education Strategy

The roots of the WAC Forestry Program's education efforts can be found in a set of position statements and policy recommendations created in 1996 by the Watershed Forestry Task Force. Between 1996 and 2010 the WAC Forestry Program used these recommendations to refine its education efforts into three categories: Landowner Education, Logger & Forester Training, and Urban/Rural School Based Conservation Education. In 2010 the WAC Forestry Program reviewed 14 years of forest landowner education in the Watershed. This review resulted in the development and approval of the Forest Landowner Education Strategy. The Forest Landowner Education Strategy identifies twelve key findings. This report documents WAC's efforts to address these findings in 2017.

- 1) ***The goal of the landowner education strategy is to adequately prepare forest landowners for the development of a forest management plan that accurately reflects the future implementation of forest stewardship practices.***
- 2) ***Past and current forest landowner education events are successful in raising awareness of water quality and forest stewardship issues as well as encouraging the establishment of long-term forest management plans. Schedule or directly sponsor at least one major landowner education event annually in the Catskill/Delaware and Croton watersheds. Identify potential partner organizations within the Croton watershed to facilitate the delivery of landowner education efforts.***
 - 61 landowner education events were held in the Catskill/Delaware watershed region in 2017. These education events were hosted by Columbia/Green County Cornell Cooperative Extension. A total of 2,319 people attended the events.
 - 1 landowner education event was held in the Croton watershed region in 2017 at the Clearpool Model Forest. A total of 250 people attended this event.
 - WAC participated in the Hudson-to-Housatonic (H2H) initiative. The goal of this initiative is to engage and move landowners towards taking stewardship or preservation activities with their woodlands. WAC is a partner in this USFS funded initiative, and is led by Highstead and the Westchester Land Trust. WAC attended meetings and helped with some planning. The H2H initiative is comprised of 24 conservation organizations.

3) *Past and current landowner education events are a suitable method for educating forest landowners regarding a variety of topics including forest stewardship, riparian buffer protection and invasive species. Effort should be made to ensure these topics are included in future education event agenda's.*

- The following charts identify forest landowner education events that provided landowners with information about forest stewardship, riparian buffer protection or invasive species. Refer to the Friday Forestry School Objectives chart on page 8 for detailed information regarding specific objectives addressed through each workshop. This chart identifies all forest landowner education events provided in 2017. A list of the education events hosted by the Model Forests is provided on pages 7 and 8.

Landowner Education Events			
Date	Event	Location	Number of Participants
1/9	Greenville Middle School Ecology Club Snow Shoe event	Siuslaw Model Forest	17
1/21	Beginning Beekeeping	Siuslaw Model Forest	31
2/3-4	Shiitake Viability project	Siuslaw Model Forest	30
3/13	Maple Sugaring Event	Clearpool Model Forest	250
3/18	Maple Fest	Siuslaw Model Forest	70
3/25	Schoharie Watershed Summit	Hunter, NY	100
3/30	Columbia County Chamber of Commerce	Ghent, NY	45
4/115/9 6/13	Catskill Beekeepers Association meetings (70 people per meeting)	Siuslaw Model Forest	210
4/11	Project Nestwatch 1 st workshop (Lab of O) with Cairo 6 th grade students (20 students 3 adults)	Siuslaw Model Forest	23
4/12	Columbia Greene Community College Environmental Studies student	Siuslaw Model Forest	15
4/20	Earth Day event	Columbia Greene Community College	35
4/20	Hemlock woolly adelgid presentation	Columbia Greene Community College, Hudson NY	37

4/24	Invasive species management **	Siuslaw Model Forest	10
4/29	Chinese Medicinal Plants presentation	Siuslaw Model Forest	26
5/8	Greenville Ecology Field Trip (10 students 2 adults)	Siuslaw Model Forest	12
5/9	Project Nestwatch 2 nd workshop-(Lab of O) with Cairo 6 th grade students (20 students 3 adults)	Siuslaw Model Forest	23
5/13	Growing Forest Fungi	Siuslaw Model Forest	16
5/13	Spring Foraging workshop	CCE CG Hudson, NY	18
5/18	Catskill School Day in the Forest (145 youth, 10 adults)	Siuslaw Model Forest	155
5/19	Agroforestry Resource center and Siuslaw Model Forest 10 th Anniversary celebration	Siuslaw Model Forest	50
5/19	10 th Anniversary Fishing event, (5 youth 1 adult)	Siuslaw Model Forest	6
5/22	Greenville Ecology Field Trip (12 youth 2 adults)	Siuslaw Model Forest	14
5/24	Orange County 4-H youth (5 youth 2 adults)	Siuslaw Model Forest	7
6/1	Tick Awareness program	Siuslaw Model Forest	9
6/2	WAJ Science Club: (10 youth 1 adult)	Siuslaw Model Forest	11
6/6	Project Nestwatch 3 rd workshop--(Lab of O) with Cairo 6 th grade students (20 students 3 adults)	Siuslaw Model Forest	23
6/13	WAJ Science Club (8 youth 1 adult)	Siuslaw Model Forest	9
6/15	Manhattan Christian Academy (48 youth 6 adults)	Siuslaw Model Forest	54
6/15	Tick Awareness program	CCE CG Hudson, NY	31
6/17	Pollinator program including forests and invasive species	CCE CG Hudson, NY	48
7/6	4-H Forestry Nationals Prep (6 teens 1 adult)	Siuslaw Model Forest	7

7/14	Invasive species overview	Siuslaw Model Forest	8
7/15	Mushroom Foray	Siuslaw Model Forest	13
7/17	4-H Forestry Nationals Prep (4 teens 1 adult)	Siuslaw Model Forest	5
7/25	4-H Forestry Nationals Prep (4 teens 1 adult)	Siuslaw Model Forest	5
7/27-30	Greene County Youth Fair	Cairo, NY	300
7/17	MFO Refresher	Siuslaw Model Forest	25
7/20	Invasive Species talk	Siuslaw Model Forest	15
8/8	Catskill Beekeeper Association	Siuslaw Model Forest	60
8/26	Mushroom Foray	Siuslaw Model Forest	10
9/7	Monarchs in our school	Siuslaw Model Forest	8
9/7	Garden club ecology walk on SMF	Siuslaw Model Forest	8
9/12-13	Environmental Awareness Day (240 students 20 adults)	Siuslaw Model Forest	260
9/12	Catskill Beekeepers Association	Siuslaw Model Forest	63
9/9	Art Reception David Slusky	Siuslaw Model Forest	30
9/16	WAC Columbia University student visit	Siuslaw Model Forest	10
9/19	Stream Assessment program	Siuslaw Model Forest	24
9/12, 19 & 26	Cornell University Climate Change webinars Focus on Natural Resources	Siuslaw Model Forest	35
9/21	Learn to Grow Ginseng	Siuslaw Model Forest	26
9/24	Fall Foraging	Hudson	18
9/25	Cornell Garden Based Learning Professional Development Day	Siuslaw Model Forest	38
9/30	Otsego County Conservation Association & Otsego Land Conservancy on Value of Forests	Cooperstown, NY	26
10/5	Columbia Greene Community College Environmental Science students	Siuslaw Model Forest	12
10/13	Farm Bureau presentation on forest values & threats.	Hudson	40
10/20	Windham Ashland Jewett Science club (10 youth)	Siuslaw Model Forest	12

	2 adults)		
11/2	Forest Pests and Diseases	Siuslaw Model Forest	7
11/4	Stream and Impacts on Infrastructure	Siuslaw Model Forest	30
11/16	First Forester Film: Carl Schenk	Siuslaw Model Forest	14
11/18	Art reception Stanley Maltzman	Siuslaw Model Forest	32
11/20	CRISP Strategic Planning Process Forest Focus Group	Siuslaw Model Forest	8
12/2	Schoharie River Center Forests and Invasive Earthworms	Esperance	25
12/4	First Aid CPR	Siuslaw Model Forest	10
	Totals	62 events	2,569

4) The refinement of the Master Forest Owner peer-based landowner site visit program in the NYC watershed will increase the quantity and quality of participation in the Watershed Forest Management Planning (WFMP) program as measured by successful implementation.

a) Master Forest Owner (MFO) Visits

- i. 55 requests for MFO visits were received during the reporting period.
- ii. 40 MFO visits were conducted during the reporting period.
- iii. The forest landowners who received the MFO visit owned a total of 1,748 acres.
- iv. None the forest landowners had a forest management plan prior to the visit.
- v. The forest landowners in the NYC watershed who received an MFO visit own a total of 454 acres.
- vi. Landowner receiving an MFO visit were interested in: learn about management to meet their goals; information on timber so they can have the property logged; to learn more about the various tree, plant, and animal species on the property; firewood, timber and 480-A; timber/ firewood and tree health; restoration of land from invasive plants and vines; info on maple, silvopasture, wildlife habitat, white ash concerns; learn about trees and how to preserve the forest; which trees to cut, which to save; how to sell standing timber; how to manage the land to control invasives, identify trees and insect and disease problems, promote reforestation, reduce deer predation on regen; want to develop a plan to include permaculture and self-sustaining ecology; how to care for and clean up the area; develop a management plan; want to sell timber, but concerned about the long term effects; Guidance and information on my land; what trees are worth keeping and what trees are worth cutting for timber and to enhance views; would love to know what types of trees and other plants grow as well as edible mushrooms, greens, and maples to tap – also how to conserve and aid wildlife and ecosystem in the forest- also interesting to know more about the animals; reduction in taxes; value of my trees; I am a city guy and know very little about forestry management. I would love to learn how to manage my property better...get to know what I don't know; manage woodlands, preserve and conserve forest, legacy and tax issues; maintain forest, had a logger about 10 years ago and asked him to cut roads to avoid erosion and I got erosion; input on improvement; help arrive at a strategy for the property, make recommendations about invasive species, selective removal of trees in dense areas to promote growth/health of forest and better understand options for timber; to find out if I have saleable timber; figure out how to maintain the health of my forest and determine which trees to remove so that the forest remains vibrant; how to best identify and cull the trees, bushes and non-native species; interested to learn more about forestry and land management; how to manage my land for maple sap production and to clear some land for small ruminants, Christmas tree farming, sell excess timber and

- need advice on negotiating with a logger; how to better manage my property; Like to understand the significance of the property and trees on it in order to best steward the land in a mindful, sustainable way for future generations; concerned about prior owner’s timbering, invasive species, best practices for trail making and maintenance; we were contacted by a logger and before we do anything of this nature we want to talk with someone who is knowledgeable about best practices for logging and how to best enter into a logging agreement; how to best maintain the property for good health of the forest and possibly timber in the future; the woods are unmanaged and we would like to maximize their health and provide an opportunity for timber harvesting consistent with the first goal; to learn more about our property and develop a forest management plan as we have two bodies of water and a small network of trails and wish to be responsible stewards of this land; would like advice in addition to what is provided by CFA, on how to steward the land and manage its resources into the future as I am concerned about intergenerational transfer and income; we are interested in understanding more about our riparian environment and its potential as a natural resource; how best to go about making a few dollars out of any valuable timber, thinning the property for future projects, and yet maintain a healthy woods; if we should use the local forester to assess timber, if there are any programs we might qualify for, and special aspects of our land we are not appreciating; managing a woodlot
- vii. The MFO’s provided landowners with the following: Handouts, Northern Woodlands, MyWoodlot cards, NYFOA information,
 - a. Master Forest Owners:
 - i. 38 MFO’s served the Catskill region in 2017.
 - ii. 16 MFO’s served the NYC Watershed in 2017.
 - iii. 6 persons signed up to become an MFO in 2017.
 - iv. 4 persons became MFO's in 2017.
 - b. MFO Marketing:
 - i. The MFO Program promoted during: At all of the Woodland Owner education events ; Delaware and Columbia County Fairs; Greene County Youth Fair; Forest Festival in Margaretville; 3 CCE Associations have subscribed to our Enhanced Regional MFO Program for 2017 and have displays and promotional materials to utilize at their functions as well. These counties include Sullivan, Ulster, and Orange.

5) *The “You and Your Forest” landowner letter series displays potential for attracting new participation to the WFMP Program as well as improving the quality of participation. Effort should be made to increase the utilization of this new tool.*

- The Forest Self Study Course *You and Your Forest* informational letter series has been offered since 2008. The Forestry Self Study Course introduces forest landowners to information that will help them steward their woodlots. Forest landowners are able to receive this information without leaving the comfort of their home. The letter series does not require previous knowledge of forests or forestry. It consists of seven 8 page letters, sent via email and hard copy, every two weeks for four months, covering the following topics: **Becoming Aware of Your Forest’s Ecology, Protecting Your Forest Assets, Agroforestry & Forest Enhancement, Enhancing Forests for Wildlife, Forest Management, Crop Tree Management, and Invasive Species and Forests.**
- The 2017 letter series went out in February and was sent through early June. 106 forest landowners signed up to receive the 2017 letter series via email or hard copy. 84 landowners received it in 2016. Each landowner owns approximately 25 to 30 acres and a small percentage have forest management plans.

Table #2: 2014 “You and Your Forest” Letter Series Evaluation

<p>1. As a result of this series, how might you use the information you learned, including developing a forest stewardship plan?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Information relevant to my needs as I move along with my woods.b. We are 3 years into ownership of a weekend home in the country with about 13 a love our property and want to do the right thing and appreciate the guidance (and insects, invasive studies, (knowing which ones to squash)c. Working my forest.d. Look at the areas around me with new eyes.e. The newsletters were interesting, but since I own 5 acres much of it steep cliffs, s was not relevant to me.f. Passed along the info to friends and family.g. Good to introduce a topic, so I will be aware and can go back later if needed/desih. Will help me with some forestry management issues on my property.i. To do what is best for the environmentj. Saving for future references.k. Good resourcesl. Learning about trees I have and moving from there.m. Thinking about our forest in the future, as we move forward today
<p>2. Did you think there was adequate information provided to introduce you to the topics covered?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Yes - 100%b. No – 0
<p>3. What additional topics, if any, should be covered by this series</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Dealing specifically with invasive plantsb. Nonec. Keeping deer from hurting my forestd. Identifying invasive plants and insects within your forest/land.e. Eradication of poison ivy from forest paths.f. Use of hillsides.g. All local topics- Land etch. NYS DEC regulations.i. Agroforestry information, how to...j. Trails.k. What wildlife to encourage.l. Insect prevention

4. Would you consider attending future conferences or workshops on some of the topics covered to learn more?

- Yes- 100%
- No- 0

5. What is your preferred method of instruction?

	Web-Based	Mail	Email	Attend Workshop
1st Choice	25%	0%	67%	17%
2nd Choice	63%	40%	33%	0%
3rd Choice	0%	40%	0%	33%

*Landowners were allowed to rank more than one method of instruction

6. Please indicate your response to the “You and Your Forest” letter series;

- Written information relating to forest related topics.

Not Useful		Useful	Extremely Useful	
1	2	3	4	5
0	0	10	30%	70%
- Follow up resources relating to forest related topics (if applicable).

Not Useful		Useful	Extremely Useful	
1	2	3	4	5
0	0	0	20%	80%

7. Do you have a forest management plan?

- Yes-0%
- No- 100%

8. Additional Comments:

None

6) *Model Forests are effective tools for educating forest landowners. Effort should be made to utilize the Model Forests in all future landowner education events.*

- The following tables identify the various education events that utilized the four Watershed Model Forests.

Model Forest Education Events ¹			
Date	Event	Location	Number of Participants
9/6/2016	Training new outdoor educators	Clearpool Model Forest	8
9/15/16	Brearley School – discovery hikes	Clearpool Model Forest	65
9/22/16	Brooklyn Friends – discovery hikes	Clearpool Model Forest	65
9/26/16	Collegiate Charter School – discovery hikes	Clearpool Model Forest	70
9/29/16	Hewitt School – hikes, pond study	Clearpool Model Forest	60
10/3/16	Women’s Academy of Excellence – discovery hikes	Clearpool Model Forest	70
10/13/16	Immaculate Conception School- hikes, predator prey	Clearpool Model Forest	120
10/14/16	North Salem MS – hike	Clearpool Model Forest	90
10/17/16	Bronx Community Charter School – hike, predator prey, pond study, survival	Clearpool Model Forest	55
10/19/16	Corlears – Water conservation, pond study, watersheds, discovery hike	Clearpool Model Forest	35
10/26/16	Ed Dalpe – wetland ecology, geology, hike	Clearpool Model Forest	15
10/27/16	Metropolitan Montessori School - water conservation, geology, hike, survival	Clearpool Model Forest	22
10/28/16	PS 130 – waste water treatment, water conservation	Clearpool Model Forest	40
	Individual Hikers on the trails during weekends	Clearpool Model Forest	15
11/2/16	Reece School – Discovery Hike, Forestry, Geology	Clearpool Model Forest	40
11/4/16	Harbor Heights – Hike, forestry, botany, geology, wastewater ornithology, mammals	Clearpool Model Forest	50
11/19/16	Father Son Weekend – discovery hikes, pond study, forest ecology	Clearpool Model Forest	55
11/21/16	York Early College Academy – forest ecology, wetland ecology	Clearpool Model Forest	90

¹ Model Forest education events are reported on a WAC fiscal year basis (July 1 through June 30). The cooperative nature of the Model Forest partnerships necessitates a delay in order collect education metrics. In contrast, reports summarizing contracted services are able to provide more recent metrics.

	People hiking on their own during this time period	Clearpool Model Forest	25
01/7/17	NYSOEA – preparation meeting for conference. People stuck around to go hiking	Clearpool Model Forest	15
1/7/17	NYSOEA Meeting – Campus Tour, Discussion on BMPs and Wastewater Treatment Plant	Clearpool Model Forest	20
1/27/17-1/28/17	Liberty Leads – Forest Ecology, Adaptations, watersheds, maple sugaring	Clearpool Model Forest	130
2/6/17-2/10/17	Staff Training – forestry, watersheds, wastewater	Clearpool Model Forest	8
2/20/17	Winter Camp – mammal adaptations, forest ecology	Clearpool Model Forest	17
2/27/17	Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Training	Clearpool Model Forest	8
2/28/17	MS 126 – watersheds, wastewater	Clearpool Model Forest	30
2/28/17-2/29/17	Community Action School - forest/wetland ecology, survival, predator prey systems	Clearpool Model Forest	60
3/5/17	Father Daughter Day – Forestry, survival, plant id	Clearpool Model Forest	40
3/13/17	Maple Sugaring Event	Clearpool Model Forest	250
3/19/17	GC NYC – discovery hike	Clearpool Model Forest	15
4/6/17-4/8/17	Speyer Legacy School – forestry, watersheds, wastewater	Clearpool Model Forest	40
4/9/17	Amphibian Hunt	Clearpool Model Forest	75
4/19/17	Bronx New School – forestry, plant id	Clearpool Model Forest	40
4/19/17	Harbor Heights – Forestry, watersheds, geology	Clearpool Model Forest	50
4/20/17	Sloatsburg Elementary – wetland ecology, forest ecology, pond study	Clearpool Model Forest	70
4/30/17	Girl Scout Weekend – forestry, wetland ecology, watersheds	Clearpool Model Forest	80
5/2/17	YWLS – forestry, wetland ecology, watersheds	Clearpool Model Forest	40
5/4/17	PS 130 – waste water, watersheds	Clearpool Model Forest	40

5/6/17	Environmental Study Center - wastewater	Clearpool Model Forest	20
5/6/17	PS 54 – watersheds, wastewater	Clearpool Model Forest	40
6/1-6/2/17	Brooklyn friends – pond study, hike	Clearpool Model Forest	70
6/7/17-6/9/17	Wcc – hemlock/invasive, hike, pond study	Clearpool Model Forest	80
6/16/17	NYC environmental study center	Clearpool Model Forest	30
9/1/17-9/8/17	Educators Training	Clearpool Model Forest	10
9/12/17	DEP Educators – WWTP, model forest	Clearpool Model Forest	50
9/28/17	Hewitt School – pond study, hike	Clearpool Model Forest	50
10/4/17	Calhoun school – ecology, water conservations, WWTP	Clearpool Model Forest	50
10/5/17	Institute for Collaborative Studies – ecology, watersheds, hike	Clearpool Model Forest	65
10/18/17	Corlears – forest ecology, hikes	Clearpool Model Forest	25
10/20/17	GC class – botany, forest ecology	Clearpool Model Forest	12
10/24/17	CS 44, Bronx – Ecology, botany	Clearpool Model Forest	40
10/26/17-10/28/17	NYSOEA conference	Clearpool Model Forest	180
9/10/16	Columbia University Students Visit	Siuslaw Model Forest	11
9/15/16	Ginseng Cultivation Workshop	Siuslaw Model Forest	22
9/16/16	Forest Ecology and Silviculture Training	Siuslaw Model Forest	9
9/20/16	Columbia Greene Community College students Siuslaw Model Forest	Siuslaw Model Forest	21
9/20/16-9/21/16	Environmental Awareness Day Siuslaw Model Forest	Siuslaw Model Forest	9/20-140 9/21-210
10/14/16	Windham Ashland Jewett Science club	Siuslaw Model Forest	14
10/20/16	Columbia and Greene Counties Chamber Leadership tour	Siuslaw Model Forest	25
10/23/16	Fall Foraging and Feasting	Siuslaw Model Forest	14

10/26/16	Biodiversity Assessment training	Siuslaw Model Forest	15
Walk-in Visitors		Siuslaw Model Forest	17
11/3/16	Forest Pests and Diseases	Siuslaw Model Forest	7
11/5/16	American Chestnut presentation	Siuslaw Model Forest	23
11/18/16	Windham Ashland Jewett Science Club	Siuslaw Model Forest	13 students 3 adults
11/18/16	Windham Ashland Jewett Science Club	Siuslaw Model Forest	13 students 3 adults
1/6/17	NYCDEP/WAC Forestry Exchange	Siuslaw Model Forest	17
Nov/Dec	Visitors*	Siuslaw Model Forest	12
1/9/17	Greenville Middle School Ecology Club Snow Shoe event	Siuslaw Model Forest	17
1/11/17	Webinar of Growing Chinese Medicinal Plants in Forests	Siuslaw Model Forest	5
1/21/17	Learning Beekeeping	Siuslaw Model Forest	31
7/6/17	4-H Forestry Nationals Prep	Siuslaw Model Forest	6 teens 1 adult
7/14/17	Invasive species program	Siuslaw Model Forest	13
7/15/17	Mushroom Foray	Siuslaw Model Forest	15
7/17/17	MFO refresher class	Siuslaw Model Forest	20
7/17/17	4-H Forestry Nationals Prep	Siuslaw Model Forest	4 teens 1 adult
7/25/17	4-H Forestry Nationals Prep	Siuslaw Model Forest	4 teens 1 adult
	Visitors	Siuslaw Model Forest	14
8/1	Siuslaw Model Forest Advisory Committee meeting	Siuslaw Model Forest	12 attended 3 call-ins
8/26	Mushroom Foray	Siuslaw Model Forest	10
8/9	Bowery Creek Training	Siuslaw Model Forest	16
9/7	Monarch Butterfly Training	Siuslaw Model Forest	8
9/7	Garden Club Ecology Walk	Siuslaw Model Forest	8
9/12-13	Environmental Awareness Day	Siuslaw Model Forest	240 students 20 adults

9/16	Columbia University Students w/WAC	Siuslaw Model Forest	8
9/19	Stream Assessment - Training	Siuslaw Model Forest	24
9/15	Forest Ecology and Silviculture	Siuslaw Model Forest	11
9/21	Learn to Grow Ginseng	Siuslaw Model Forest	26
10/5	Columbia Greene Community College Environmental Science students	Siuslaw Model Forest	12
10/20	Windham Ashland Jewett Science club	Siuslaw Model Forest	10 youth 2 adults (475)
	Visitors	Siuslaw Model Forest	14
7/2/17-8/4/17	Wilderness Survival	Lennox Model Forest	24
7/2/17-8/4/17	Backpacking 2	Lennox Model Forest	84
7/2/17-8/4/17	Nature	Lennox Model Forest	98
9/10/16-11/5/16	Watershed, forest ecology hikes, model forest tours	Frost Valley Model Forest	4331
11/11/16	WAC Bus tour	Frost Valley Model Forest	50
11/15/16-1/20/17	Model forest hikes, Forest/Watershed Ecology classes	Frost Valley Model Forest	4000
1/25/17-2/25/17	Forest Ecology/watershed ecology hikes	Frost Valley Model Forest	1,400
6/15/17-9/15/17	Forest Ecology, Watershed, Hikes	Frost Valley Model Forest	500
Sept.-Nov. 2017	Watershed and Forest Ecology Classes and Hikes	Frost Valley Model Forest	700
	Totals	101	11,055

- 7) *Standardizing landowner education events will facilitate future evaluation and refinement. Any standardizing should allow for the delivery of high priority information while retaining some flexibility in content and style to facilitate landowner satisfaction.*
- a) WAC Forestry Program staff have developed MyWoodlot.com as a means for standardizing forest landowner education. MyWoodlot.com allows family forest owners to create and maintain their own management plans. Family forest owners will populate their plans by selecting from lists of "parts" – goals, activities and supporting information - that have been tailored to suit their reasons for owning forestland and their concerns for their

woodlots. The goals, activities and supporting information have been designed by WAC to communicate high priority information to family forest owners. Refer to the 2017 MyWoodlot Annual Report for more information.

8) *Friday Forestry School has proven to be an effective landowner education tool. Staff should explore the possibility of using this event in whole or modified form as a mechanism for standardizing education events.*

- The “Peer to Peer” approach for educating forest landowners has proven effective in other states. Based on this success the WAC Forestry Program has elected to pursue peer-to-peer forest landowner education in place of implementing Friday Forestry School in its entirety.
- Friday Forestry School was not implemented in its entirety. However, the six objectives of Friday Forestry School were integrated into the Forest Landowner Education efforts held in 2014. Refer to Tables #1, #3, and #5 to determine which Friday Forestry School objective was addressed during each workshop.

#1	Introduce local resources and sources of assistance (NYFOA, MFO’s, WAC), learn the importance of understanding one’s resources and conveying the importance of a forest management plan.
#2	Learn about concepts to help students protect their land including Best Management Practices for roads and trails, timber theft, leasing and conservation easements.
#3	Define and discuss agro-forestry, how it can benefit a landowner and some practical considerations.
#4	Discuss wildlife habitat needs and management for a variety of species. Students will learn about wildlife damage and how to avoid or minimize damage.
#5	Introduce forest ecology and silviculture, forest health, riparian management and planning.
#6	Teach students about how proper planning and management can significantly benefit their position for a timber sale. Topics will include timber sale arrangement, estimating value, timber tax law and timber income tax treatment.

9) *Landowner education event survey and evaluation techniques need to be standardized in order to facilitate review and future refinement.*

10) *An evaluation methodology that tracks landowner participation in education events through the management plan development process and into management plan implementation is necessary in order to evaluate the effectiveness of landowner education efforts.*

Even though WAC no longer funds traditional watershed forest management plans the Forestry Program still uses a variety of methods to help Watershed landowners make decisions that will benefit the region’s forests and water. But how effective are these methods? Are Watershed landowners prepared to make informed decisions about their land that take its conservation value into account?

We use a peer-reviewed landowner survey, the Conservation Awareness Index (CAI), to assess Watershed landowners’ awareness of New York’s Forest Tax Law Program (480-a), conservation easements, timber harvesting, and conservation-based estate planning. CAI is a short, modular, quantitative evaluation tool with almost limitless analytical potential. It can assess differences based on demographics, types of awareness, and individual conservation decisions.

CAI offers greater evaluation potential than traditional participant surveys because it can compare participants and non-participants. It can also reach far more landowners than previous methods. For example, a 2015 CAI survey in the New York City Watershed resulted in more than 900 usable responses, more than every 5-Year Survey combined. CAI also provides in-depth opportunities to study the effectiveness of Watershed landowner education efforts over time, particularly as they relate to crucial conservation decisions like timber harvesting, conservation easements, estate planning, and enrolling in New York’s Forest Tax Law Program.

CAI was implemented for the first time in January 2015. Subsequent deployments of CAI will be conducted at five year intervals. As this data set grows the Forestry Program will be able to evaluate the success of its landowner education efforts in diffusion knowledge to landowners regarding key conservation decisions.

11) *Work with the WAC Agricultural Program, DEP Conservation Easement Program, CRISP and Catskill Stream Buffers Initiative to educate target audiences.*

In 2017 WAC Forestry Program staff assisted WAP, Delaware County Soil & Water Conservation District and NRCS with exploring the potential for integrating CSBI and CREP. The purpose of this collaboration is to expand riparian reforestation efforts to idle agricultural lands not traditionally eligible for CREP. Forestry staff are developing a landowner survey that will assess landowner willingness to participate in CREP given the various costs and benefits. This information, coupled with knowledge gained over an 18 month pilot effort, will facilitate the assessment of this effort and its suitability for continuation, refinement or abandonment.

12) *Review, revise and update educational resources found in current forest management plans as they relate to (1) forest stewardship and sustainability, (2) riparian buffer protection, and (3) invasive species control.*

Although WAC no longer funds traditional watershed forest management plans it remains necessary to insure the best available information about WAC’s priorities is communicated to family forest owners. MyWoodlot is the foundation of WAC’s landowner education efforts. It houses all the information we need landowners to know in order to make positive conservation decisions. Staff draw from this reservoir of knowledge when communicating with landowners by phone, email, during site visits or at education events. It is the place landowners are introduced to the information they need to take positive conservation action. And it is the place they can return to in order to find it over and over again. The following paragraphs summarize the priority knowledge MyWoodlot contains.

Mission-Related Content

To reflect landowners’ diverse interests and questions, MyWoodlot contains more information than just what is in WAC’s mission. Much of this information was also expected of foresters when they prepared Watershed Forest Management Plans: wildlife habitat recommendations, invasive plant control, and recreational uses, to name three. That said, WAC’s mission emphasizes water quality protection and supporting the economic viability of agriculture and forestry. How are these priorities addressed through MyWoodlot’s content?

Water Quality

MyWoodlot addresses water quality protection both directly (activities with a tangible water quality benefit) and indirectly (activities that combat land use change). As of the end of 2017, MyWoodlot has 11 Goals, 40 Activities, and 9 blog posts that support water quality protection.

Direct

Direct water quality protection activities are projects that will have a tangible benefit for water quality. They cover three topics: Best Management Practices, streamside tree planting, and rain garden construction.

Interest	Goal	Activity
Protect Water	Maintain My Trails	Understand Erosion on My Trails

		Assess My Trails
		Clean My Best Management Practices
	Care for My Streamside Areas	Understand My Streamside Areas
		Do a Streamside Health Checkup
		Get Help from the Catskill Stream Buffer Initiative
	Protect My Streams and Trails during Logging	Identify Important Places on My Land
		Understand Best Management Practices
		Include BMPs in My Timber Sale Contract
		Pick Best Management Practices that Work for Me
	Build a Rain Garden	Plan My Rain Garden
		Install My Rain Garden
		Maintain My Rain Garden
Timber Production	Harvest Trees	Clean Up after the Harvest

Blog Posts

1. Culvert 1, 2, 3's
2. Seeps in the Snow (a copy of this blog has been provided in Annex 2 as an example)
3. How to Convert Your Old Log Landing into a Wildlife Food Plot
4. Overlooked and Underfoot: The Water Bar
5. How to Keep Your Arbor Day Tree Alive
6. Obstructions in Streams

Indirect

Indirect protection is largely related to combating land-use change, since forests are the best land cover for water quality protection. There is also content that aims to make landowners aware of the value of water supplies as a way to inspire their protection.

Interest	Goal	Activity
Leaving a Legacy	Decide If Legacy Planning Is for Me	Learn about the Importance of Legacy Planning
		Read Other Landowners' Experiences with Legacy Planning
		Discover Options for Leaving a Legacy
	Determine My and My Family's Needs	Hold a Family Meeting
		Learn My Family Members' Needs with the "Heirloom Scale"
		Walk My Land with My Family
		Write Down My Wishes for My Land
		Get the Legacy Planning Professionals I Need
	Get the Legacy Planning Professionals I Need	Hire a Consulting Forester
		Hire an Estate Planning Attorney
		Hire a Certified Public Accountant (CPA)
	Get a Conservation Easement	Learn about Conservation Easements
		Meet Landowners with Easements
		Contact My Local Land Trust
		Discuss an Easement with My Family
		Get My Land Appraised

		Review Easement Terms with an Attorney
		Discuss Easement Tax Implications with an Accountant
		Close on My Easement
Nature & Wildlife	Discover Nature	Find My Vernal Pools
		Find Out What Lives in My Stream
Reduce Taxes	Enroll in New York's Forest Tax Law Program	Understand 480-a
		Submit Application for WAC Funding
		Contact a Forester to Get a Management Plan
		Submit Plan and Forms to DEC
		Submit Materials to WAC for Payment
		Update My 480-a Enrollment

Blog Posts

1. What Draws Us to Water?
2. A Vernal Pool and a Spotted Salamander
3. How You Can Do Right by This Downstream Dad

Economic Viability

MyWoodlot addresses economic viability in four ways. First, some content directly encourages working the land with professional help. Second, other content encourages landowners to explore a new business. Third, some content helps landowners deal with threats that can lower their woods' economic value now or in the future. Finally, MyWoodlot provides contact lists for professionals where appropriate. As of the end of 2017, MyWoodlot has 15 Goals, 54 Activities, and 10 blog posts that support economic viability.

Working the Land

Properly managed, timber can be a source of long-term, periodic income for landowners. Timber harvesting also creates economic opportunity for loggers, foresters, sawmills, and wood-using businesses.

MyWoodlot encourages the sustainable management of timber through its Timber Production Interest. This interest includes not only a step-by-step process for logging, but also ways to enhance the long-term value of timber, such as by doing timber stand improvement.

Interest	Goal	Activity
Timber Production	Learn If I Can Harvest My Trees	Have a Knowledgeable Landowner Visit My Property
		Have a State Forester Visit My Woodlot
		Get a Written Forest Management Plan
	Invest in My Trees	Do a Woodlot Improvement Cut
		Plant Trees
		Prune My Trees
		Compete in the Northeast Timber Growing Contest
	Harvest Trees	Hire a Consulting Forester
		Mark My Timber
		Make the Sale
Get a Timber Sale Contract		
Carry Out the Harvest		

Blog Posts

1. Management Assistance Program
2. The Northeast Timber Growing Contest Helps Landowners Grow Bigger Healthier Trees (Guest Post)
3. Forester, Logger, Arborist... Which One Do I Want, and How Do I Find Them?

4. Timber Sale Troubles (a copy of this blog has been provided in Annex 1 as an example)
5. Buying Local Firewood Protects Local Forests