

Maine Division
NEW ENGLAND SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FORESTERS

**Maine
Division
Officers 2009**

Chair

Jake Metzler

Forest Society of Maine
115 Franklin St. 3rd Floor
Bangor, ME 04401
(o) 945-9200
(h) 947-7223
(f) 945-9229
(c) 944-5169
(e) jake@fsmaine.org

Chair-Elect

David Maass

SGS
4 Gusnstock Rd.
Scarborough, ME 04074
(o) 883-0504
(h) 883-0504
(c) 240-5228
(e) david.maass@sgs.com

**Secretary/
Treasurer**

Bill Livingston

5755 Nutting Hall
Orono, ME 04469-5755
(o) 581-2990
(h) 827-4500
(f) 581-4257
(e) william_livingston@umenfa.maine.edu

Immediate

Past Chair

Henry Whittemore

FourWinds Capital
Management (US) Inc.
77 Water St.
Hallowell, ME 04347
(o) 622-0244
(h) 685-3258
(f)
(c) 857-207-8723
(e) hwhittemore@fourwindscm.com

Division Manager

Laura Audibert

11 Leopold St.
Fort Kent, ME 04743
(h) 834-6773
(c) 231-0048
(e) la4568@sjv.net

Maine Division Website

www.mesaf.org

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Dear Maine Division Members,

I am writing today, as temperatures outside nudge further upward, buds are swelling, and another successful NESAF Winter Meeting (with more than 440 attendees), hosted by the Maine Division has concluded, to let you know that it's a great day to be a Forester.

At the Winter Meeting there were bumper stickers available that said, *Trees are the Answer*. There were several people who made the predictable joking comment, "yeah but what's the question?" But really, now more than ever it doesn't matter the question, forests can provide the benefits that many people are clamoring for as it relates to everything "green", renewable, sustainable, etc. This reinforces that we need to ensure that the public understands the values of managed forests. Foresters have value to add to the discussion of these social issues because these concepts are not new to us and the answer to many of the questions is forest management. It is incumbent on us as individuals and as a profession to spread the word both through direct interaction and through our work, to ensure that people are aware of the values of forests and our role in their management.

The Maine Division embraces this task in many ways. We proudly provide support to many activities including our Student Chapter members, students in the state's middle and high schools, and teachers to learn more about how forestry concepts can enhance their subjects. We can provide financial support for these activities because of the funds we generate through our Spring and Fall Meetings. Our meetings typically generate healthy income (directly related to non-member attendance), which allows us to continue to keep member registration rates very reasonable and also support our programs.

The support we provide for the UMaine Student Chapter is in the subsidization of their SAF membership dues, as well as travel support for them to attend the NESAF Winter Meeting. We also put a large emphasis on assisting in the education of Maine's high school and grade school students about the values of forests, forestry, and foresters. I think many of us have come to the realization that one of the best ways to educate the public is to start with the kids, so that they can get outside and learn and explore about their forested surroundings, but also they can bring that knowledge and excitement home to their parents as well.

In addition to the support we provide to the groups discussed above, it is also MESAF's role to provide resources and outreach opportunities for our members. Attached to this letter are announcements for two events we are sponsoring this spring. Our traditional fall meeting will be held in Orono again on **October 13**. More details about that meeting will be available in the fall, but please hold the date, for what we expect will be another insightful and worthwhile meeting.

In closing, please also consider volunteering for service in one of the many available roles in our organization. Information on candidates for elected positions need to be in by August so if you have an interest, please don't hesitate to let me know. Please don't fall into the trap of thinking that you need to be "well connected" or have a long history working in the Maine woods to help the organization. As much as life experiences play into the ability to lead and contribute to the Maine Division, the desire to learn and grow as a professional also provide benefits to the membership. We have recently created several incentives for those folks willing to volunteer their time as part of the Executive Committee or even to be nominated as a candidate for a position. I would happily discuss those, as well as the various opportunities available where we need help. Also, please visit the NESAF website (nesaf.org) to look at the various awards that your colleagues can be nominated for. The Executive Committee would gladly assist in the process if you had someone you think is deserving of one of those awards.

Thank you again for your continued support of the Maine Division and I look forward to seeing you soon and discussing what SAF can do to help make you a better forester. Please don't hesitate to contact me about any concerns you have that you think MESAF can help address. Happy Spring!

-Jake