

Maine Division  
NEW ENGLAND SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FORESTERS

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September 10, 2007

Greetings MESAF Foresters:

It was nice to see the first branches starting to turn in the Boundary Mountains yesterday. Still August too. Fall can be a pleasant and productive season. Earlier in the week your executive committee put final details (most of them anyway) into place for our annual fall meeting **"First Class Forestry and Rate of Return: Can We Have Our Trees and Cut Them Too?"**

We have an impressive slate of speakers. The first three are forest managers living with working forest conservation easements, wood supply agreements, certification, and meeting landowner expectations. Chris Zinkhan, SAF, literally wrote the book on Timberland Investments and is Managing Director of The Forestland Group. Blake Brunson, Chief Forester for JD Irving, leads perhaps the largest and most innovative forest management staff in the northern forest. Bob Saul at Grantham, Mayo and van Otterloo rapidly grew one of the largest timberland ownerships in the world. Together, they are responsible for millions of acres throughout Maine. They know us and our forests in a broader context as they are also responsible for millions of acres elsewhere in the US, Canada and abroad. To hone our knowledge a little finer, we asked two resident experts to ground truth first class forestry from the local perspective. Mike Dann, SAF, needs no introduction other than to acknowledge one of Maine's preeminent foresters has turned his considerable skill to SWOAM programs. Mike will provide us insight into the challenges and tools available to forest landowners in Maine, big and small. Finally, we are fortunate to have quite a few home grown success stories among us. As this goes to press, we are still trying to find one who has enough extra time to relate what it takes to grow a land base, integrate it with value added processing and simultaneously fortify the rural economy for many employees, contractors and their families.

During the course of the meeting, Sue Aygarn will encourage you to follow where the Forestry Awareness Committee is heading. The outcome they set sights on is nothing less than incorporating forestry and Maine's forest into a statewide curriculum available to Maine school systems. In their vision, professional foresters will assist teachers implement the study of forests "in their own back yard". The concept is timely, gaining support on State and National levels, evidenced by National SAF's selection of author Richard Louv as Keynote speaker at the National SAF Convention in Portland, Oregon later this fall. Louv's book "Last Child in the Woods: Saving our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder" is a must read. When you finish the book, you might consider donating it to your local library.

Our MESAF business meeting will segue into the main program with an update from the Forester Licensing Task Force. There has been important progress, but as yet there is not a fully functioning board. To keep things fun and lively, we will be tying the Task Force report into the main program with an interactive ethical dilemma. Rene Noel is working with the Association of Consulting Foresters to design a relevant topic as this goes to press.

Financially MESAF is very healthy. The Executive Committee is committed to constantly improving membership value. The meeting program is the most visible component as members pay break-even cost of registration for meetings. Student registrations are below cost. The ample premium from non-member registration fees beefs up meeting programs with the surplus put to further good use. For example, MESAF is enriching student members by picking up travel and expenses associated with attending NESAF meetings (did you notice the Maine student turnout at Lake Morey?), sending interested members to SAF Leadership Academy, waiving registration fees for volunteers, underwriting the Forestry Awareness Committee and more. There is unanimity within your executive committee that above an adequate financial cushion our mission is to distribute funds, not accumulate.

Take a look at the program elsewhere in this mailing and send in your registration soon. We expect another standing room only crowd on October 9<sup>th</sup>.

Best Regards, Gary Bahlkow