

CONNECTICUT



PROFESSIONAL TIMBER  
PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

A PUBLICATION OF THE CONNECTICUT  
PROFESSIONAL TIMBER PRODUCERS  
ASSOCIATION, INC.

FALL  
2023

# *The Cutting Edge*



## Inside This Issue

P. 2-3 TIMPRO News: Mes-  
sage from the President;  
Update on Urban Forestry;  
2023 Plant Science Day by  
Debbie and Mike Hinman

P. 4-5 Celebrate our Scholar-  
ship Winners

P. 6-7 Fire in Our Future

P. 8-9 Meet Logger John "J"  
Wolfe

P. 10 Climate Smart Forestry

P. 11 Thinking Outside the  
Box: Spruce Tip Beer

P. 12 Calendar

Cover Picture: Courtesy Uni-  
versity of Florida

Cover Art: Deborah Roach

## Board of Directors

Kyle Bruetsch - Pres.

Henry Gundlach - VP

Trish Clark - Treas.

Gerald Bellows - Sec.

Clyde Breakell

Stanley Burr Jr.

Robert Carrington

Andrew Clark

Matthew Derby

Peter Hart

Mike Hinman

Douglas Moore

Joan Nichols

David Trowbridge

## Alternates

Crystal Gillotti

Mike Gillotti

**Editor** Hallie Metzger



The Connecticut Professional Timber Producers Association, Inc. (TIMPRO CT) is recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)6 non-profit corporation. Our mission is to enhance the image and understanding of the forest products industry throughout the state through public outreach programs, education, and a commitment to professionalism among our members.

## TIMPRO CT NEWS

---

### LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

I intend to continue our strong roster of programs. I've also been reaching out and trying to get new and old programs lined up such as logger rescue, CPR, truck safety and hazmat just to name a few. It is hard to get people out of the woods during the day when the weather is co-operating, so having engaging courses lined up for members and non-members is a priority. As the new President of TIMPRO CT, I am grateful to our members for sharing their knowledge and years in the business and learning from them. Kyle Bruetsch

### UPDATE ON URBAN FORESTRY

Our Winter 2021 issue reported CT-DEEP's appointment of Danica Doroski as State Urban Forester. On September 13, we learned what she has accomplished when she talked about her work at Yale's Hixon Center Urban Conference – "Urban Forests: Solutions for a Changing Climate." A forest ecologist by training, Doroski described how her CT-DEEP unit has grown from a small unit on a shoestring budget to an adequately funded state program making a real difference in communities that have lacked open space and adequate tree canopy.

She emphasized the lead time it has taken to hire staff, to help develop projects, and to guide community groups unfamiliar with how to apply for grants. One big challenge has been defining and quantifying the extent of urban forests. Until now, many communities did not even have a good working definition of Urban Forest let alone accurate acreage or tree counts. In fact, Conference participants from all over the country described the patchwork of departments that manage urban forests, i.e. Parks, Sanitation, and a host of others.

Another challenge has been modifying laws impeding best practices. For example, many municipalities have a law preventing urban foresters from taking down trees over a certain DBH. But many of these large trees are invasives that prevent regeneration of natives. One participant said he had to get a permit for each large tree he wanted to take down. And then there were invariably angry neighbors who wanted to know why the tree was gone!

### Membership in the Connecticut Professional Timber Producers Association

Membership is open to sawmills, loggers, foresters, landowners, supporting businesses and anyone else interested in supporting the forest products industry in Connecticut. Benefits include educational programs, a voice in the Connecticut Legislature, a listing on the TIMPRO CT website, current information on issues affecting the forest products industry, discounts from area businesses, a free subscription to *The Cutting Edge* and more.

Dues are \$150/year. \$25.00 for student memberships.

Applications are available by calling TIMPRO CT at 860-948-0432 or visiting the website at [www.timproct.org](http://www.timproct.org).



## 2023 PLANT SCIENCE DAY — DEBBIE AND MIKE HINMAN

We represented Timpro at the 113<sup>th</sup> Plant Science Day held August 2 on the Lockwood Farm at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station in Hamden CT. In the main pavilion, state scientists gave talks about agriculture, environment, health, and food safety. There were displays with working demos across the grounds. Timpro had a well-stocked booth explaining what we are about.

Recent wildfires are making people more aware of the need to manage forests and to reduce fuel buildup. Articles coming from USDA, USFS and State of CT DEEP about managed forests are helping to educate people about good silviculture.

One person approached our display with a negative view of logging. But after talking with us, he gained a new appreciation for what we do. Before he left, he thanked us for helping him understand what good silvicultural management is all about.



*Photos courtesy of Debbie and Mike Hinman*



## MEET OUR 2023 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



There are few outdoor pursuits Fejzo Daniel Akaratovic hasn't mastered. Fejzo (pronounced Fay-zo), who will attend UConn, is certified in First Aid for Severe Trauma as well as Adult and CPR/AED and First Aid; Firearms Hunting; Archery Hunting; Basic Trapping; and Personal Water Craft. A graduate of Glastonbury High School, he has an endorsement for Coyote Land Trapping. And if that isn't enough, he was Connecticut State Chair for the Carp Anglers group and holds a record for a Bowfin catch in 2021 and 2022.

Yet he says he doesn't come from an outdoorsy family. "My father took me along fishing with his friends when I was about six. He had basic equipment and went fishing every once in a while to Wethersfield Cove. Soon enough I couldn't wait to fish again and I would ask to go." The neighborhood offered many opportunities including fishing for carp at Spring Street Pond. By the age of eleven, Fejzo was allowed to go fishing on his own.

Fejzo also trains hunting dogs. His beagles have won four ribbons in field trials. And he has a coon hound he's taking out every evening so she's learning to recognize smells and sounds.

Working in tobacco fields, he has earned enough to buy his own fishing boat, a 12' V-Haul aluminum boat and now has a 7.3 power stroke truck. "I've worked hard for my stuff and I take care of it," he said. His hard work has also paid off in academics and he is a member of the National Honor Society. He credits his FFA Agriculture teacher, Logan Tyler, for encouraging him.

Then came trapping. "Landowners sometimes call me to remove beavers from a small stream. I have sold beaver pelts to Native American tribes for dream hoops and muskrat pelts for silencers on traditional bow strings."

In his scholarship application essay, Fejzo wrote, "If I was born 100 years earlier, I'd be chasing the money of the fur trade, but today trappers chase the beauty of the outdoors. It's not about the money for me, but more about the wildlife and time spent outdoors. It is truly a



*Fejzo above with one of his beagles.  
On right with prizewinning bowfin.*

*Photos courtesy of Fejzo Akaratovic*



Noah Green is very clear that being a Boy Scout brought him to this point in his life. "That was definitely something in the earlier part of my life," he explained during a phone interview. "I started as a Cub Scout. When Covid came, things changed. But in terms of what I learned, it really fostered my interests such as forestry and wildlife management and spending time outdoors." One of his Scout projects was maintenance on Land Trust trails. More recently he's been working outside of Boy Scouts maintaining land trust trails and clearing out invasive species.

"I never did much hunting but I've really enjoyed hiking, especially with the Boy Scouts," he said. One Scout project was submitting each of the tallest peaks in New England. It took a couple of years but he made each climb: Bear Mountain in Connecticut; Katahdin in Maine; Greylock in Massachusetts; Mount Washington in New Hampshire; Jerimoth Hill in Rhode Island; and Mount Mansfield in Vermont. "Doing these all the time really fostered my appreciation in the outdoors and made me think of protecting the outdoors," he added. Closer to home, he has spent time roaming Great Mountain Forest.

In addition to hiking, Green has always been an avid fisherman. But while most of his friends like trout fishing, he prefers bass. "I used to go with my dad and friends to places

like Lake Champlain and Lake George. I did a lot as a Boy Scout," he reflected. That interest led to taking courses in Fisheries Management at Northwestern Regional High School where the class raised its own fish in aquaculture tanks including some wild species but also tilapia. His instructor John Farrell was a big influence in that course. Green also worked in the school's sugaring operation.

But equally powerful is the hands-on education and instruction he got outside the class room from neighbor Henry Gundlach, TIMPRO CT Vice President: "Since my freshman year, thanks to Henry Gundlach, I've worked with his cows, especially Spring, and a heifer that belongs to the school," Green said.

An Honor Roll student at Northwestern from which he graduated this June, Green has tailored his courses to prepare for studies in Natural Resource Management at the University of Connecticut in Storrs. He hopes also to have time to continue competitive swimming. He was Team Captain of the Varsity Swim and Dive Team at Northwestern.

Living in the UConn dorms, he'll miss his parents and two older brothers. He'll also miss Toby, his 14-year-old Yellow Lab, and Doodles, his 15-year-old cat. But he's eager to take the next steps towards a career. "My parents have always been supportive of everything I've wanted to do," he said. "I remain optimistic about my future and I'm excited to see where it will take me."



*Above: Noah on Mount Katahdin. Right: with trophy From Berkshire League Competition*

*Photos courtesy of Noah Green*



## NEWS YOU CAN USE

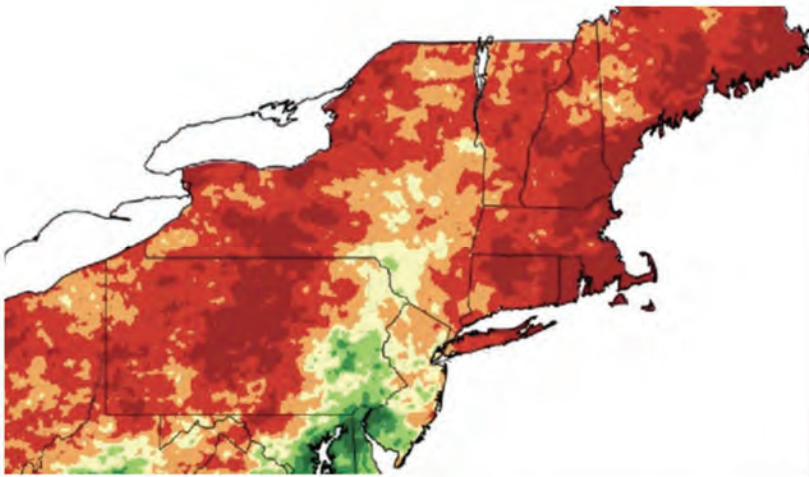
---

### FIRE IN OUR FUTURE

Almost 50 years ago, I was taught that New England forests are "fire-proof" thanks to evenly distributed and steady rainfall, or would be if it weren't for careless people. As Smokey the Bear always warned, "Only you can prevent forest fires."

Now the recent pall of smoke from Canadian fires is a warning that our forests face fire threats from climate change. Yet fire is an important management tool. In 2022, CT-DEEP conducted prescribed burns at Matianuck Natural Area Preserve, among others, stating that fire "is a tool that can effectively maintain this habitat, without having to use chemical control of invading plants." The DEEP also noted that fire returns nutrients to the soil and allows native grasses to flourish.

Climate change described below increases risks. It will take more than Smokey the Bear to keep our forests safe! Editor



A

*Northeast Regional Climate Center map from June to August 2020 showing extreme drought and reduced groundwater recharge.*

In September 2021, The Providence Journal predicted that New England would see more wildfires as a result of global warming and droughts. Climate change is causing heavier rains to fall within shorter periods of time, potentially leaving longer dry spells amid rising temperatures. New England winters also see far less snow. 2020 was a record-breaking wildfire year for Maine and a May 2021 brush fire in western Massachusetts became the largest wildland fire in the state in more than two decades.

The Journal quoted Jeff Currier, regional forest ranger for the Maine Forest Service:

"It's real. We're at this crossroads with weather, the volunteer firefighter shortage and more people in the state." He called 2020's wildfire numbers in Maine "off the rails," due in large part to an increase in pandemic-prompted back country tourism and campfires gone wrong.

The National Wildfire Preparedness Level was at PL5 – indicating the highest level of wildland fire activity – beginning July 14, only the third time in the last 20 years the country has reached that level by mid-July.

It's important to note that humans cause over 90% of our forest fires. The growing "wildland urban interface" increases opportunities for human ignition. No surprise that the cost of wildfires is growing. The First Street Foundation, a nonprofit climate research group based in New York, estimated costs associated with wildfires accelerated faster than any other climate hazard since 1990 – growing from \$1 billion per year in the '90s to \$16.6 billion in 2020.

Dan Dillner, a protection forester and fire response coordinator for the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, is still worried about how conditions have changed on the ground over time. "We are concerned about what the future's gonna bring," he said. "I don't think folks in the Northeast are quite in that mindset yet. It doesn't matter what the fuels are, what the soils are. If it doesn't rain for a long enough period of time, it's going to be dry."



As Smokey Bear says "Only you can prevent wildfires!"

*Courtesy CT-DEEP Website*

## **PRESCRIBED FIRES CURB TICK POPULATIONS**

A recent study in Florida indicates that prescribed fires may have an unexpected benefit. The study is available from Ask IFAS, a user-friendly hub of information on topics ranging from gardening to agriculture to family resources ([ask.ifas.ufl.edu](http://ask.ifas.ufl.edu)).

University of Florida scientists reported that important pollinators survive the temporary displacement of prescribed burns while ticks "often lose the battle."

Raelene Crandall, associate professor in the UF/IFAS School of Forest, Fisheries, and Geomatics Sciences noted, "Bees that use forests as habitat either burrow underground or fly out of the fire, and later they benefit from the renewed pollination resources that then have the space to regrow. But ticks need to catch a ride out of the forest, or they can't escape the flames."

The document "Bees and Fire: How does Fire in Longleaf Pine Savannas Affect Bee Communities?" summarizes a collection of studies that explains how bees benefit from fires. Bee death during fire is rare, the document notes, and as the burned area rebounds, the natural flower diversity increases within several months.

Ticks, on the other hand, can be controlled with fire. In the document "Prescribed fire as a tool for controlling tick populations in the southeastern United States," Crandall found fire can be used intentionally to suppress the population of disease-carrying ticks. It wouldn't eradicate them, but any survivors would also continue to feed opossums, turkeys and other animals one link up the food chain.

"The temperature alone can kill the ticks directly," said Crandall. "But it's also leaving behind a more open canopy that doesn't provide a favorable habitat for ticks."



*A prescribed burn underway. Photo courtesy of the University of Florida.*





## Bits and Chokers

### MEET LOGGER JOHN "J" WOLFE



John (J) Wolfe has seen it all. "When I was a little kid, my parents logged with horses," he said. "My parents couldn't afford a babysitter so I was in the woods with them. They were both really good with horses. My dad handled most of the chainsaw work so he'd limb and cut logs and then cut up firewood. My mom and a whole bunch of us kids helped and another close friend of my parents split the wood. The hardest working horse did the skidding. When the horses weren't needed, they stood waiting."

We had a wagon with tall wheels. We'd throw the split wood on the wagon and then pull it out of the woods. My dad would skid the logs out with his biggest horses. He'd bring the wood right to the mills in a Chevy C50, from the 60's, a flat bed dump truck. We'd throw the firewood off the wagon into the same truck."

J switched to machinery when he began working for somebody else. "I started with a cable skidder and chainsaw when I was 13. I did that until I was out of high school and started on my own." In 2016, he started mechanized logging with a whole-tree cutter. "It's completely different!," he explained. "I can cut the lowest value tree and still make money. It's much easier on my body. But I can't bring my kids to work. It's much more dangerous. My dad would cut 6 -7 trees a day. I can cut 100-150 in a day when I'm logging with the harvester, even more if they're small. But I still spend half my time cutting with a chainsaw."

J grew up in Cornwall and went to school there. Since graduating high school 28 years ago, he has learned on the job. "I mostly learned from my dad and the friend I worked for. I had to figure out mechanization on my own. I've been in business on my own for 26 years." Looking back J acknowledges, "It is much harder to cut low value trees with horses but they do have much less impact on the ground and on other trees because they are small and light. So horse logging in some situations could be very good for the woods."

Currently J works a couple of jobs at once to take advantage of good weather whenever he can. He works certain sites in rainy weather and others when the weather is dry. The rainy weather site, for example, is almost all exposed rock and there's a gravel road. When not at a logging site, he keeps bees, raises some beef cattle and chickens and does small-scale farming.

"I really like what I do," he sums up. "I love the woods."





## LOGGING THROUGH THE YEARS



A special thank you to J for scanning and sharing these pictures of his family's early logging days.

Opposite page upper left: J showed early mechanical skill tinkering with an old saw.

Opposite page below: J at work with more modern equipment.

This page left: Skidding with one of his family's horses.

This page below: The wagon ready for a load of split wood .



## "CLIMATE SMART FORESTRY" (CSF)



Lauren Cooper and David MacFarlane of the Michigan State University's Forestry Department have published their research on the need to expand and share understanding of the term "Climate Smart Forestry" (CSF). This is essential for policymakers, natural resource managers, and others – especially foresters and loggers. The researchers started with a thorough review of the literature, then looked at different policy and practice assessments, and finally did a statistical analysis of data from related studies

Cooper and MacFarlane note that people assume they know what they're talking about when they talk about CSF. But there is little clarity about what that means on the ground. As a result, there is what they call a "science-practice gap."

Currently CSF has three objectives:

- ◆ Increase carbon storage in forests and wood products, along with other "ecosystem services", i.e. improving soil retention of rainfall.
- ◆ Enhance human health and community resilience through adaptive forest management.
- ◆ Use wood resources sustainably as a substitute for non-renewable, carbon-intensive materials.

To close the "science-practice gap," the researchers propose adding two additional goals:

- ◆ Protect natural places by avoiding the loss of forests, maintaining intact and complex forests, protecting biodiversity.
- ◆ Promote restoration of degraded landscapes, improve ecosystem function and connectivity, i.e. wildlife corridors.

Further, Cooper and MacFarlane noted that concern about carbon sequestration rates or storage narrows our understanding of climate benefits. It does not fully consider the long-term resilience of forests and other factors. They propose adding tree longevity and biomass residency to data so that we can more accurately analyze varied forest types.

Finally, Cooper and MacFarlane identify the following gaps in the current understanding of CSF.

- ◆ Oversimplification of the relationship between carbon sequestration and forest management.
- ◆ Emphasis on above-ground tree volume as opposed to below ground roots and surface biomass.
- ◆ "Carbonization" of forest values.
- ◆ Unequal distribution of benefits from CSF.
- ◆ Misinterpretation of climate effects.
- ◆ Overlooking economic misalignments.

These gaps play out in campaigns to ban logging to the detriment of local economies. And such campaigns, Cooper and MacFarlane suggest, may not even achieve the goal of strengthening forests or sequestering carbon.



## SPRUCE TIP BEER

Brew masters are always looking for something new – a flavor or a way of creating a distinctive beer. Snake venom beer, anyone?

But the New England Forest Foundation (NEFF) has something plant-based on offer. It has partnered with Dirigible Brewing Company in Littleton, Massachusetts to produce a Spruce Tip Beer using sustainably harvested tips from Red Spruce (*Picea rubens*) on its Lincoln Davis Memorial Forest property in Sharon, New Hampshire. A July 26 release party gave guests a behind-the-scenes tour. All ticket sales went directly to NEFF's conservation programs.



Collectively, the 670-acre Lincoln Davis-Cabot-Morse Memorial Forests are managed to NEFF's Exemplary Forestry Standards to improve standing timber quality and wildlife habitat. The property offers views of Mount Monadnock and connects with the Wapack Trail. Red spruce, a wide-ranging and tolerant northeast native, is abundant on the property

Its tips are considered a complimentary ingredient to hops to give Pale Ale a sweet, citrusy flavor. Wildlife such as moose enjoy nibbling on the tips and not just because they taste good. Spruce needles are exceptionally high in Vitamin C. Frozen or dried, spruce tips are a good source of vitamin C during wintertime. They also contain carotenoids. Spruce buds are rich in minerals such as potassium and magnesium. Spruce needles have long been used by indigenous tribes to relieve coughs and sore throats.

In fact, brewing beer with spruce or other firs is not new. An ancient Finnish saga written down in the 19<sup>th</sup> century tells of brewing beer for the wedding of a chieftain's daughter. A white squirrel is sent out with these instructions:

"Hasten through the heavy tree-tops,  
Wisely through the thickest branches,  
That the eagle may not seize thee,  
Thus escape the bird of heaven.  
Bring me ripe cones from the fir-tree,  
From the pine-tree bring me seedlings,  
Bring them to the hands of Kapo,  
For the beer of Osmo's daughter."

(*Kalavela*, Rune XX)



And in 1778 Captain John Knox wrote down a recipe for spruce beer stating:

"It is made of the tops and branches of the Spruss-tree, boiled for three hours, then strained into cask, with a certain quantity of molasses; and, as soon as cold, is fit to use."

So raise a mug and celebrate a centuries-old tradition for using this ingredient.



PO Box 508  
Oneco, CT 06373

**CT Professional Timber  
Producers Association**

**Look for mailings or check the  
website for further details and  
any changes to the Calendar of  
Events.**

**Ideas for classes you would  
like offered?**

**Contact TIMPRO CT:**

**PO Box 508**

**Oneco, CT 06373**

**860-948-0432**

**info@timproct.org**

**Articles, ideas, pictures  
you'd like to see?**

**hallie.metzger@gmail.com**

**CHECK OUR WEBSITE TIMPROCT.ORG FOR LISTINGS**

**Get Involved**

The Board of Directors is seeking members who are interested in helping out with various activities throughout the year such as CEU programming, fairs, Ag Days at the State Capitol in March, Plant Science Day in August in Hamden, programs at the Agriscience Centers and more. The Board, made up of business owners, just like yourselves, is keenly aware of the demands on your time. Any amount of time, no matter how minimal, is greatly needed.

Contact TIMPRO CT for more information:

860-948-0432 or e-mail: info@timproct.org.