

## A Municipal Official's Guide to Forestry in New York State

Definition of Forest Use – A wooded area, whether managed or unmanaged, that may include conservation of wildlife habitat, provision of outdoor recreation, production of timber and forest crops, protection of water quality, regulation of water flows, conservation of soil, carbon sequestration and/or protection of aesthetic qualities.

Timber harvesting:

1. Must be in accordance with the comprehensive plan
2. State 2003 Right to Practice Forestry law (Town Law Section 263) town must identify forest uses allowed and desirable in the town. Town must distinguish between forestry uses and/or sustainable forestry practices. This may avoid use variances (pg 11). Towns may have review by boards or enforcement officers (temporary permit). Appropriate zoning with a density standard of one allowed dwelling per 10 or 20 acres of forest land. Permit sawmills
3. Can require forester-approved harvest plan. Can require a base fee for all harvests and an additional component that is acreage related.
4. Page 16
5. Standards for clearing of land for development. Can require trees with a specified diameter breast height remain (forester on retainer).

Laws: page 8

1. US Army Corp – permit for stream crossings
2. NY DEC – permit for stream crossings; minimum residual stand density in wetlands; silviculture and managed timber harvesting are exempt.
3. NY DOT – road and weight limits on roads. Towns can control seasonal use, protect against road damage and prohibit leaving mud or debris on roadways.

\*NY State Forestry BMP field guide; NY Logger Training; Cooperative Forest Management Program etc.

Sample ordinance language pg 20