

## **2023 Solicitation and Announcement Master Forest Owner Volunteer Training**

Have you ever thought about using your knowledge and skill to help your neighbor woodland owners? Join the hundreds of woodland owners who have served their neighbors since 1993.

As a woodland owner you have a unique perspective and status that allows you to serve as a peer-to-peer counselor to help other woodland owners in your area. Your existing skills are enhanced by educational resources available through Cornell Cooperative Extension and Cornell's [ForestConnect](#) program. Learn how to merge your skills with existing resources so you can be a volunteer that helps other woodland owners more thoroughly enjoy and manage their property. You are invited to the annual training for Cornell's Master Forest Owner (MFO) volunteers. MFO volunteers work through Cornell Cooperative Extension to visit woodland owners in their county and direct them towards resources that help them manage their woodlands. This training is open for new volunteers and previously trained volunteers seeking a refresher.

Applicants selected to participate will join in 7 weekly online sessions via Zoom, and subsequently meet in person in May-June for a one-day field session at one of multiple locations within the state. Online sessions are 6:30 – 7:30PM Wednesdays March 21 through May 2. These sessions include 2 orientation sessions and 5 technical content sessions which provide participants increased knowledge about: woodland ecology and health, wildlife and habitat, interfering vegetation management, silviculture, and agroforestry. Participants should plan to allocate 3-4 hours per week to learn the technical content via guided online learning and spend an hour per week in a live interactive discussion session.

All woodland owners in NY are welcome. Owners interested in becoming a volunteer should start the online application process [here](#). The fee is \$35 per person and \$50 per couple which includes the full training and supplies and resources provided at the field session. Previously trained volunteers are also welcome at \$18/person and \$25/couple.

For consideration to participate in the training, follow these steps to be completed by March 14:

1. Complete registration application via the link above, and after reviewing background materials [here](#) and training information [here](#).
2. Be alert to an email from your regional director to meet via Zoom after completing your application.
3. Payment made via a secure online link provided to you after you talk with your regional director.

Within 6 months of the training:

1. Have a visit on your property conducted by an existing MFO volunteer (for newly trained volunteers)
2. Shadow a visit with a local MFO volunteer to a woodland owner in your area.

If you have any questions about the MFO program, you can learn more at [www.CornellMFO.info](http://www.CornellMFO.info) or from Program Director Peter Smallidge at [pjs23@cornell.edu](mailto:pjs23@cornell.edu) or 607-592-3640. You can also contact the Regional Director for your county [here](#).