Despite the enthusiasm of several participants in the Northeast Timber Growing Contest (see The New York Forest Owner 51:2, p.12), I was reluctant to take part. The thought of getting out into the woods with tape measure and clipboard to measure and record hundreds of trees was daunting. I estimated this would take many, many hours. Besides, the woodshed wasn’t filled yet. However, veteran “tree measurer” and Timber Growing Contest co-developer Dean Faklis convinced me that the tree measuring should take four hours or less, and he even offered to come over and help. I couldn’t refuse.

The production category I chose to enter was “basal area increment.” To prepare for the actual measurement, I bought 200 pre-numbered aluminum tags (www.benmeadows.com), borrowed my neighbor’s handheld laser range finder and downloaded the appropriate submission sheets from www.TimberContest.com. I reread our Forest Management Plan and selected the stand where we had the best trees, some of our better soils (Lordstown and Manlius soils) and had already completed TSI and invasive plant control. The stand was moderately sloped and faced towards the west.

Dean arrived on a beautiful August day with a 4 1/2 foot measuring stick in hand. Before heading down into the woods, we convinced my wife Sarah to take part. Besides being very interested in our woods and being very active in The New York Forest Owner’s Association, she tends to be organized and has neat handwriting. It turns out that three people is the perfect number to make the measuring go very quickly.

After walking around a bit, we selected three plots that were a few hundred feet apart. Each plot was 0.25 acre or within a 58.9 feet radius. With Sarah standing at the center of the plot with the laser rangefinder and submission form clipboard, Dean and I headed around in a circle while going back and forth to each tree in turn. The laser rangefinder told us instantly if a tree was in or out of the plot. If it was in, an aluminum numbered tag was nailed to the bottom of the tree just above the ground using aluminum nails, the measuring stick was held vertically with its bottom end resting on the aluminum nail, and the tree diameter was measured at the top of the 4 1/2 foot long measuring stick. We used a tape that was linear on one side and had diameter in inches, 10ths, and 100ths on the other side (www.forestry-suppliers.com). While Sarah recorded the diameter, Dean and I selected the
Timber Growing Contest (continued)

next tree. Trees under 6" diameter at breast height were omitted.

We were done with all three plots in about three hours. The process went smoothly, efficiently and was actually fun. Plot one contained 32 trees, with shagbark hickory, sugar maple and oak (red, black and white). Plot two contained 40 trees of the same species plus pignut hickory (we think). Plot three contained 44 trees of the same species.

With the measurements in hand, the next step was to enter the data into the correct spreadsheet found at www.timbercontest.com. The basal area for plot one was 39.86 square feet, for plot two was 38.74 square feet, and for plot three was 40.42 square feet. We were surprised at how the three plots were nearly identical in basal area at about 160 square feet per acre. This was higher than we had expected based on the initial inventory done to prepare our Forest Management Plan. That plan, done in the winter of 2008, listed the basal area in this stand at 100 square feet. A moderate intensity Timber Stand Improvement project in 2011 had been completed with the goal of cutting basswood and white ash around potential crop trees which was expected to reduce basal area to 80 square feet. It will be interesting to compare our results with the data in our five year plan update, which has not yet been released.

Next year it will be easy to remeasure these trees and calculate the increase in basal area. Win or lose, it was fun getting out into the woods, identifying the trees and picking what looked like the best trees. It was a pleasant few hours, now if only the woodshed could be filled up quickly.

Charles Stackhouse is Vice President of the NYFOA board.

NYFOA Awards

At the annual membership meeting each year, NYFOA presents several awards:

The Heiberg Memorial Award recognizes outstanding contributions to forestry and conservation in New York.

The NYFOA Outstanding Service Award recognizes outstanding service to the NYFOA membership and furtherance of NYFOA’s mission.

NYFOA’s Chapter Activity Award thanks a volunteer individual or couple from each chapter for helping the Chapter to operate in reaching members and other private forest owner outreach in the area. Each Chapter is urged to name one volunteer individual or couple each year for recognition by the state membership at the annual meeting in 2015.

Please send the name of your nominations for awardees, and any suggestions on individuals who might be interested in serving on the State Board to Ron Pedersen by January 1, 2015.

Ron Pedersen
22 Vandenburg Lane, Latham, NY 12110
Email: rwp22@nycap.rr.com

Are you interested in a particular topic and would like to see an article about it.

Please send your suggestions to:
Mary Beth Malmsheimer
Editor
The New York Forest Owner
at mmalmshe@syr.edu

Please share this magazine with a neighbor and urge them to join NYFOA.
By gaining more members, NYFOA’s voice will become stronger!

Wanted: Landowners for Member Profiles! As many of you know, we include a member landowner profile in each issue of the Forest Owner magazine. The next several issues of the Forest Owner, especially in 2015, will be highlighting various aspects of forest regeneration or restoration. Do you have any experiences related to your efforts, successes, or failures with forest regeneration? If so, we would love to hear from you and any others that would be interested in being interviewed for the profile. If interested, please visit: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/OwnerProfile and we will be in touch. The time commitment is only about 30 minutes for the interview.

Even if you don’t have any stories to tell about regeneration we are still interested in hearing from you if you would like to be profiled for the Forest Owner. Any questions? Please contact me at the number or e-mail below.

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