

A REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE OF REFORESTATION AND
FOREST MANAGEMENT IN NEW YORK

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The area north of New York City is commonly referred to as the lower Hudson Valley and Catskill region. This general geographic area represents one of the fastest changing trends in land use in the state. Reforestation has been very important in the region since the turn of the century. The first state nursery was located here as the early residents became concerned about the decline of forests from logging and agriculture. The Civilian Conservation Corp was responsible in planting many of the larger reforestation areas in the Catskill. In the 1930's increased efforts began to establish secure watersheds on public and private land to meet the demands of a rapidly increasing population in New York City.

Trends have changed in recent years concerning reforestation in this area. People continue to plant trees but in smaller quantities. I suspect many variables are responsible with the major ones being land values, change of ownership, the cost of establishing forests and the associated costs of land ownership. One popular use of seedlings is for Christmas tree production, particularly cut your own operations. More and more people are getting involved in this industry when they purchase property for weekend or second homes.

Because we are dealing with absentee landowners or displaced

urbanites, education in forest management is very important. Regional staff utilize workshops, talks and tours to reach as many people as possible. We sometimes become people managers more than forest managers but education is the key to bring environmental concerns into perspective. Aesthetics and tourism are major industries in our area. People need to know about the principles of forest management as well as associated problems such as insect and disease infestations.

In summary, we have seen a trend concerning reforestation where more people are taking advantage of our nursery program but planting smaller quantities. The pressures of high land assessments, development, subdivision and land use changes are a challenge to the professional staff and a major concern in setting forest resource management goals for the future.