



2025 ESFPA/ARC Fall Forestry Roundtable

Location: SUNY Adirondack, Northwest Bay Conference Center, 640 Bay Rd, Queensbury, NY 12804

Date and time: Monday November 3, 2025, 8:45 AM - 4:00 PM

Organizer: Dan Fitts, (518) 241-6186, adkresearchconsortium@gmail.com

Overview:

- **8:00 a.m. Registration**
- **8:45 a.m. Opening Remarks:**
 - Dan Fitts, Executive Director, Adirondack Research Consortium
 - John Bartow, Executive Director, Empire State Forest Products Association
- **9:00 – 9:45 a.m. Session 1 NYS Reforestation, Regenerate NY and State Forest Update**
 - **Jason Drobnack, Chief, Bureau of Forest Resources Management, NYS DEC**
 - **Molly Hassett, Supervising Forester, Climate Forestry & Carbon Unit, NYS DEC**
 - This session will present an update on New York's reforestation efforts, the Regenerate New York program and State Forest program activities. We will present the latest on our efforts in pursuing Governor Hochul's 25 million Trees goal, work with private forest landowners on advancing afforestation and reforestation efforts and work on State Forests. We will seek feedback on program changes that we have been advancing as well as ideas that we have been receiving from stakeholders.
- **9:45 – 11:15 a.m. Session 2 – RPTL 480a and Future Forest Tax Policy**
 - Since Real Property Tax Law Section 480a was adopted in 1972, there has been talk of amending it to make it simpler and more inclusive of forest stewardship objectives. As part of the work of the Climate Scoping Plan Agriculture and Forestry Working Group, there were several recommendations for amending RPTL Section 480a and to adopt new provisions for broadening forest stewardship tax benefits. This panel will flush out some of those proposals from the Climate Scoping Plan as well as new concepts that have arisen in the years since the Scoping Plan. The panel will also discuss what may be necessary to bring diverse stakeholders along to reach consensus on changes in forest tax law that would make the program more attractive to forest landowners and beneficial for New York's forests.
 - **Moderator – Robert Malmsheimer, SUNY College of Environmental Science & Forestry**
 - **Panelists:**
 - Christopher Prentiss, NYS Association of Consulting Foresters
 - Jeff Denkenberger, Molpus Woodlands Group
 - Jackie Bowen – Adirondack Council
 - Claudia Bramer – Executive Director, Protect the Adirondacks

- Robert Somers – Private Forest Landowner, NY Forest Owners Association
 - Jim Townsend, Esq. – Advisor & Counsel, Adirondack Landowners Association
 - Fionna Watt, NYS DEC, State Forester, Director, Div of Lands & Forests
- **Session 3: 11:15 a.m. – 12 noon - Assessing the Climate Value of New York’s Wood Products**
 - **Dr. Obste Therasme, Associate Professor, SUNY ESF**
 - Tool for Assessing Carbon-Storing Materials (TACSMA), developed by the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY ESF) with support from NYSERDA, can help manufacturers of wood and other forest-based materials quantify the impact of their products. This presentation introduces the fundamentals of Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) and Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs), key methods for measuring and communicating environmental performance. It addresses the opportunities for New York’s wood products. The session highlights how collaboration among manufacturers, researchers, and policymakers can showcase New York’s leadership in low-carbon, wood-based innovation and strengthen the state’s transition toward a climate-smart, circular economy.
- **Lunch 12:00 p.m.**
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- **Session 4: 1:00 – 1:45 p.m. – Forest Connects**
 - **Peter Smallidge – NYS Extension Forester, Cornell CALS**
 - Update on ForestConnect. The Cornell CALS statewide extension forestry program integrates applied research and extension in support of people who make decisions about the management of forests. This presentation will describe the breadth of the ForestConnect program, and provide an update on recent, current, and pending projects.
- **Session 5: 1:45- 3:30 p.m.- Mass Timber**
 - The future of New York’s forests needs new opportunities in markets and uses for wood products. Using wood in mass timber and in addressing embodied carbon is one opportunity we want to explore in this panel. Mass timber construction is still in its infancy, especially in the US. But there are clear reasons to believe that it will become much more common. Mass timber provides a much-desired carbon sink, allows for rapid construction, and can provide cost savings not just in time but also in a reduced need for finish materials because the structural wood product can also serve as a finish. Bringing together panelists that have design and research experience in the use of wood in buildings and in deploying mass timber projects is the primary goal of this panel.
 - **Moderator** – John Bartow, Empire State Forest Products Association
 - **Panelists:**
 - Martin Hopp – AIA, RIBA Martin Hopp Architecture
 - Dr. Paul Crovella – Associate Professor, SUNY ESF
 - Eamon Carey – Dir. Of Jurisdiction & Agreements, NYC and Vicinity District Council of Carpenters
 - Gizem Karazog – Assistant Vice President, NYC Economic Development Corp.
 - Lee Scott – Director of Sales, North America, Element 5 (via Zoom)
 - Leslie Karasin – Adirondack Program Director, Northern Forest Center
- **3:30 p.m. – Action Steps and Wrap-up**
 - Moderators John Bartow and Robert Malmsheimer
- **4:00 p.m. Close**