



2017 ANNUAL REPORT

*Protecting Forested Land &
Supporting Rural Communities
Through Working Forests*

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The Foundation At a Glance

925+

Acres of forest protected, with
current projects and bequests
of several thousand more



134

Memberships in 2017 energize the organization and
are ambassadors of its Mission.
Thank you!



1

Exciting new partnership in 2017 with the 1st ever
Shared Gift with Allegheny College-
The Bail Family Forest



President's Message



During 2017, the Bail family donated a property in Spring Township, Crawford County, to the Foundation in partnership with Allegheny College. The acquisition will help in our efforts for sustainability and also provide an area that Allegheny College students can use for outdoor classwork projects and research endeavors. This was the first property protected under the FSF's Shared Gift Program, and we are hopeful that more will follow.

Our principal goal is the protection of forested lands, primarily through ownership and then using the sustainable proceeds from these properties to support our mission.

In time, we will acquire sufficient acreage to support the FSF's operations in perpetuity. At year's end, the FSF owned and stewarded approximately 925 acres of forested land. As the result of two, possibly three, large projects that members of our organization have been involved with for several years, we hope to acquire for protection another 850 to 1,060 acres during 2018, thus doubling our current holdings. These acquisitions will not make us self-sufficient at this time, but with careful stewarding they will come to sustain the FSF and its mission in the future. If we are successful, it is certainly a huge step forward.

It is important to note here an important truth: land protection is not all about acreage. Our care of the land is equally as, if not more, important than the amount of land we have protected. In Aldo Leopold's essay "The Land Ethic", he states:

"One basic weakness in a conservation system based wholly on economic motives is that most members of the land community have no economic value.

Wildflowers and songbirds are examples."

In the FSF's own practice of stewardship, we must maintain this perspective in the decisions we make for the land. Otherwise, we risk falling into the same trap. In his essay, Leopold goes on to describe this well:

"In my own field, forestry, 'Group A' is quite content to grow trees like cabbages, with cellulose as the basic forest commodity. It feels no inhibition against violence; its ideology is agronomic. 'Group B', on the other hand, sees forestry as fundamentally different from agronomy because it employs natural species, and manages a natural environment rather than creating an artificial one...it worries about a whole series of secondary forest functions: wildlife, recreation, watersheds, wilderness areas. To my mind, Group B feels the stirrings of an ecological conscience."

And so, as we take on several major land protection projects in 2018, we will continue to face head-on the challenge of stewarding these lands with an "ecological conscience" as we maintain working forests well beyond "growing trees like cabbages". Thank you for making that possible with your support.



Aldo Leopold

Troy Firth, President & Founder

2017 Financial Summary

The Foundation for Sustainable Forests strives for fiscal transparency and good stewardship of your contributions. We are committed to keeping operational and personnel expenses low, to be able to direct more funds to the care and protection of forested lands.

2017 was an “introspective year” for the Foundation. The largest proportion of expenses was dedicated to the stewardship of existing lands, followed by long-term conservation and organizational sustainability through payments towards the FSF’s land endowment (*see facing page*).

The Foundation is committed to stewarding the lands it has already protected, first and foremost. In 2017, these activities included beginning a path to sustainable forestry on the newly protected Moxie Woods, salvaging ash trees in several forests due to widespread mortality from the emerald ash-boring beetle, and storm salvage from a November wind event in Crawford County. See “*What to Expect in 2018*” on page 5 for our projections in the year ahead.

In terms of revenue, the stewardship activities described above contributed 66% of our revenue for the year, supporting the expenses associated with management, such as tree cutting and removal, invasive species removal and pest management, and property access. Stewardship revenue also supported FSF operations.

Lastly, this was a milestone year for YOUR support. Excluding major gifts in 2017 from our President Troy Firth, thanks to you the FSF surpassed its goal for 2020 by raising over \$25,000 in public support! This was also the first year of membership at the “Forest Partner” level (\$250+), and so many of you rose to the occasion - thank you. Know that your support is directly applied to the cost of our operations, our public outreach efforts, and our land conservation campaigns. It is a critical component of the FSF’s ability to achieve its mission, and will be especially important to continue, given the scope of projects ahead in 2018.

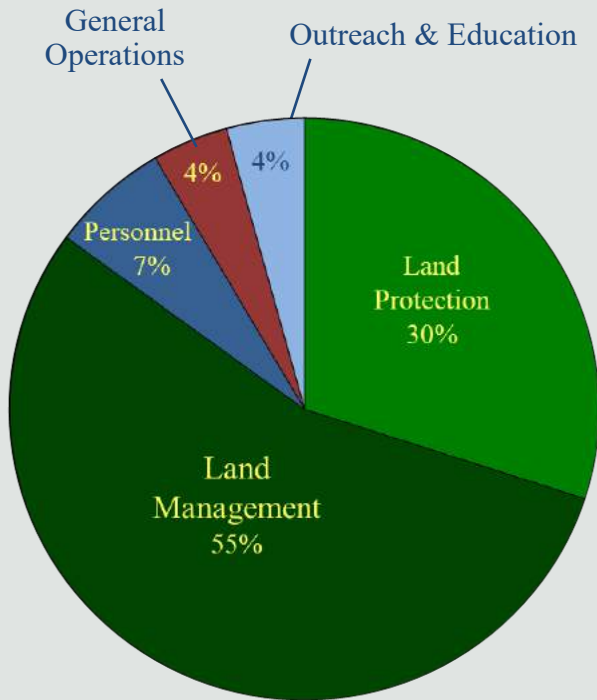
A Milestone Achievement: Caldwell Creek Watershed Conservation Project

In November 2017, the FSF was awarded \$725,000 by the DCNR Bureau of Recreation & Conservation’s Community Conservation Partnerships Program. These funds will support the purchase of the 292-acre Stony Hollow tract along Warren County’s Caldwell Creek, a public access corridor for trout fly-fishing, and make contiguous over 1,000 acres of FSF-protected land in the watershed. In support of the acquisition, Troy Firth will donate an additional 150 acres of land, also located in the watershed. The Caldwell Creek Valley is a high priority protection area for the FSF.

This is the first major grant award in the FSF’s history, and the culmination of years of effort, in particular by the FSF’s John Bartlett, Guy Dunkle, Bob Slagter, and more recently, Annie Socci. We are grateful to the DCNR for their support of forest conservation efforts in the region. Stay tuned as the project moves towards completion in 2018!



Expenses

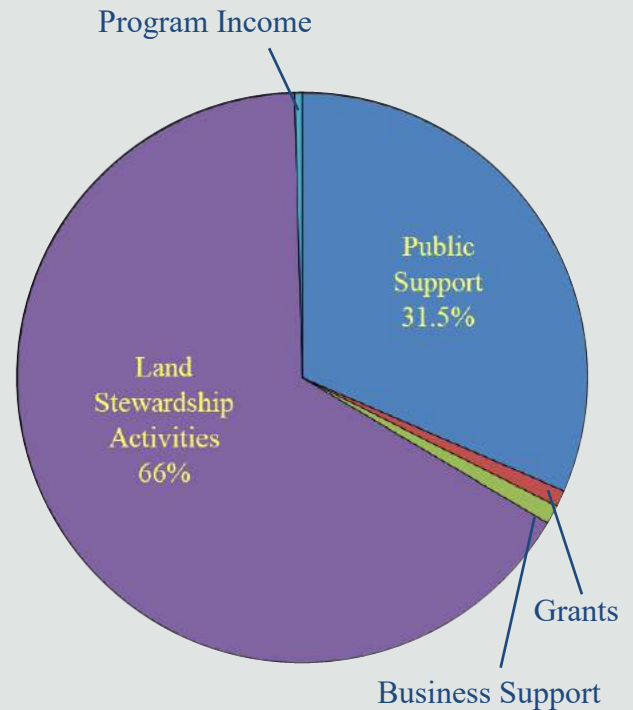


Total Expenses: \$279,000

Land Management includes maintenance, invasive species & pest control, real estate taxes, and timber harvest expenses

Land Protection includes legal fees & payments towards protected lands, including principal payments and interest on long-term loans.

Revenue



Total Revenue: \$326,000

Land Stewardship Activities includes the sale of timber that was removed using “worst-first” selection, ash tree salvage, storm salvage, and other improvements.

Public Support includes membership dues and donations, including major gifts by Founder Troy Firth.



What to Expect in 2018

While the Foundation will continue to steward its protected lands old and new in the year ahead, the rush of activity due to the emerald ash-boring beetle is waning. This is likely to yield fewer timber proceeds that can be applied to the FSF’s operational expenses.

In addition, we are likely to see a spike in expenses associated with three major Land Acquisition projects that are currently underway and projected to be completed in 2018. These expenses include the cost of land purchase itself in one case, and the legal fees, surveys and related costs of land acquisition and property donation.

We are thankful to our grantors who are supporting these projects, but additional support is needed and makes your contributions even more critical this year.

2017 Membership & Support

With gratitude to the following supporters for sustaining the Foundation's Mission

Forest Partner (\$250+)

Blaine, Terry & Lenley Aikin

Scott Alexander

The Bail Family

BDS Financial Network

Wendell & Tanya Berry

Henry & Elaine Burkholder

Dane & Jill Charlton

Clarence Cleer

Pat & Sam Dengel

Guy & Wilma Dunkle

Jean Engle

Diane Esser

Ron & Rebecca Fassett

James & Linda Finley

Troy Firth

David Hess

Knox Law

Margaret Lay-Dopyera

Bob Long & Kathy Stevens

Chris H. Lundberg

Wayne & Margaret McCartney

Eric Pahlke

Al & Peggy Richardson

Craig A. & Monica Schwegman

Craig K. Schwegman

Bob & Jane Slagter

Thomas Socci & Xandra Feathers

Emil & Kathy Spadafore

Ron & Michele Weisenstein

Jane E. Woods

Richard Zeber

Sustaining (\$50-\$249)

Sarah & Dan Baker

Richard Bartlett

John C. Baun

Terry & Connie Bensel

Jerry & Becky Biebel

Bill & Erin Blechman

Richard Bowden

Dale Brenner

Paul Burroughs

Betsy Carroll

Ellen & John Cass

Ryan Cavalcante

Evan Clendenin & Amy Seese-Bieda

Bob & Kit Concilus

Richard & Carol Deiss

Jason Dilworth

Scott Drabert

Reed Dunkle

Norman Dunkle

Gary & Denise Foltz

Marlene & William Gandjos

Court Gould

Thomas Grissom

James & Patricia Harwood

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The Heesch-Hill Family

Lou & Wanda Irion

Lonnie Jantzi

Joanne & Robert Jaworski

Ron & Kelly Johnston

Judith Kasten

Kristine King

Ann Kleinschmidt & Lee Coates

Jim & Lori Lang

Christine Lindquist

Terrence Lobdell

Richard Lutz

Patrick Maloney & Annie Socci

Robert & Laura Maloney

Sandra Mansmann

Palmiero Toyota

Melissa & Larry Mencotti.

Judith F. Messina

Peggy Mogush

Allyson Muth

Brett & Nicole Neely

Paul Rankin

Jim & Jane Reilly

Dave & Hallie Rigg

Sarah Sargent & Ron Mumme

Brian Schultz

Ben & Susan Slote

Gretchen Smith

Adrienne Socci & Nick Parker

Elliott & Cynthia Socci

Samuel C. Spencer

Bruce & Cindie Stainbrook

John Tautin & Joan Galli

Carmen & Kathy Testi

Jim & Connie Thompson

Ray & Sue Toombs

Galen Tromble

Shirley Turnage

David Washousky

Eleanor Weisman & Jay Hanes

Zachary Wild

Max & Janet Bremmer Willis

David Yasenchack

Scott Yeager



Family (\$25-\$49)

Jess Baker
Daniel & Liz Bizer-Cox
Kevin Boozel
Bill Briggeman
Gloria Corbett
Brenda Costa
Sharon L. Davenport
Dianne Moore & Richard R. Eakin

Karen Eisenhart
Tom Erdman
Karl Evans – Mayhill Maple
Don Haas
The Halmi Family
Matthew Heffner
Joseph L. Hood
Bob Howden

Glorianne Leck
Jason Roblee
Grant & Stephanie Ruttinger
Robert Sambroak
Karen M. Seymour
Emily & Josh Smith
Andy Walker
Nathan Zimmerman

Individual (\$15)

Peter Dalby
David Dunkle
Robert Howden

James Kelley
Richard Kubiak
Peggy Mogush
Robert Ostryniec

Andrew Plaza
Cecile Stelter
Richard Szymkowski

Event Sponsors

Erie Insurance
Ernst Conservation Seeds

Knox Law
Mercer County State Bank
Northwest PA Woodland Association

Craig & Monica Schwegman
Emil & Kathy Spadafore

Grantors and Partners

Allegheny College
Bartramian Audubon Society

Corry Community Foundation
Crawford Community-
Heritage Foundation

Erie Community Foundation
French Creek Valley Conservancy

*The FSF makes every effort to acknowledge the generosity of its supporters each year.
If you have been omitted in error, please accept our deepest apologies and kindly let us know.*



Board Member Patrick Maloney (left) leads a sugarbush tour and answers Member questions at the Fall Potluck.

Checking in on the Foundation's 5-Year Goals, 2016-2020

In July 2015, the Board of Directors and members of the FSF Community held a strategic planning session. They outlined organizational priorities and set 5-year goals associated with each. Now in the 3rd year, we offer an update on our progress. In July 2018, we will revisit and revise goals that already have been met.

1) Outreach: Engage new Woodland Owners in Forest Conservation Planning

In 2017 we hosted two Landowner Outreach programs, informally known as “Coffee & Cake Sessions”. Board Members Bob Slagter and Craig Schwegman worked hard to draw woodland owners to attend in two geographic centers around Edinboro (March) and Cochranton (October). These events were attended by private forest landowners who are interested in learning about their long-term conservation and stewardship options for their woodlands.

This form of direct engagement directly addresses our organizational priorities, and will continue in 2018 as our capacity permits. These efforts will also be supported by our annual conference in May, and additional upcoming events that are open to the public (*see page 10*).

Would you be interested in co-hosting a Woodland Owner Outreach session in your area? If so, please contact Board Member Craig Schwegman to discuss: ca.schwegman@gmail.com or call the FSF office, (814) 694-5830.

2) Land Protection: Protect 5,000 acres of forest as sustainable working forest

With the donation of the Bail Family Forest to the FSF in 2017, our protected land base expanded to 926 acres. As described in the *President's Message* on Page 2, and “*A Milestone Achievement*” on page 4, important groundwork was laid in 2017 that will significantly forward this goal in 2018.

Are you considering a donation or bequest to the FSF? We would like to hear from you, so that we may assist you in achieving your conservation goals and ensure that your woodland will be sustainably managed and protected in perpetuity.

3) Membership: Reach 150 memberships by 2020 (from 70 memberships in 2015)

In 2017, the FSF held 134 memberships, a growth from 97 memberships in 2016. This shows steady progress towards achieving the goal for 2020, and is a testament to your loyalty and dedication to the FSF's mission.

Please continue to participate, or join, in our Annual Membership campaign, to be mailed out by early April. Or, you can become a member online at FoundationForSustainableForests.org/membership.

4) Fundraising: Expand Giving to \$25k by 2020

Thanks to the dedication of the FSF community, we have surpassed our goal for 2020 with over \$25,000 in unrestricted public donations received. We are truly humbled by this generosity and momentum, and are happy to produce tangible growth in our mission to complement your support. In July, the Board of Directors will re-evaluate the FSF's fundraising needs and set new goals accordingly.

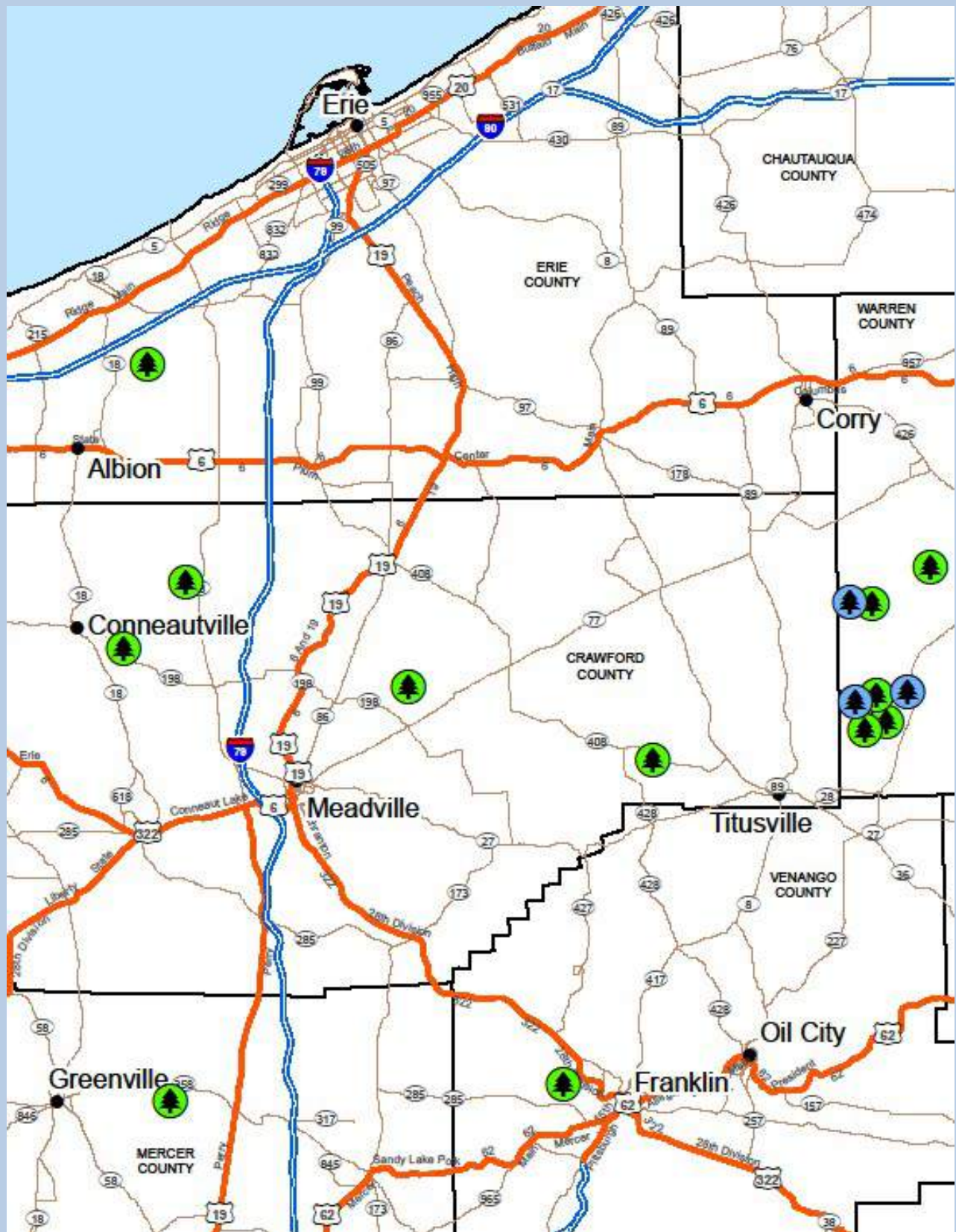


Far left: Menominee Forest Manager Marshall Pecore presents to forest professionals at our Blooming Valley Forest during our May 2017 conference weekend.

Left: Students at Mercyhurst University visited our Floraroz Forest in October to learn about sustainable forestry.

The FSF Across the Landscape

The properties below are currently (green), or soon to be (blue), protected in perpetuity by the FSF. Note the properties in SW Warren County, which are in the Caldwell Creek Watershed, mentioned in “A Milestone Achievement” on Page 4.



FSF-Owned Forests



Forest Protection Projects in Progress



UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2018

APR 29 SPRING WILDFLOWER WALK

In memory of FSF co-founder Lynn Firth, we will walk through the woods on a Sunday afternoon and enjoy spring's wildflower display. Led by DCNR Forester Cecile Stelter, 1pm-4pm, Location TBD



MAY 18 FRIENDS OF THE FOUNDATION DINNER

Attend the 2nd Annual Dinner, a celebration of the FSF community. The featured speaker is horse-logger & Healing Harvest Foundation founder Jason Rutledge. Begins 5:30pm @ Nick's Place, Edinboro



MAY 19 LOVING THE LAND CONFERENCE

Our premier field event, open to all. The day's program covers woods walks, legacy planning, attracting wildlife to your backyard, and a special feature- "Women & Working Forests". 8am-4pm, Girard, PA



AUG 14 ERIE GIVES DAY



The region's annual day of giving, and the FSF's biggest campaign of the year

OCT 7 WALK IN PENN'S WOODS DAY

This statewide event was launched in 2017, and was so successful it has become an annual event. Join us on a Sunday afternoon for a stroll in the woods. 1pm-4pm, Location TBD.



NOV 3 FALL POTLUCK GATHERING

Always a highlight, join the 5th annual gathering of community for light programming and a potluck feast at the Woodland Lodge in Grand Valley, PA. Walks and Talks begin at 4pm, Supper at 5:30pm



FoundationforSustainableForests.org/events



Plan your Conference Experience!

7th Annual

Loving the Land Through Working Forests Saturday, May 19, 2018

Located near 9201 South Creek Rd. Girard, Erie County, PA

8:15am

Welcome & Introductions

8:30am

Opening Address by Jason Rutledge, Healing Harvest Foundation

"A Practitioner's Journey to Restorative Forestry"

9:00am

Session 1

Concurrent Sessions 9am-10:20am	<i>Sustainable Forestry for Ecosystem Resilience</i> Troy Firth (Will also span Session 2)	<i>Women & Working Forests</i> Amanda Mahaffey, Allyson Muth, Cecile Stelter	<i>Modern Horse-Logging</i> Jason Rutledge
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10:40am

Session 2

Concurrent Sessions 10:40am-12pm	<i>Sustainable Forestry for Ecosystem Resilience</i> Troy Firth	<i>Legacy & Estate Planning for the Woodland Owner</i> Thomas C. Hoffman, II	<i>Practical Ways to Support Wildlife on your Land</i> Josh VanBrakle	<i>Modern Horse-Logging</i> Jason Rutledge
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12pm

Lunch (*Provided*)

1:30pm

Session 3

Concurrent Sessions 1:30pm-3pm	<i>Sustainable Forestry for Ecosystem Resilience</i> Troy Firth	<i>Legacy & Estate Planning for the Woodland Owner</i> Thomas C. Hoffman, II	<i>Practical Ways to Support Wildlife on your Land</i> Josh VanBrakle	<i>Modern Horse-Logging</i> Jason Rutledge
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We thank our event sponsors:





**22418 Firth Rd.
Spartansburg, PA 16434**

(814) 694-5830

info@forestsandpeople.org

FoundationForSustainableForests.org

The Foundation for Sustainable Forests is a 501(c)3 nonprofit land trust and outreach organization dedicated to conserving forested land and protecting sustainable working forests. Through direct ownership and active forest management we promote the protection and stewardship of forests.

Board of Directors

Troy Firth, *President*

**Richard Bowden, PhD
*Chair, Outreach/Education***

**Guy Dunkle
*Chair, Forestry***

James Finley, PhD

**Thomas C. Hoffman II, Esq.
*Secretary***

Patrick Maloney

Craig Schwegman

**Robert Slagter
*Chair, Fundraising***

**Emil Spadafore, Esq.
*Treasurer***

Dr. Jane E. Woods, *Emeritus*

Staff

**Annie Socci, PhD
*Executive Director***

**John Noel Bartlett
*Development Director, Emeritus***



**The Foundation for
Sustainable Forests**
invites you to attend

7th Annual Field Conference

Loving the Land Through Working Forests



Saturday, May 19, 2018

Floraroze Forest, near Girard in Erie County, PA

To view the program and register visit:
forestsandpeople.org/loving-the-land