
An Evaluation of the NY Master Forest Owner Volunteer Program:

Master Forest Owner Program Activities and Impact



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Executive Summary

The New York Master Forest Owner (MFO) Volunteer Program trains woodland owners in the principles of forest stewardship and helps them to better manage their own woodlands. A goal of the program is also to have trained MFOs motivate other woodland owners to become actively involved in their forestland. Volunteers are certified following a series of visits and after attending a four-day 40-hour training session covering numerous forestry-related topics, such as wildlife management, forest economics, ecology, and related programs and organizations. Refresher workshops are also available. Volunteers conduct on-site visits with other forest owners, collaborate with agencies and organizations on forestry educational events, and prepare forestry articles for media outlets. The program relies on peer-learning strategies and landowner networks to achieve its goals. The purpose of the following study was to determine the impacts of the MFO program on its volunteers and to obtain feedback on the program itself. Questions were also posed concerning the nature of the forestland on the owners' properties, as well as the basic attitudes of the owners towards their land. How often do volunteers conduct on-site visits? What kinds of activities do volunteers participate in? How could the MFO Program be improved?

A ten-page survey was designed with 24 questions that covered a range of aspects of the Master Forest Owner Program and forestry in general, including demographics, MFO activities, opinions of the Program, and use of forestry knowledge. Prior to circulation, a pre-test focus group with six MFO volunteers was held to obtain feedback on the survey's content and layout, as well as the accompanying cover letter. After the input was received and incorporated, the survey was sent to all 149 active MFO Volunteers through either e-mail or standard mail. Of the 149 surveys circulated in December 2008, 95 returned a completed survey, 1 returned survey was unusable, and 1 survey was undeliverable, for an overall response rate of 65%.

In 2007, 83% of volunteers conducted on-site visits and 25% of all respondents conducted at least four. Since their certification, only 3% of volunteers have not conducted an on-site visit and 50% of respondents have conducted more than 20. The most common referral source for on-site visits was a neighbor or friend (39%), followed by the New York Forest Owners' Association (NYFOA) (15%).

MFO Volunteers were asked about their participation in programs and events. Fifty-five percent of respondents have participated in at least one MFO activity with other organizational partners. The most frequent partners were the Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) (85%), followed by the New York Forest Owners Association and the New York Department of Environmental Conservation. Eighty-eight percent of volunteers felt that the local CCE office was aware of the MFO program and 73% felt that the local CCE office supported the program, mostly through referrals and sponsoring educational programs.

Respondents were asked how they have utilized the information learned through the MFO Program at various events and on their own land to better manage their properties. Each year, 41% of respondents use knowledge gained from the MFO program at various events. Thirty-five percent of volunteers attended other educational events. Three-quarters of respondents have held at least one organizational leadership role since their certification. On their own

property, the most common usage of knowledge gained involved timber stand improvement, the creation of better wildlife habitat, invasive species and pest management, and the preparation of a written management plan. After joining the MFO Program, 35 volunteers have also joined the NYFOA.

MFO Volunteers enjoy the program due to increased social connections, the enhanced ability to promote forest stewardship, and more information to manage properties more wisely. These were the same reasons a large majority of volunteers found the program valuable. However, Volunteers least favored aspects involve the lack of time to participate in MFO activities, the amount of paperwork involved, and the lack of interest and awareness among landowners and the public.

MFO Volunteers suggest that training workshops could be improved by including a more rigorous and expansive curriculum and more information on economic issues. While many have no complaints about the MFO Program in general, the most common suggestions were to increase advertising to increase awareness and referrals, followed by incorporating rising economic and energy concerns into management options, suggesting alternative management, keeping all forestry and MFO information updated and accessible, providing more institutional assistance to volunteers regarding on-site visits, and facilitating connections between volunteers living in same region.

MFO volunteers were asked to rate the likeliness that they would cooperate with other landowners in their community on forestry-related activities. These questions were not specific to the MFO program but were aimed at assessing their overall interactions and communications with other woodland owners in their community. A majority of volunteers do interact with other woodland owners in their community (91%). The rate of interaction is primarily a few times per year (56%), monthly (19%), or weekly (17%). Most of these interactions are casual: 45% volunteers reported incidental contact in town and 26% of these interactions take place during social events. Both email and telephone contact was reported by 26% of MFO volunteers. The most common existing ways that respondents already cooperate include watching for trespassers on each other's land (39%), allowing access to hunt on each other's land (29%), and allowing access to recreate on each other's land (21%). However, they are least likely to cooperate in jointly leasing land with their neighbors to hunting or fishing groups (75%), sharing the cost of hiring labor, and coordinate spraying of herbicides.

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Introduction

The New York Master Forest Owner (MFO) Volunteer program was instituted in 1991 with the goal of training woodland owners in the principles of forest stewardship to better equip them to manage their own woodlands and also to motivate other woodland owners to become actively involved in their forestland (Goff and Muth 2006). A four-day (~40 hour) training is required to become a certified NY MFO Volunteer. Refresher workshops are offered throughout the year for continuing education. The initial training covers topics of silviculture, wildlife management, forest economics, ecology, and forestry related programs, agencies, and organizations. Requirements to become and maintain Master Forest Owner certification include 1) a forest visit from a current MFO Volunteer prior to attending the training, 2) a visit by the candidate to their Cornell Cooperative Extension County Association, 3) attendance at the 4-day training, 4) conducting on-site visits with at least 5 forest owners following training, and 5) aiding in program review and evaluation by keeping and submitting records of activities related to being a Master Forest Owner Volunteer.

The mechanisms by which MFO Volunteers fulfill the goals of the program are by conducting on-site visits with other forest owners, collaborating with agencies and organizations on forestry educational events, and preparing forestry articles for media outlets. Thus the program relies on peer learning strategies as well as landowner networks in achieving program goals. As of spring 2008, there were currently 148 *active* MFO volunteers in New York State that reported about 150 annual visits to forest owners that collectively own over 9,000 acres. Additionally, MFOs participate in or lead approximately 300-350 outreach activities yearly that reach audiences in the thousands. The numbers reached are likely larger as the reporting rates of MFOs for site visits and educational activities is approximately 50% (Goff 2008). The last comprehensive survey of landowners visited by an MFO was conducted in 1997 (Broderick et al. 1999).

A ten-page survey was designed with 24 questions that covered a range of aspects of the Master Forest Owner Program and forestry in general, including demographics, MFO activities, opinions of the Program, and use of forestry knowledge. The survey sought to investigate the impact of the Master Forest Owner Program on MFO volunteers and to gain feedback on the Program itself. Prior to survey mailing, a pre-test focus group was held on April 2, 2008 in order to obtain feedback on the content and layout of the survey and the accompanying cover letter (Appendix A). The six participants in the focus group represented the forestry community through their affiliation as Master Forest Owner Volunteers. The resulting insights prompted clarifications in the wording and format of questions as well as changes in the tone of the cover letter.

Active New York master Forest Owner Volunteers (n=149) were surveyed via a web survey (n=96); those without an e-mail address on file (n=54) were surveyed in a series of four postal mailings: (1) a postcard (May 5, 2008), (2) a survey and cover letter (May 12, 2008), (3) a reminder/thank you postcard (May 23, 2008), and (4) a second copy of the survey and cover letter to the remaining non-respondents (May 30, 2008) (Appendix B). Of the 149 Volunteers contacted, 59 returned a completed survey via the web and 36 via mail, 1 returned a survey that was unusable, and 1 survey was undeliverable, for an overall response rate of 64.6%.

Characteristics of Respondents

The survey assessed a number of demographic traits that are outlined in Table 1. The large majority of MFOs surveyed are males (87%, n=80) between the ages of 45 and 54 (37.6%) or 55 and 64 (29.0%). The size of the land that the respondents own varies greatly, with a mean total acreage of 148.55 acres (std. dev.=139.47) and a mean wooded acreage of 105.76 acres (std. dev.=111.86) (Figures 1 and 2). MFOs have acquired their land from as early as 1939 to as recent as 2006 (Figure 3). The mean year that respondents acquired their land was 1987 with a standard deviation of 15.65 years.

Approximately two-thirds of the MFOs surveyed (68.1%) live on or within one mile of their forested property (Table 1). Most respondents indicated that other individuals are involved in their decision-making process for their forestland (73.6%). Among those 67 respondents who include others in their forestland decisions, 42.9% involve their spouse or partner and another 21.4% involve their children (Table 1).

Table 1. Demographics of Respondents

Characteristic	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Male	80	87.0
Female	12	13.0
<hr/>		
Under 25 Yrs	3	3.2
25-34	8	8.6
35-44	12	12.9
45-54	35	37.6
55-64	21	29.0
65-74	7	7.5
85 and Over	1	1.1
<hr/>		
Live on/Within 1 Mile of Forestland	62	68.1
Do Not Live on/Within 1 Mile of Forestland	29	31.9
<hr/>		
Others Involved in Forestland Decisions	67	73.6
Others Not Involved in Forestland Decisions	24	26.4
<hr/>		
Spouse/Partner Involved	48	42.9
Children Involved	24	21.4
Other Relatives Involved	13	11.6
Parents Involved	11	9.8
Business Partners Involved	7	6.3
Friends/Neighbors Involved	6	5.4
Others Involved	3	2.7

Figure 1. Total Acreage Owned (n=91)

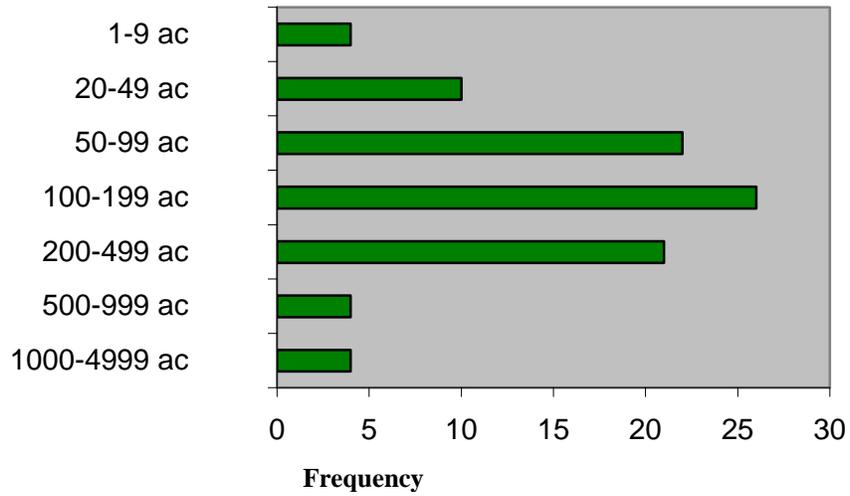


Figure 2. Wooded Acreage Owned (n=91)

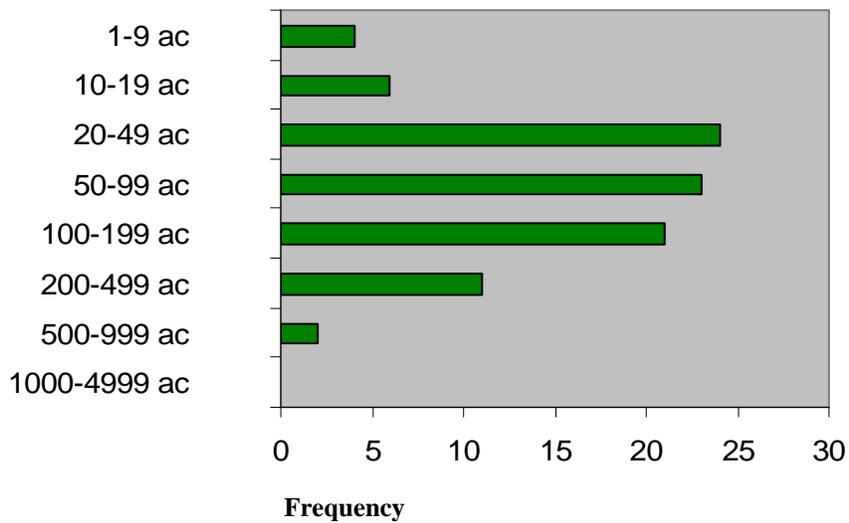
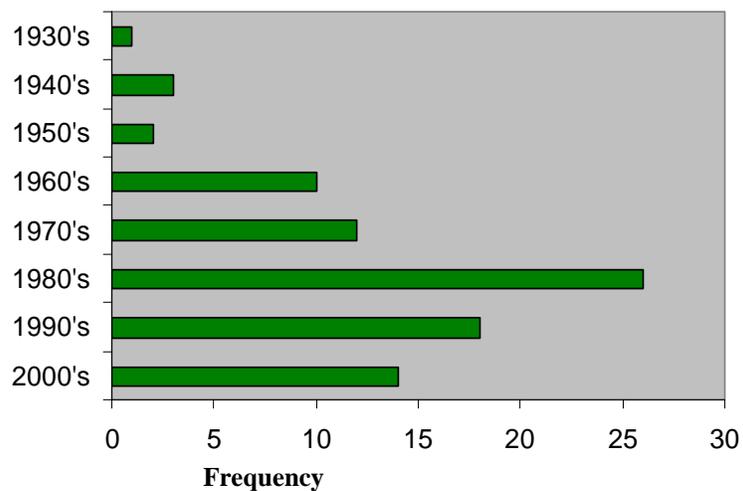


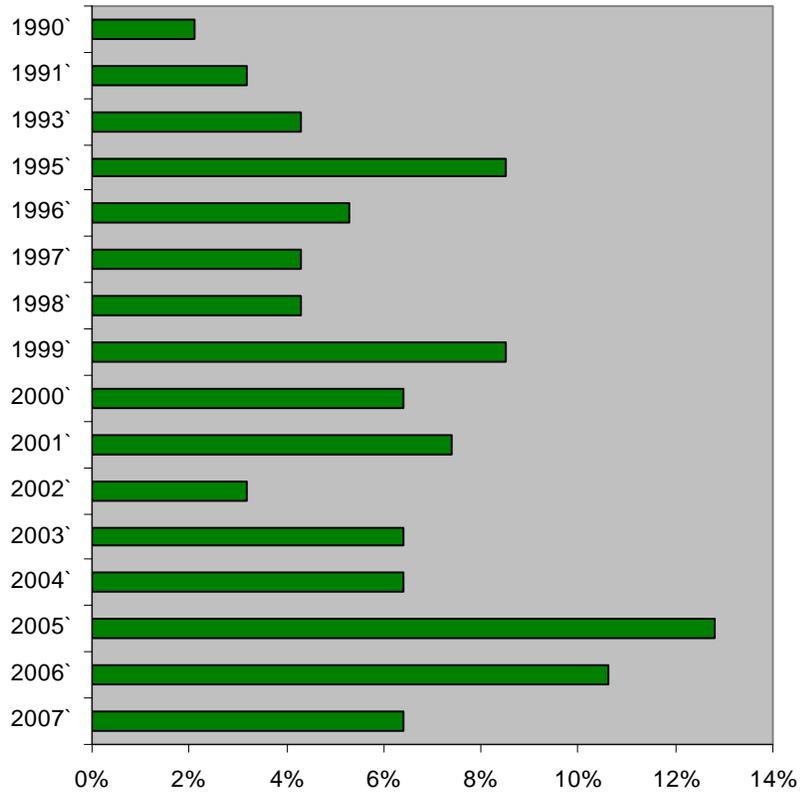
Figure 3. Year Land Acquired (n=86)



Master Forest Owner Activities

This section focuses on characteristics and activities related to the Master Forest Owner Program. Respondents were certified as Master Forest Owner Volunteers from as early as 1990, however, close to a third (29.8%, n=28) were certified within the past three years (2005-2007). Figure 4 displays the full range of MFO certification dates. Figure 5 shows the number of on-site visits with landowners that MFOs reported conducting in 2007, while Figure 6 shows the total on-site visits since certification. Within 2007, the majority of MFOs (58.3%, n=56) conducted between one and three on-site visits with forest owners (Figure 5). Since completing their certification, exactly half of the MFOs indicated that they have completed a total of between one and ten on-site visits. The other half of the respondents were essentially split between having visited a forest owner's property on eleven to twenty occasions and twenty-one or more occasions (Figure 6).

Figure 4. Year of Certification* (n=94)



*No respondents to the survey were certified in 1992 or 1994.

Figure 5. On-Site Visits Completed in 2007 (n=96)

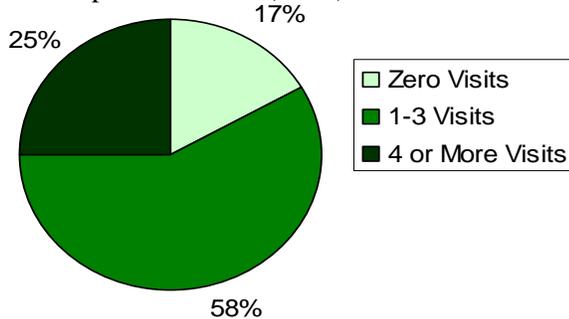
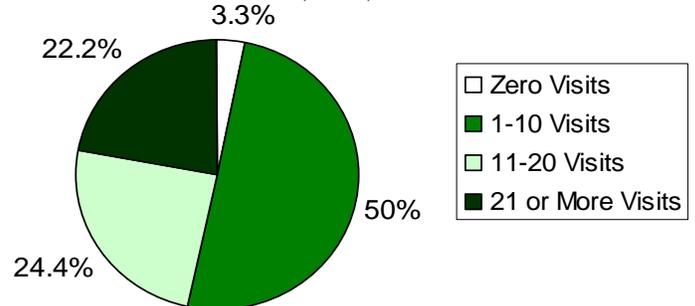
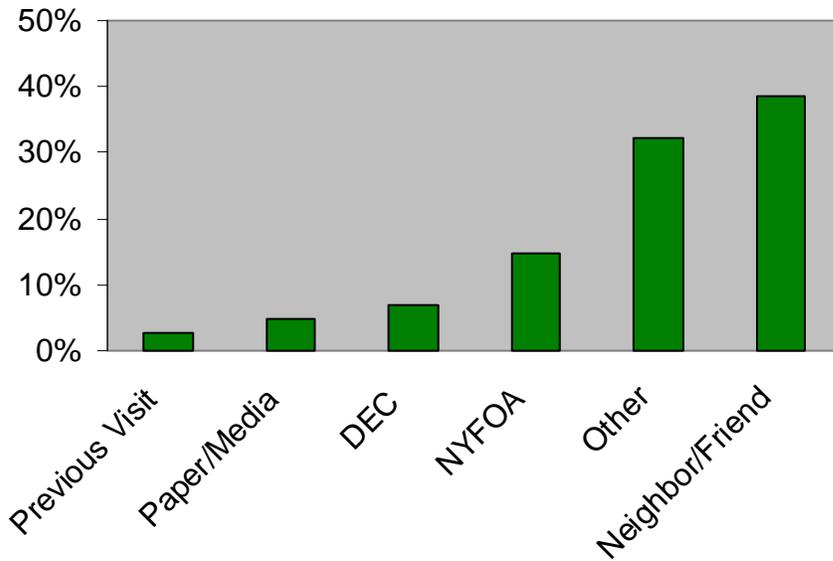


Figure 6. Total On-Site Visits Since Certification (n=90)



The respondents were asked to indicate the percentage of their landowner on-site visits that could be attributed to various referral sources. The mean percentage of referrals from each source is depicted in Figure 7. The most common referral source was a neighbor or friend, providing an average of 38.7% of on-site visits. “Other” types of referral agents beyond those listed on the survey were the source for 32.2% of MFO visits. The MFOs surveyed did not identify the specific “Other” sources for on-site visits. The New York Forest Owners’ Association (NYFOA) was responsible for approximately 15% of MFO landowner referrals, and the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) was the source for approximately 7%. Newspaper and other media (4.8%) as well as previous on-site visits (2.7%) were the lowest sources of referrals.

Figure 7. Mean Percentage of MFO On-Site Visit Referrals from Sources (n=96)



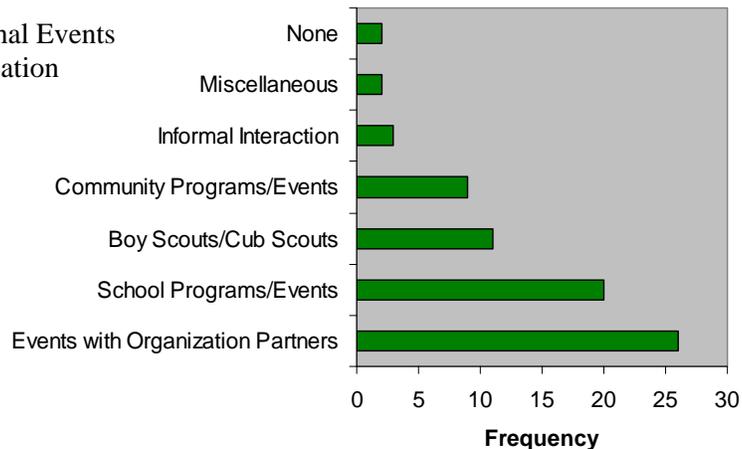
Since being certified as MFOs, respondents have participated in a range of forestry outreach and leadership activities. The types of activities and their corresponding level of involvement, on average per year after becoming an MFO, are depicted in the first section of Table 2. The total estimated frequency of activities since certification is displayed in the second section of Table 2.

Table 2. Frequency of Activities Since MFO Certification

On Average Per Year	None	1-5	6-10	11 or More
Woodswalks Hosted on Property	35.9%	55.1%	6.4%	2.6%
People Nominated/Encouraged to Become MFO	1.2%	98.8%	0.0%	0.0%
People Persuaded to Join Organizations	1.3%	98.7%	0.0%	0.0%
MFO Refresher Classes Attended	28.9%	56.6%	9.6%	4.8%
Educational Events Attended	1.2%	64.0%	15.1%	19.8%
Times Knowledge from MFO Program Used at Event	4.9%	53.7%	22.0%	19.1%
Forest Owners Personally Interacted With	24.5%	71.4%	0.0%	4.1%
Total Activities Since Certification				
Leadership Roles Assumed	24.5%	71.4%	0.0%	4.1%
Articles Written	56.6%	33.3%	8.9%	2.2%

A large majority of MFOs participate in a variety of forestry outreach activities at an average frequency of one to five times a year. Since their certification, almost all MFOs have nominated or encouraged other people to become MFOs and almost all MFOs have persuaded other people to join organizations. Nearly three quarters of MFOs have personally interacted with forest owners. Some activities have higher levels of participation (6 to 10 and 11 or more times per year), such as using knowledge gained from the MFO Program at various events (41.1%, n=34) and attending other educational events (34.9%, n=30). Approximately three-quarters of MFOs surveyed have assumed between one and five leadership roles since certification (71.4%, n=35). In addition, the majority of respondents have not written any articles in a magazine or newspaper (56.6%, n=25). Respondents were asked to specify any youth educational events at which they have presented since their certification. The categories of activities are depicted in Figure 8. The most common type of youth activities for our respondents (n=26) are those with organization partners, such as 4-H events. Twenty MFOs indicated participation in school events like classroom visits or school woods walks. Other events in which MFOs addressed youth audiences include Boy Scout activities (n=11) and community programs (n=9) like county fairs.

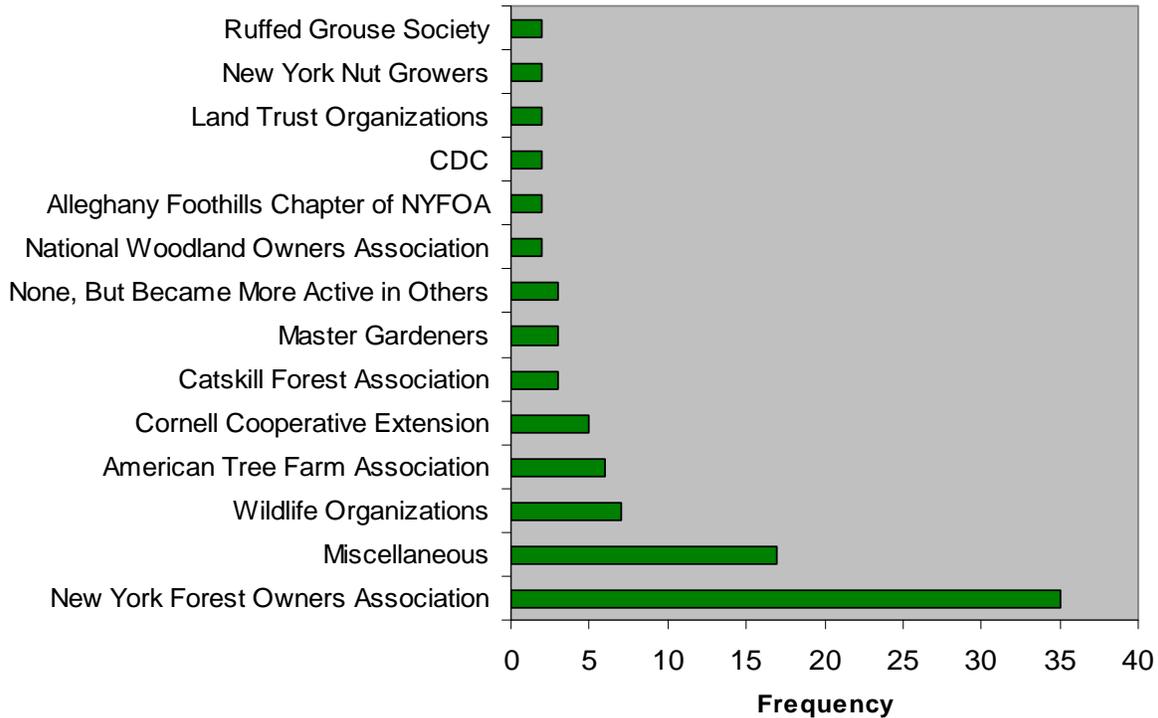
Figure 8. Youth Educational Events Presented at Since Certification



Organizations and Partnerships

Respondents have joined, at least in part, a number of organizations because of their involvement in the MFO Program (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Number of MFOs that have Joined Organizations Since Certification



The most common organization that MFOs have become members of since certification is the New York Forest Owners Association (NYFOA), with over five times as many respondents (n=35) indicating this organization compared to others. The miscellaneous category includes those organizations that were mentioned only by a single respondent, such as Honey Producers, Lake Erie Beagle Club, and the National Arbor Day Foundation. Other commonly indicated groups include various wildlife organizations (n=7), such as Audubon Society and Pheasants Forever. Additionally, respondents indicated joining the American Tree Farm Association (n=6) and Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) (n=5). Since CCE is not an organization that can be joined, it is not clear what respondents were conveying when they indicated CCE, perhaps describing participation in CCE programs.

The MFO Program encourages collaboration with local Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) offices. Results concerning CCE and the MFO Program are depicted in Table 3. Most MFOs surveyed (84.7%, n=83) have participated in a CCE sponsored event and believe their local CCE office is both aware of the existence of the MFO program (88.8%) and supportive of it (73.2%). Nevertheless, some respondents were unsure about these details, with 10.2% and 22.7% checking “not sure,” respectively.

Table 3. Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) and the MFO Program (n=98)

	Yes	No	Not Sure
Participated in a CCE Event	84.7%	12.2%	3.1%
Local CCE Office Aware of MFO Program	88.8%	1.0%	10.2%
Local CCE Office Support MFO Program	73.2%	4.1%	22.7%

Respondents were asked to indicate the ways in which their local CCE supports the MFO Program, the results of which are depicted in Figure 10. Respondents see CCE lending the most support through referrals (n=24). MFOs surveyed also indicated that CCE was instrumental in sponsoring educational meetings or programs (n=12), and in distributing literature and providing publicity (n=10). Some also noted that CCE Educators were trained as MFO Volunteers (n=7). The outreach activities of MFOs surveyed have incorporated partnerships with agencies and other organizations. The approximate number of activities and the approximate percentage of all activities involving these partners are depicted in Figures 11 and 12, respectively.

Figure 10. Type of CCE Support for MFO Program

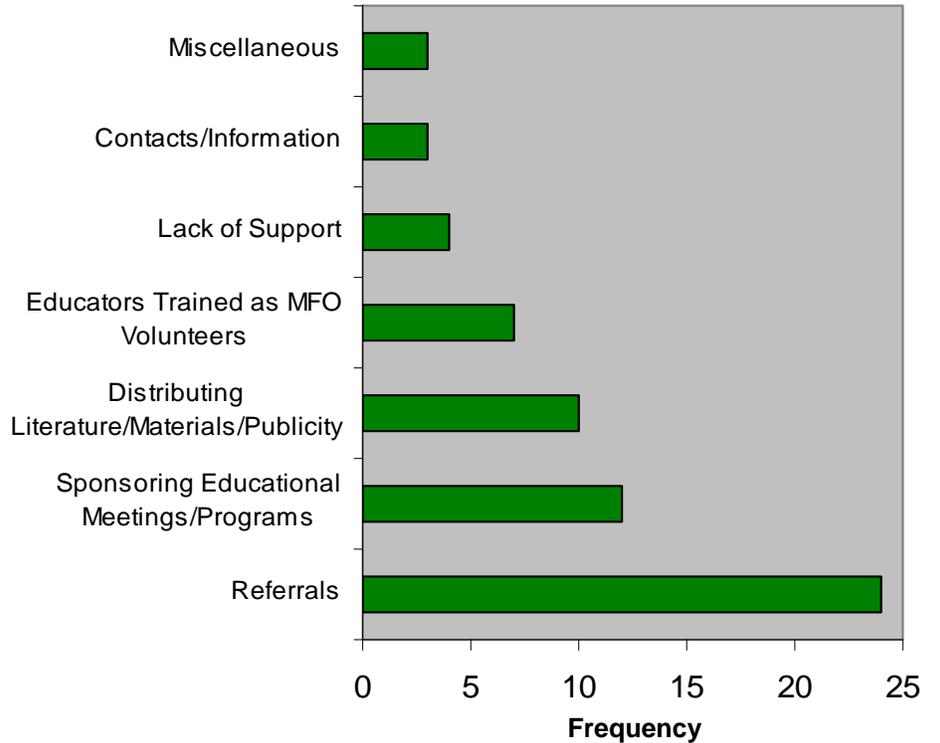


Figure 11. Number of MFO Activities Involving Partnerships with Agencies and Organizations (n=62)

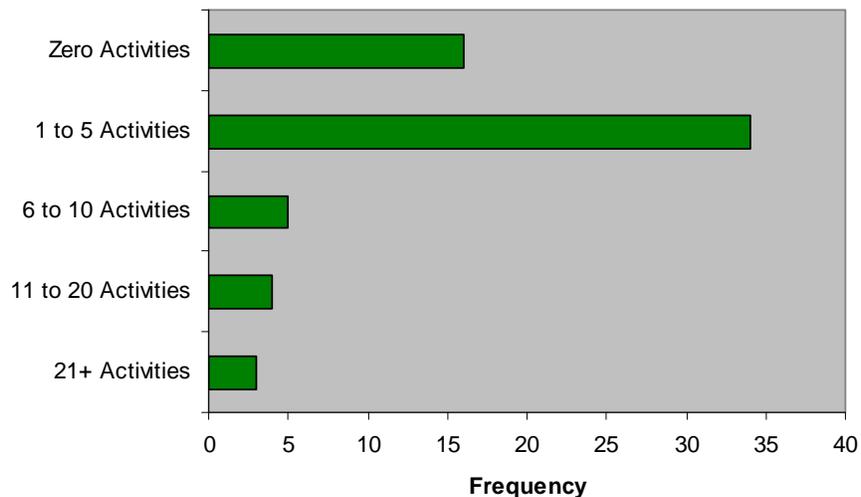
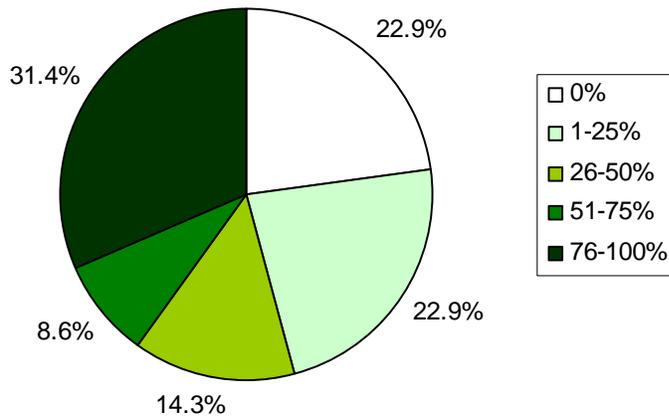


Figure 12. Percentage of Activities Involving Partnerships with Agencies and Organizations (n=35)

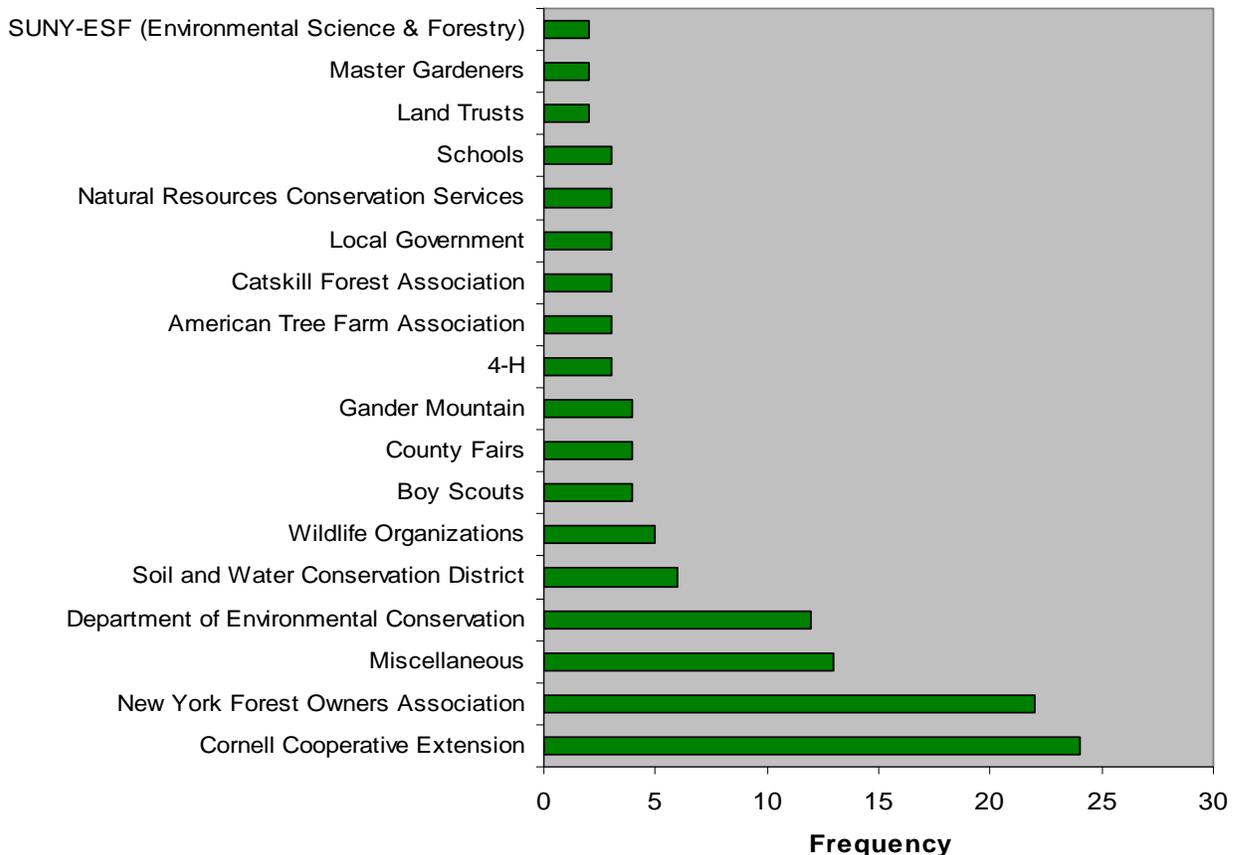


Close to a third of the respondents (31.4%) approximated that 76% to 100% of their total forestry outreach activities involve partnerships (Figure 12). Nearly half of the MFOs attributed less than a quarter of their activities to those with organizational partners (Figure 12). Some respondents (n=16) have not participated in any outreach activities with organizational partners.

Respondents were asked to specify which organizations or agencies they partner with in their MFO outreach activities (Figure 13). The two most frequent partnerships for the MFOs surveyed were with CCE (n=24) and NYFOA (n=22). Respondents also tend to cooperate with the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) (n=12), Soil and Water Conservation Districts (n=6), and various wildlife organizations (n=5) when conducting outreach activities.

Respondents were asked to specify which organizations or agencies they partner with in their MFO outreach activities (Figure 13).

Figure 13. Organizational or Agency Partners in MFO Outreach Activities



Master Forest Owner Program Impact

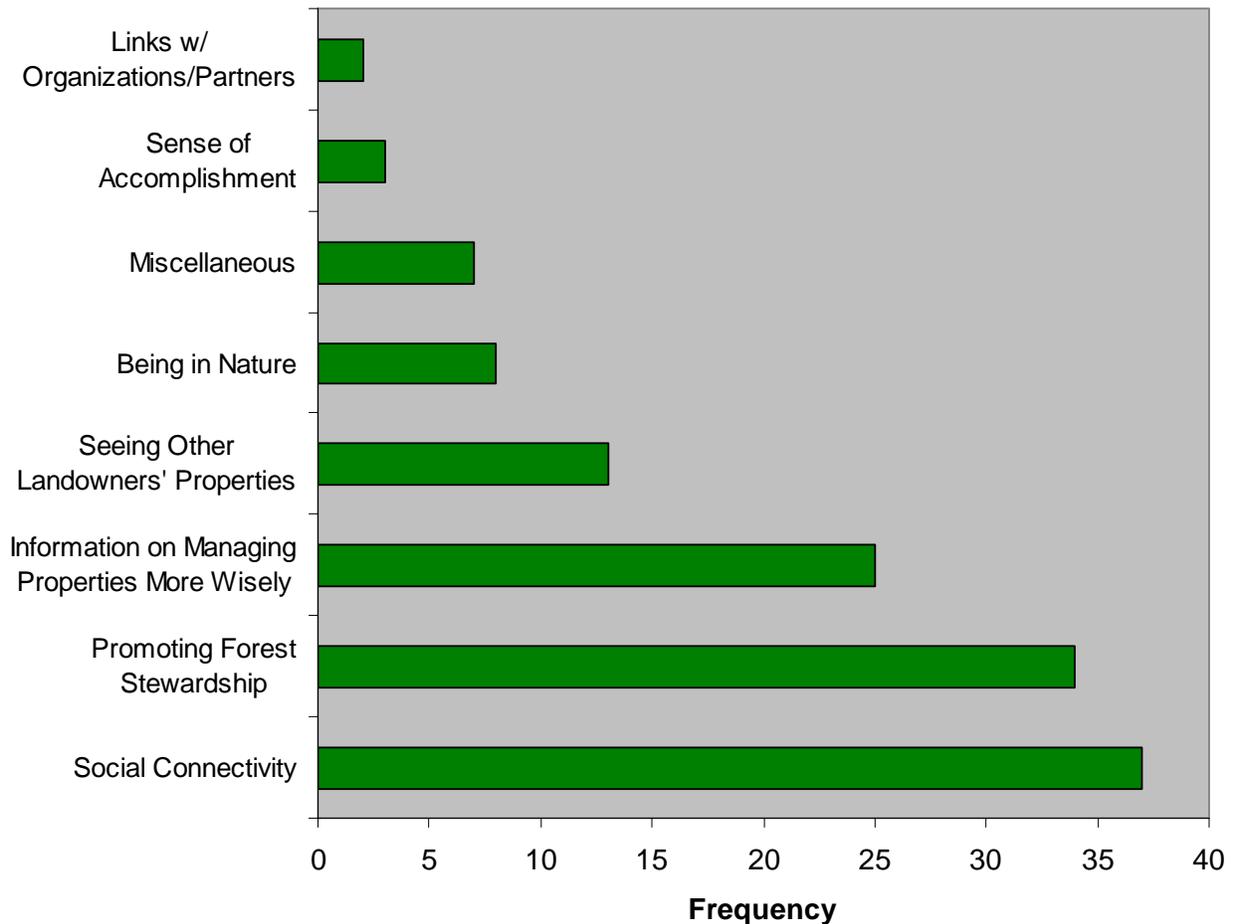
Respondents have utilized the information learned through their involvement in the MFO Program to manage their properties in a diversity of manners (Table 4). The most common way that MFOs utilized knowledge gained is through conducting timber stand improvements, with 36 MFOs indicating this application. The MFOs surveyed also have frequently employed their insights gained to create or enhance habitats for wildlife (n=25), manage invasive species and other pests (n=17), prepare a written management plan (n=16), build and maintain trails or access trails (n=14), use ponds and wetland for management (n=14), and consult with a professional forester or organization (n=13).

Table 4. Use of Knowledge Gained as MFO to Manage Own Property

Activity	(n)	Activity	(n)
Timber Stand Improvement	36	Harvested Firewood	7
Created or Enhanced Habitat for Wildlife	25	Miscellaneous	7
Invasive Species/Pest Management	17	Strategy for Planting New Trees	4
Prepared a Written Management Plan	16	Arranged Timber Sale	4
Built/Maintained Trails or Access Roads	14	Best Management Practices	3
Use of Ponds and Wetlands	14	Enrolled in Forest Tax Law 480-a	3
Consulted with Prof. Forester or Org.	13	Forest Regeneration	3
Crop Tree Management	10	Managed Sugarbush/Sold Maple Prod.	3
Tree Identification	10	Reinforced Forestry Education	3
Property Boundary Establishment	8	Brush Management	2
Beech Management	7	Hunted/Fished on Own Forestland	2
Cultivation of Non-Timber Forest Products	7	Leased Hunting/Recreation Rights	2
Education and Communication Skills	7	Planted or Sold Christmas Trees	2
General Awareness of Woodlot Mgmt.	7	Estate Planning	1

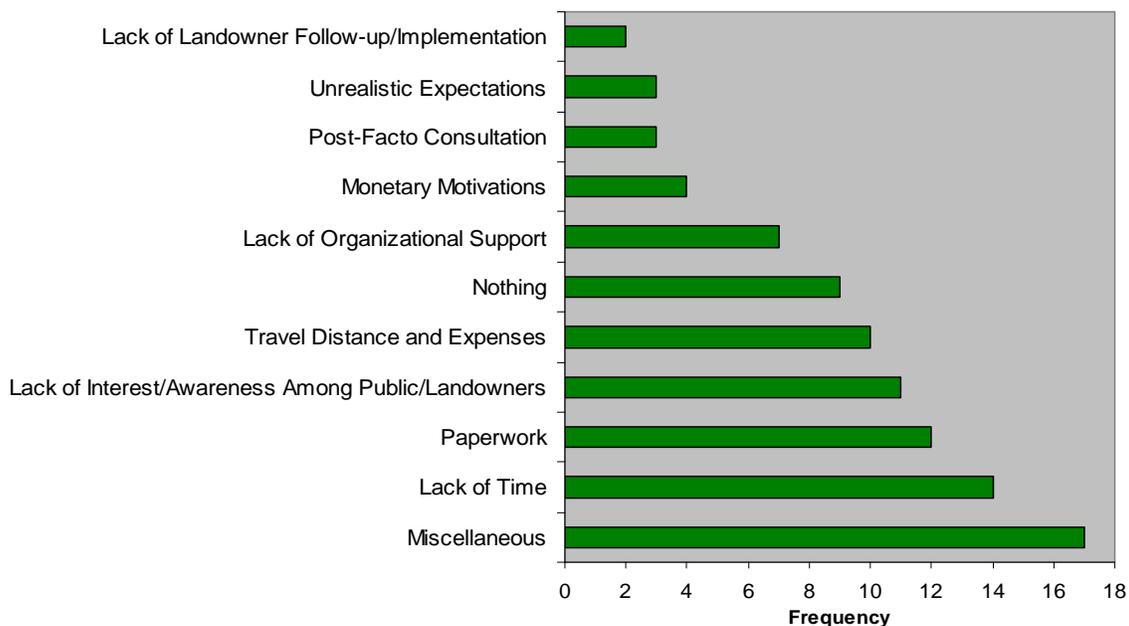
MFOs surveyed described what they like most about being a MFO Volunteer. The results in Figure 14 demonstrate a range of social, informational, and emotional benefits. The largest number of respondents (n=37) indicated the types of social connectivity derived through forest visits, meetings, and other interactions within the forestry community as their favorite part of being an MFO. The ability to promote forest stewardship, such as inspiring better management practices and instilling a love of the land, is another very popular aspect of the MFO program for the MFOs surveyed (n=34). Many respondents (n=25) valued most the insights they gained from the MFO program which they use to manage their own properties more wisely. Some MFOs (n=13) surveyed also noted enjoying the opportunity to see the properties of other landowners most. Other responses include the enjoyment of being in nature (n=8), miscellaneous (such as attending refreshers or working the Farm Show booth, n=7), a sense of accomplishment and efficacy (n=3), and the creation of links with organizations and other partners (n=2).

Figure 14. Favorite Aspect of Being a MFO Volunteer



Respondents also indicated the aspects they like least about being a MFO Volunteer (Figure 15). The most common response (n=14) was the lack of time that they have to actually participate in MFO activities. Some of the MFOs surveyed (n=12) dislike the paperwork involved in the MFO program, indicating that it intrudes into the privacy of others or is too time-consuming or tedious. Frustration at the lack of interest and awareness of the program among the public and landowners was also expressed (n=11). Respondents noted challenges with travel distances and expenses involved in conducting outreach activities and attending MFO-related meetings (n=10). Some indicated that they did not dislike anything about being an MFO (n=9), while others (n=7) dislike the lack organizational support (both from within the MFO program and from outside the program). In addition, respondents were also critical of aspects of some of their on-site visits, including landowner's strictly monetary motivations of management (n=4), post-facto consultations where landowners requested assistance after which the situation could not be remedied n=3), and unrealistic expectations for the visit (n=3). Finally, two respondents dislike the lack of landowner follow-up after visits and lack of implementation of advice. The miscellaneous category included a variety of areas of dissatisfaction, such as a personal lack of knowledge or not knowing the ultimate results of outreach visits.

Figure 15. Least Favorite Aspect of Being a MFO Volunteer



The survey also asked the respondents for any suggestions for improving the format and content of the MFO Training Workshops (Figure 16), the MFO Refresher Workshops (Figure 17), and any other aspect of the program (Figure 18). First, nearly half of the respondents (n=22) indicated that they very happy with the way in which the MFO Training Workshops are conducted and did not have any suggestions. Some of the MFOs surveyed (n=9) thought that the curriculum taught should be more rigorous and expansive, including such things as pathology and species identification. Six respondents explicitly said that more information on economic issues (property taxes, return rates, etc.) should be included in the training. Other MFOs suggested changing the medium of information (n=3) to use fewer and more updated handouts and also make lectures available on CDs or DVDs. In addition, three respondents recommended changing the timing of training workshops, such as expanding it by a day, making it on consecutive

Saturdays, or allowing more knowledgeable individuals to attend a shorter version. A few respondents advised including more demonstrations and role-playing (n=3) or shortening the travel distance required (n=2).

Figure 16. Suggestions for MFO Training Workshops

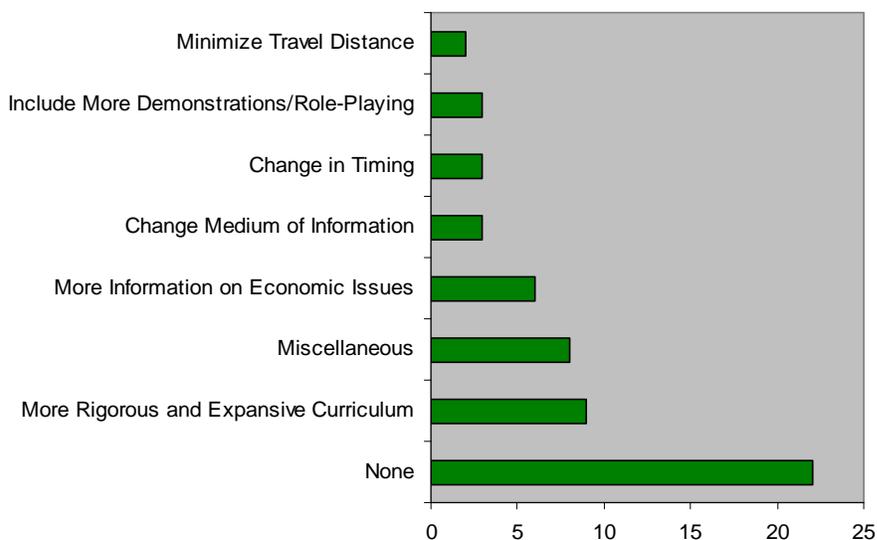
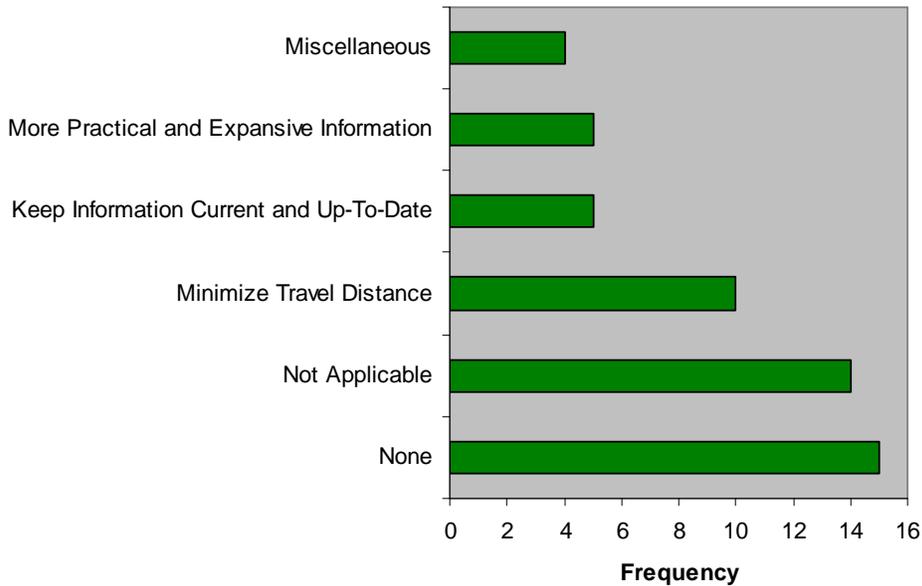


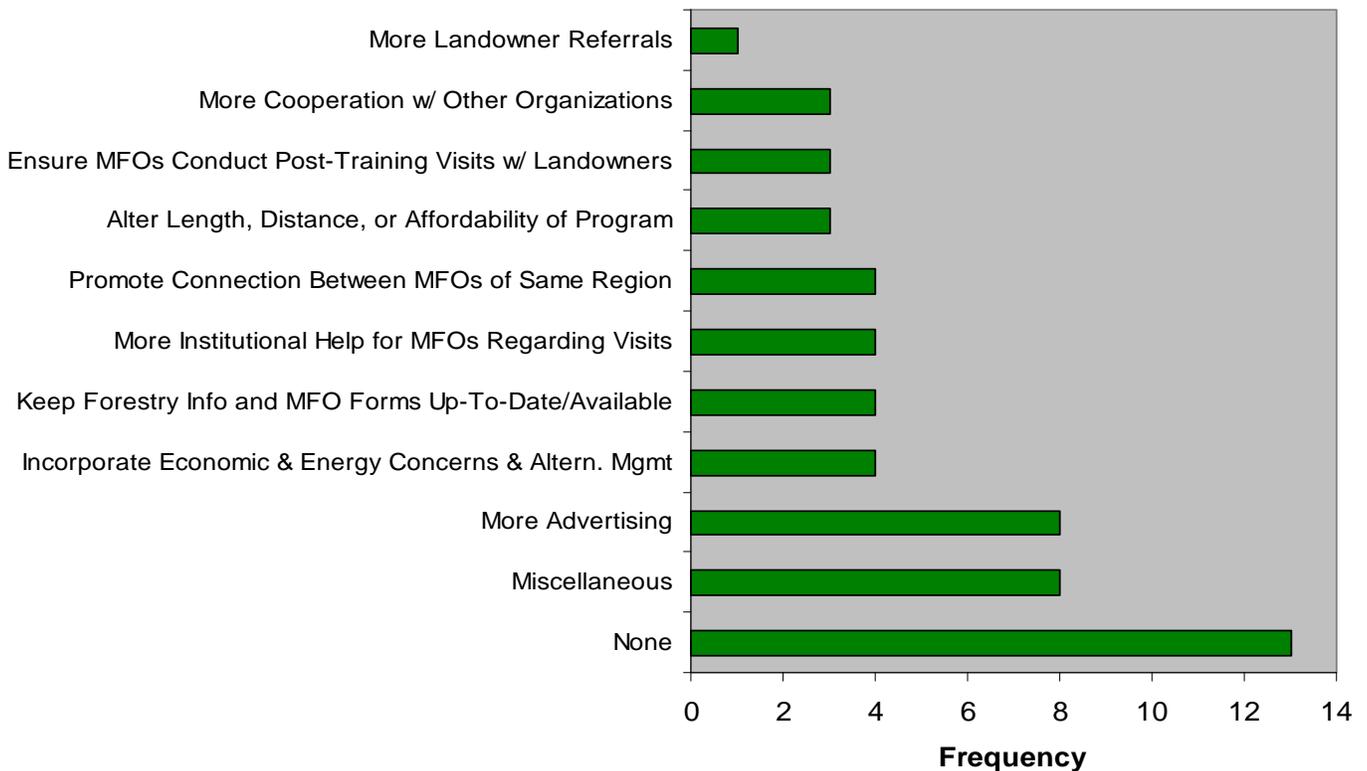
Figure 17. Suggestions for MFO Refresher Workshops



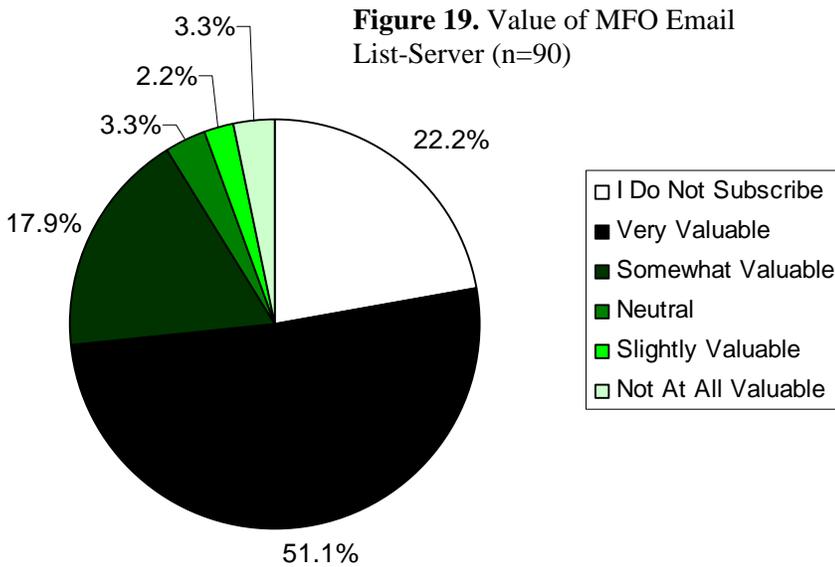
For the MFO Refresher Workshops, the largest number of respondents (n=15) had no recommendations, while nearly as many (n=14) indicated that the question was not applicable. Beyond this, MFOs surveyed suggested minimizing the distance of refresher workshop locations (n=10), keeping information more current and up-to-date (n=5) such as with technical silviculture and green economics, and including more practical and expansive information (tree pathogens, invasive species, etc.) (n=5).

Respondents also offered other suggestions about the MFO Program (Figure 18).

Figure 18. Suggestions for MFO Program in General



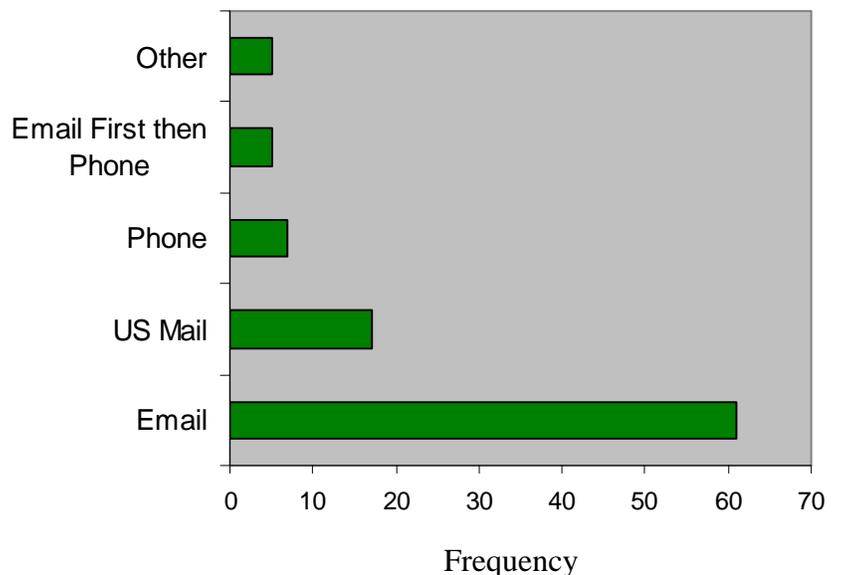
Once again, the most common response among MFOs was that they had no suggestions or negative comments (n=13). For those with advice, they suggested advertising more to increase awareness and referrals (n=8), incorporating rising economic and energy concerns as well as alternative management into the focus of the Program (n=4), keeping all forestry information and MFO materials updated and easily accessible (n=4), providing more institutional assistance to MFOs regarding on-site visits (such as a code of conduct or workshops, n=4), and facilitating connections between MFOs living in the same region (n=4). Miscellaneous recommendations (n=8) include fewer qualifications for certification, promoting interaction between private and public foresters, and tailoring the program for smaller landowners.



For those MFOs that subscribe to the MFO email-list server, the resource seems to be quite valuable (Figure 19). About half of respondents find the list-server very valuable (51.1%) and approximately another fifth find it to be somewhat valuable (17.9%). Currently 22.2% of MFOs surveyed do not subscribe to the list-server. However, 13 respondents provided their email addresses on the survey so that they may subscribe.

The best manner to reach respondents is chiefly by email (n=61) and to a much lesser extent by US Mail (n=17), as depicted in Figure 20. Phone is not a preferred contact method.

Figure 20. Best Method of Reaching



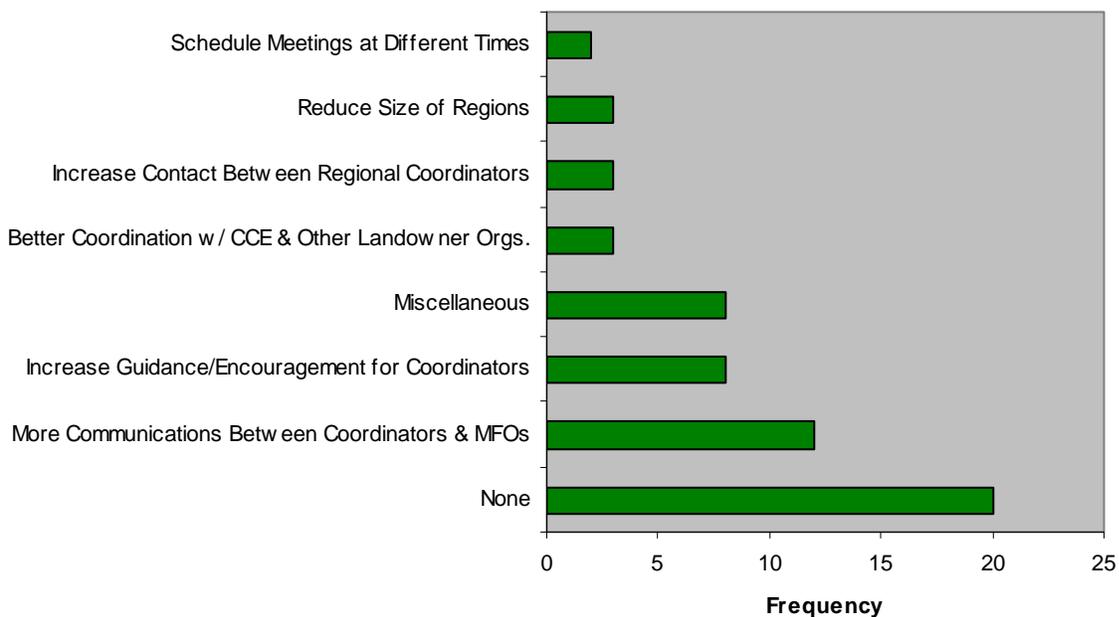
In 2008, the MFO Program implemented a Regional Coordinator System to help connect MFO's in regions of the state. Respondents indicated their level of engagement with their new MFO Regional Coordinator (Table 5) as well as their suggestions for the Regional Coordinator concept (Figure 21). Almost three-quarters of MFOs surveyed (70.9%) have been contacted by their MFO Regional Coordinator, while a little over half (54.5%) have contacted their Regional Coordinator themselves. Approximately a tenth of respondents were not aware of the MFO Regional Coordinator, with 11.6% and 9.1% choosing this option.

Table 5. Contact with MFO Regional Coordinator

	Yes (%)	No (%)	Not Aware of Regional Coordinator (%)
Contacted by MFO Regional Coordinator (n=88)	70.9	17.4	11.6
Contacted MFO Regional Coordinator (n=86)	54.5	36.4	9.1

The largest number of MFOs surveyed did not have any suggestions for improving the concept and implementation of the MFO Regional Coordinator system (Figure 21, n=20). The most common recommendations were increased communication between the Regional Coordinators and the MFOs in their region (n=12) and increased guidance and encouragement for the coordinators and the specifics of their role on the institutional level (n=8). Other suggestions include improving the coordination between Regional Coordinators and other landowner organizations, increasing the contact between Regional Coordinators of different regions (n=3), reducing regions to a more manageable size (n=3), and scheduling meetings at different times such as not on weekdays or during the hunting season (n=2).

Figure 21. Suggestions for MFO Regional Coordinator System



Respondents were asked to specify the value of the MFO program in allowing them to achieve certain goals. The results are depicted in Table 6. The majority of MFOs surveyed consider the Program to be extremely valuable in helping them make wise management decisions on their own property (63.8%) and promoting forest stewardship throughout their community (53.8%). Respondents find their participation in the MFO program slightly less useful in allowing them to get to know other forest landowners in their community, with 38.5% selecting extremely valuable and 40.7% selecting moderately valuable. Very few respondents indicated that the MFO Program was not very or not at all valuable for fulfilling these objectives.

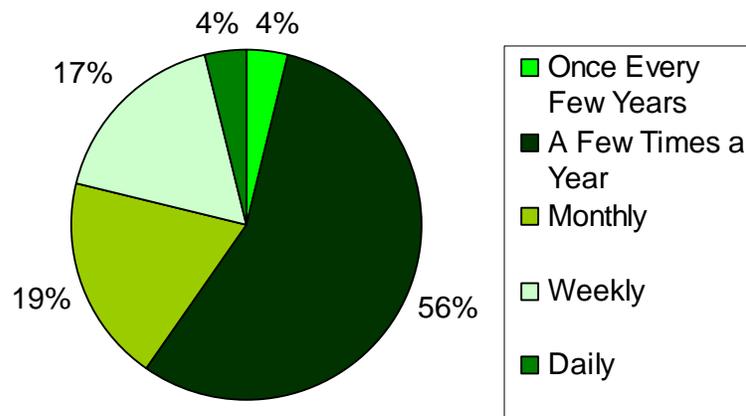
Table 6. Value of MFO Program for Achieving Aims

	Not at all Valuable	Not Very Valuable	Neutral	Moderately Valuable	Extremely Valuable
Making Wise Management Decisions	1.1%	1.1%	10.6%	23.4%	63.8%
Promoting Forest Stewardship	0.0%	0.0%	6.5%	39.8%	53.8%
Getting to Know Other Forest Owners	0.0%	4.4%	16.5%	40.7%	38.5%

Landowner Cooperation and Communication

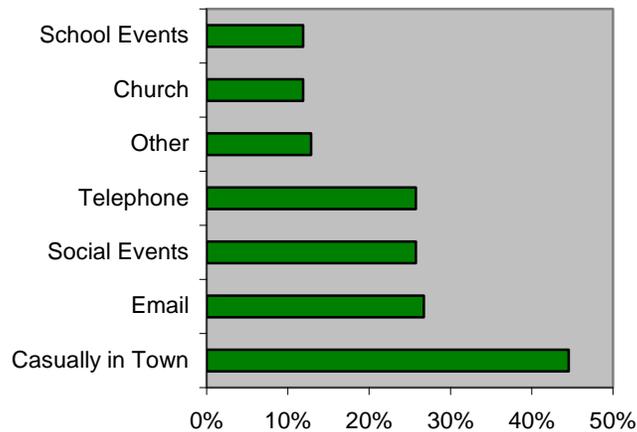
This section focuses on a series of questions about peer-to-peer landowner cooperation and communication. These questions were not specific to the MFO program but were focused on broader interactions among woodland owners in the community. Landowner cooperation and interaction questions were only included on the web version of the survey and were not present in the postal mail version. Almost all of MFOs surveyed (91.4%, n=58) report interacting with other forest owners in their community. This communication is of a varying frequency and capacity. The largest percentage of respondents (55.8%) communicate with fellow woodland owners a few times per year (Figure 22). Beyond that, slightly less than a fifth of respondents interact on a weekly (17.3%) or monthly (19.2%) basis with other landowners. Very few respondents communicate on a daily basis or as infrequently as every few years.

Figure 22. Frequency of MFO Interaction with other Landowners in Community (n=52)



Out of a list of options, the most frequent contexts of communication with other forest landowners are casually or incidentally in town (44.6%), via email (26.7%), via telephone (25.7%), or during social events (25.7%) (Figure 23). Slightly more than a tenth of respondents (20%) indicated other circumstances for interaction with woodland owners, such as for work or business or attending various seminars or workshops.

Figure 23. Context of MFO Interaction with Other Landowners in Community (n=101)



The MFOs surveyed were asked to rate the likeliness that they would cooperate with other landowners in their community on a list of forestry-related activities (Figure 24).

Respondents are the least willing to jointly lease land with their neighbors to hunting or fishing groups, with 50.9% describing it as very unlikely and 24.5% as unlikely. In contrast, MFOs surveyed are extremely apt to watch for trespassers on each other's land. Nearly a quarter indicated that they already do (38.5%) and another quarter described this as very likely (23.1%). Respondents also indicated that they already allow to access to hunt (29.1%) and recreate (20.8%) on each other's land.

Figure 24. Likelihood of Cooperation on Activities with Forest Owners in Community

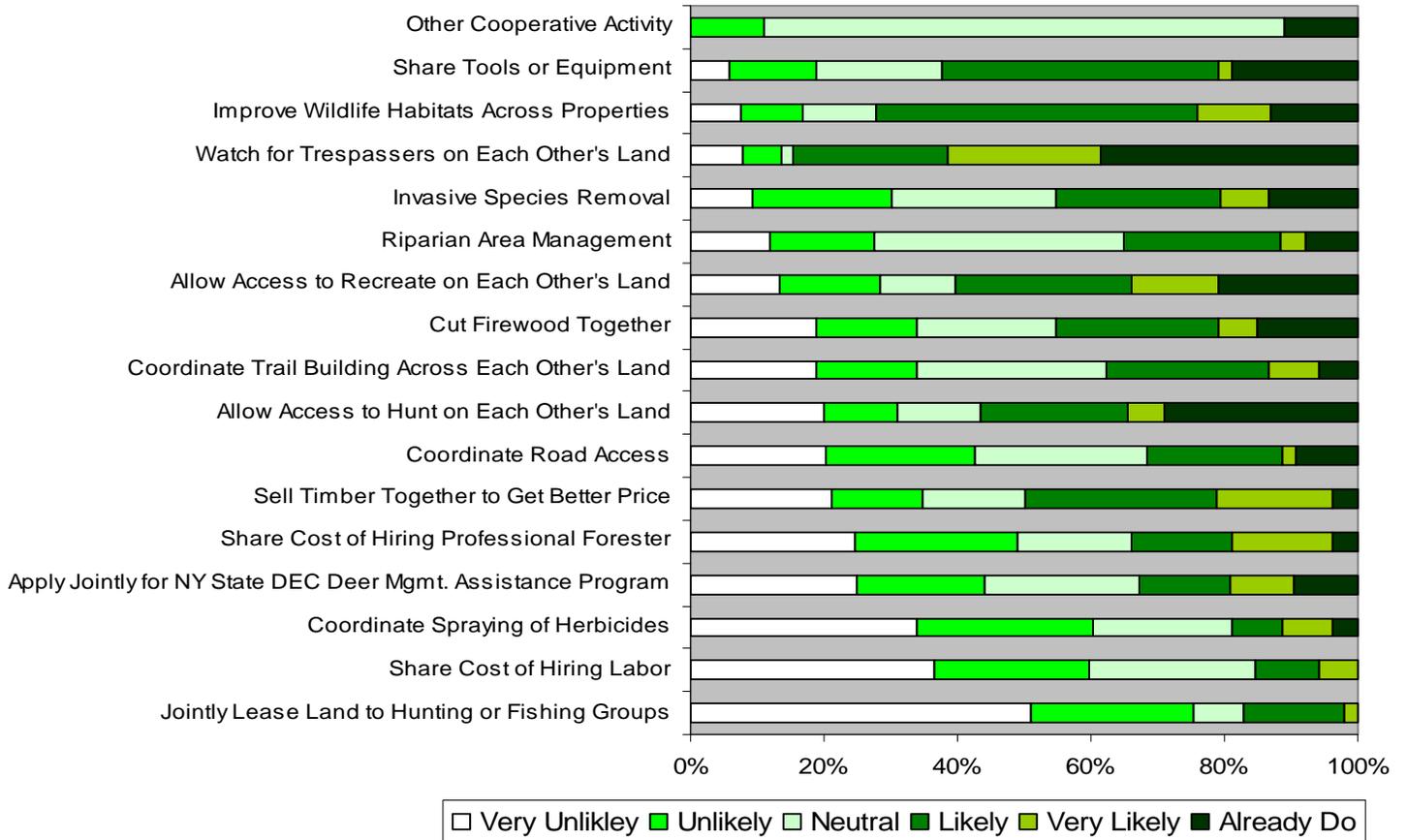
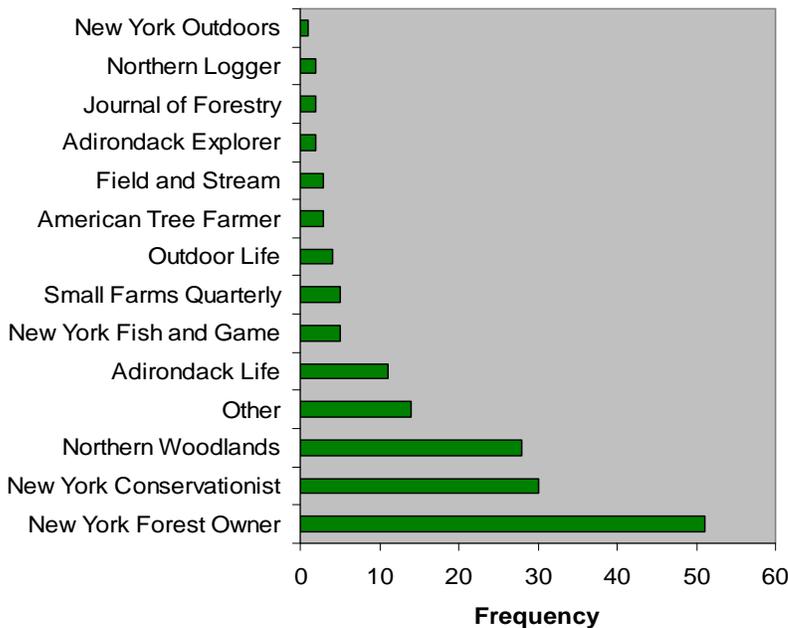


Figure 25. Publication Subscriptions



The MFOs surveyed most commonly subscribe to the *New York Forest Owner* publication (n=51) (Figure 25). Other common publication subscriptions among respondents include the *New York Conservationist* (n=30), *Northern Woodlands* (n=28), and *Adirondack Life* (n=11). Within the “Other” category (n=13), MFOs also specified such publications as *American Tree Farmer* and *The Backwoodsman*.

Conclusions

- Most respondents are males (87%) that own a mean of 149 total acres and 106 wooded acres.
- Close to a third of MFOs surveyed (30%) were certified in the past three years.
- Half of respondents have completed a total of between one and ten on-site visits with landowners since certification; 58% completed between 1 and 3 visits on 2007 and 25% completed 4 or more woodswalks with woodland owners in 2007.
- 39% of woodland owner on-site visits can be attributed to referrals from neighbors or friends.
- Common forestry outreach and leadership activities were encouraging others to become MFOs, persuading others to joining organizations, having personal interactions with forest owners, and assuming leadership roles.
- The most common types of activity that addresses a youth audience are those with organizational partners and schools.
- Since certification, five times as many respondents have joined NYFOA as any other organization.
- Most MFOs surveyed have worked with a Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) Educator (85%) and believe that their local CCE office is both aware (89%) and supportive (73%) of the MFO Program.
- Respondents indicated that the CCE lends the most support through providing referrals.
- Nearly a third of MFOs estimated that between 76 to 100% of their total outreach activities involved these types of partnerships.
- The most common organizational/agency partners for outreach activities are CCE and NYFOA.
- In managing their own property, MFOs most frequently use the information they learned through participation in the MFO Program for timber stand improvement, creation and enhancement of wildlife habitat, and preparation of a management plan.
- Respondent's favorite aspects of the MFO Program in order of magnitude are social connectivity, promoting forest stewardship, and learning better ways to manage their own property.
- Respondent's least favorite aspects of the MFO Program in order of magnitude are: lack of time to participate, paperwork, lack of interest among the public and other landowners, and travel distance.
- The largest number of respondents did not have any suggestions for the MFO Training Workshops, the MFO Refresher Workshops, or any other aspect of the MFO Program.
- The most common suggestions for the MFO Refresher workshops are minimizing travel distances and keeping the curriculum expansive and up-to-date.
- The most frequent recommendations for improving the MFO Program were to increase advertising, incorporate economic and energy related content into the training, and to keep forestry information accessible and up-to-date.
- Over half of the MFOs surveyed find the MFO email list-server to be very valuable
- The best contact method for respondents is by email and those that subscribe to the listserve find it valuable.
- A majority of respondents (71%) have been contacted by their MFO Regional Coordinator and many have also contacted the coordinator themselves (55%).

- Beyond no suggestions, the most common recommendation for improving the MFO Regional Coordinator system is increasing the communication between the Regional Coordinators and the MFOs in their region.
- The MFO Program is most valuable for respondents in making wiser management decisions for their own property and promoting forest stewardship.
- Almost all of MFOs surveyed (91%) interact with forest owners in their community about forestry matters.
- Most respondents communicate with fellow woodland owners a few times a year or monthly.
- The most frequent context of interaction with other area forest owners is casually or incidentally in town.
- Existing ways woodland owners cooperate: in terms of already existing cooperative activities with other woodland owners, MFOs watch for trespassers on each other's land, allow access to hunt on each other's land, and allow access to recreate on each other's land.
- Likely future cooperative activities: MFOs surveyed indicated that in the future, they are most likely to watch for trespassers on each other's land, share tools or equipment, and improve wildlife across each other's properties.
- Unlikely future cooperative activities: Respondents are least likely to jointly lease land with their neighbors to hunting or fishing groups, share the cost of hiring labor, or coordinate the spraying of herbicides.
- The most common publication subscriptions for MFOs are *New York Forest Owner*, *New York State Conservationist*, and *Northern Woodlands*.

References:

Broderick, S., F. Milici, L. Snyder, G. Goff, and J. Finley. 1999. Reaching private woodland owners through Coverts: How are we doing? *RGS*. 11(3):24-25, 32.

Goff, G. and A. Muth. 2006. Yours for the asking.....Peer assistance for forest owners. *Small Farms Quarterly* Winter 2006: 16-17.

Goff, G. 2008. NY Master Forest Owner/COVERTS Program: 2008 Program Year. <http://www.dnr.cornell.edu/ext/mfo/newsletters.htm>.

Appendix A: Focus Group Report

A pre-test focus group was held on April 2, 2008 in a meeting room at the Arnot Teaching and Research Forest in Van Etten, NY. The purpose of the focus group was to obtain feedback on the context and layout of the surveys and accompanying cover letters prior to mailing the survey to the full sample. The six participants in the focus group represented the forestry community through their affiliation as Master Forest Owner Volunteers.

The results of the pre-test were as follows:

Completion Time for Survey

- Average completion time=18.8 minutes
- Range of 14-25 minutes

Suggested Revisions to the Letter

- Move the paragraph on the technical, administrative aspects of the survey to the inside cover of the survey
- Make the tone a little more grateful
- Link to forest stewardship
- Create and mention a benefit for completing the survey for extra incentive (ex: entry into a lottery or a small amount of money)

Suggested Revisions to the Woodlot Owner Survey

Changes

- Add more colored images (on inside cover, at corner of pages) or a fun forest fact at the bottom
- Change the color of Q1 from blue to black
- Remove e, f, and g from Q1 and create a separate question from it
- Change the wording of Q2 to simplify it
- Add an option of workshop/event to Q4
- Revamp the format of Q8 by adding key words above the table to clarify and remind and split up into influenced by MFO and not influenced by MFO
- Add option G to Q8- I have decided not to do it regardless of my contact with a Master Forest Owner Volunteer
- Remove the first sentence of Q9
- Reformat Q9 by making it a yes/no option and if yes, how much

- Reword Q25 to ask if you have “ever communicated with or participated in an event sponsored by”- include the CCE acronym in the question
- Add option of Don’t Know to Q25

Possible New Questions

- Make e, f, g of Q1 into Q2 asking “Is your woodlot:”
- Add new part to the beginning of Q9 asking “Did you benefit economically from a visit with a MFO? If yes, go on to parts b-k.”
- In Q19, make a new question asking how many total acreage of land you own before asking how many wooded acres
- Fears, Threats, Concerns, Challenges

Suggested Revisions to the Master Forest Owner Survey

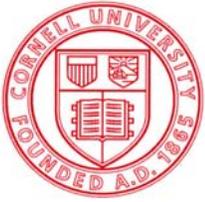
Changes

- Add inside cover page
- Remove the word established from Q3
- Reword Q5e to the same as Q25 on Landowner survey
- Add option for Not Familiar to Q14
- Bold Q20
- Add “to discuss the specifics of this survey or suggestions you would like to discuss in greater detail” to Q21
- Underline “does not impact” in Q21
- Add “If yes, name _____” to Q21

Possible New Questions

- In Q1, make a new question asking how many total acreage of land you own before asking how many wooded acres
- Ask follow up to 3b “% of total that are referrals from:”
- Add 3f- “Is your local Cornell Cooperative Extension aware of the MFO program?- yes/no/not sure
- Add 3g- “Does your local Cornell Cooperative Extension support the MFO program”- yes/no/not sure

Appendix B: Survey Cover Letters



Cornell University

College of Agriculture
and Life Sciences
Department of Natural
Resources
Cornell Cooperative Extension
108 Fernow Hall
Ithaca, NY 14853
t. 607-255-2115
f. 607-255-2815
www.dnr.cornell.edu/extension

May 7, 2008

Dear NY Master Forest Owner Volunteer,

We need your help to evaluate the impact of the NY Master Forest Owner (MFO)/COVERTS Volunteer program and to learn more about the experiences of MFO Volunteers. You are receiving this survey because you are one of the approximately 150 MFO Volunteers in New York. It is important to periodically evaluate the effectiveness of the MFO program on behalf program sponsors (Cornell University in partnership with other organizations). The results of this survey will allow us to document the impact that the program has on forest stewardship and also make warranted improvements to the program. Your participation is voluntary and we would like to thank you in advance for taking the time to complete the enclosed survey.

As a MFO Volunteer, you are critical to the success of the program and we are very interesting in hearing your viewpoints.

A similar survey is also being conducted of NY forest owners who have received an on-site visit from a MFO volunteer within the past 8 years. Please be assured that all results will be compiled collectively, such that individual replies will not be associated with specific names, the forest owner, or the volunteer who made the visit. Your individual responses will remain confidential and your name will not be used in any reporting. Researchers at Cornell University will be conducting the data analysis and will keep the collected information protected and confidential. [add the following sentence for web survey participants] When you complete the web survey, your responses will be encrypted via SSL as they are transmitted back to us on the Internet. SSL encryption is commonly used by banks and online merchants for sending private documents or information securely via the Internet.

When you complete the survey, mail it back to us in the enclosed postage paid envelope. Please do so as soon as possible so that we may remove your name from future mailings and thus not inconvenience you and expend our time and expense in sending follow-up reminders.

Thank you very much for your dedication and work on behalf of the MFO Program and for helping us with this survey as it is voluntary. Your replies and frank suggestions will allow us to document the impacts of the program and make improvements that will further enhance its effectiveness.

Please contact Gary Goff (607-255-2824, grg3@cornell.edu, 104 Fernow Hall, Cornell Univ., Ithaca, NY 14853) or Shorna Broussard (607-255-2149, srb237@cornell.edu, 122C Fernow Hall, Cornell Univ., Ithaca, NY 14853) if you have any questions regarding the survey. A summary of the results will be posted on the NY MFO website www.cornellmfo.info by early fall, or please give us a call at 607-255-2115 to request a copy in the mail. Thank you very much for your help with the survey.

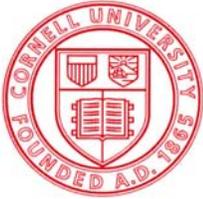
Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Gary Goff in black ink.

Gary Goff
Senior Extension Associate
Director of NY MFO/COVERTS Volunteer Program

Handwritten signature of Shorna Broussard in black ink.

Shorna Broussard, Ph.D.
Associate Professor



Cornell University

College of Agriculture
and Life Sciences

Department of Natural
Resources

Cornell Cooperative Extension
108 Fernow Hall

Ithaca, NY 14853

t. 607-255-2115

f. 607-255-2815

www.dnr.cornell.edu/extension

May 20, 2008

Dear NY Master Forest Owner Volunteer,

We need your help to evaluate the impact of the NY Master Forest Owner (MFO)/COVERTS Volunteer program and to learn more about the experiences of MFO Volunteers. You are receiving this survey because you are one of the approximately 150 MFO Volunteers in New York. It is important to periodically evaluate the effectiveness of the MFO program on behalf program sponsors (Cornell University in partnership with other organizations). The results of this survey will allow us to document the impact that the program has on forest stewardship and also make warranted improvements to the program. Your participation is voluntary and we would like to thank you in advance for taking the time to complete the enclosed survey.

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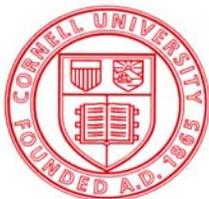
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Sincerely,

Gary Goff
Senior Extension Associate
Director of NY MFO/COVERTS Volunteer Program

Shorna Broussard, Ph.D.
Associate Professor



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Resources

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www.dnr.cornell.edu/extension

May 23, 2008

Dear NY Master Forest Owner Program Volunteer,

We hope that you will take the time to complete the enclosed survey. The results from this survey will help us improve the Master Forest Owner Volunteer Program and understand your perspectives. It is important that we receive the input of as many MFO Volunteers as possible to help us fully understand and document landowner perspectives about the MFO Volunteer Program. Several weeks ago, you may have received a survey. In case this survey was lost in the mail, or if you have misplaced it, we have enclosed a new one.

A similar survey is also being conducted of NY forest owners who have received an on-site visit from a MFO volunteer within the past 7 years. Please be assured that all results will be compiled collectively, such that individual replies will not be associated with specific names, the forest owner, or the volunteer who made the visit. Your individual responses will remain confidential and your name will not be used in any reporting. Researchers at Cornell University will be conducting the data analysis and will keep the collected information protected and confidential.

When you complete the survey, mail it back to us in the enclosed postage paid envelope. Please do so as soon as possible so that we may remove your name from future mailings and thus not inconvenience you and expend our time and expense in sending follow-up reminders.

Thank you very much for your dedication and work on behalf of the MFO Program and for helping us with this survey. Your replies and frank suggestions will allow us to document the impacts of the program and make improvements that will further enhance its effectiveness.

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Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Gary R. Goff in black ink.

Gary Goff
Senior Extension Associate
Director of NY MFO/COVERTS Volunteer Program

Handwritten signature of Shorna Broussard in black ink.

Shorna Broussard, Ph.D.
Associate Professor



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension

We need your help! A couple of weeks ago, you received in the mail a survey seeking your opinions about the New York Master Forest Owner Volunteer Program.

If you have already completed and returned the survey to us, please accept our sincere thanks. If not, please do so today. It is only by asking people to share their insights that we can document program effectiveness and make necessary improvements to the Master Forest Owner Volunteer Program.

Thank you,

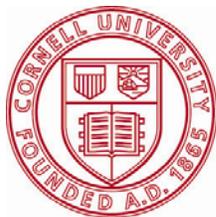
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Goff".

Gary Goff

Director of the MFO Program and Senior Extension Associate

Survey of New York Master Forest Owner Volunteers

An Evaluation of the NY Master Forest Owner Volunteer Program



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension

We hope you will enjoy completing this survey about your experience as a Master Forest Owner Volunteer. We appreciate your help.

If you have any questions, please contact Master Forest Owner Volunteer Program Director Gary Goff at 607-255-2824 or by e-mail at grg3@cornell.edu. You may also contact research study director Dr. Shorna Broussard by telephone at 607-255-2149 or by email at srb237@cornell.edu. This study has been reviewed and approved by the Cornell University Institutional Review Board (IRB) for human subjects. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant please contact the Cornell University IRB at 607-255-5138 or irbhp@cornell.edu.

Master Forest Owner Activities

1. In what year were you certified as a Master Forest Owner?

2. What is the number of forest owner on-site visits that you've completed in:

a. 2007 _____

b. Total since certification _____(approximately)

% of total that are referrals from:

i. DEC _____

ii. NYFOA _____

iii. Paper/media release _____

iv. Neighbor/friend _____

v. Previous visit _____

vi. Other _____

100%

3. Since your MFO certification, how many of the following activities or events do you participate in on average, per year ?

a. Educational wood walks on your property _____

b. Forest owners you have nominated or encouraged to become MFO volunteers _____

c. Forest owners you have persuaded to join a natural resources-related organization _____

d. MFO Refresher classes attended _____

Are you interested in hosting a refresher class at your property or a nearby forest of interest to the volunteers?

Yes No

e. Natural resources educational events attended _____

f. Meetings or events where you have used knowledge acquired from the MFO program _____

g. Forest owners you have personally interacted with via phone calls, social events, etc. (other than the on-site visits) _____

4. Since your MFO certification, how many of the following activities or events have you participated in in total ?

- a. Educational events where you worked or addressed a youth audience _____
Please list the events here _____
- b. Number of organization(s) that you have joined, at least in part, because of your involvement in the MFO program _____
Please list the organizations here _____
- c. Organization leadership roles you have assumed at least in part due to your involvement in the MFO program _____
- d. Articles in newspapers or magazines you have written _____
- e. Have you ever communicated with or participated in an event sponsored by a Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) County Association?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Don't know
- f. Is your local Cornell Cooperative Extension County Association aware of the MFO program?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Not sure
- g. Does your local Cornell Cooperative Extension County Association support the MFO Program?
 - Yes, If yes, how? _____
 - No
 - Not sure

5. To what extent have your MFO outreach activities involved partnership with other agencies or organizations?

- a. Approximate number of activities _____
- b. Approximate percentage of all activities _____
Please list the partners _____

Opinions about the Master Forest Owner Program

6. Please give some examples of how you have used information you learned as a MFO to manage your property.

7. Approximately how much money have you earned or saved as a result of that information?

8. What do you like most about being a MFO volunteer?

9. What do you like least about being a MFO volunteer?

10. Do you have any suggestions for improving:

a. the MFO training workshop?

Format:

Content (for ex. subject material or technical training):

b. the MFO refresher workshops?

Format:

Content:

c. any aspect of the MFO program?

d. How valuable to you is the MFO e-mail list-server?

- Not all valuable
- Slightly valuable
- Neutral
- Somewhat valuable
- Very valuable
- I do not subscribe to the MFO e-mail list server

If you don't subscribe, would you like to? If yes, list your email

11. What is the best manner by which to reach you regarding general forest management and specific MFO Program information?

12. Have you been contacted by your new MFO Regional Coordinator?

- Yes
- No
- Not aware of MFO Regional Coordinator

13. Have you contacted your new MFO Regional Coordinator?

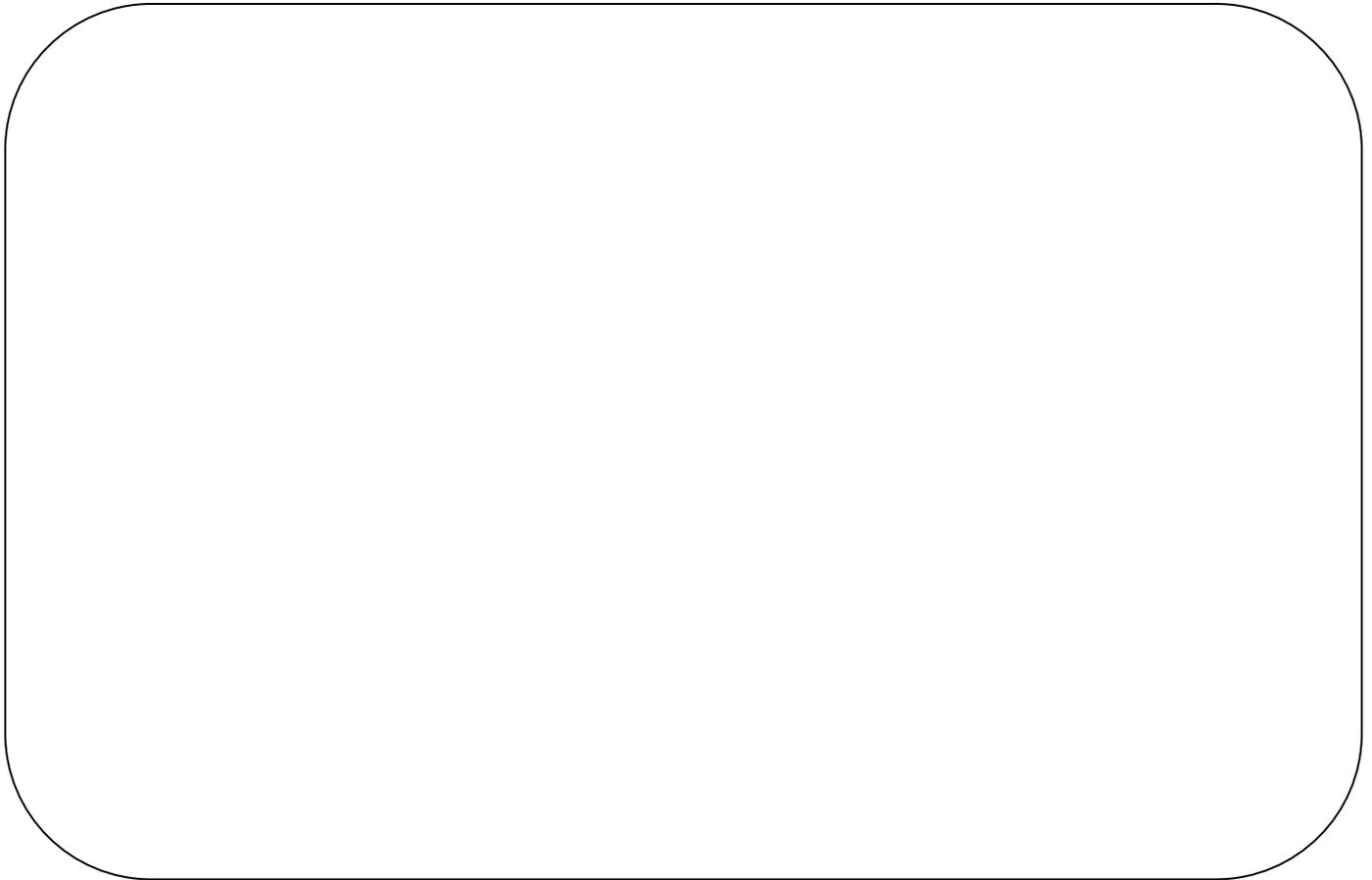
- Yes
- No
- Not aware of MFO Regional Coordinator

14. Do you have any suggestions as to how we can improve the regional coordinator concept?

15. How valuable has the MFO program been in allowing you to:

	Not at all Valuable	Not Very Valuable	Neutral	Moderately Valuable	Extremely Valuable
a. make wise management decisions regarding your forest land	<input type="checkbox"/>				
b. fulfill your desire to promote good forest stewardship in your community	<input type="checkbox"/>				
c. get to know other forest owners in your community	<input type="checkbox"/>				

16. Please briefly describe a personal “success story” where you believe you made a significant contribution to forest stewardship in your community or in the state.



17. With the withdrawal of funding by The Ruffed Grouse Society (initial and primary sponsor for 12+ years), we are in need of a substantial and continual sponsor, or manner by which to secure funding. Do you have any suggestions?



Demographic Characteristics

18. How many acres of land do you own?

- a.) Total acres _____
- b.) Wooded acres _____

19. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

20. What is your age?

- Under 25 years
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75-84
- 85 and over

21. In what year did you acquire your woodland?

22. Does anyone other than you participate in decision making related to your forestland?

- Yes

If yes, indicate below:

- Spouse/domestic partner
- Children
- Other relatives
- Parent(s)
- Business partner
- Friends or Neighbors
- Other (please specify) _____

- No

23. Do you live on or within 1 mile of your forested property?

- Yes
- No

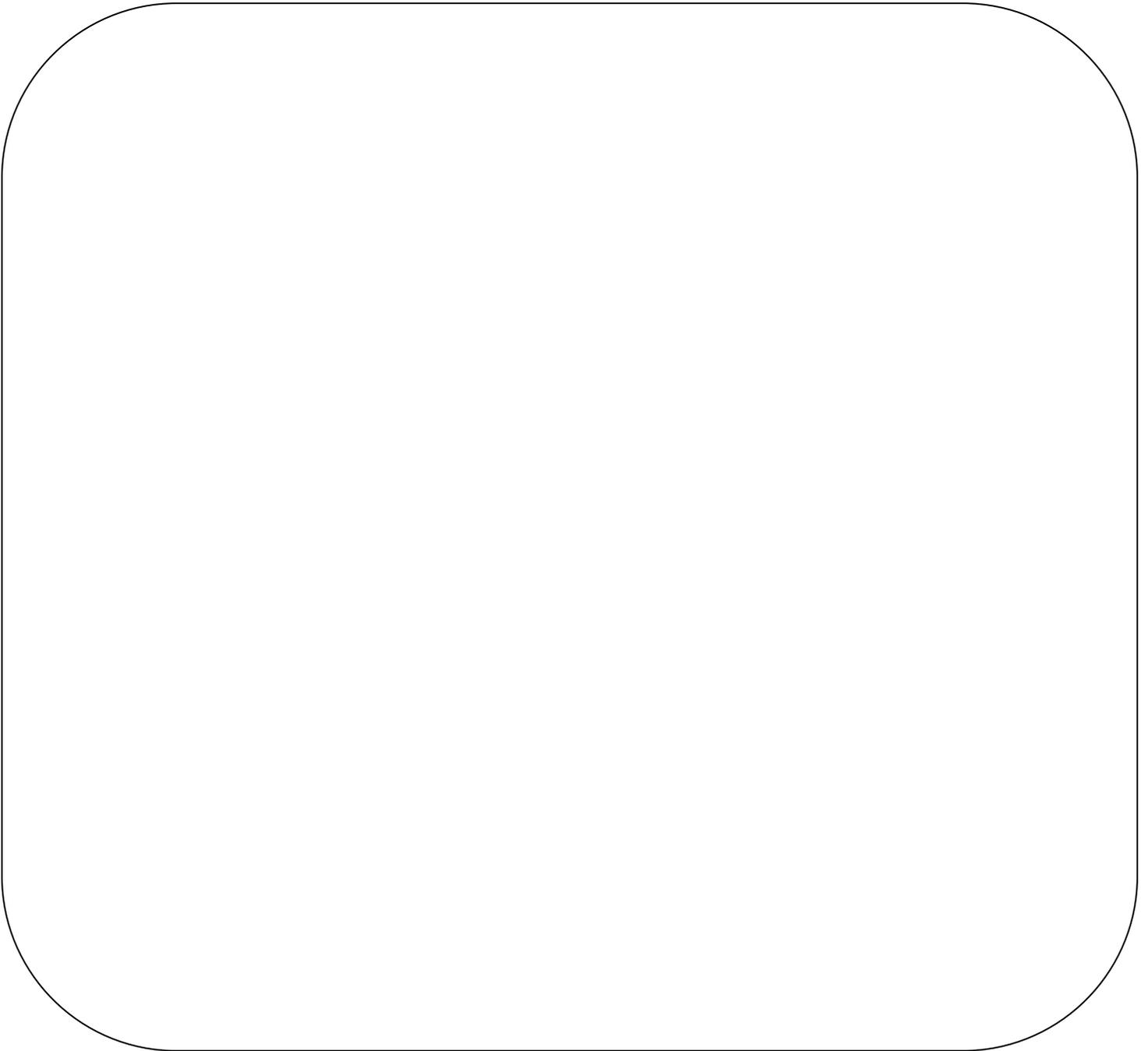
24. Would you like to participate in a follow-up personal interview this summer to discuss the specifics of this survey or other suggestions in greater detail? Please indicate below. This does not impact the confidentiality of your responses to this survey.

- Yes If yes, please list your name

- No

Other Comments?

Please let us know if there is anything else you would like to share with us about your experiences as a New York Master Forest Owner Volunteer.



Please return the completed survey in the envelope provided. *Thank you very much* for taking the time to tell us about your experiences as a New York Master Forest Owner Volunteer.

Survey of New York Master Forest Owner Volunteers

We need your help! As NY Master Forest Owner Volunteer, you are critical to the success of the program and we value your opinions. We are conducting this survey to document the impact of the program and make warranted improvements to the program. We hope you will enjoy completing this survey and reflecting on your experiences as a NY Master Forest Owner Volunteer. We really appreciate your time and assistance.

TO START: Click the "Next" button below to get started.

TO FINISH: Click the "Submit Survey" button on page 6 when you have completed the survey.

1. I would rather complete this survey by mail.

- Yes
- No (If no, click NEXT button below to get started)

If yes, enter your name below and we will send you the survey by mail.

PLEASE NOTE: If you have any questions, please contact Master Forest Owner Volunteer Program Director Gary Goff at 607-255-2824 or by e-mail at grg3@cornell.edu. You may also contact research study director Dr. Shorna Broussard by telephone at 607-255-2149 or by email at srb237@cornell.edu. This study has been reviewed and approved by the Cornell University Institutional Review Board (IRB) for human subjects. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant please contact the Cornell University IRB at 607-255-5138 or irbhp@cornell.edu.

Survey of New York Master Forest Owner Volunteers

Master Forest Owner Activities

2. In what year were you certified as a Master Forest Owner?

3. What is the number of forest owner on-site visits that you've completed in:

a. 2007

b. Total since certification (approximately)

4. Of these on-site visits since certification, what percentage of the total are referrals from (should total to 100%). Please enter NUMBERS only in the boxes:

a. DEC

b. NYFOA

c. Newspaper/media release

d. Neighbor/friend

e. Previous visit

f. Other

5. Since your MFO certification, how many of the following activities or events do you participate in on average, per year?

a. Educational wood walks on your property

b. Forest owners you have nominated or encouraged to become MFO volunteers

c. Forest owners you have persuaded to join a natural resources-related organization

d. MFO Refresher classes attended

e. Natural resources educational events attended

f. Meetings or events where you have used knowledge acquired from the MFO Program

g. Forest owners you have personally interacted with via phone calls, social events, etc. (other than the on-site visits)

h. Organizational leadership roles you have assumed, at least in part, due to your involvement in the MFO program

i. Articles in newspapers or magazines you have written

6. Are you interested in hosting a refresher class at your property or a nearby forest of interest to the volunteers?

Yes

No

Survey of New York Master Forest Owner Volunteers

7. Since your MFO certification, how many educational events and activities have you participated in that addressed a youth audience? Please list the number of the events. Also, list the names of the events.

8. Since your MFO certification, how many organizations have you joined, at least in part, because of your involvement in the MFO program? List the number of organizations you have joined as well as the names of those organizations.

9. Have you ever communicated with or participated in an event sponsored by a Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) County Association?

Yes

No

Don't know

10. Is your local Cornell Cooperative Extension County Association aware of the MFO program?

Yes

No

Not sure

11. Does your local Cornell Cooperative Extension County Association support the MFO Program?

Yes

No

Not sure

If yes, how?

Survey of New York Master Forest Owner Volunteers

12. To what extent have your MFO outreach activities involved partnership with other agencies or organizations?

a. Approximate number of activities

b. Approximate percentage of activities

c. Please list the partners

Survey of New York Master Forest Owner Volunteers

Opinions about the Master Forest Owner Volunteer Program

13. Please give some examples of how you have used information you learned as a MFO to manage your property.

14. Approximately how much money have you earned or saved as a result of that information?

15. What do you like MOST about being a MFO volunteer?

16. What do you like LEAST about being a MFO volunteer?

17. Do you have any suggestions for improving the format or content (example: subject material or technical training) of the MFO training workshops?

Survey of New York Master Forest Owner Volunteers

18. Do you have any suggestions for improving the format or content of the MFO refresher workshops?

19. Do you have any suggestions for improving any aspect of the MFO program?

20. How valuable to you is the MFO email list server?

If you don't subscribe, would you like to? If yes, please list your e-mail.

21. What is the best manner by which to reach you regarding general forest management and specific MFO Program information?

22. Have you been contacted by your new MFO Regional Coordinator?

Yes

No

Not aware of MFO Regional Coordinator

23. Have you contacted your new MFO Regional Coordinator?

Yes

No

Not aware of MFO Regional Coordinator

Survey of New York Master Forest Owner Volunteers

24. Do you have any suggestions as to how we can improve the regional coordinator concept?

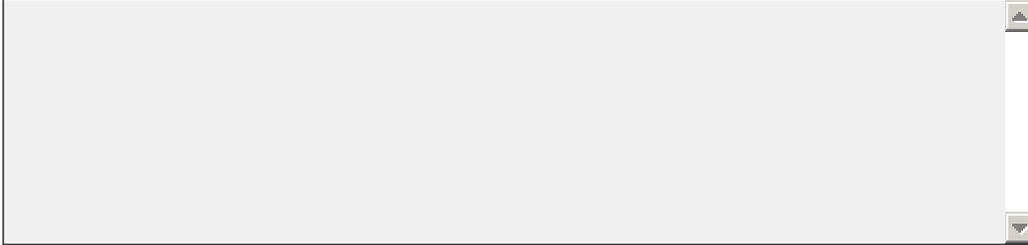
25. How valuable has the MFO program been in allowing you to:

	Not at all valuable	Not Very Valuable	Neutral	Moderately Valuable	Extremely Valuable
a. Make wise management decisions regarding your forest land	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
b. Fulfill your desire to promote good forest stewardship in your community	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
c. Get to know other forest owners in your community	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn

26. Please briefly describe a personal "success story" where you believe you made a significant contribution to forest stewardship in your community or in the state.

Survey of New York Master Forest Owner Volunteers

27. With the withdrawal of funding by The Ruffed Grouse Society (initial and primary sponsor for 12+ years), we are in need of a substantial and continual sponsor, or manner by which to secure funding. Do you have any suggestions?



Survey of New York Master Forest Owner Volunteers

Landowners and Organizations

28. Do you know of any conservation or environmental organizations (The Nature Conservancy, New York Forest Owners Association, etc.) that you can participate in or get information related to forestry? If yes, please list them here.

29. Do you interact with other forest owners in your town or community regarding forestry matters?

Yes

No

30. If yes, how often do you interact or communicate with them?

Daily

Weekly

Monthly

A few times a year

Once a year

Once every few years

Survey of New York Master Forest Owner Volunteers

31. In what capacity do you interact with forest landowners in your town or community? Check all that apply.

- Organization meetings (ex: Fish and Game Club, Sierra Club, etc.)
- Church service or activities
- School related activities
- Casually or incidentally in town
- Social events
- Via e-mail
- Via the telephone
- Other (please specify)

32. Do you subscribe to any of the following publications? Check all that apply.

- Outdoor Life
- Field and Stream
- New York Fish and Game
- New York Outdoors
- Small Farms Quarterly
- Adirondack Life
- Northern Woodlands
- The Conservationist
- New York Forest Owner
- Other conservation publication (please specify)

Survey of New York Master Forest Owner Volunteers

33. How likely are you to cooperate with forest owners in your community on the following activities?

	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Neutral	Likely	Very Likely	Already Do
a. Allow access to hunt on each others' land	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja
b. Allow access to recreate on each others' land	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja
c. Jointly lease land to hunting or fishing groups	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja
d. Apply jointly for the Dept. of Environmental Conservation Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP)	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja
e. Coordinate trail building across each others' land	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja
f. Coordinate road access	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja
g. Share tools or equipment	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja
h. Improve wildlife habitat across our properties	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja
i. Coordinate spraying herbicides	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja
j. Share the cost of hiring labor	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja
k. Share the cost of hiring a professional forester	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja
l. Sell timber together to get a better price	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja
m. Watch for trespassers on each others' land	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja
n. Cut firewood together	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja
o. Invasive species removal	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja
p. Riparian management	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja
q. Other	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja	ja

(please specify)

Survey of New York Master Forest Owner Volunteers

Demographic Characteristics

34. How many acres of land do you own?

a. Total acres

b. Wooded acres

35. What is your gender?

Male

Female

36. What is your age?

37. In what year did you acquire your woodland?

38. Does anyone other than you participate in decision-making related to your forestland?

Yes

No

39. If yes, indicate whom below. Check all that apply.

Spouse/domestic partner

Children

Other relatives

Parent(s)

Business partner

Friends or Neighbors

Other (please specify)

40. Do you live on or within 1 mile of your forested property?

Yes

No

Survey of New York Master Forest Owner Volunteers

41. Would you like to participate in a follow-up personal interview this summer to discuss the specifics of this survey or other suggestions in greater detail? Please indicate below. This does not impact the confidentiality of your responses to this survey.

Yes

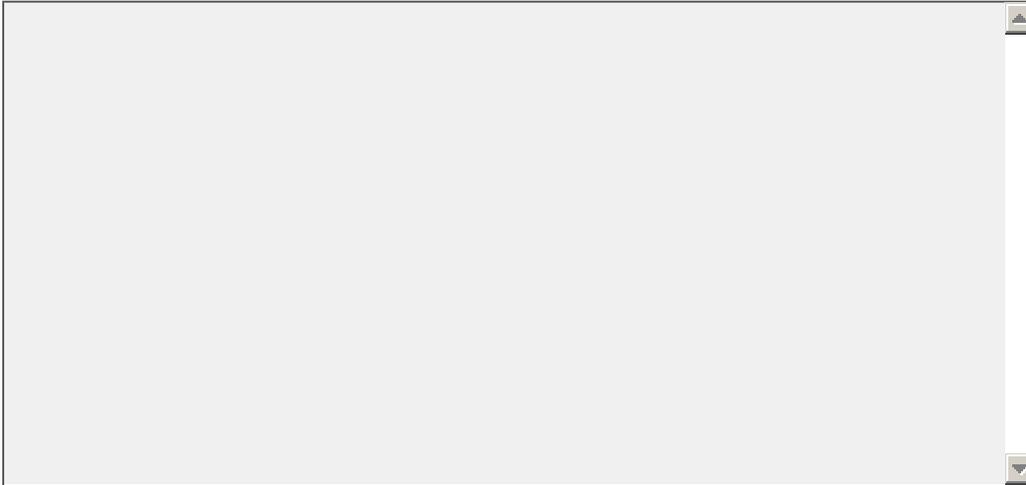
No

If yes, please list your name

Survey of New York Master Forest Owner Volunteers

Other Comments?

42. Please let us know if there is anything else you would like to share with us about your experiences as a New York Master Forest Owner Volunteer.

A large, empty text input field with a light gray background and a thin black border. On the right side, there is a vertical scrollbar with a small arrow at the top and bottom, indicating that the field is scrollable.

TO FINISH: Click the "Submit Survey" button at the bottom of this page when you have completed the survey.