

Southern Maine Forestry Services 2021 Newsletter

Forestry isn't rocket science. It's harder!
P.O. Box 910, Windham, Maine 04062,
(207) 892-6562

Office@Someforest.com, Website:
someforest.com

YOU CAN LIKE AND FOLLOW US ON
FACEBOOK-SOUTHERN MAINE FORESTRY
SERVICES

A graphic for Southern Maine Forestry Services, Inc. celebrating their 40th anniversary. The background is a photograph of a dirt road winding through a dense forest of tall evergreen trees. At the top, the company name "SOUTHERN MAINE FORESTRY SERVICES, INC" is written in large, bold, black capital letters. Below the name is a red ribbon banner with the text "Celebrating Our 40th Year" in white cursive. A list of services is provided in white bold capital letters: "• LICENSED FORESTERS", "• PROFESSIONAL FOREST MANAGEMENT SERVICES", "• TIMBER SALE", "• MANAGEMENT PLANS", and "• TIMBER INVENTORIES". At the bottom, the phone number "207-892-6562" and the website "www.someforest.com" are listed, followed by a small Facebook logo.

**SOUTHERN MAINE
FORESTRY SERVICES, INC**

Celebrating Our 40th Year

- **LICENSED FORESTERS**
- **PROFESSIONAL FOREST
MANAGEMENT SERVICES**
- **TIMBER SALE**
- **MANAGEMENT PLANS**
- **TIMBER INVENTORIES**

207-892-6562 • www.someforest.com 

WELCOME

Two Anniversaries

This year I am celebrating two anniversaries. The first is the milestone year of my turning 70 years old. I'm glad I made hale and hearty but... The second I'm enjoying celebrating more and that is it has been 40 years since I founded this forest consulting and land Management Company. I am certainly proud of the success we have achieved. Looking through our records over those years we have dealt with a lot of people, more than 8,100. More than 4,000 are tagged as clients. Many of these we provided just a quick service, a cruise, a timber appraisal, risk tree assessment, a shore land zoning consult or one of the many other things someone may ask of a forester. For over 1,100 clients we provide ongoing management advice and assist them in managing their woodlots and selling their timber. Collectively we help your neighbors manage over 100,000 acres of woodland.

It may be cliché but true. We have had this success and grown by putting our clients' interests first. We listen to what they want to accomplish and use our knowledge and skills to accomplish what our clients want. It's telling we get a lot of work from folks who have been referred to us by clients.

When preparing to sell our clients timber we mark, with paint, all the trees which are to be sold while tallying how much wood they contain. While doing this we lay out trails for equipment access so as to minimize damaging soil, water courses and remaining trees when the timber is extracted from the forest. Before loggers show up we know how much wood is likely to come from the property. How it will be removed from the forest. And a pretty good idea of how much income is going to be realized from the sale of that timber.

In the financial part of a timber sale we sell our clients timber, never do we buy it. Our fiduciary responsibility is to our clients not a mill or logging company. We believe it's wrong for us to make more money while making less for our clients. What does that mean? This is basic economics. Buyers and sellers obviously have a conflict of interest. The less buyers pay the more they make when selling to users. Sellers obviously want to get as much as they can for what they sell. It's true whether you are selling a valuable antique or standing timber on your woodlot.

Most of our clients are interested in keeping their woodlots healthy, providing good wildlife habitat, maintaining its beauty while yielding periodic income from the sale of timber. These goals fit well with how the foresters here think. We all became foresters because of our love for working in and with the forest. We all like growing high quality trees to until they are big. We like big trees and really enjoy watching them grow over time.

For myself turning 70 is a bit of a "what to Hell" event. Healthy and hearty it's a number that doesn't seem to fit with what is in my mind. You who know me well know I went through a nasty encounter with Lyme disease and chronic fatigue which followed. Thankfully that is behind me. I do notice a few things that have changed. Someone has been going around widening brooks I know I could jump easily! They have also made hours longer. Four or five hours bushwhacking through forests have been lengthened to 8 or 10. And they have also added at least 10 pounds to my paint gun! They haven't been able to change my love of forests, practicing forestry or growing big beautiful trees.

Those of you who know me well know I've always had a hard time saying "no." I tend to over commit myself and this one fault has probably caused more aggravation among my clients than any other. As I've gotten older and started slowing down I've gotten better at delegating. I've got a great crew. All of them like seeing landowners, our clients, well served. They are S.M.F.S.' foundation for another 40 years of growth. I'm proud of what we do for you and that this company will keep doing it. Personally I intend to continue to practice at the level I can but I do intend to spend a little more time playing. Thank you all and remember TREES ARE GOOD!



Southern Maine Forestry Services, Inc.

Rene D. Noel Jr., ACF
President/Forester

PO BOX 910
Wincham, ME 04062
207-892-6562

www.someforest.com

Like us on Facebook



Is Half the Truth a Lie?

Some years ago a landowner approached me asking if I would review a contract that was presented to him by a procurement forester and logging contractor harvesting on an abutting property. The landowner had two copies and left me one. Initially, the prices offered were low. As the project progressed I learned quite a bit as a younger forester.

Fiduciary responsibility is something that our company takes quite seriously. Most landowners in my experience do not have experience selling timber. I heard Dave Ramsey on the radio once say "if you cannot describe the details of a financial transaction to a friend so well it makes sense to them, then you probably should not be involved with it". By law foresters are required to disclose the cost of their services. That is not always clearly disclosed and is not the case at all for logging contractors.

The above-mentioned landowner hired me to sell his timber on his 35-acre parcel. At the end of the project I compared income to what had been offered by other buyers. The total sale generated a little over \$16,000.00 our fees were about \$2,400.00. The original offer he would have netted our client \$6,100.00. For the most abundant products the price per m.b.f. or per ton were about half what we sold them. Products of which there was very little volume were 10% more than prices I could negotiate. The logger/buyer mentioned certification multiple times in the initial sales pitch. Certification only requires use of proper harvesting techniques.

One thing I have learned in my twenty plus years as a consulting forester is that if a landowner is willing to leave money on the table, someone to come along and happily take it with or without a landowner's knowledge. So I ask, is half the truth a lie? To me it is.



outcrops than on rich soils. These add or detract from the total sale. All wood in Maine today is sold by the thousand board feet (M.B.F.) or by the green ton, except for firewood.

For example, a hundred-acre woodlot that is well wooded could easily produce 1,000-1,200 cords. For this illustration I will use hardwood. Using the Maine Forest Service conversion rate of 2.7 would put this at an estimated 3,000 tons. Reviewing the prices from the contract offered by the procurement forester and logger above would have generated \$16,000.00 to that landowner. Prices I negotiated would have generated \$30,000.00. The point being that every dollar per ton increase in price is \$3,000.00 to the landowner receives. The larger the volume the greater the gap, and when dealing in saw timber the separation is exacerbated because the money is so much greater.

We disclose all costs of services in advance so there is no conflict. Should the low bidder mentioned earlier have had to mention he was planning to charge \$10,000.00 more to operate? The law says no.

However, it is a good thing for landowners to think about. What is a good fiduciary worth?

I say to potential clients that wood pricing is a lot like milk pricing; unless you are dealing with it on a regular basis it most likely will seem foreign. It is difficult to do comparisons between woodlots because they are all different. Pine growing along the coast on marine clay does not grow the same as pine on sandy soils in western Maine. Oak grows differently on ledge

Volumes, quality, distance to market, soils, acres, terrain, type of cut. A final cut can add 20-30% on good quality wood vs a landowner that wants a improvement cut taking mostly low-grade. Utilization is also a huge component. Are the products coming out of the forest being processed into their highest value or is someone trying to hit a certain load count for the week at the landowner's expense? This happens more often than people think when no one is looking out for the landowner. My advice for landowners to spend the time to do their due diligence. Don't allow yourself to be fooled with half the truth!

Southern Maine Forestry Services, Inc.

**Chip Love
Forester**

PO BOX 910
Windham, ME 04062
207-892-6562
www.someforest.com
Like us on Facebook



Days In The Life of a Forester

The early motivation for most foresters in pursuing this line of work is a desire to spend more time in the woods than in an office. The common trajectory is for youthful experiences hunting, fishing, or just exploring to spark a passion for being outdoors that leads to an education and then career in forestry, envisioning a life of earning a living by wandering the woods. Of course, in reality there are plenty of days as forester that aren't dissimilar to a day in any other field. There is paperwork to be filled out, email correspondence to stay on top of, and phone calls to be made. Creating stand maps and writing management plans (or newsletter articles!) can result in plenty of time in front of a computer screen. Technology evolves, and taking the time to maintain familiarity with the current gadgetry and computer software relevant to the field is an important part of being a forester.

Various career avenues within forestry and adjacent outdoors fields involve different ratios of time spent at a computer, and in the field. In some areas, advancement and experience can paradoxically result in roles that involve less and less time outdoors interacting directly with the relevant natural resource, and more time chained to a desk. Part of the appeal of a career in consulting forestry, specifically, is that fulfilling the role competently not only allows for but requires significant amounts of time in the field burning boot leather and working hands-on. Our client's woodlots are not just an abstract set of metrics derived from a technician's inventory, to use in writing a prescription for a harvesting crew to implement. Our management



This has its highs and lows – for every day covering even ground in nice weather, there are days trudging through deep snow up and down rocky hillsides, or navigating swampy forested wetland amidst a fog of mosquitoes and black flies. However, this time outdoors experiencing and interacting with the natural world, in all its harshness and beauty, is for most of us the initial draw to the profession we are in. It is what continually renews our passion for our work, and with that our personal investment in doing that work well. In a world in which our obligations often bind us to screens, it feels like a privilege to fulfill a role in which doing right by our clients and the resource we manage regularly puts us out amidst the trees with a paint gun in hand and an eye to the canopy.

philosophy involves assessment and decision-making not just at the scale of a forest type or stand, but down to the individual tree. Thus, a large portion of the workload involves leaving the truck in the morning with a paint can in hand to spend the day hiking through a property, assessing each portion of each acre for what management action will best achieve the relevant combination of specific landowner goals, and general forest health and productivity.



Southern Maine Forestry Services, Inc.

Nick McDougal
Forester

PO BOX 910
Windham, ME 04062
207-892-6562
www.someforest.com
Like us on Facebook



Harder than rocket science

Regular readers of our newsletter surely recognize Rene's statement "Practicing forestry isn't rocket science, it's harder!". The practice could be diagrammed out as page after page of "if-then" decisions. Feeling like you have mastered the challenge? Throw in some non-native invasive species to up the ante. An insect infestation can add time crunch to the equation to add to the excitement.

As a forester I am suffering from Ash Borer fatigue. State forestry agencies have been running a full-on awareness program since 2013 when it was discovered in Concord, New Hampshire. It was estimated that the population was established three to four years prior to discovery. In ten years it has spread 50 miles east to central York County, a steady and predicted expansion of 5 miles per year. Relatively modest compared to the previous 600 miles in 15 years from Michigan to New England.

The threat is now here and it is real. Just take a ride through eastern New Hampshire to see blonde ash, the tell-tale sign of woodpeckers feeding on fully infested trees. A very noticeable spot is on RT28 south of Wolfeboro.

It is time to take action to protect your value. Usually a forced sale of wood like this would result in a flooded market and depressed prices. For the past 15 to 20 years, the price of ash has been depressed, undoubtedly from huge volumes of ash being liquidated across the eastern United States. The only consolation is that demand and prices have risen sharply in the last year or two as the national supply has disappeared. Maine is the only remaining growth of ash in the country.

How does this tie into the opening paragraph? I am working with the town of Alfred to develop a Project Canopy grant forest management plan. The property is a highly visible woodlot located between Rte. 202 and Shaker pond. The northerly half of the lot, 15 acres, is an almost pure ash stand. The borer was discovered there a year ago. The state has established a population of host specific parasitic wasps to control the borer. The property is a gateway to the town, a town beach, and recreation area. Maintaining positive aesthetics and reducing the liability of dead trees is high on the management goals. Managing any public land presents a challenge, relative to private property, in trying to please a broad spectrum of people.

And there are more challenges. The under-story of the ash stand is fully infested with invasive shrubs and vines. Honeysuckles, barberry, and bittersweet are the primary species. The first or second week of May the hillside will be an emerald green before everything else has leaved out. The green is all honeysuckle! The majority of the hillside is within the shore land zone. Lastly, there are several species of animals, and a tree species classified as threatened by the state present.

The beech committee is still exploring no-herbicide control options for the invasive shrubs. If you are willing to accent the use of herbicides, these species can be successfully controlled. There are many acres that will require a broad-brush treatment. Around the perimeter, a more selective application is the better choice. A careful selection of

herbicide, treatment type, and timing will maximize the results. Removing all the invasive species provides great site preparation to establish some desirable regeneration and grow a high quality forest in the future. We recently purchased a new Kubota side-by-side to help treat larger areas. We only used it a little bit last year, but it helped us cover a half dozen smaller jobs and over 50 acres for the York land trust. I am working with the committee to develop a plan that addresses all of these concerns. We are looking to host a workshop or two to share more details with landowners and foresters who might be facing similar challenges. Keep an eye out for future announcements.



Southern Maine Forestry Services, Inc.

Erik F. Grove
Forester

PO BOX 910
Windham, ME 04062
207-892-6562
www.someforest.com
Like us on Facebook



Spending Every day in the Classroom

Following high school graduation in the spring of 2015, I headed off to Orono in pursuit of a bachelor's degree in forestry. Within a few short weeks of classes, I began to have second thoughts on my choice of major as many people do. I found that it was hard to be excited about something that I really did not know much about. I began to search for a different options and majors, even enrolling in the university's survey program to become a dual major. I gave myself a deadline of the end of Christmas break to make the decision to continue with my forestry degree or try something else.

A few weeks before break, I received a call from a family friend wondering if I was looking for work during the break. The forester he was cutting for at the time was looking for a hand. I was reluctant to proceed but figured it would help me make my decision come the deadline. A short phone interview took place with questions like your name? Where are you from? When can you start? Before I knew it, I was employed by a forestry company. On the first day, immediately after formal introductions and handshakes we headed straight to the woods. The days lesson was jam packed, covering subjects like navigation, tree species identification, disease identification, proper spacing of white pine, harvest layout, and many more. The day flew by. It could have been due to the information flying at me, or the length of daylight in the middle of December, either way I loved it and could not wait for the next day.

The next day I was introduced to another of the company's senior foresters, a new woodlot, a new perspective, and new lesson. On this day, the lesson was the proper way to maintain boundary line, how to spot 40-year-old blazes, to always look on top of rocks and roots for pieces of barbed wire, the history of agriculture in the area, and many more.

The next day was spent with the last senior forester, a new woodlot, a new perspective, and a new lesson. I quickly realized that each day would be filled with different lessons and challenges, but I loved the variability and the access to knowledge that the senior foresters had. By the end of the Christmas break I had forgotten about my deadline and had no doubt that I was going to continue with the forestry degree.

I worked for Southern Maine Forestry Services through my four years of college on all breaks or whenever possible. Upon completion of my two attempted degrees in 2019, I was hired on full time with the company. By this time, my

training with Southern Maine Forestry Services had given me the ability to work efficiently on my own, making the decisions needed to reach the goals of the landowner. I was checked on regularly and given feedback from the senior foresters. Once again, I loved the fact that decades of knowledge were so readily available. Through my time with the company, I have been exposed to many different situations and scenarios. Different terrains, forest types, and composition. Different goals and objectives from many different clients. Each day is still a lesson. Now the subjects are a different challenge. For example, contracts, markets, legal requirements, public relations, just to name a few.

Today as I begin to build my practice in the Oxford Hills region, I know that I have the ability to serve my client's needs. Whether it be timber sale administration, boundary line maintenance, herbicide application, or one of the many other services our company offers. Southern Maine Forestry Services is celebrating its 40th year in business. The company has over 100 years of in-house experience and forestry knowledge that is always available to me as I serve my clients.



Southern Maine Forestry Services, Inc.

Aiden Heikkinen
Intern Forester

PO BOX 910
Windham, ME 04062
207-892-6562
www.someforest.com
Like us on Facebook



Southern Maine Forestry Services | PO BOX 910, WINDHAM, ME 04062

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by office@someforest.com powered by



Try email marketing for free today!