



10 NORTH ENTERPRISE DRIVE
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12204
TELEPHONE (518) 434-5300

KATHY M. SHEEHAN
MAYOR

JOSEPH E. COFFEY, JR, P.E.
COMMISSIONER

AWB – TNC Forest Management & Forest Stewardship Council 2024/2025 Update

During the past year the AWB, and other TNC properties that are certified under TNC's Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certificate, had a successful audit with no findings of nonconformance. There are a total of 26 forest owners under TNC FSC certificate. While AWB carbon credits are still in very strong demand, the carbon market is in a period of adjustment and the AWB and TNC are reserving the remaining credits in the off chance there will be a reversal. To date the AWB has netted \$983,261.00 from the carbon project. The 10-year update to the forest management plan is due in 2028. This will be drafted over the next couple of years and be available for public input prior to finalizing. Forest inventory will begin this year and continue through 2026 during the growing seasons. We have hired a seasonal Forest Technician, Sarah Sullivan, who has come to us from the US Forest Service and brings with them a ton of experience and drive to help Alex tackle this large feat.

Highlights from 2024/2025 forestland activities:

- In January of 2025, Sylvan Land Clearing was contracted to cut a small red pine plantation and construct a slash wall around the site. Cornell University's Dr Smallige and Dr Chedzoy, supplied us a small grant to use on the project.
- In April of 2025, we again contracted Sylvan Land Clearing to mow an area of heavy invasive bushes in the Forestlands. Follow-up invasive plant removal will happen throughout this summer.
- On June 5, a group led by Michigan State University came to tour the Alcove. The group included people from MSU, NYS DEC, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and The Nature Conservancy, along with some private landowners, all interested in forest carbon sequestration. We discussed the Working Woodlands Program that AWB is enrolled with, as well as several land management projects occurring around the Reservoir.
- 800 seedlings were purchased from the NYSDEC nursery for planting this past spring. They were planted in mounds of soil created in a disused shale pit near Lawson's Lake Rd, which is surrounded by two branches of a tributary stream into Alcove Reservoir.

This project will aid the rehabilitation of this site, and hopefully improve the water quality of one of our most impacted tributaries.

- Due to an increase in tours to the Alcove in conjunction with the new Alcove facility work is being performed to build a path adjacent to the office that includes visiting a carbon remeasurement plot, a deer browse demonstration using red oak seedlings, a pollinator garden including native flowers and shrubs, and a sample of the forest condition on AWB property. This trail will be an alternative and more informative option to walking down the Dam following the usual tour presentation.
- Major efforts involved mapping and controlling aquatic and terrestrial invasive species across the properties. Targeted invasives for management for the 2024 – 2025 years are water chestnut, ailanthus, hemlock woolly adelgid, emerald ash borer, Japanese stilt grass, bush honeysuckle, Japanese knotweed, and phragmites.
- A Hemlock woolly adelgid infestation was confirmed on the property in 2021, and is now widespread across the property and the region. Forestry staff continue to perform a protective pesticide treatment in an effort to protect hemlock trees in priority hemlock-dominated stands.
- The NYS Hemlock Initiative, through Cornell University, released a bio-control insect in 2023, and returned to the property twice this spring for follow-up sampling. While none of the released insects have yet been found in these samples, Cornell is optimistic that a small population may be establishing in the area, and that it will aid hemlock woolly adelgid control into the future.
- 2024 was the sixth successful deer hunting program for the AWD. This was the fifth year of the program with the ECL prohibiting deer hunting removed as well as the fifth year of a NYSDEC Deer Management Permit program. This program continues to strengthen the AWD's relationship within the local community.
- The first major, in-house, timber sale has been sold, and the loggers will likely move in this coming year and have through 2026 to complete the work. Another timber sale is currently being marked in another forest compartment and expect to be finished and out to bid by end of year.
- The drone program continues to monitor forest health and wildlife issues and develop detailed land cover data for the Forestlands. Drone surveys have been integral in locating and mapping invasive species and harmful algal blooms that likely would not have been found by on the ground monitoring.
- We have hired a seasonal GIS Technician, Ryan Mahoney, Water Quality Technician, Kaiden Sharp, and Forest technician, Sully Sullivan for the field season.