

17 - RURAL NATURE OF NYS

Eco-Regions
Open Space
Forests
Wildlife

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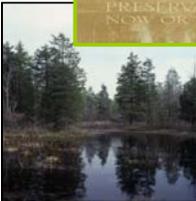
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Forests of NYS

Read the **Forest Cover and Uses** handout on the course home page.

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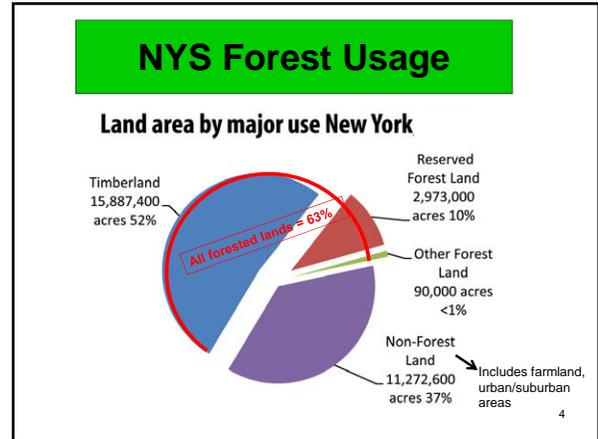



Forests of NYS




PRESERVATION NEW YORK STATE

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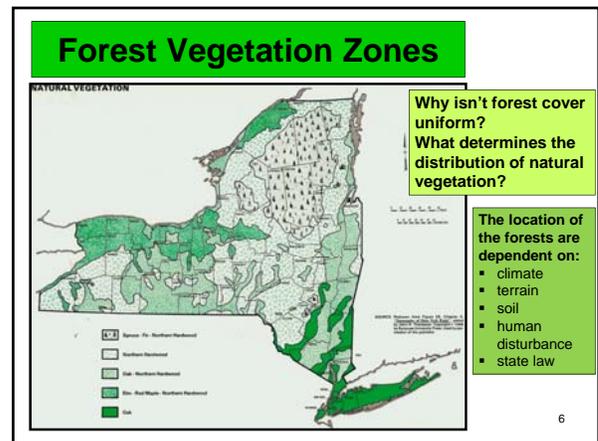
Forests Stats

- **NYS land area:** 30.2 million acres.
- **NYS forest area:** 18.95 mil acres (63% of total)
- **Tree species:** more than 100 commercial and non-commercial species
- **Most common forest type:** maple/beech/birch (53% of forest land area)

- **Publicly-owned forest land:** c. 3.7 mil acres

Allen Lake State Forest
2,421 Acres
State of New York
Department of Environmental Conservation
- **Privately-owned forest land:** c. 14.4 million acres; 76% of forest land; held by c. 687,000 land owners.
 

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Economic Importance of New York's Forests

- ❖ **c.\$300 mil in annual payments** to private landowners by logging companies for:
 - 488 mil. board feet of logs
 - 2.1 mil. tons of pulp-wood and wood chips

- ❖ **Money-maker:**
 - 25% of NYS timber harvest is exported for processing.
 - **Economic contribution** of forest products /related manufacturing and services: **c.\$14 bil.**
 - **Forest-related tourism:** **c.\$1.9 bil.**

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Changing Forest Cover

- **The forests of NYS are relatively young:** post-Ice Age (7,000-18,000 yrs old).
- **Native Americans had a great impact on the forest:** cutting trees for wood and clearing land for farming.
(From NYS Museum exhibit: thin second growth trees were used in the construction of Iroquois long-houses because they could be bent.)
- **Clearings** allowed sunlight to reach the forest floor, setting in motion **sequential vegetation cycles.**
 - ❖ **Climax Vegetation:** the best species for a set of physical characteristics.
 - Character of the forest cover will be affected by **changing temperature and moisture conditions** associated with **global warming.**

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Sequential Vegetation leading to Climax Vegetation

PRIMARY SUCCESSION for the temperate deciduous forest

Secondary Succession

Open water

Floating plants

Emergent plants

Plants in waterlogged soil

Shrubs

Forest

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U.S. Sources of Energy 1776-2016 (as a percent of total use)

Changes in New York's Forest Land Area

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, Monthly Energy Review, April 2017, preliminary data for 2016. eia

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Forests and History

- 1600s - Indian occupancy
- 1790s - Expansion of agriculture
- 1830s - Erie Canal
- 1850s - height of logging industry
- 1870s - American industrial revolution
- 1885 - Forest Preserves created
- 1894 - "Forever Wild" clause in the NYS Constitution
- 1920s - decline in agriculture; farmlands abandoned
- 1930s - Federal reforestation program (CCC) plants trees
- 1960 - Parkland Reclamation Act
- 1972, 1986 - Environment Quality Bond acts
- 1990 - Open Space Conservation Plan
- 1990-2010s - farm abandonment; reforestation programs; green space programs.

Changes in New York's Forest Land Area

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Changes in New York's Forest Land Area

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Forest Coverage (percent by year)

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Forested Areas of NYS Today

2010 aerial survey estimates that 63% of NYS is forested.

Hamilton 98%
 Warren and Essex 92%
 Franklin 82%
 Fulton 80%
 Ulster 78%
 Sullivan 76%
 Greene and Herkimer 75%
 (NYC is 31% forested)

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Commercial Use of Forests

Fence Posts and Telephone Poles

- use tall, small diameter trees
- wood is chemically treated to prevent rot and control insects

Maple Syrup Production

- NYS ranks within the top three states in annual production
- Major producing areas are the colder, snowier regions

Firewood, Chips and Sawdust

- used as fuels
- used in landscaping

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Commercial Use of Forests

- **Commercial Lumbering**
 - saw milling (logs, planks, boards)
 - paper and pulp
 - furniture
 - flooring
 - construction materials
- **Christmas Tree Plantations**
 - located mainly in western NYS
 - trees are harvested after 6-20 years
 - constant recycling of acreage and planting of saplings

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Land Swaps

Land exchanges and the removal of land from the Forest Preserve is allowed under NYS constitutional guidelines and each action must be approved by the state's voters. We voted in 2017 to exchange land along roads and in villages for untouched forest tracts. Since 2013 *NYCO Minerals* wants to expand its wollastonite mine into the Jay Mountain Wilderness. Environmentalists disagree on whether the proposed **swap of 200 acres of public Forest Preserve for 1,500 acres of private lands** in the vicinity of Jay Mountain is a good deal.



Under the proposal, NYS would pick up the yellow parcels in exchange for Lot 8.

<https://www.adirondackexplorer.org/stories/mine-seeks-state-land>

<http://www.protectadk.org/2017/09/vote-yes-on-proposal-3-on-november-7-2017-to-amend-article-14-section-1-the-forever-wild-provision-to-create-new-health-and-safety-land-account-to-help-local-communities-with-highway-and-utility/> : 2017 VOTE

NEXT

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT