

# Erie County Forest Management Plan Update



## Public Workshop Summary and Project Update

**Meeting Information:** Two workshops (stakeholder and public) were held on Wednesday March 20, 2024, at Chestnut Ridge County Park in the Casino Meeting Room. These were the first of two sets of public workshops. The second set of public workshops will be held in Spring 2025 to review the draft plan update and encourage feedback prior to finalization.

**Meeting Purpose:** The purpose of the first set of workshops was to increase public and stakeholder understanding of Erie County's Forest resources and to identify and explore management priorities and issues. Participation at these workshops helped the planning team identify potential issues, solutions, and implementation strategies as they began data collection and plan development.

### Meeting Agenda and Notes

#### 1. Welcome and Introductions

- A. Attendance: **See Attachment A – Attendance Lists**
- B. Welcome by Troy Schinzel, Erie County Parks, Recreation, & Forestry Commissioner

#### 2. Erie County Forests and Management Planning – Background

Large map boards of Erie County Forest Lots were provided near meeting tables. A PowerPoint presentation was provided by Josh Konovitz (County Forester) and Sheila Hess (CC Environment & Planning). **A copy of the presentation is provided in Attachment B.**

Josh and Sheila provided the history and background of forest management in Erie County including previous forest management plans, the 2003 Forest Management Plan goals and the 2019 Parks Master Plan recommendations for forest lots. An overview of the planning process and timeline was provided along with a review of data collection, plan components, and public engagement opportunities.

A project website, located at [https://ccdesign23.wixstudio.com/erie\\_forestmgtplan](https://ccdesign23.wixstudio.com/erie_forestmgtplan), provides an interactive opportunity to learn about the project and keep up to date with project activities and information.

3. **Interactive Session 1: Upside Down** – A 25-minute engagement exercise was conducted to gather ideas, images, perspectives, and information from the general public and stakeholders to support a vision for Erie County forests and to inform a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis for the management plan update. Participants were asked to use one word or short phrases to describe the upside, the downside, an ideal (vision), and outside resources needed for forest lots and forest management in Erie County. **The handout for this activity is provided in Attachment C.**

A summary of the most common responses for both the stakeholder and public workshops is provided in the table below.

STAKEHOLDER RESPONSES	PUBLIC REPONSES
<p><b>Upside – valued aspects of County Forests</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Educational opportunities</li> <li>2. Trails, hiking</li> <li>3. Wildlife/natural beauty/connectivity/protected</li> <li>4. Economic value/maple syrup</li> </ol> <p><b>Downside – concerns and issues for County Forests</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Poor timber management</li> <li>2. Invasive species</li> <li>3. Poor trail maintenance</li> <li>4. Management of multi-use</li> <li>5. Poor parking/access</li> <li>6. Not advertised/lack of awareness</li> </ol> <p><b>Inside – what we envision for County Forests</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Regenerating forests</li> <li>2. Old growth stands</li> <li>3. Diverse, sustainable, protected forests</li> <li>4. Community is educated about forests</li> <li>5. Resilient, adaptive, cared for, and economical,</li> <li>6. Quiet, enjoyed by young and old</li> </ol> <p><b>Outside Resource Needs</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increased youth involvement, public education</li> <li>2. Funding</li> <li>3. Input by local community, other communities, Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK)</li> <li>4. Legislative support/commitment to plan implementation</li> </ol>	<p><b>Upside - valued aspects of County Forests</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Unique wildlife</li> <li>2. Natural space to enjoy</li> <li>3. Carbon storage/climate mitigation</li> <li>4. Recreational access</li> <li>5. Protection of water resources</li> </ol> <p><b>Downside – concerns and issues for County Forests</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Invasive species</li> <li>2. Impacts to water</li> <li>3. Oil and gas extraction</li> <li>4. Access and use management</li> </ol> <p><b>Inside - what we envision for County Forests</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Safe, accessible, used by many</li> <li>2. Connected, sustainable, diverse forests</li> <li>3. Diverse structure/understory</li> <li>4. Economical</li> <li>5. Picnic areas, multi-use trails that are maintained</li> <li>6. Healthy biota (soils, flora, fauna)</li> <li>7. Invasives control</li> </ol> <p><b>Outside Resource Needs</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. “Friends” groups</li> <li>2. Better promotion</li> <li>3. Interactive wayfinding/education</li> <li>4. Understanding of climax forests</li> </ol>

4. **Interactive Session 2: Table Topics** – A 45-minute engagement exercise was conducted to inform and engage workshop participants on specific forest management related topics including protection, stewardship, ecosystem services, public use, and forestry best management practices (BMPs). Participants were asked to use one word or short phrases to answer a series of questions on the topics listed above. **The handouts used for this activity are provided in Attachment D.**

A snapshot of the most common themes/responses given at stakeholder and public workshops for each table topic by theme is in the table below.

THEME	ECOLOGICAL CONSERVATION/STEWARDSHIP	FOREST BENEFITS/PUBLIC USE	FORESTRY BEST MANAGEMENT
<b>Forest Resources</b>	Timber harvesting should be allowed where appropriate, specific prescriptions, consider diversity, best management practices, expand protection	Timber management, maple syrup, education and awareness, sustainable timber harvesting	Remove dead/diseased trees, restoration after harvest, trail safety, harvest with minimal damage select cutting
<b>Ecology/ Wildlife</b>	Invasive species management, native plantings, buffer sensitive areas, protect listed species, connectivity	Biodiversity, wildlife habitat, pollination, manage deer, invasives	Biodiversity/natives, protect/buffer wildlife habitat and connectivity
<b>Water/ Quality</b>	Buffer wetlands/streams, floodplains, flood abatement opportunities, erosion and sediment control	Flood mitigation, protect water quality, headwaters	Riparian buffers, erosion control and water quality best management practices, vernal pools, headwaters
<b>Public Use</b>	No motorized access, passive recreation, trail design that protects sensitive ecosystems, education/outreach, no access in some areas, youth	Manage multi-use by separating types, better signage, facilitate connection with nature, special protection of trail corridors, bird watching, emphasis on enrichment, mental health and natural beauty	Separating uses, trail maintenance, education
<b>Sustainability/ Resilience/Other</b>	Climate impacts/forest fires, research, connectivity, protection (buffers), education, consider management/maintenance costs	Climate mitigation, air and water quality, soil protection, biodiversity, fire lanes, higher property values adjacent to forests, education	Fire breaks, forest resiliency/regeneration, assisted migration, public awareness and education, adequate funding and staff, best practices, work with researchers

5. **Next Steps:** Desktop review and field data collection are currently underway. The steering committee will continue to meet regularly to guide plan development. Updates, fun facts, and announcements of upcoming participation opportunities will continue to be provided to meeting participants who provided emails as well as on social media and the [project website](#).

# Attachment A - Attendance Lists

Stakeholder Workshop		Public Workshop	
Name	Organization	Name	Town
Mike Kasprzyk	Steering Committee	Leane Schultz	West Seneca
Wendy Paterson	Steering Committee/EC Parks	Dave O'Donnell	
Lisa Rood	EC Parks Erie Catt. Rail Trail	David Cady	Buffalo
Dave Waples	EC Federation of Snowmobile Clubs	Jennifer Grande	Gowanda
Kate Watson	Buffalo Audubon	Maria Cooper	
Ray Hummel	Natural Resources Conservation Service	Scot Makai	Rochester
Mark Valites	FLTC	Theresa Kaidra	Halland
Mark Yaxis	EC DEP	Cheryl Peluso	Hamburg
Ken Kassel	Concord Councilman	Barb Mach	Stykersville
Joanna Panasiewicz	EC Water Quality Committee	Milse Adams	Holland
Carol Schmetz	NYS Trail Council	Jay Choczynski	Tonowanda
David Kreinheder	Eden Trail Blazers	Chris Holmes	West Seneca
James Klein	Buffalo Nordic Ski Club	Kyle Dash	Wales
Mike Radomski	WNY Hiking Challenge	Nancy Smith	East Aurora
Stephanie Schelble	EC Park Rangers	Pam Sander	Amherst
Troy P. Schinzel	EC Parks Commissioner	Jessie Hodges	Hamburg
Dennis Degolier	Sardinia Beautification	Nicole Barnum	Holland
Charles Feldman	Foothills Trail Club	Joe Crumlish	Lancaster
Marilyn Feuerstein	Buffalo Ornithological Society	Ken Parker	Cheektowaga
Maria Cooper	Foothills Trail Club	Gene Baran	Lancaster
Sheila Hess	CC Environment	Jeanne Moog	East Aurora
Michael Wilkinson	Niagara Frontier Botanical Society	Sue Watkins	Buffalo
Geoff Hack	Town of Holland	Kelly Brady	Concord
Andrea Locke	WNY PRISM	Carol Schmelz	North Tonawanda
Andrew Nicosia	Colden Trail Riders	Barb Huber	West Falls
Ken Zittel	Town of Concord Councilman	John Sander	Amherst
Allen Young	ECSWCD	William Ciszak	O.P.
Chris Horeth	Colden Trail Riders	Paul Mesi	East Aurora
Kate Hilliman	EC Parks Deputy Commissioner	Thomas H Conhessy	Lockport
Janet Lenichek	Sierra Club	Paul Marko	Buffalo
Josh Balisteri	WNY Land Conservancy	Michael Brady	Concord
Susan M O'Donnell	Niagara Frontier Botanical Society	Randy Basker	Eden
Jeanne Beiter	Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper	Kim Preshoff	Hamburg
Mark Rountree	EC DEP	Margaret Wooster	Buffalo
Emily Moll	EC DEP	John Waugaman	Snyder
Josh Konovitz	EC Parks	Lisa Rood	Boston
Bree Zuchowski	EC DEP	Emily Moll	EC DEP
Ben Zimmerman	CC Environment	Josh Konovitz	EC Parks
Annie Swanson	CC Environment	Bree Zuchowski	EC DEP
Eric Stawitzky	Pioneer Forestry	Eric Stawitzky	Pioneer Forestry
		Ben Zimmerman	CC Environment
		Annie Swanson	CC Environment

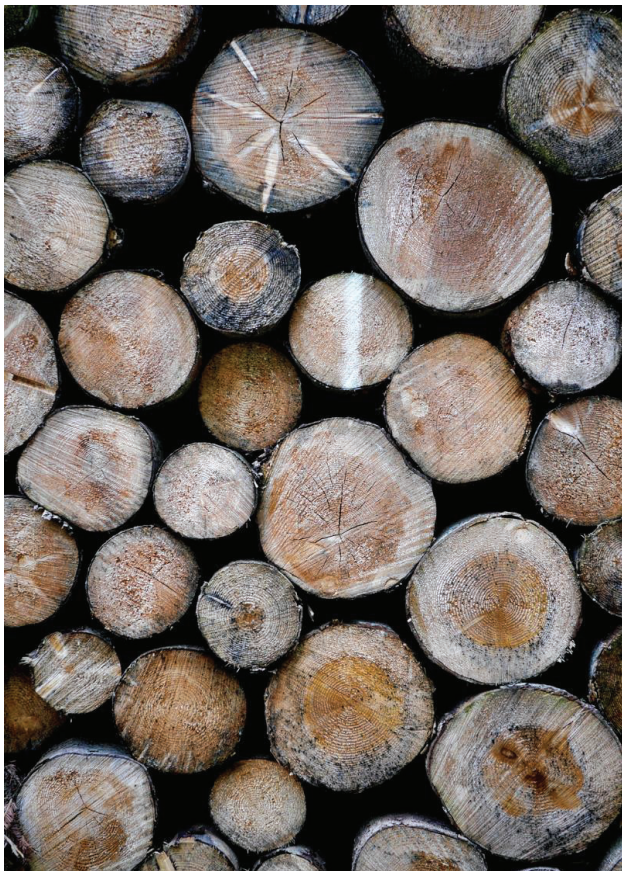


# Attachment B - PowerPoint Slides

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# ERIE COUNTY FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

Workshop #1  
March 20, 2024



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## AGENDA

Welcome/Introductions (5 min)

Project Background (5 min)

Planning Process and Participation (5 min)

Interactive Session

- Upside Down (25 min)
- Table Topics (45 min)

Optional Discussion/View Boards (30 min)



**PIONEER FORESTRY**

**RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT  
& ARBORIST  
SERVICES**

rural urban

NOV. 15, 1927.

Whereas, the principal object to be considered in the maintenance of such lands shall be the sale of forest products in aid of the public revenues, and the protection of the water supplies of the people of this county, and prevent the damage to lands and property from storm, floods and erosions and to assist in re-establishing fertility of the soil and provide homes for game and fish and to encourage forest plantation under private ownership and,

ests and the avails therefrom, and that said lands and forests shall be cultivated in accordance with the best principles of scientific forestry, and be it further

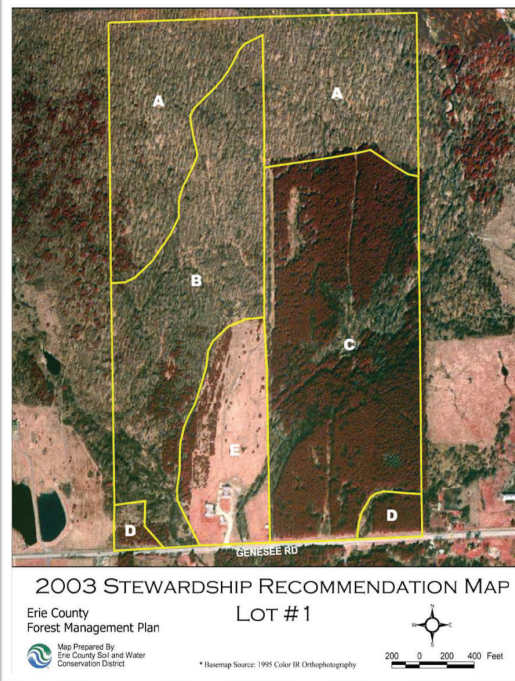
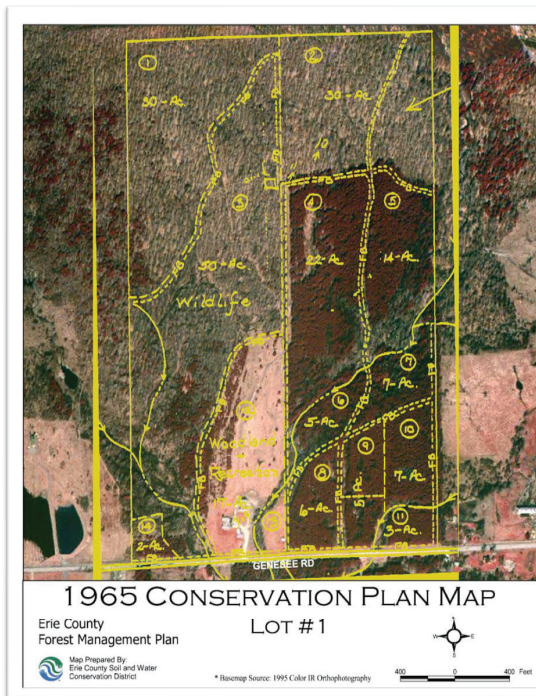
## Introduction

236 MEETING NO. 45. BOARD OF SUPERVISORS. NOV. 15, 1927.

[illegible]



Diverse positive aspects of a forest are perceived differently by the public and various special interest groups. These aspects include aesthetics, timber, wildlife, recreation and preservation. Lack of a clear-cut policy for the forests has resulted in recent pressure on various uses of forest resources and land.



- Greater than 5,000,000 hardwood and softwood trees planted
- 50% thinning in the 1930's and 1940's
- Forest Conservation Plan in 1965
- Forest Management Study in 1987
- Forest Management Plan in 2003.



## 2003 Forest Management Plan

### Mission / Goals / Objectives

The Erie County Forest Management Plan has been constructed around three **basic principles**. The first principle is that any data collection or inventory planning adhere to the highest standards. The second is that the recommendations resulting from the analysis be based on sound biological, ecological, economical, recreational and educational considerations. And lastly, that relationships formed throughout the planning process will enhance and strengthen the benefits to residents and taxpayers in Erie County.

The **mission** was laid out on November 15, 1927, when the Erie County Board of Supervisors created the Erie County Bureau of Forestry. The primary function of the bureau was to increase the public revenues from the sale of forest products, as well as encourage the enhancement and protection of wildlife and water supplies for the people of this county.



Timber from Erie County Forest was used to rehabilitate the Ellicott Creek Park Casino.

The **goal** is to create healthier and sustainable County Forests for the 21st Century, using science, Best Management Practices (BMPs)\*, and common sense. Managing Erie County's 13 Forest Lots has tremendous benefits for Erie County residents. The Bureau of Forestry will create/enhance multi-use opportunities with a unique blend of recreation, watershed protection, wildlife habitat enhancements, educational opportunities and sound economics (all working in unity toward the goal of sustainable forests). While much has been done in recent years, it will take another three to four years to rebuild the Forestry Bureau. Establishing good forestry principles through partnerships, and practicing proper stewardship of the County's forestry resources will have lasting benefits for generations to come.

The **objectives** of the Erie County Forest Management Plan include creating educational and economic opportunities for taxpayers, community groups, and educators; utilizing the Woodlands Environmental Educational Center and certain Lots for scientific experiments in ecology and forestry; putting forest products to good use in County parks, departments, and for public projects; reducing taxes through profits from sales of lumber products; providing for water resource protection, wildlife habitat enhancement and fire protection; and encouraging/enhancing recreational use.

\* According to New York State's Soil and Water Conservation District Law, Section 3, a Best Management Practice "..." means methods, measures or practices determined to be the most practical and effective in preventing or reducing the impact of pollutants generated by nonpoint sources to a level compatible with water quality standards established pursuant to section 17-0301 of the Environmental Conservation Law.

## MISSION

## GOALS

## OBJECTIVES

## ROLES

## FUNCTIONS

## 2019 Parks Master Plan VOLUME 1

### 3.3.4 CONSERVATION PARKS

Formally undeveloped parks, these lands are to generally remain in a natural state. The primary purpose of these sites is for conservation of the natural environment, and nature-based education and recreation activities; Hunter's Creek, Eighteen Mile Creek, Franklin Gulf, Scooby Dam, Boston Forest and the Buffalo River Natural Habitat Parks. These parks were originally purchased by Erie County to provide future recreational areas as population grew and demand warranted.

#### ROLE AND FUNCTION

- Management and enhancement of environmental resources, i.e. forest management, fisheries and other wildlife enhancement;
- Self-directed, resource-oriented outdoor recreation that complements the unique and natural features of each site, without compromising environmental integrity, for example, fishing, nature enjoyment, trail uses.

#### FACILITIES

- Conservation lands and natural areas;
- Trails of a type suited to park environment, with hierarchy based on types of use and skill level;
- Low-impact supporting facilities such as trailheads, modest comfort facilities, informal parking areas, information/interpretive kiosks, directional way finding signage;
- Modest facilities for outdoor education programming, such as an open-air shelter.

#### EXISTING MANAGEMENT FOCUS

- Protection of important natural and cultural heritage features;
- Identifying appropriate use areas and trail routes;
- Encourage multi-use trails wherever possible and appropriate to serve the greatest number of users; separate trail uses where necessary if conflict is unavoidable;
- Perimeter landscape buffers in appropriate locations;
- Trails management and safety measures;
- Foster partnership efforts to augment the current Parks offering and opportunities, including trail building, maintenance and patrolling;
- Maintain the "Carry-in / Carry-out" trash policy within these scenic and natural park settings.

### 3.3.5 FOREST MANAGEMENT AREAS

Forest lots comprised primarily of plantation forests.

#### ROLE AND FUNCTION

- Management and enhancement of resources through Forest Stand Improvements and promotion of wildlife habitat;
- Resource management for educational opportunities

#### FACILITIES

- Modest facilities for resource management and/or education programming, Sugar Shanty, Sawmill, warming shelters, informal parking lots or bus drop-offs, open-air shelters;
- Access roads for resource management purposes.

#### EXISTING MANAGEMENT FOCUS

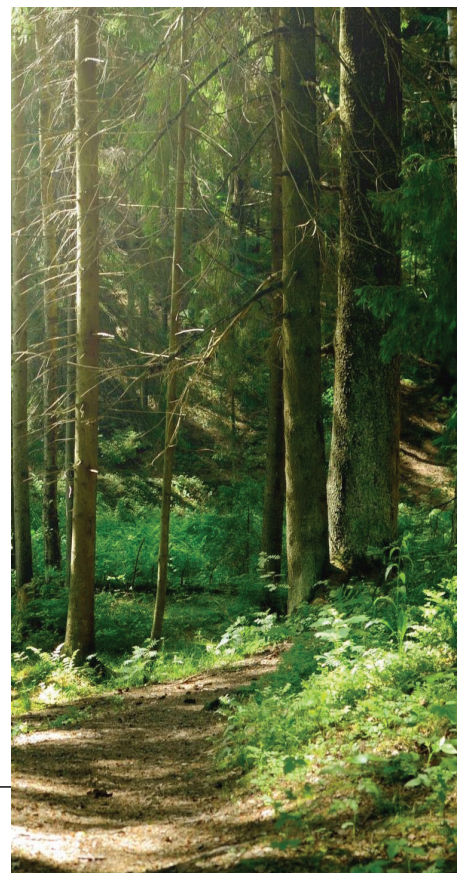
- Maximizing resource management opportunities while preserving habitat and environment, and long-term sustainability;
- Identifying opportunities for education and interpretation programs that focus on resource management;
- Foster partnership efforts to augment the current Parks offering and opportunities. This includes a focus on Environmental-based and Conservation-based organizations that will preserve and enhance these natural settings.

## 2003 Forest Management Plan:

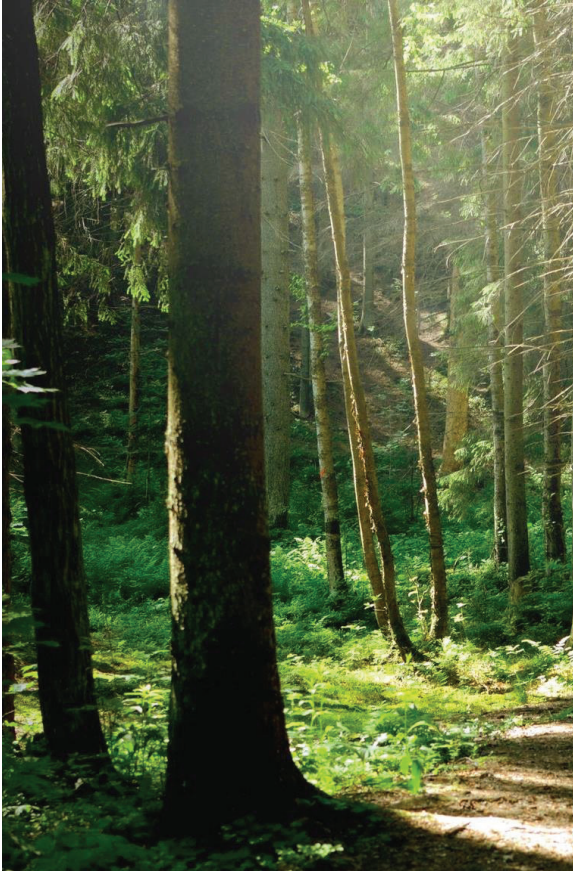
Bureau of Forestry mission: *"to increase the public revenues from the sale of forest products, as well as encourage the enhancement and protection of wildlife and water supplies for the people of this County."*

### Goals:

- Create healthier, sustainable forests with science, BMPs, common sense.
- Create educational and economic opportunities for taxpayers, community groups, and educators.
- Utilize the Woodlands Ecological Center for scientific purposes, specifically ecology and forestry.
- Put forest products to good use in County Parks, County departments, and public projects.
- Reduce taxes through profits from sales of lumber products.
- Provide water resource protection, wildlife habitat enhancement, and fire protection.
- Encourage and enhance recreational use.







**The 2019 Parks Master Plan identified the role and function of the forestry lots as:**

- Management and enhancement of resources through forest stand improvements and promotion of wildlife habitat
- Resource management for educational opportunities

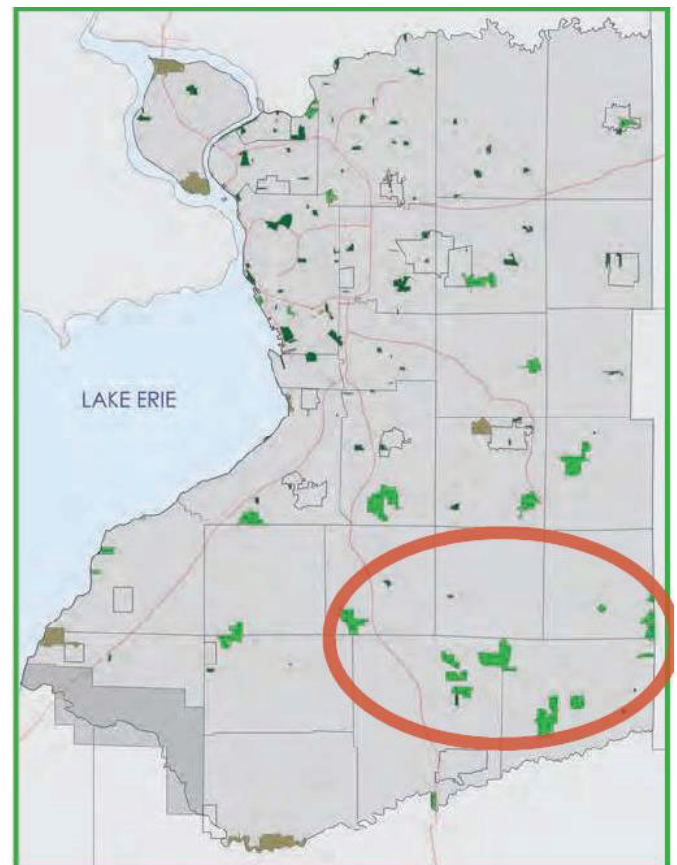
**The 2019 Parks Master Plan identified the need for a comprehensive update to the 2003 Forest Management Plan. Recommendations from the 2019 Parks Master Plan included:**

- That an extensive forest inventory of all Forest Lots to better understand habitat and wildlife management needs.
- Encouraging biodiversity in all lots.
- Managing invasive plant species.
- Expand/enhance recreational and educational opportunities.

**Erie County  
Bureau of Forestry**

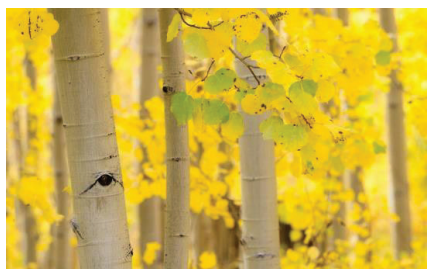
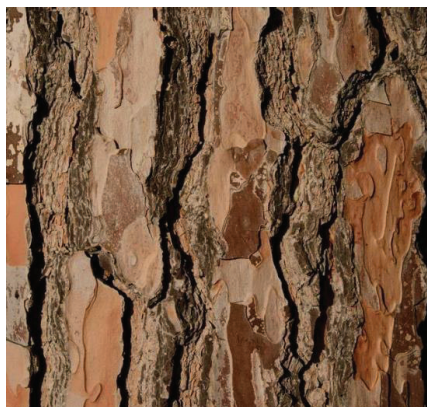
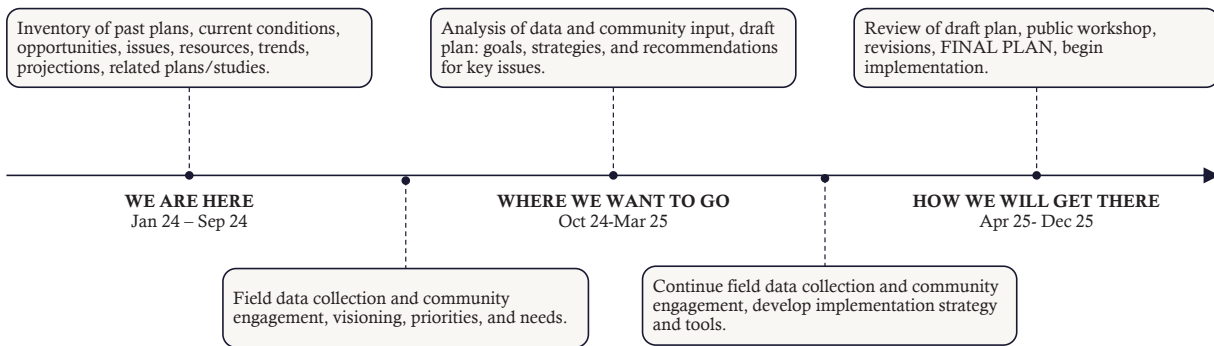
**Forestry Lots**

Lot #	Town	Acreage	Year Acquired
1	Sardinia	200	1928, 1964
2	Sardinia	852	1928, 1929, 1963
3	Sardinia	329	1931
4	Holland	264	1931
5	Holland	264	1928
6	Holland	100	1931
7	Holland	76	1931
8	Concord	71	1931
9	Concord	278	1929
10	Boston	230	1929
11	Sardinia	94	1937
12	Sardinia	100	1939
13	Concord	295	1949





# PROCESS/TIMELINE



## INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

- Related plans/studies/stakeholder input/climate
- Delineation of forest stands
- Ecological measures/indicators/trends
  - Ecosystems
  - Invasive species
  - Water resources
- Timber/non-timber resources
  - Live trees/snags
  - Regeneration/productivity
- Asset inventory
  - Trail mapping
  - Buildings/infrastructure



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## PLAN COMPONENTS

- Background/History
  - Vision/Purpose
  - General Recommendations/Implementation
  - Forest Lot Management Plans
    - Ecological Communities
      - Conditions, Trajectories, Threats, Mgt Recommendations, BMPs, Climate Adaptation
    - Forest Stands
      - Delineation/Descriptions, Function, Timber Value, Threats, Restoration Plans, Silvicultural Prescription, Non-timber Forest Products, Climate
    - Asset Inventory
    - Recreation & Trails
    - 10-year Implementation Strategy
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## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Meetings	Media	Website	Forum	Contact
<p>Steering Committee Mtgs</p> <p>Workshops: (Inventory and Draft Plan)</p> <p>Webinar</p> <p>Dates and details will be in the news and on the website.</p>	<p>Periodic news releases and social media posts will provide progress updates, fun facts, and meeting announcements.</p>	<p>Check in for up-to-date information and resources.</p> <p><a href="https://ccdesign23.wixstudio.io/erieforestmgtplan">https://ccdesign23.wixstudio.io/erieforestmgtplan</a></p>	<p>Register on the website to participate in the community forum. You can also read posts and responses on forest management topics.</p>	<p>Reach out via phone or email to:</p> <p>Ben Zimmerman or Sheila Hess 585-219-4030 <a href="mailto:bzimmerman@ccenvironment.com">bzimmerman@ccenvironment.com</a></p>

erie | Erie County FMP

ccdesign23.wixstudio.io/erieforestmgtpplan

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# Erie County Forest Management Plan Update

**PUBLIC WORKSHOP**


WHEN: March 20, 2024, 6:00PM-7:30PM  
WHERE: Chestnut Ridge Casino Meeting Rm - 6121 Chestnut Ridge Rd, Orchard Park, NY

Get Started Here >>


**PUBLIC WORKSHOP**  
Join us to learn about Erie County forests, forest management, and the plan update process.  
WHEN: March 20, 2024, 6:00PM-7:30PM




**About The Plan**  
[More information about the Plan](#)




**History of Forests**  
[Fun Facts about Forestry Management](#)



**Events & Schedule**  
[Stay up to date on all that's happening](#)



**Resource Library**  
[Find all planning documents here](#)



**Stakeholders**  
[Join the forum to help shape the Plan](#)

15

Forest Resources | Erie County

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## Welcome!

Welcome to the Erie County Forest Management Stakeholder Forum. This is an opportunity for stakeholders to share key issues, ideas, and opportunities for the Forest Management Plan Update. Your input will support development of the Erie County's vision

### Erie County Stakeholder Forum


Welcome! Have a look around and join the discussions.

Create New Post




**Forest Resources**  
Follow  
2


Forest stands, tree health and diversity, timber management, harvest, non-timber resources, infrastructure.



**Ecology and Wildlife**  
Follow  
1

Types of ecosystems, plant and animal species/populations, ecological benefits: moderation of wind, air temperature, etc





16

# WORKSHOP INTERACTIVE SESSION



**Q/A**



**Upside Down**



**Table Topics**



**Maps/Discussion**

17

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## UPSIDE DOWN

*The purpose of this 25-minute exercise is to gather ideas, images, perspectives, and information from the public and stakeholders to support a vision for County forests and to inform a SWOT analysis for the Erie County Forest Management Plan Update.*

### UPSIDE – 5 min

What is unique, special, important, valuable, and possible about Erie County Forests and forest management? What are the ecological benefits and economic benefits that mean the most to you? What value do these forests offer Erie County residents? visitors?

### DOWNSIDE – 5 min

What is difficult, unfortunate, vulnerable, unbearable, dangerous, worrisome, annoying, or possibly looming ahead for County forests and forest management? What do you wish was different?

### INSIDE – 5 min

VISION PAUSE. Take a few quiet moments and visualize the most incredible, wonderful version of forests in Erie County, 10, 20, 30 years from now. What do they look like, where can you go, what can you do, what is happening there? When prompted, quickly write down the FIRST three words, images, or VERY SHORT phrases that represent aspects of your vision.

### OUT – 5 min

What is out there (other regions, states, countries) that we want to bring here? What do we have that we can build upon, what can we do, and what do we need to improve forests/forest management, to meet challenges, grow, flourish, protect, sustain, adapt and to meet that vision you had a few moments ago

18





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# THANK YOU

Erie County FMP Planning Team | Contact Email: [bzimmerman@ccenvironment.com](mailto:bzimmerman@ccenvironment.com) | Website: <https://ccdesign23.wixstudio.io/erieforestmgtplan>

19

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The way to get started  
is to quit talking and  
begin doing.

Walt Disney

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20

# Attachment C - Upside Down Handout



# Upside / Downside / Inside/ Out

The purpose of this 25-minute exercise is to gather ideas, images, perspectives, and information from the public and stakeholders to support a vision for County forests and to inform a SWOT analysis (SWOT = strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) for the Erie County Forest Management Plan Update.



**What is a vision statement?** *A vision is a statement of aspiration and purpose for the future. A vision statement can be a short phrase or a single paragraph with, or without imagery, that clearly describes purpose, value, and long-term goals. It is usually worded in the present tense. The vision statement considers what is most beneficial, meaningful, and unique and sets the bar high while still being achievable.*

**LET'S BEGIN!**

**Assign someone to keep time and take notes.**

Using just one word or a very short phrase, answer the questions below. Use the themes to prompt additional ideas. Notetaker: Use the following sheets to record shares.

Timekeeper: 5 minutes per question. Be bold, creative, and have some fun!

## UPSIDE – 5 min

What is unique, special, important, valuable, and possible about Erie County Forests and forest management? What are the ecological benefits and economic benefits that mean the most to you? What value do these forests offer Erie County residents? visitors?

RECORD ANSWERS IN COLUMNS BELOW:

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### THEMES

#### Forest Resources

Forest stands, tree health and diversity, timber management, harvest, non-timber resources, infrastructure

#### Ecology and Wildlife

Types of ecosystems, plant and animal species/populations, ecological benefits: moderation of wind, air temperature, protection of water quality, listed species, invasive species concerns, etc.

#### Water/Water Quality

Protection of streams, streambank condition/remediation, water quality inputs and outputs

#### Public Use/Recreation

Public access and information, trails, trail maintenance, visitation, parking areas, clubs, etc.

#### Sustainability and Climate Resilience

Protection, forest improvements, sustainable management, climate resiliency

#### Region/Other

Neighboring communities, county and region, regional issues, multiple topics

# DOWNSIDE – 5 min

What is difficult, unfortunate, vulnerable, unbearable, dangerous, worrisome, annoying, or possibly looming ahead for County forests and forest management? What do you wish was different?

RECORD ANSWERS IN COLUMNS BELOW:

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# INSIDE – 5 min

VISION PAUSE. Take a few quiet moments and visualize the most incredible, wonderful version of forests in Erie County, 10, 20, 30 years from now. What do they look like, where can you go, what can you do, what is happening there? When prompted, quickly write down the FIRST three words, images, or VERY SHORT phrases that represent aspects of your vision.

RECORD ANSWERS IN COLUMNS BELOW:

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## THEMES

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### Water/Water Quality

Protection of streams, streambank condition/remediation, water quality inputs and outputs

### Public Use/Recreation

Public access and information, trails, trail maintenance, visitation, parking areas, clubs, etc.

### Sustainability and Climate Resilience

Protection, forest improvements, sustainable management, climate resiliency

### Region/Other

Neighboring communities, county and region, regional issues, multiple topics

# OUT – 5 min

What is out there (other regions, states, countries) that we want to bring here? What do we have that we can build upon, what can we do, and what do we need to improve forests/forest management, to meet challenges, grow, flourish, protect, sustain, adapt and to meet that vision you had a few moments ago?

RECORD ANSWERS IN COLUMNS BELOW:

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## THEMES

### Forest Resources

Forest stands, tree health and diversity, timber management, harvest, non-timber resources, infrastructure

### Ecology and Wildlife

Types of ecosystems, plant and animal species/populations, ecological benefits: moderation of wind, air temperature, protection of water quality, listed species, invasive species concerns, etc.

### Water/Water Quality

Protection of streams, streambank condition/remediation, water quality inputs and outputs

### Public Use/Recreation

Public access and information, trails, trail maintenance, visitation, parking areas, clubs, etc.

### Sustainability and Climate Resilience

Protection, forest improvements, sustainable management, climate resiliency

### Region/Other

Neighboring communities, county and region, regional issues, multiple topics

# Attachment D - Table Topics Activity Sheets

# Erie County Forest – Table Topics

## SESSION: ECOLOGICAL CONSERVATION AND STEWARDSHIP



### Exercise Purpose:

To educate and engage workshop participants on specific forest management related topics. This will help generate discussion that the planning team and the County can utilize to inform plan development.

### Instructions:

Meeting participants will be separated into three groups. Topic leaders will rotate around each table (station) every 12-15 minutes, visiting each table once. Topic leaders will pass around this instruction sheet, open the topic with a brief 2-min introduction and then guide the group through a discussion of the topic-related questions below for the remaining 10+ minutes. Participants may share **2-3 word or short phrase responses** to the questions below verbally and/or record written responses and hand this sheet to the topic leader before they depart for the next station.

## INTRODUCTION (2 min)

- The CCC reforestation plantations and timber production areas only represent a portion of Erie County forest lands.
- Forest lands also include a diversity of other ecological communities including wetlands, riparian forests, mature forests, etc.
- Many ecosystems require management to maintain, or to restore, their integrity.
- Alternatives will be analyzed to recommend appropriate management actions.
- This is a multidisciplinary approach towards protecting, conserving, and restoring biodiversity and habitat.

## QUESTIONS (10-12 min)

- 1. The Erie County forests contain conservation areas that are managed for their ecological value and to protect their natural state. What uses and management activities should be permissible in these areas?**

*For instance, targeted, low volume invasive species management.*

- 2. It is vital to consider the existing conditions of management areas and how to guide them successfully to their intended future states. What factors should be considered to facilitate this process?**

*For instance, early detection and rapid response to invasive species or harvesting pioneer species such as cherry to release late successional canopy species.*

- 3. The Erie County forests are not isolated, nor static ecosystems. They are influenced and impacted by factors including use, management, and adjacent land uses. What are some of these factors and how can they be reconciled to sustain and support ecological function?**

*For instance, utilizing buffer areas between sensitive areas such as wetlands and erodible slopes and intensive use or management.*



# Erie County Forest – Table Topics

## SESSION: FOREST BENEFITS AND PUBLIC USE

### Exercise Purpose:

To educate and engage workshop participants on specific forest management related topics. This will help generate discussion that the planning team and the County can utilize to inform plan development.



### Instructions:

Meeting participants will be separated into three groups. Topic leaders will rotate around each table (station) every 12-15 minutes, visiting each table once. Topic leaders will pass around this instruction sheet, open the topic with a brief 2-min introduction and then guide the group through a discussion of the topic-related questions below for the remaining 10+ minutes. Participants may share **2-3 word or short phrase responses** to the questions below verbally and/or record written responses and hand this sheet to the topic leader before they depart for the next station.

## INTRODUCTION (2 min)

- Forests provide numerous benefits to the health and wellbeing of people, the community, and the economy.
- The natural setting of Erie County forests supports multiple use recreation and educational opportunities. These include hiking, wildlife observation, horseback riding, snowmobiling, snow shoeing, cross country skiing, orienteering, and mountain biking, among others.
- Management activities may preclude certain activities, and some recreational interests may conflict.
- Consideration must be taken that permissible public use is congruent with forestry management goals.

## QUESTIONS (10-12 min)

**1. Forested areas provide valuable natural services and provide wildlife habitat. How do you, or your community benefit from the ecosystem services provided by forests?**

**2. Recreation in nature has physical and mental health benefits for individuals and the community and can also stimulate the local economy. How can these forestry lots support your interests, community activities, or the local economy?**

*For instance, do you participate in a group or purchase supplies locally for activities that could occur on public forest lands, such as hiking, birdwatching, or educational programming?*

**3. Erie County forest management goals include timber stand management, natural resource protection, and public use opportunities. How could conflict concerning multiple use recreation interests, active management, and conservation within the forestry lots be minimized?**

# Erie County Forest – Table Topics

## SESSION: SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

### Exercise Purpose:

To educate and engage workshop participants on specific forest management related topics. This will help generate discussion that the planning team and the County can utilize to inform plan development.



### Instructions:

Meeting participants will be separated into three groups. Topic leaders will rotate around each table (station) every 12-15 minutes, visiting each table once. Topic leaders will pass around this instruction sheet, open the topic with a brief 2-min introduction and then guide the group through a discussion of the topic-related questions below for the remaining 10+ minutes. Participants may share **2-3 word or short phrase responses** to the questions below verbally and/or record written responses and hand this sheet to the topic leader before they depart for the next station.

## INTRODUCTION (2 min)

- Within the Erie County forests there are designated forest management areas that are managed for timber production. These are primarily softwood plantation reforestation areas.
- Timberland management, when practiced sustainably following the current industry best management practices and leading research, minimizes impacts to soil, water, and biodiversity, and maintains healthy forest crops for the future.
- The Bureau of Forestry management areas should serve as demonstration projects and living laboratories exhibiting various low-impact and sustainable silvicultural practices.
- Forest management strategies can additionally consider the opportunities and benefits of non-timber products and natural resources that forests provide.

## QUESTIONS (10-12 min)

- 1. Forest management areas that serve as public demonstrations for management practices should adhere to the highest standards and accepted practices. What standards, research, and best practices should be considered when planning and implementing timber management?**
- 2. What timber management practices and considerations protect:**
  - a. Water resources?**
  - b. Forest resiliency?**
  - c. Biodiversity?**
  - d. Public use?**