

History of Certain State Forests in Region 7

The following state forests have unique history associated with them. They are presented in alphabetical order and the county in which they are located is listed in parenthesis after the name of the forest. More information on each forest can be found at:

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7792.html>

Altmar State Forest (Oswego)

Cleared for crop land by European settlers and Revolutionary War Veterans, the land that is now Altmar State Forest offered limited reward for early farmers. Being located within the Tug Hill Plateau, the soils are predominately stoney, medium to course textured, and highly acidic. When combined with harsh winters and short growing seasons, the land proved to be too difficult to successfully cultivate, and farms were abandoned as settlement was attempted elsewhere.

The State Reforestation Law of 1929 and the Hewitt Amendment of 1931 set forth new legislation that authorized the Conservation Department to acquire land, by gift or purchase, for reforestation areas. These State Forests, consisting of no less than 500 acres of contiguous land were to be "forever devoted to reforestation and the establishment and maintenance thereon of forests for watershed protection, the production of timber and other forest products, recreation and kindred purposes" (Article 9, Titles 5 and 7, Environmental Conservation Law). Altmar State Forest became one of the properties purchased by the state under this legislation; it now provides a diverse array of ecological, economic, and recreational services for hundreds of New Yorkers each year.

Anderson Hill State Forest (Tioga)

Cleared for pasture and cropland by European settlers and Revolutionary War Veterans, the land that is now Andersen Hill State Forest offered limited reward for most farming attempts. The upland soils of the Allegheny Plateau are characteristically thin, steep and acidic. When combined with harsh winters and short growing seasons, the land proved unproductive. High elevation farms were abandoned, as settlement was attempted elsewhere. The State Reforestation Law of 1929 and the Hewitt Amendment of 1931 set forth new legislation that authorized the Conservation Department to acquire land, by gift or purchase, for reforestation areas. These State Forests, consisting of not less than 500 acres of contiguous land, were to be "forever devoted to reforestation and the establishment and maintenance thereon of forests for watershed protection, the production of timber and other forest products, recreation and kindred purposes" (Article 9, Title 5, Environmental Conservation Law).

The majority of Andersen Hill State Forest was purchased under this program between 1938 and 1942, with three smaller additions being made in 1962, 1975 and 2009. According to Department records, the Slaterville Springs Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camp S-125 hand planted more than 61,000 tree seedlings between 1939 and 1940. In 1954 and 1963, New York State Conservation Department employees planted an additional 111,000 seedlings using a tractor and

spade. In total, approximately 85% of the tree seedlings were softwood species, with Norway spruce, Red Pine and White Spruce being the most frequently planted species representing over sixty percent of the seedlings planted.

Baker School House State Forest (Cortland)

Most of the land that is now called Baker School House State Forest was originally used for agricultural practices in the 1800s. However, the upland soils of the Allegheny Plateau are thin, relatively steep, and acidic. As such, the ground is not fit for intensive farming. When combined with harsh winters and a short growing season, it is easy to understand why farmers abandoned these lands in pursuit of greener pastures in the Midwest. Therefore, the land was sold to the state in the 1930s to undergo reforestation. Today, DEC foresters manage the forest to provide diverse ecological, economic, and recreational services for all New Yorkers and visitor.

Battle Hill State Forest (Oswego)

The forest is named for a battle which took place nearby during the Revolutionary War and is a great place to experience activities that are enjoyed within a wild forest setting. majority of the land that now makes up Battle Hill State Forest was originally purchased during the 1930's. Prior to this, the landscape had been comprised of a matrix of crop lands, open fields, forest, meadows and homesteads. However, the soils that are commonly found in this area are thin, highly acidic, and predominately filled with stones. Together with the long, harsh winters which typically ravage the area, it is easy to understand why many of the early farms were unsuccessful.

The Roosevelt Administration developed the State Reforestation Law of 1929 and the Hewitt Amendment of 1931. This new legislation authorized the Conservation Department to acquire land, by gift or purchase, for reforestation areas. These State Forests, consisting of no less than 500 acres of contiguous land, were to be "forever devoted to reforestation and the establishment and maintenance thereon of forests for watershed protection, the production of timber and other forest products, and kindred purposes" (Article 9, Titles 5 and 7, Environmental Conservation Law). Since that time, Battle Hill State Forest has been intensely managed to promote forest health, timber production, wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities.

Beaver Dam State Forest (Tioga)

Article 9, Titles 5 and 7, of the Environmental Conservation Law authorizes the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to provide for the management of lands acquired outside the Adirondack and Catskill Parks. Management is defined as watershed protection, the production of timber and other forest products, recreation and kindred purposes.

Most of the land encompassing what is today known as Beaver Dam State Forest was purchased between 1939 and 1942. Prior to this point, the land had been cleared of the natural vegetation and used for agriculture by early European settlers and Revolutionary War Veterans. However, because the soils common in the area are typically thin, somewhat steep and acidic, they are not fit for intensive farming. Harsh winters and short growing seasons further compounded the issue and provoked many farmers to abandon their properties in pursuit of more suitable land in the

Midwest. Fortunately, the State Reforestation Act of 1929 and the Hewitt Amendment made it possible for the abandoned farmland to become productive once more through the planting of trees. Hundreds of young men found work, and the fruits of their labor is made evident by the forested landscape that now covers the land.

Beaver Meadow State Forest (Chenango)

Beaver Meadow State Forest, consists of 5,816 acres located between State highway 80 and County highway 16 in the towns of Otselic and Smyrna, Chenango County. Beaver Meadow State Forest was first established in 1933 as the Chenango Experimental Forest. Its creation came about through a cooperative agreement formed between the New York State Conservation Department and the United States Forest Service. Using the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC's) for much of the labor, a wide variety of studies were conducted to determine the effects of planting trees on the abandoned farm lands. These studies examined the growth rates of a wide variety of different tree species so as to determine which species were most suitable for planting on state forests. Other studies examined different planting methods, rainfall runoff before and after planting trees on abandoned farm lands, and the effectiveness of various chemical treatments to kill undesirable hardwood trees. A weir dam and road to access it were built by the CCC. The dam was built for watershed studies; it also contained a small meteorological station. In 1939, people came from as far away as Yale University in Connecticut to see the Chenango Experimental Forest.

By 1941, most of the work on the experimental forest had stopped as people and government financial resources were directed towards America's involvement in World War II. When the federal government withdrew its involvement in the Chenango Experimental Forest, the land area became known as Beaver Meadow State Forest.

Bear Swamp State Forest (Cayuga)

The state forest and surrounding area was dramatically affected by glaciation about 10,000 years ago. Skaneateles Lake, the steep valley walls, and the flat-top ridges are the result of this geologic event. Human effect on the area was more recent, since Native Americans used the area sparingly to hunt and travel through. After the Revolutionary War, veterans and their families cleared and settled the area. One famous son of the area is Millard Fillmore, our 13th President, who was born and raised nearby.

The peak of farm settlement was around the Civil War era, and slowly declined until the Great Depression of 1929, which hastened farm abandonment. Most of the state forest was abandoned farmland bought in the 1930's. The large amount of open land was planted with coniferous trees - red pine, Norway spruce, and larch. Thus the term reforestation lands was aptly applied to these state forests.

Bobell State Forest (Chenango)

The forest was named after early settlers named Bobell or Bowbell. The soils proved to be somewhat poor for farming, having shallow depths to hard pan and a tendency to be seasonably

wet. These soil characteristics still present challenges to some forest management and recreational activities

The present day landscape of pine, spruce and hardwood forests reflects these past events. Very little old growth forest is present today. Remaining old growth can be seen on the steep valley slopes leading to Skaneateles Lake, as well as in small pockets around the creek. The forest plan for this state forest will emphasize management to protect and encourage this diversity and use.

Camillus Unique Area (Onondaga)

The land now known as Camillus Forest Unique Area was originally settled in 1796 by John and Sarah Vacher. The property was transferred to the Hopkins family in 1810 and continued to be used for farming purposes until the late 1880's. Agricultural statistics from 1855 describe the property as crop land, meadow, and pasture. Crops that were grown included potatoes, winter wheat, barley, oats and corn. The dominant livestock were swine, dairy cows and sheep; sheep significantly outnumbering all other livestock. Once the Erie Canal was opened in 1825, the transportation of grains and wool from this area contributed significantly to the growing economy. Land ownership records dating back to 1852 also reveal that there were two sawmills located within a mile of the property, one at the base of the parcel along Nine Mile Creek.

Although the forest is old, it is not considered undisturbed pre-settlement "old-growth" forest. Recently data collected by DEC foresters and the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF) confirms that the stand was harvested in the distant past. It is thought to have been managed as a sugar bush for maple sap production.

The Camillus Forest parcel has been under state ownership since 1926. It was managed by the Syracuse Developmental Center until 1997 when a transfer of jurisdiction brought it under the auspices of the New York State DEC. The intent of the transfer was to protect and preserve the land for public enjoyment and education, ensuring that present and future generations would be able to enjoy the great natural beauty the area offers. Today, the forest is comprised of old forest, mature forest, riparian areas, former crop land, and pasture. It provides diverse ecological and recreational services to many New York residents and visitors alike.

Chateaugay State Forest (Oswego)

The land that is now a part of Chateaugay State Forest was last molded twelve thousand years ago by the retreating Wisconsin Glacier blanketed the ground. The rocks left behind (shale and sandstone) after the glaciers melted underlie the area and are defining characteristics of the Tug Hill Plateau region.

According to the New York State Tug Hill Commission, Tug Hill's elevation and position in respect to Lake Ontario results in lake effect snowfall exceeding 200 inches annually, making the area well known for its winter activities.

Originally utilized by early settlers for timber and farm land, Chateaugay State Forest's many rock walls can still be easily seen throughout the woods. In fact, it is believed that many of the

stone walls that remain in this forest were built by Vic and George Waggoner of Orwell, who were known for their walls and stone bridges in the surrounding area. Many of the older walls were built in the early-to-mid 1800's and are still in great condition today. As you walk or ski the trails of Chateaugay Forest, you may notice the incredible stonework scattered throughout the forest

Cliffside State Forest (Tompkins)

Prior to European settlement, the lands within and surrounding Cliffside State Forest were Native American hunting and fishing grounds, and the neighboring Cayuta Creek was used for transportation to the Susquehanna River. In fact, the word Cayuta is believed to be of Native American origin. Cliffside State Forest was originally cleared and farmed by European settlers and Revolutionary War Veterans. The neighboring hamlet of Cayuta was formed in March of 1824. Lumbering has always been an important part of the local economy. The first water powered sawmill was built in 1816 on Cayuta Creek. In 1928, Burton J. Cotton and Howard A. Hanlon built a sawmill in the hamlet in Cayuta. The sawmill, now owned by Wagner Lumber Company, continues to produce locally grown hardwood lumber.

Originally part of the Watkins and Flint purchase, about 891 acres of the Cliffside State Forest (nearly 90%) was acquired from the federal government in January of 1956. From 1933 to 1937, as part of the Roosevelt Administration's New Deal, the federal government purchased about 8 million acres in the Southern Appalachians through what was called the "submarginal" land purchase program. The program purchased land with limited crop production capacity such as the Cliffside State Forest and in some cases promoted the resettlement of farm families whose lands had been bought by the federal government. The remaining 86 acres of the Cliffside State Forest was acquired from the Lehigh Railroad in 1985.

Cuyler Hill State Forest (Cortland)

New York State purchased most of the land that is now called Cuyler State Forest between 1933 and 1965, with a recent addition purchased in 1991. During the 1930's, programs initiated by the Roosevelt Administration were an attempt to create new jobs and counteract the effects of the Depression. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) worked diligently on a massive tree planting campaign to combat serious soil erosion that resulted from poor agricultural practices in the past. CCC Camp S-118 was established in Truxton and planted more than 1,488,500 trees in Cuyler Hill State Forest. In addition, the DeRuyter CCC Camp S-103 planted more than 1,001,200 trees, and the Conservation Department added another 542,500 tree saplings. A total of just over 3 million trees were planted in the forest between 1936 and 1979. As a result of the hard work of hundreds of young men, the forest now provides diverse ecological, economic, and recreational services to residents and visitors of New York.

Danby State Forest (Tompkins)

Danby State Forest is located on the Allegheny Plateau, which is made of sedimentary bedrock that formed some 350 million years ago when the region was covered by an ancient saltwater sea. Geologists believe that the plateau was created during a collision of the North American and

African continents some 250 to 330 million years ago. The collision lifted the bedrock, which has since been shaped by continual weathering and the advance and retreat of continental ice sheets (glaciers). The glaciers created the 'U' shaped valleys of the region and the Finger Lakes.

Tompkins County was originally home to members of the Iroquois Confederation or Haudenosaunee, specifically the Cayuga Nation. The Haudenosaunee was established in circa 1570 under the influence of Hiawatha. It was a bond between five nations: the Oneida, Cayuga, Seneca, Mohawk, and the Onondaga. In 1715, the Tuscarora nation was added making it a league of six nations. The Cayuga's, who were the main inhabitants of the Tompkins County area, did not use the land heavily. They had semi-permanent dwellings placed near freshwater sources which enabled them to hunt and transport game, as well as irrigate their crops without causing great stress to the land.

Early European settlers and Revolutionary War Veterans referred to the area as "Dark Forest" because the forest was so dense that only small traces of light penetrated through the forest canopy. However, the new settlers had many forest superstitions and they had little or no experience in producing forest goods. They therefore decided to clear the area almost entirely for use as farmland. The timber that was not used for carpentry was burned, becoming a valuable by-product known as potash. This process continued until almost the entire land was converted from dense forest to open fields.

As time progressed, it became apparent that the soils had major limitations for intensive crop production, including a seasonally high water table, low fertility, moderate to high acidity, and steep slopes. Early farmers quickly learned that the long harsh winters and thin, fine textured upland soils of the area would not support intensive agriculture. As such, many of the farmlands were abandoned as farmers sought deeper and more productive soils in the Midwest.

Originally part of the Watkins and Flint Purchase, Danby State Forest lands were added to the state forest system from 1933 to 1997. The most significant acquisition took place in January of 1956 when about 6,200 acres were added to the State Forest from the federal government. Chiefly former farms, the federal lands were acquired as part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal under what was then called the federal sub marginal land purchase program. In total, about 50 farms were acquired under the sub marginal land purchase program, with an average land parcel size of about 150 acres. The lands that comprise the Danby State Forest were once rural farming communities. Before federal and state ownership, four schoolhouses and five cemeteries were established on Danby State Forest lands. The 1860 Historical and Statistical Gazetteer of New York State lists grain, butter, apples and potatoes as the top agricultural and dairy products produced in the town of Danby.

Evidence of the Bald Hill farming community can be found today. Family cemeteries on Danby State Forest include: the Fisher Settlement Cemetery (Ward/Theron Family), the Grant Farm Cemetery, the Green and Mettler Cemetery, the Larue Hill Farm Burying Ground (Bogert/McGowen Family) and the Ryant Family Burial Ground (also called the McFall Family Burial Ground). Burials in these cemeteries took place from as early as 1821 to as late as 1918. The Friends of Bald Hill, DEC Adopt-A-Natural Resource Partners, have extensively researched

the rich history of Bald Hill. In the past several years, the group has located and mapped many of the former farm buildings, sawmill locations and school foundations on the State Forest.

Danby State Forest has a history of forest fires. On November 10, 1931, a serious forest fire broke out and burned over 2,000 acres of the "wildest sections of Bald Hill." An article from the Ithaca Journal reports that over 200 volunteers, county workers and State Troopers battled the fire which burned mostly second growth timber. On November 12, 1931 an article in the Elmira Advertiser stated that "already the fire had licked up thousands of young pine and elm trees in one of the richest strips of tree country in the Southern Tier." Reports indicated that the fire may have started from careless hunters or from the railroad as it passed through West Danby at the base of Bald Hill.

From 1934 to 1967, Civilian Conservation Corp crew members and Camp MacCormick members planted about 1.1 million trees on Danby State Forest. Most of the trees planted were softwoods such as eastern white pine, red pine, Japanese larch and Norway spruce. However, some hardwood trees were planted as well. In 1934, about 38,000 northern red oaks were planted.

DeRuyter State Forest (Madison)

DeRuyter State Forest, occupies a narrow ridge-top with a deep cut channel that feeds the Middle Branch of the Tioughnioga Creek. The 1875 Atlas of Madison County reveals a well established population of farmers in and around what is today DeRuyter State Forest. Cheese factories, sawmills and tanneries operated throughout the town and the New York, Oswego & Midland and the Cazenovia & Canastota Railroads linked distant markets with local farm and manufactured goods. During the late 19th century DeRuyter was a wide open landscape of farms, and fields and one could look west from Stanton Road and see the shimmering light reflected from DeRuyter Reservoir, built in 1863 as a feeder to the Erie Canal. Soon, however, industrialization and heeds to the cry of "go west young man" drew people away from rural New York and the pastures and cropland of DeRuyter that once fueled the local economy were slowly reclaimed by native forest.

Using funds authorized from the State Reforestation Act of 1929, the Conservation Department purchased land from, among others, Charles Boyd, Fred Hurt, Anna Granville and George Congers to create DeRuyter State Forest. Beginning in 1935, recruits from the Civilian Conservation Corp Camp S-103, located in DeRuyter, planted hundreds of acres of red pine and Norway spruce on the forest. Today these planted forests mask ,but don't completely hide, a rich history of settlement, abandonment and regrowth.

The Boyds, Hurts and Granvilles, along with their herds of cattle and sheep, have moved on; but today DeRuyter's regrown forest is home to a different group of residents. In early spring hawks nesting in planted pine fiercely protect their young while turkey toms pump up and show off in search of a mate. A buck deer bounds off through a thicket of witch hazel while a flock of cedar waxwings perch in a cherry tree to share in its juicy fruit. The low croak of a raven, a grouse drumming on a stump and a chorus of screaming spring peepers remind us that these seemingly lonely woods are alive with activity.

Dog Hollow State Forest (Cortland)

The land that is now known as Dog Hollow State Forest was sold to the State of New York in 1963 and 1964 to undergo reforestation. Dog Hollow State Forest, like many of New York's State Forests, was once cleared and farmed by European settlers and Revolutionary War Veterans. Unfortunately, the soils common in the area are relatively steep and acidic. As such, the ground is not fit for intensive farming. When combined with harsh winters and a short growing season, it is quite understandable that farmers abandoned these lands in pursuit of greener pastures in the Midwest. In order to reduce soil erosion, protect water quality, provide forest products and recreational opportunities, the State of New York started acquiring property during the 1930's and planted many trees on it.

The Department of Environmental Conservation, under Article 9, Titles 5 and 7 of the Environmental Conservation Law, has been given authorization to manage lands acquired outside the Adirondack and Catskill Parks. Management, as defined by these laws, includes watershed protection, the production of timber and other forest products, recreation and kindred purposes. Between the years 1964 and 1967, over 49,500 trees were planted in Dog Hollow by Department employees and Camp Georgetown crews. This land has been restored to forest and today provides diverse ecological, economic, and recreational services.

Donahue Woods State Forest (Cortland)

Donahue Woods was acquired by the state during the 1930s as part of the Roosevelt Administration's plan to counteract the effects of the Great Depression. The land had originally been used for agricultural purposes, which proved unsuccessful due to the poor quality of the soil and short growing seasons. The State Reforestation Act and the Hewitt Amendment, and later the Environmental Bond Act, provided a means for abandoned farm land to once again become productive under the management of the Department of Environmental Conservation. Today, Donahue Woods State Forest provides diverse ecological, economic, and recreational services for many residents and visitors of Central New York.

Fairfield State Forest (Tioga)

The land that is now known as Fairfield State Forest was sold to the State of New York between the years 1932 and 1940, with an additional purchase in 1962. Like many of New York's State Forests, the land had originally been cleared and farmed by European settlers and Revolutionary War Veterans. Unfortunately, the soils common in the area are relatively steep and acidic. As such, the ground is not fit for intensive farming. When combined with harsh winters and a short growing season, it is quite understandable that farmers abandoned these lands in pursuit of greener pastures in the Midwest. In order to reduce soil erosion, protect water quality, provide forest products and recreational opportunities, the State of New York started acquiring property during the 1930's and planted many trees on it.

The Department of Environmental Conservation, under Article 9, Titles 5 and 7, of the Environmental Conservation Law, has been given authorization to manage lands acquired outside the Adirondack and Catskill Parks. Management, as defined by these laws, includes watershed protection, the production of timber and other forest products, recreation and kindred purposes. More than 434,000 tree seedlings were hand planted at Fairfield State Forest by the Cornell Civil Conservation Corps(CCC) Camp in 1934. In 1938, the Slaterville Springs CCC Camp S-125 hand planted 30,750 more trees. The Conservation Department planted an additional 18,7000 more seedlings in 1963 using only a tractor and spade. Thus, the land that encompasses what is now known as Fairfield State Forest has been restored to forest and today provides diverse ecological, economic, and recreational services.

Frozen Ocean State Forest (Oswego)

The majority of the land in Frozen Ocean State Forest was acquired by the state in purchases made during the 1930's, but also as recently as the 1990's. The name is said to have originated from the fact that during the winter season, extremely cold winds sweep across the land turning the woods into endless stretches of frozen forest, the way that the ocean stretches endlessly across the horizon seemingly frozen in time.

Griggs Gulf State Forest (Cortland)

Griggs Gulf State Forest, like many of New York's State Forests, was once cleared and farmed by European settlers and Revolutionary War Veterans. Unfortunately, the upland soils of the Allegheny Plateau are thin, relatively steep, and acidic. As such, the ground is not fit for intensive farming. When combined with harsh winters and a short growing season, it is easy to understand why farmers abandoned these lands in pursuit of greener pastures in the Midwest. In order to reduce soil erosion, protect water quality, provide forest products and create recreational opportunities, the State of New York began acquiring property designated for reforestation during the 1930's. As a result, the once barren lands were transformed into forests, and today they provide diverse ecological, economic, and recreational services for New York residents and visitors.

Hall Island State Forest (Oswego)

Hall Island is really not an island, but a long peninsula. The land was once cleared for use by the owners of an old farmstead in the mid 1800's. The land, however, was purchased by the Salmon River Power Company and low lying areas then flooded after the construction of the Salmon River Reservoir dam in 1910 - 1912. The reservoir was constructed for the purpose of hydroelectric power generation which is still in use.

Article 9, Titles 5 and 7, of the Environmental Conservation Law authorized the Department of Environmental Conservation to manage lands acquired outside the Adirondack and Catskill Parks. Management, as defined by these laws, includes watershed protection, the production of timber and other forest products, recreation and kindred purposes. Hall Island was purchased by the State of New York under this program in the 1930's. Today, the land has been transformed

into a fully functioning forest and provides a vast array of ecological, economic, and recreational services for hundreds of people each year.

Hewitt State Forest (Cortland)

Hewitt State Forest, is New York State's first State Forest. Settlers arrived in the area as early as 1799. These first settlers claimed the area had an abundance of wildlife, which was both problematic and helpful. For instance, bears were troublesome because they were predators, and tended to destroy the settlers' corn crop. However, because bears were so abundant, the settlers could hunt them. On one such hunt three settlers set out to track and kill a notorious predator, but never succeeded in finding it. After a brief while of searching in vain for the bear, one of the hunters gave up the hunt while the other two pushed forward. These two had no luck finding the bear either, but they succeeded in finding another bear known to be a nuisance. They shot the second bear instead, but they only wounded it. Eight miles later they finally killed it and made bear skin caps from its hide to commemorate the event. Deer were also a nuisance animal because of their numbers and tendency to consume crops. One settler boasted of his ability to kill seven deer while searching for a proper sapling from which to make a broom stick.

From the time of first European inhabitants to around 1865, the town of Scott grew to a population of about 1,149. Settlers were spread throughout the town's 12,928 acres and there were a number of sawmills and gristmills which dotted the landscape. The land surrounding the town was primarily used for agricultural purposes and still remains that way today with the exception of 937 acres reserved for Hewitt State Forest.

Unfortunately for the early farmers, Scott's soil was not conducive for agriculture. As in most New York State Forests in Cortland County, the soil of the area is classified as Lordstown-Volusia-Mardin or "LVM." LVM mostly consists of shallow to moderately deep soils with a fragipan. Due to the area's soil make-up many farms became non-profitable around the time of the Great Depression and were sold to the State for reforestation.

The forest was established between 1929 and 1942 to reduce soil erosion, produce forest products, help stabilize the tax base, and provide recreational opportunities. Most of the landscape was cleared of trees for agriculture during the mid-to-late 19th century by European settlers. Between 1929 and 1947 approximately 1,056,872 pine, spruce, cedar, dogwood and red oak were planted by members of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camp S-96 based in Sempronius, New York. Today, the forest provides a diverse group of ecological, economic, and recreational services

"This State Reforestation Area", as it was called then, was named after Senator Charles J Hewitt from nearby Locke. Senator Hewitt was the sponsor of the Hewitt Reforestation Act that established State Forests outside of the Forest Preserves. On October 3, 1929, in an impressive ceremony, four Norway Spruce from the State Nursery at Saratoga, were planted on the former Harmon Farm. Planting these trees were: Nelson C. Brown, acting Dean of the State College of Forestry in Syracuse, who represented Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt; Senator Charles J. Hewitt; Conservation Commissioner Alexander Macdonald; and George D. Pratt, President of the American Forestry Association and a former Conservation Commissioner.

Kasoag State Forest (Oswego)

The land that is now Kasoag State Forest was originally formed millions of years ago as massive glaciers that had once covered the region began to recede. The last glacier, the Wisconsin Glacier receded twelve thousand years leaving behind, shale and sandstone rocks, giving the area its defining moderately rocky and highly acidic characteristics. The forest is located in the Tug Hill Plateau region of New York State.

Unfortunately for many farmers in the area, soil and weather conditions are not fit for intensive agriculture. Excessive erosion and prolonged freezing and wet periods made farming very difficult. As rail and waterways expanded, access to better crop land was more easily obtained, causing many farmers to abandon their properties in New York in search of greener, warmer land in the Midwest.

The State Reforestation Law of 1929 and the Hewitt Amendment of 1931 set forth new legislation that authorized the Conservation Department to acquire land, by gift or purchase, for reforestation areas. These State Forests, consisting of no less than 500 acres of contiguous land were to be "forever devoted to reforestation and the establishment and maintenance thereon of forests for watershed protection, the production of timber and other forest products, recreation and kindred purposes" (Article 9, Title 5, Environmental Conservation Law).

The majority of Kasoag State Forest was purchased by the state under this program in parcels during the 1930's. During this period, lands that had once been cleared of timber for farm land was restored to forests. The planting of trees created new job opportunities for hundreds of young men, and Kasoag State Forest today provides diverse ecological, recreational, and economic benefits for both society and wildlife.

Kennedy State Forest (Cortland)

The towns of Virgil, Lapeer, and Harford, in which the forest is located, were developed under the Military Tract, which was established in 1789. During the Revolutionary War New York State needed soldiers to protect its borders from British attack as well as attacks from Native Americans. Since the State had little money to pay its soldiers, a plan was devised to pay them with land. The Governor of New York, DeWitt Clinton, plotted land from Oswego to the southern border of present day Cortland County. This land was dedicated for the payment of New York's Revolutionary War soldiers. The land was then divided into smaller sections of about ten square miles called townships. These townships were then divided into sections of land approximately 600 acres each to be allotted to individual soldiers. Unfortunately, the majority of the soldiers did not utilize such payments, preferring instead to take their chances elsewhere. In those instances the soldier sold his land warrant to a speculator who would commonly divide the lots into smaller pieces and then sell them for a large profit.

As part of the Military Tract, the town of Virgil was named after the Roman poet, Virgil. Originally the town of Virgil was connected to Homer, New York. Virgil separated from Homer in 1804. The first settler of the Virgil area, Joseph Chaplin, arrived in 1792. Chaplin was commissioned by New York State to cut a road through the dense forest from Oxford to Ithaca in

order to open Central New York to settlement and development. Chaplin strove to cut a road as straight as possible and eventually ended up coming out near Ludlowville. This road was referred to as "The First Road." However, the state was not satisfied with "The First Road," and refused to pay Chaplin until he made another road from Virgil to Ithaca which was named "Bridle Road."

After two years of breaking the road, Chaplin's work ended in 1794. New York State achieved its goal of promoting the settlement of Central New York. Shortly thereafter, John M. Frank and his family used the road to settle in the town of Virgil. John Gee and his family followed the Frank family in 1795. They were later followed by John Roe and his family in 1797. These were the first three families to settle in Virgil.

Daniel C. Squires named the town of Lapeer, and he was responsible for its split from Virgil. Squires is reported to have commented after the split, "Although among the youngest of all the towns of Cortland County [it is] the peer of them all." Squires combined the French article La, which is commonly used like "the" in English, with the English word Peer. "Lapeer," the town's name, is a direct reference to Squires' statement meaning "The Peer." Although not organized as a town until 1845, Lapeer's first settler was Primus Grant a native of Guinea who came to the area in 1799.

Unlike Virgil or Lapeer, the town of Harford has no solid information as to the origin of its name. However, there is a hypothesis regarding its origin. It is assumed that Harford followed the example of the neighboring town of Richford in determining its name. Richford received its name from the first owner of Richford's general store, Ezekial Rich, around the year of 1821. Theodore Hart ran Harford's first general store around 1824. It is also interesting to note that Harford was and is often spelled "Hartford." Therefore, it is feasible that Harford did receive its name from Theodore Hart, although it cannot be proven.

Ketchumville State Forest (Tioga)

Ketchumville State Forest was purchased in 1941 by the State of New York from lands formerly owned by the Waite, Zimmer, Chamberlain, Bailey, and Andrews families. This area was not reforested until 1961, when more than 153,000 tree seedlings were planted. The delay in reforesting this property is due to the fact that the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camps and their programs were terminated as the United States entered World War II. Following the war, tree planting was resumed at a much slower rate.

Ketchumville State Forest, like many of New York's State Forests, had originally been cleared and farmed by European settlers and Revolutionary War Veterans. Unfortunately, the soils common in the area are relatively steep and acidic. As such, the ground is not fit for intensive farming. When combined with harsh winters and a short growing season, it is quite understandable that farmers abandoned these lands for more fertile lands in the Midwest. In order to reduce soil erosion, protect water quality, provide forest products and recreational opportunities, the State of New York started acquiring property during the 1930's and planted significant numbers of trees in order to reforest the land.

Existing evidence of the early settlers and the original inhabitants still remains, as stone walls, foundations, scattered quarries and even portions of the original road system can be found at Ketchumville State Forest. Even vegetative remnants of the old homesteads still exist as evidenced by the fruit trees and introduced ground cover and flowers (keep an eye out for creeping myrtle and day lilies).

Kettlebail State Forest (Cortland)

Kettlebail State Forest was originally used as an extensive hunting ground by the Iroquois. The land was later cleared for farming by Revolutionary War Veterans and early European settlers. To the dismay of many farmers, the area's soils are thin, relatively steep and acidic, and the growing seasons are short with long, harsh winters. Intensive agricultural practices only led to damaged, undesirable and unproductive land that became too costly to manage. Eventually, many farmers abandoned their upland farm properties in pursuit of better farmland in the Midwest.

The State Reforestation Law of 1929 and the Hewitt Amendment of 1931 were created by the Roosevelt Administration as a means for the state to take over the responsibility of managing abandoned farms, making them productive once more. Kettlebail was purchased in parcels by the State of New York in the early 1930's to undergo reforestation efforts. Department foresters and the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) worked diligently to re-establish the land as forest, and, with the planting of 1,468,631 conifer seedlings, their hard work was successful. Today, the landscape has been transformed into forest and now provides diverse ecological, economic, and recreational services to hundreds of people each year.

Klondike State Forest (Oswego)

The land that is now Klondike State Forest was originally cleared and used for farm land and timber products by European settlers and Revolutionary War Veterans. Unfortunately for many farmers in the area, soil and weather conditions were not fit for intensive agriculture. Shale and sandstone rocks created an area that was moderately rocky with highly acidic soil characteristics. Less than premium soils and prolonged freezing and wet periods made turning a sustainable profit very difficult. As a result, many farmers abandoned their farms and headed out to the Midwest in search of more productive land.

The State Reforestation Law of 1929 and the Hewitt Amendment of 1931 set forth new legislation that authorized the Conservation Department to acquire land, by gift or purchase, for reforestation areas. These State Forests, consisting of no less than 500 acres of contiguous land were to be "forever devoted to reforestation and the establishment and maintenance thereon of forests for watershed protection, the production of timber and other forest products, and kindred purposes" (Article 9, Title 5, Environmental Conservation Law).

During the 1930's the majority of Klondike State Forest was purchased under this program by New York State. Lands that had once been cleared for timber and farm land were restored to forests. This reforestation program reduced the problem of soil erosion, protected water quality

and provided forest products and recreational opportunities. Today Klondike State Forest provides diverse ecological, recreational, and economic benefits for both society and wildlife.

Lab Hollow Unique Area (Onondaga/Cortland)

Labrador Hollow Unique Area was acquired with funds provided by the Environmental Quality Bond Act of 1972 as a means to protect areas of great natural beauty, wilderness, and/or historical, geological or ecological significance. This includes rare plant life and scarce animal habitats. Labrador Hollow's topography is responsible for its unique character. The area is located in the middle of a valley running north to south that was dug out by glacial movement that occurred during the Pleistocene Epoch. Massive ice sheets from the last glaciation episode (Wisconsinan glaciation episode) retreated from the area approximately ten thousand years ago. They left behind numerous sedimentary deposits and superficial features, some of which filled with water and are now called the Finger Lakes, while others became known as valleys. The floor of Labrador Hollow's valley is only about one-half mile wide, but its walls rise abruptly for several hundred feet. Today, this unique and attractive area provides diverse ecological, economic, and recreational services for many New York residents and visitors alike.

Mariposa State Forest (Madison)

The first pioneer settlements in this area began in 1784 when Deacon and Jesse Catlin created Catlin Settlement in what is now the hamlet of Lincklaen. The forested hills in this area were cleared for crops and pasture land. The settlers discovered that the hills in this area were well suited for sheep grazing, so sheep were common livestock on the early farms. After the Civil War, these agricultural lands were converted to dairy farms as the demand for dairy products increased.

Many of the dairy farms went out of business during the 1930's due to the poor economy and less productive soils found on the hilltops. Beginning in 1932, these lands were acquired for the establishment of Mariposa State Forest.

Maxon Creek State Forest (Cortland)

The land where Maxon Creek State Forest is located was originally cleared and farmed by European settlers and Revolutionary War Veterans. However, the upland soils of the Allegheny Plateau are thin, relatively steep, and acidic. As such, the ground is not fit for intensive farming. When combined with harsh winters and a short growing season, it is easy to understand why farmers abandoned these lands in pursuit of greener pastures in the Midwest. Most of the land was purchased by the state for reforestation between 1933 and 1963, with an additional purchase made in 1974.

The Truxton Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camp S-118 hand planted over 222,350 trees in the area between 1936 and 1941. An additional 295,800 trees were planted by the DeRuyter CCC in 1935, and the Department of Environmental Conservation planted more than 18,000 trees in 1962. The planting of trees under the State Reforestation Act and Hewitt Amendment

provided new jobs for hundreds of young men, and the future forests would yield products and services that would benefit both wildlife and society for generations to come.

McDonough State Forest (Chenango)

Beginning in 1804 settlers began to arrive from New England and were quick to exploit the region's wealth of natural resources. Timber, stone and water were cut, mined and harnessed and within fifty years most of the pre-settlement forest had been transformed into agricultural land. By the late 19th century, however, declining productivity of upland farms, the lure of the city and its industrial jobs, and the availability of what were advertised as more fertile lands in the American frontier, "go west young man", resulted in increasing rates of abandonment. Concern was growing over the local economic impact of migration and agricultural abandonment and as early as 1920 the Norwich Chamber of Commerce and Chenango County Fish, Game and Gun Club were advocating public land acquisition for conservation purposes. Following passage of the Hewett Amendment and the State Reforestation Act in 1929, Chenango County became an early focus of state land acquisition efforts.

McDonough State Forest has the distinction of being the first reforestation area in Chenango County, and soon after acquisition, the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) were dispatched to plant millions of trees, construct bridges, roads and ponds and conduct other forest improvement activities. The first Chenango County CCC camp was a tent barracks located near Steers Pond that provided temporary accommodation for 180 African American enrollees. A more permanent camp was established in McDonough in June 1933 and could accommodate 200 men. Camp # 3 was active through 1941 and during its eight year history 1,500 men passed through its gates. A stone chimney located southeast of Bliven Pond along State Route 220 marks the site where Camp # 3 once stood.

Melondy Hill State Forest (Chenango)

The Melondy Hill State forests attained their name from early settlers on these foot hills of the Catskills. In the early 1800's much of the land was cleared for agriculture. Most of the areas not put into agriculture were heavily logged back in the early 20th century. As with many state forests, they now offer a wide array of other flora and fauna to see, hear or observe. Purchased with Hewitt Amendment funds in the 1930's, the State Forests are a blend of planted forests of red pine, white pine, Scotch pine and Norway spruce, and natural forest stands consisting mostly of red maple, American beech, sugar maple, red oak, black cherry, white ash, white pine and eastern hemlock. Various forest products have been removed during the years. Forest management objectives are to maintain a variety of habitats from young forests to old forests, and evergreens to hardwoods.

Morgan Hill State Forest (Onondaga/Cortland)

Morgan Hill State Forest was originally used by the Iroquois for extensive hunting. Later the land was cleared for farming by Revolutionary War Veterans and early European settlers. The area's soils, however, are thin, relatively steep and acidic, and the growing seasons are short with

long, harsh winters. This combination of factors resulted in land that was mostly unproductive and that would eventually be abandoned in pursuit of more productive lands in the Midwest.

The State Reforestation Law of 1929 and the Hewitt Amendment of 1931 were created by the Roosevelt Administration as a means for the state to take over the responsibility of managing abandoned farms, making them productive once more. Morgan Hill State Forest was one such area. The forest was established in the early 1930's by state foresters and the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) with the planting of 4,840,424 conifer seedlings. Today, the approximately 70 year-old conifer forest covers more than forty-five percent of the area. The forest provides diverse ecological, economic, and recreational services to hundreds of people each year.

Morrow Mountain State Forest (Madison)

Georgetown was one of the original Chenango Twenty Towns and was patented to Thomas Ludlow Jr. of New York City in 1792. It was formed from DeRuyter and named Georgetown only after the State Legislature denied a local petition to name it Washington. In his 1880 history of Chenango and Madison Counties, James Smith reports that when Georgetown was first settled it was one unbroken forest: "...the bights of her hills crowned with large straight hemlock, spreading beech and sweeps of sugar maple; swamps gloomy with magnificent pine-ancient monarch of the forest, reigning with undisputed sway over the mass of tangled struggling foliage beneath them."

Soon much of the original forest that Smith described was cut for lumber or cleared for farms earning Georgetown the name "Slab City" for the rounded side of a log removed during milling. Farms produced potatoes, butter, hops, cheese and apples and sheep provided wool for local looms. By the late 19th century however, urbanization, westward expansion and an increasing demand for industrial labor reconfigured New York's rural landscape. Between 1870 and 1930 the population of Georgetown declined 52% from 1,423 to 684 residents. In the absence of plowing and grazing, pastures and fields began the slow but steady return to native forest. Between 1933-42, the Civilian Conservation Corp recruits planted trees, built roads and erected a 67' fire tower and observation cabin atop Morrow Mountain. The tower was dismantled in the 1970s and replaced with a 100' communication tower to support a New York State Police radio network.

Nelson Swamp Unique Area (Madison)

From State Route 20, which passes through the swamp, a traveler's gaze is often drawn to a low lying landscape of wet meadows, deciduous woods and dark groves of cedar and pine. From the State Route's hilltop perspective, one can follow the Chittenango Creek as it meanders on its circuitous journey north to Lake Ontario. The Chittenango, which is the dominant water course within the swamp, was commonly referred to as Chittening by settlers but was derived from the Oneida word "Chu-de-naany" meaning "where the sun shines out".

Historically, "Cedar Swamp" played an important role in the development of Nelson's agricultural economy. Many area farmers owned swamp parcels known as "post lots" that provided a ready supply of timber and other forest products. The rot resistant wood of white

cedar was used for split rail fencing and poles for supporting hop vines. White pine was cut and milled for building materials and balsam fir was harvested for decorative greens and Christmas trees. Baskets were woven from thin strips of black ash and the dense wood of American elm was used to manufacture a variety of farm implements

Newfield State Forest (Tompkins)

Present day Newfield State Forest was cleared and farmed by European settlers and Revolutionary War Veterans. The pace of settlement and commerce increased after the Civil War with the arrival of the Geneva, Ithaca and Sayre railroad in 1871. The first sawmill in the village of Newfield was built in 1809, followed by a gristmill machine in 1811. Unfortunately, the hilltop soils of the area are often thin, relatively steep and acidic. As such, farmers found that the hilltop lands were not fit for intensive crop farming; the soils quickly lost productivity once cleared of trees. Originally part of the Watkins and Flint purchase, about 1,443 acres of the Newfield State Forest (nearly 93%) was acquired from the federal government in January of 1956. From 1933 to 1937, as part of the Roosevelt Administration's New Deal, the federal government purchased about 8 million acres in the Southern Appalachians through what was called the sub-marginal land purchase program. The program purchased land with limited crop production capacity such as the Newfield State Forest and in some cases promoted the resettlement of farm families whose lands had been bought by the federal government.

The Federal lands were planted with trees by the Civilian Conservation Corps., becoming part of the state forest system in 1956. The Department of Environmental Conservation under Article 9, Titles 5 and 7, of the Environmental Conservation Law, has been given authorization to manage lands acquired outside the Adirondack and Catskill Parks. Management, as defined by these laws, includes watershed protection, the production of timber and other forest products, recreation and kindred purposes. In the last several decades, time and deliberate management have transformed the Newfield State Forest into valuable open space, providing many different ecological, economic and recreational services for the people of New York State.

O'Hara State Forest (Oswego)

The land that now comprises O' Hara State Forest was originally used for farm land and timber products by European settlers and Revolutionary War Veterans. Unfortunately, poor soils and extremely cold weather did not provide for ideal farming conditions. Shale and sandstone rocks provided a rocky terrain and soils were highly acidic. Excessive erosion and prolonged freezing and wet periods frustrated many farming attempts. As a result, frequently crops and fields were abandoned as farmers moved to the Midwest in pursuit of better land.

The State Reforestation Law of 1929 and the Hewitt Amendment of 1931 set forth new legislation that authorized the Conservation Department to acquire land, by gift or purchase, for reforestation areas. These State Forests, consisting of no less than 500 acres of contiguous land were to be "forever devoted to reforestation and the establishment and maintenance thereon of forests for watershed protection, the production of timber and other forest products, recreation and kindred purposes" (Article 9, Title 5, Environmental Conservation Law).

O'Hara State Forest was purchased under this program by New York State during the 1930s. During this period, lands all over the state that had once been cleared for pasture and farm land were restored to forests. Reforestation reduced the problem of soil erosion, protected water quality and provided forest products and recreational opportunities. Today, O'Hara State Forest provides many different ecological, economic and recreational services for the people and wildlife in New York State.

Orton Hollow State Forest (Oswego)

Orton Hollow State Forest was once used by early European farmers and Revolutionary War Veterans for crop and pasture land. Unfortunately, the soils located within the Tug Hill Plateau Region of New York State consist largely of shale and sandstone deposits from receding glaciers. They are typically rocky and highly acidic. When combined with long and harsh winters, the conditions prevented most agricultural attempts from achieving significant success.

The State Reforestation Law of 1929 and the Hewitt Amendment of 1931 authorized the Conservation Department to acquire land, by gift or purchase, for reforestation areas. These State Forests, consisting of no less than 500 acres of contiguous land, were to be "forever devoted to reforestation and the establishment and maintenance thereon of forests for watershed protection, the production of timber and other forest products, recreation and kindred purposes" (Article 9, Title 5, Environmental Conservation Law).

As a result of these provisions, the majority of Orton Hollow State Forest was purchased in the 1930's by New York State. Lands like Orton Hollow, which had once been cleared for timber and farm land, were gradually restored to forests. Reforestation reduced the problem of soil erosion, protected water quality and provided forest products and recreational opportunities. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) planted thousands of conifer seedlings on the newly acquired lands. Their hard work and diligence can still be seen today as evidenced by the tall pine, spruce, and larch that decorate the landscape. The transformation that occurred on the land in Orton Hollow State Forest provides hundreds of people with ecological, economic and recreational opportunities each year.

Pharsalia Woods State Forest (Chenango)

Following the 1788 treaty signed at Fort Schuyler between Governor Clinton and the Oneidas, what had previously been referred to as *terra incognita*- "unknown land"- was suddenly the twenty towns of Chenango County. In 1797 John Randall and seven other families arrived from Connecticut and began to carve a claim deep within the New York wilderness. A tell tale sign of the area's shallow soils and marginal farming conditions is revealed in Randall's choice of Stonington as the town's original name. He may have been persuaded by land speculators to select a name more attractive to the wave of immigrants arriving from the east, because by 1808 the town was changed to Pharsalia. Despite the name change, poor soils resulted in high rates of farm abandonment such that by 1923 the population of Pharsalia had dropped to one half its 1850 level. With high rates of abandonment, Pharsalia became an early focus of state land acquisition programs and today nearly one half of the town is in public ownership.

Potato Hill State Forest (Tompkins)

Originally cleared for pastureland by European settlers and Revolutionary War Veterans, the land that is now Potato Hill State Forest offered limited reward for most farming attempts. The upland soils of the Allegheny Plateau are characteristically thin, steep and acidic. When combined with harsh winters and short growing seasons, the land proved unproductive and farms were abandoned as settlement was attempted elsewhere. The State Reforestation Law of 1929 and the Hewitt Amendment of 1931 set forth new legislation that authorized the Conservation Department to acquire land, by gift or purchase, for reforestation areas. These state forests, consisting of no less than 500 acres of contiguous land were to be "forever devoted to reforestation and the establishment and maintenance thereon of forests for watershed protection, the production of timber and other forest products, recreation and kindred purposes" (Article 9, Title 5, Environmental Conservation Law).

The majority of Potato Hill State Forest was acquired in 1938 and 1940, with two additional purchases in 1975 and 1980. The name of this forest attests to the large scale planting of potatoes in the area by early Irish Immigrants. The highest Tompkins County production recorded was 316,334 bushels in 1845. By 1865, Tompkins County production had dropped to 166,300 bushels, but potatoes were still raised on a decreasing scale until the 1960's. Previous owners of the land included the Kendall, Hotaling, Royce, Cortright, Delola and Michaud families, as well as the Federal Land Bank.

Because soil erosion was a serious problem on the newly acquired farmlands, a massive tree planting campaign began. The labor used to create these tree plantations was provided by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), a work program established by the Roosevelt Administration to create jobs. The Slaterville Springs Camp S-125, hand planted more than 602,000 tree seedlings on Potato Hill State Forest between 1939 and 1941. In 1965, the Caroline Center Youth Camp hand planted an additional 2,000 trees. Almost all the seedlings planted were softwood species, with Norway spruce, red pine and white pine being the most frequently planted species.

Robinson Hollow State Forest (Tioga)

Robinson Hollow State Forest, like many of New York's state forests, had originally been cleared and farmed by European settlers and Revolutionary War Veterans. Unfortunately, the upland soils of the Allegheny Plateau are thin, relatively steep and acidic. As such, the ground is not fit for intensive farming. When combined with harsh winters and a short growing season, it is quite understandable that farmers abandoned these lands in pursuit of more fertile properties in the Midwest.

The Department of Environmental Conservation, under Article 9, Titles 5 and 7 of the Environmental Conservation Law, is authorized to manage lands outside the Adirondack and Catskill Parks. The forest is managed to conserve, protect and enhance wildlife diversity and habitat. Sustainable forest products such as firewood and sawtimber are produced as wildlife habitat is created and enhanced. Management, as defined by these laws, includes watershed protection, the production of timber and other forest products, recreation and kindred purposes.

In order to reduce soil erosion, protect water quality, provide forest products and recreational opportunities, the State of New York started acquiring these abandoned properties during the 1930's and planted thousands of trees, returning the land to forest.

The majority of Robinson Hollow State Forest was purchased between 1934 and 1941. Five additional purchases were made in the 1960's, with two more purchases in the 1980's. The previous owners included the Oliver, Fitzcharles, Wattles, Beam, Dickenson, Wright, Allen, Hoaglin, Loring, Welch, Royce, Morton, Gardiner, Brown, Beebe, Wuensch, Cortright, and Donato families.

Between 1935 and 1939, the Slaterville Springs Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camp S-125 hand planted more than 793,000 tree seedlings on the land. Another 211,000 seedlings were added in 1962 by the Conservation Department, and more than 40,000 were planted in 1963 with just a tractor and a spade. The McCormick Youth Camp hand planted more than 57,000 tree seedlings in 1966 and 1967. In 1981, another 10,000 seedlings were added to the land in Robinson Hollow. The majority of the seedlings planted were softwood species, including Norway spruce, red pine, and white pine.

Salmon River Falls Unique Area (Oswego)

Prior to the arrival of Europeans, the Salmon River Falls was part of lands occupied by the Five Nations of the Iroquois Indians. The Salmon River Falls, located nineteen miles upstream from the mouth of the river where it enters Lake Ontario, was the upstream barrier to fish migration including native Atlantic salmon. The Onondaga, Oneida and Cayuga tribes of the Iroquois Nation used the falls as fishing ground where they annually harvested salmon. European settlement of the Salmon River area started in the early 1800's. Atlantic Salmon runs ceased by the 1860's as development of dams in the lower river blocked migration.

The history and use of the Salmon River and Salmon River Falls from the early to late 1900's was driven by the development of hydroelectric power facilities. In 1912 the Salmon River Reservoir was created to harness the water power diverting water from the fall through a 10,000 foot pipeline from the Salmon River Reservoir to the power station at Bennett's Bridge. Summer flows were diverted to practically only leakage: the falls lost its tourist appeal.

During the 1960's public use increase along with camping, drinking and drug use, graffiti and cliff diving. Accidents resulted in injuries and deaths.

In 1993 Niagara Mohawk Power Company was directed by the New York Power Authority to divest all the land they owned along the Salmon River which were not essential to their core business of hydroelectric generation. In 1993 Niagara Mohawk developed a comprehensive plan which guided the sale of land. As part of the plan Niagara Mohawk sold 1700 acres of land and 13 miles of conservation easements and fishing rights along the Salmon River to DEC. Salmon River Falls was part of that transaction.

In 1996 when the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission renewed Niagara Mohawk's operating license a new requirement was made directing Niagara Mohawk to make minimum flow releases to enhance aesthetic beauty of the falls.

Salmon River State Forest (Oswego)

Originally the land now known as Salmon River State Forest was used exclusively by the Iroquois for hunting and fishing. However, as is the case with many of the lands that have since become managed by the state, the land was later cleared for farm land and timber by Revolutionary War Veterans and early settlers. However, the upland soils of the Tug Hill Plateau are characteristically rocky, highly acidic, and steep. Combined with the long and intense winters common to the region, it is easy to understand why many of these farmers were forced to abandon their properties and seek their fortune elsewhere.

The State Reforestation Law of 1929 and the Hewitt Amendment of 1931 provided legislation which authorized the Department of Conservation to acquire land, by gift or purchase, for reforestation areas. These State Forests, consisting of no less than 500 acres of contiguous land, were to be "forever devoted to reforestation and the establishment and maintenance thereon of forests for watershed protection, the production of timber and other forest products, and kindred purposes" (Article 9, Title 5, Environmental Conservation Law).

Salmon River State Forest was purchased by New York State during the 1930s for these purposes. It was during this period that lands cleared for agricultural practices were restored to forests. Reforestation reduced the problem of soil erosion, protected water quality, and provided forest products and recreational opportunities. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) planted thousands of conifer seedlings on the newly acquired lands. Evidence of their tremendous efforts can be seen today through the fully grown red pine, white pine, white spruce, Norway spruce, and European and Japanese larch, which cover the landscape

Sandy Creek State Forest (Oswego)

The land that encompasses Sandy Creek State Forest was last molded twelve thousand of years ago with the receding of the last massive glacier that covered the ground. The rocks that were left behind, shale and sandstone, underlie the area and help define the region. High levels of precipitation from snow melt and rain supply an abundance of wetlands, streams and rivers, all noted for their pristine character.

The Roosevelt Administration developed the State Reforestation Law of 1929 and the Hewitt Amendment of 1931 in order to authorize the Conservation Department to acquire land, by gift or purchase, for reforestation areas. These State Forests, consisting of no less than 500 acres of contiguous land, were to be "forever devoted to reforestation and the establishment and maintenance thereon of forests for watershed protection, the production of timber and other forest products, recreation and kindred purposes" (Article 9, Titles 5 and 7, Environmental Conservation Law).

The majority of the land that now makes up Sandy Creek State Forest was originally purchased by New York State during the 1930s for reforestation purposes. Prior to this point, the landscape had been comprised of a matrix of crop lands, open fields, forest, meadows and homesteads. Unfortunately for many farmers, the upland soils that are commonly found in this area are thin, highly acidic, and predominately rocky and coarse. When taken together with the long, harsh winters which typically ravage the area, it is easy to understand why many of the early farms were unsuccessful.

Since the area was purchased by the state Sandy Creek Forest has been managed to promote forest health, timber production, wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities. Today, the forest provides diverse economic, ecological and recreational services to the people of New York State.

Shindagin Hollow State Forest (Tompkins)

The Shindagin Hollow State Forest is located on the Allegheny Plateau, which is made of sedimentary bedrock that formed some 350 million years ago when the region was covered by an ancient saltwater sea. Geologists believe that the plateau was created during a collision of the North American and African continents some 250 to 330 million years ago. The collision lifted the bedrock, which has since been shaped by continual weathering and the advance and retreat of continental ice sheets (glaciers). The glaciers created the 'U' shaped valleys of the region and the Finger Lakes. The last glacier left New York State about 10,000 years ago.

Human settlement followed the retreat of the glacier. Tompkins County was originally home to members of the Iroquois Confederation or Haudenosaunee, specifically the Cayuga Nation. The Haudenosaunee was established in circa 1570 under the influence of Hiawatha. It was a bond between five nations: the Oneida, Cayuga, Seneca, Mohawk, and the Onondaga. In 1715, the Tuscarora nation was added making it a league of six nations. The Cayuga's, who were the main inhabitants of the Tompkins County area, did not use the land heavily. They had semi-permanent dwellings placed near freshwater sources which enabled them to locate and transport game, as well as irrigate their crops without causing great stress to the land.

Early settlers and Revolutionary War Veterans referred to the area as "Dark Forest" because the forest was so dense that only small traces of light penetrated through the canopy. However, the new settlers had many superstitions involving forests, and they had little or no experience in producing forest goods. They therefore decided to clear the area almost entirely for use as farmland. The timber that was not used for carpentry was burned, becoming a valuable by-product known as potash. This process continued until almost the entire land was converted from dense forest to open fields, leaving the landscape seemly forever changed.

Soils on area hilltops, however, have major limitations for intensive crop production, including a seasonally high water table, low fertility, moderate to high acidity and steep slopes. Early farmers quickly learned that the combination of long, harsh winters and thin, fine textured upland soils would not support intensive agriculture. As such, many of the farmlands were sold or abandoned as farmers sought more fertile lands in the Midwest.

During the Great Depression of the 1930's, the landscape would be transformed again. In order to reduce soil erosion, protect water quality, provide forest products and recreational opportunities, the State of New York began acquiring property for reforestation during the 1930's under the auspices of the State Reforestation Law of 1929 and the Hewitt Amendment of 1931. These laws allowed the Conservation Department to acquire land, by gift or purchase, for reforestation. Properties had to be a minimum of 500 acres of contiguous land.

Although the Hewitt Amendment was a major acquisition catalyst throughout New York State, about 73% of Shindagin Hollow State Forest was acquired from the federal government in January of 1956. From 1933 to 1937, as part of Roosevelt Administration's New Deal, the federal government purchased about 8 million acres in the Appalachians through what was called the sub-marginal land purchase program. The program purchased land with limited crop production capacity and in some cases promoted the resettlement of farm families whose land had been bought by the federal government. Van Etten Civilian Conservation Corp. Camp S-81, Caroline Center Youth Camp and New York State Conservation Department crews planted more than 2,231,700 tree seedlings on 2,105 acres from 1935 to 1952. Most of the seedlings were softwood species such as red pine, white pine, Norway spruce and Scotch pine. Today, forest covers about 67% of the surrounding landscape, while crop land and pasture cover about 27%.

South Hill State Forest (Chenango)

An atlas of Chenango County, published in 1875, shows several homes that were located on what is now the South Hill State Forest. These homes belonged to: W. Penn, N. Morgan, W. Hovey, I. Bennet and H. Evans. There was also a school house located at the intersection of Charles Wicks Road and Hohreiter Road

Stone Hill State Forest (Oswego)

As with the majority of other state forests, the land that now encompasses Stone Hill State Forest was originally purchased for reforestation by the State of New York during the 1930s. Up until this point, the landscape had been comprised of a diverse matrix of crop lands, open fields, forest, meadows and homesteads. Unfortunately, the upland soils of the Tug Hill Plateau are highly acidic, rocky and of a very coarse texture. Taken together with the intense winters which blanket the area, it is easy to understand why many of the early farms were unsuccessful. As methods of transportation became more readily accessible, farmers moved to the mid-west where winters were less harsh and land was more productive.

The Roosevelt Administration developed the State Reforestation Law of 1929 and the Hewitt Amendment of 1931. These two bills authorized the Conservation Department to acquire land, by gift or purchase, for reforestation areas. State Forests, consisting of no less than 500 acres of contiguous land, were to be "forever devoted to reforestation and the establishment and maintenance thereon of forests for watershed protection, the production of timber and other forest products, and kindred purposes" (Article 9, Titles 5 and 7, Environmental Conservation Law)

Summer Hill State Forest (Cayuga)

he first settlers on or near the Hewitt- Cayuga Highlands arrived in 1792 in the town of Niles and later traveled to Moravia, Locke, Sempronius, Scott, and Summer Hill. Nathaniel Fillmore, one of the first to settle in Summer Hill, was the father of U.S. President Millard Fillmore.

The majority of Summer Hill State Forest was purchased by the state in parcels during the 1930's. During this period, lands that had once been cleared for agriculture were restored to forests in an attempt to counteract the crashing economy and loss of jobs. The planting of trees not only created new job opportunities for hundreds of young men, but the forest products themselves would restore the hope to hundreds.

The forest is said to have been named as such because it was a place that people only wanted to be in the summer. Whereas the winter brought extremely cold temperatures, a retreat into the hills during summer provided cool relief to the sun's intense heat.

Triangle State Forest (Broome)

During the War of 1812, many of the nation's capital buildings were burned, damaged or destroyed. Anson Seymour, son of one of Triangle's first settlers, capitalized on the reconstruction of the capital by selling white pine logs to the Federal government. He rafted "vast" amounts of old growth white pine down the Tioughnioga River, into the Chenango River, into the Susquehanna River and down to the Chesapeake Bay. To this day, some of our national buildings contain lumber grown in the Town of Triangle.

Trout Brook State Forest (Oswego)

The land that is now known as Trout Brook State Forest originally was used by the Iroquois for hunting and fishing. However, as is the case with many of the lands that have since become managed by the state, the land was later cleared for farm land and timber by Revolutionary War Veterans and early settlers. Unfortunately, the upland soils of the Tug Hill Plateau are characteristically rocky, highly acidic, and not highly fertile. Combined with intense winters common to the region, the fact that many farmers abandoned their properties in pursuit better lands in the mid-West is understandable.

The State Reforestation Law of 1929 and the Hewitt Amendment of 1931 provided legislation which authorized the Department of Conservation to acquire land, by gift or purchase, for reforestation areas. These State Forests, consisting of no less than 500 acres of contiguous land, were to be "forever devoted to reforestation and the establishment and maintenance thereon of forests for watershed protection, the production of timber and other forest products, and kindred purposes" (Article 9, Title 5, Environmental Conservation Law).

Trout Brook State Forest was purchased by New York State during the 1930s for reforestation purposes under this program. During this period, lands that had once been almost completely cleared for agricultural practices were restored to forests. This practice reduced the problem of soil erosion, protected water quality, and provided forest products and recreational opportunities. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) planted thousands of conifer seedlings on the newly

acquired lands. Red pine, white pine, white spruce, Norway spruce, and European and Japanese larch decorate the landscape and give witness to the tremendous planting efforts made not so long ago.

Turkey Hill State Forest (Tioga)

Most of the land encompassing what is today known as Turkey Hill State Forest was purchased during the 1930s. Prior to this point, the land had been cleared of the natural vegetation and used for agriculture by early European settlers and Revolutionary War Veterans. However, soils common in the area have major limitations for intensive crop production, including a seasonally high water table, low fertility, moderate to high acidity, and erodibility on steep slopes. Early farmers quickly learned that the combination of long, harsh winters and thin, fine textured upland soils would not support intensive agriculture. As such, many of the farmlands were abandoned as farmers sought more fertile land in the Midwest.

Fortunately, the State Reforestation Law of 1929 and the Hewitt Amendment of 1931 set forth the legislation that authorized the Conservation Department (predecessor to the Department of Environmental Conservation) to acquire land, by gift or purchase, for reforestation areas. These state forests, consisting of no less than 500 acres of contiguous land outside the Adirondack and Catskill Parks, were to be "forever devoted to reforestation and the establishment and maintenance thereon." Management is defined as including watershed protection, the production of timber and other forest products, recreation and kindred purposes. (Article 9, Titles 5 and 7, Environmental Conservation Law)

West Osceola State Forest (Oswego)

As with the majority of other state forests, the land that now encompasses West Osceola State Forest was originally purchased for reforestation by the State of New York during the 1930s. Prior to this, the landscape was comprised of a diverse matrix of crop lands, open fields, forest, meadows and homesteads. Unfortunately, the upland soils of the Tug Hill Plateau are characteristically rocky, highly acidic, and steep. Combined with intense winters common to the region, the fact that many farmers abandoned their properties in pursuit better lands in the mid-West is understandable.

The State Reforestation Law of 1929 and the Hewitt Amendment of 1931 provided legislation which authorized the Department of Conservation to acquire land, by gift or purchase, for reforestation areas. These State Forests, consisting of no less than 500 acres of contiguous land, were to be "forever devoted to reforestation and the establishment and maintenance thereon of forests for watershed protection, the production of timber and other forest products, and kindred purposes" (Article 9, Title 5, Environmental Conservation Law).

West Osceola State Forest was purchased during the 1930's under this program and has been intensely managed to promote forest health, timber production, wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities. Through the efforts of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), who planted thousands of softwood tree seedlings on the newly acquired state lands, the landscape in West

Osceola State Forest has been restored to thick woodland; it provides a myriad of economic, ecological and recreational services to hundreds of people each year.

Yellow Barn State Forest (Tompkins)

The majority of the lands that cover Yellow Barn State Forest were once used for farming and pasture. However, the land could not support intensive agriculture. Farming came to an end during the Great Depression when many of Upstate New York's hilltop farms became economically unproductive.

Originally part of township number 23 of the military tract, the Yellow Barn State Forest lands were added to the State Forest System from 1956 to 2002. The most significant acquisition took place in January of 1956 when about 1,242 acres of federal lands were added to the State Forest. Chiefly former farms, the federal lands were acquired as part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal under what was then called the federal sub marginal land purchase program. In total, 12 farms were acquired under the sub marginal land purchase program, with an average farm size of about 104 acres. The lands that comprise the Yellow Barn State Forest were once part of a rural farming community. In addition to the village of Dryden, a hamlet called California was settled at the intersection of Yellow Barn and Midline roads. The hamlet appears on a 1860 map. It was supposed to have received this name, commented Iva Cornelius Van Pelt (1904-2001) "from a group of pioneers whose original goal had been that far-western state (the 1849 California Gold Rush) but who so liked the hollow that they decided to remain here instead" (Gutchess, n.d.). The 1866 Atlas of Tompkins County indicates that A. Hard, J.W.D., W. Carpenter, J. Hammond, A.D. Card, D.B. Card, D.A. Chatfield, T. Robinson, O. Smith, A. Simon Est., J.H.N., B. Simons, P.M. Overbaugh, L. Griffin, T. Johnson and J. Vanorder owned land within the Yellow Barn State Forest.

During the Great Depression, President Roosevelt pushed forth his "New Deal" legislation in an effort to combat the rising unemployment epidemic caused by the Depression. This legislation offered many opportunities to Americans throughout the country, and it help start the process of reforestation in New York State. At the state level, the State Reforestation Law of 1929 and the Hewitt Amendment of 1931 were enacted. These laws were created to help stabilize the school tax base and authorized the then New York State Conservation Department to establish State Forests by gift or purchase. State Reforestation Areas, consisting of areas no less than 500 acres of contiguous land, were to be forever devoted to "reforestation and the establishment and maintenance of forests for watershed protection, the production of timber and other forest products, and for recreation and other kindred purposes" (Article 9, Title 5 and 7, Environmental Conservation Law).

The New Deal, State Reforestation Law and Hewitt Amendment paved the way for the establishment of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in 1933. The CCC enabled young men to be employed in various road building and forestry programs. Camp S-125 planted between 400,000 and 600,000 Scotch pine, European larch, Norway spruce, red pine, white pine, jack pine, red oak and Austrian pine seedlings in Yellow Barn State Forest.