

# INTO THE WOODS

NEW ENGLAND FORESTRY FOUNDATION | SPRING 2023

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## Dear Supporters and Friends,

The time for transformation of New England forests has begun. We now have three separate studies that confirm the potential of improved forest practices to provide major gains in climate mitigation while improving wildlife habitat and keeping up the flow of climate-smart forest products.

First off the block last year was NEFF's own peer-reviewed scientific article, published in the journal *Forests*, that revealed the science underlining our 30 Percent Solution—the forest management pathway to offsetting fully 30 percent of New England's carbon reduction goals. That was followed by Highstead's *Climate Imperative* report, which used different methods of analysis but came up with the same scale of opportunity for improved forest management. And, most recently, the Forest Carbon for Commercial Landowners (FCCL) report looked at the large commercial lands in northern Maine and identified another opportunity for large-scale carbon storage at a very reasonable and competitive cost. More on all three reports can be found in this newsletter.

NEFF's five-year, \$30-million USDA Climate-Smart Commodities program will allow us to begin work immediately to pilot climate-smart forestry approaches and prove these concepts on the ground. However, while the focus of our work and these recent studies centers on increasing carbon stores in forests, we should not overlook the many other beneficial effects for New England's forests that improved management and increased carbon stocking across the landscape can accomplish.

- Improved biodiversity and wildlife habitat
- Improved rural economies
- Enhanced recreational opportunities
- Increased forest yield per acre, which would allow us to maintain harvest while leaving more acres in wild condition
- Increased yield of climate-smart forest products, particularly larger trees that can be engineered into mass timber building products, which store carbon in buildings while allowing our regional forests to assist in alleviating the affordable housing crisis

That's quite a list! It means that an appropriate investment in improving forest practices yields a bundle of other forest-related benefits and launches us all forward in achieving the Wildlands, Woodlands, Farmlands and Communities vision, which calls for permanently protecting 80 percent of New England in a mixture of natural wildlands (at minimum 10 percent), productively managed woodlands (60 percent), farmland (7 percent), and other (up to 3 percent). We need to not only conserve 60 percent of New England as managed forests, but ensure those lands are managed well, all while being good partners to wildlands and the people who protect and steward them.

We'll be sure to use climate-smart forestry's suite of additional benefits as well as this balanced wildlands-and-woodlands approach to management as we seek long-term funding to make NEFF's forest vision a reality over the next 30 years.

Robert Perschel  
Executive Director

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WHEN LEARNING LEADS TO GIVING

## Save the Date!

Join us Thursday, June 8, for our Annual Meeting, a picnic celebration at NEFF's Prouty Woods in Littleton, MA. Enjoy good food and company, learn to call feathered friends from a local bird mimic, go for a walk in the woods, and help us celebrate NEFF's Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities award. Visit [newenglandforestry.org/connect/events](https://newenglandforestry.org/connect/events) for more information and to register.

## Hiring Announcement

NEFF is seeking new staff members for our USDA-funded New England Climate-Smart Commodities project: high-level and visionary foresters, an outreach specialist, a wood-sourcing expert, and a program and administration specialist. NEFF is also hiring a new Chief Development Officer and a Government Grants Writer that will support NEFF's growing climate-mitigation work.

NEFF values the importance of a diverse workforce, supports equity in the fields of conservation and forestry, and strives to empower candidates from all backgrounds to apply. For more information, including the details of NEFF's generous benefits package, visit [newenglandforestry.org/about/careers-2](https://newenglandforestry.org/about/careers-2)



# NEFF UNVEILS GAME- CHANGING FORESTRY SCIENCE

## WRITING BY

NEFF Communications Manager Tinsley Hunsdorfer  
and NEFF Forest Scientist Colleen Ryan

Thanks to national and international climate research and an understanding of our region's woods, New England Forestry Foundation (NEFF) has long known improved, climate-smart forest management in New England had an important part to play in solving the climate crisis. Now, we not only have the necessary science to back that knowledge up, but we're also producing some of the science ourselves.

In November 2022, NEFF published an article in the peer-reviewed journal *Forests* that demonstrated implementing our own Acadian Forest Exemplary Forestry™ standards in New England could increase carbon storage by an estimated 488 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent—equal to about 23 percent of the emissions reductions needed for New England to reach net-zero emissions by 2050.

NEFF's conclusions were supported by an October 2022 report from Highstead and coauthors like Harvard Forest, which studied the projected carbon impacts of improved forestry and other forest-related mitigation approaches across New England.

Most recently, the Forest Carbon for Commercial Landowners (FCCL) Initiative released a report in March stating northern Maine's commercial forestlands could store at least 20 percent more carbon each year by changing forest management practices, and without reducing harvest levels.

These studies have a cumulative effect—as each one is published, the case for Exemplary Forestry, NEFF's 30 Percent Solution, and climate-smart forestry in New England grows stronger.

## NEFF's First Peer- Reviewed Publication

NEFF has reached an exciting milestone with the publication of its first original research paper in a peer-reviewed scientific journal. The article in *Forests*, "Storing More Carbon by Improving Forest Management in the Acadian Forest of New England, USA," determined the climate benefits of switching from conventional forest management to Exemplary Forestry.

This means NEFF's modeling of the carbon benefits of Exemplary Forestry in the Acadian Forest has passed scientific muster. These benefits make up the bulk of the carbon savings in NEFF's 30 Percent Solution, which demonstrates that combining four forest-based climate solutions can provide nearly one-third of the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reductions New England needs in the next 30 years. We have received confirmation from the wider field of forestry and forest ecology that Exemplary Forestry is just as powerful a tool as we believed it to be.

The paper first studied carbon impacts across a four-million-acre region of northwestern Maine, and then applied those results across all of New England's Acadian Forest—which encompasses large areas of Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont, as well as small portions of western Massachusetts and Connecticut—and went on to determine that New England's Acadian Forest could store the aforementioned additional 488 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e in the forest under Exemplary Forestry management if applied to all private timberland in understocked counties.

Exemplary Forestry can produce healthier forests with more valuable timber over the long term. However, for it to spread widely among private landowners, it must be financially feasible in the short term, as well. Financial modeling



**LEARN MORE:**  
[newenglandforestry.org/connect/publications/forests-article](https://newenglandforestry.org/connect/publications/forests-article)

*Forests* Article Coauthors:  
 Alec Giffen, Senior Forest Science and Policy Fellow for NEFF; Colleen Ryan, Forest Scientist for NEFF; Ethan Belair, Natural Climate Solutions Forester for The Nature Conservancy; Mike Pouch, now Chief of Silviculture for Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands; Seth Brown, Vice President, Forestry and Land Use for Quantified Ventures

conducted for this study showed that a combination of revenue streams from timber management, sales of carbon credits, and philanthropic funding of conservation easements can make Exemplary Forestry profitable over a 15-year time frame.

Now that NEFF has its academic foot in the door, our science team will look to submit additional articles about Exemplary Forestry to other journals, as well as publish already-underway studies on different topics.

NEFF publishing its first peer-reviewed paper is truly a momentous occasion, so raise a glass and toast to Alec Giffen, lead author and NEFF Senior Forest Science and Policy Fellow; Colleen Ryan, coauthor and NEFF Forest Scientist; and the article's coauthors at other organizations (see above). Cheers!

## Highstead Climate Report

Highstead's report, *New England's Climate Imperative: Our Forests as a Natural Climate Solution*, models the impact of five integrated climate-mitigation pathways: avoided deforestation, wildland reserves, improved forest management, mass timber construction, and urban and suburban forests. Of these approaches, improved forest management has by far the greatest potential to mitigate climate change.

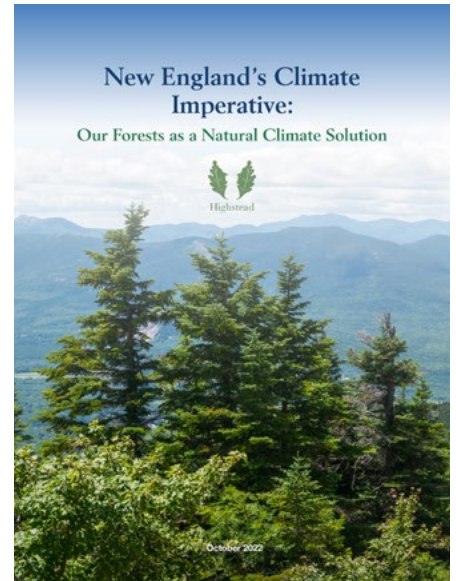
While the modeled carbon performance of well-managed woodlands in the report is impressive and dovetails with NEFF's work, NEFF also remains committed to all five pathways and believes they should be addressed together using a systems approach. Not only will treating the pathways as one integrated system allow the region to make the greatest possible carbon-storage gains, but it will also allow us to preserve everything that makes forests a vital part of life in New England.

Highstead estimates New England could store 184 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e over 30 years if improved forest management was implemented on half of the region's understocked working forestland. NEFF estimates New England could store 542 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e in the same timeframe if its Exemplary Forestry standards were implemented across all understocked counties in the region.

At a per-acre level, NEFF and Highstead's results are similar, but Highstead's total is lower because the organization chose to anticipate a 50 percent adoption rate.

"Highstead's analysis is in line with the modeling work NEFF has been conducting for several years, in spite

of using different methods and different targets," said NEFF's Alec Giffen, a report coauthor along with NEFF Executive Director Bob Perschel and NEFF Deputy Director and Climate Fellow Andrea Colnes. "Instead of setting a target for implementing improved forest management on a portion of the landscape, we reported the total potential across all understocked counties in New England to emphasize the whole opportunity that's available if the region chooses to make natural climate solutions a priority."



**LEARN MORE:**  
[newenglandforestry.org/2022/10/26/new-climate-report](https://newenglandforestry.org/2022/10/26/new-climate-report)

In this instance, a partner organization—whose work was extensively reviewed by other experts—rather than the peer-review process has provided NEFF with verification of our Exemplary Forestry numbers, as well as confirmed our sweeping 30 Percent Solution is backed up by solid science, and we look forward to building off of these studies' findings together.

## Forest Carbon for Commercial Landowners

A unique coalition of New England scientists, economists, large commercial forest landowners, and environmental nonprofits called the Forest Carbon for Commercial Landowners (FCCL) Initiative commissioned a study from the University of Maine in 2021 to discover whether it was possible to increase carbon storage on commercial lands by changing forestry practices, and, if so, how much it might cost to incentivize landowners to switch to climate-aligned practices.



Why silviculture matters: these two stands are the same age, but the top one was thinned, while the one on the bottom was left alone. At age 40, the thinned stand has large, well-spaced trees that will produce sawtimber in 10 years. Thinning is one practice that could be incentivized through a carbon-smart forestry program. Photo by R. Alec Giffen



Visit [newenglandforestry.org/connect/publications/fccl](https://newenglandforestry.org/connect/publications/fccl) to view and download the full FCCL report and to read a science highlights blog post featuring a summary of the report's methods, findings, and next steps.

The University of Maine modelled the results of seven different land management practices—including leaving land unharvested—across a study area of 7.6 million acres over a 60-year period. Maine's actual commercial forestlands total approximately 10 million acres.

The results are now in, and the study area's forestlands could store at least 20 percent more carbon each year without reducing harvest levels.

"Given the scale of Maine's commercial forests, it would be hugely beneficial

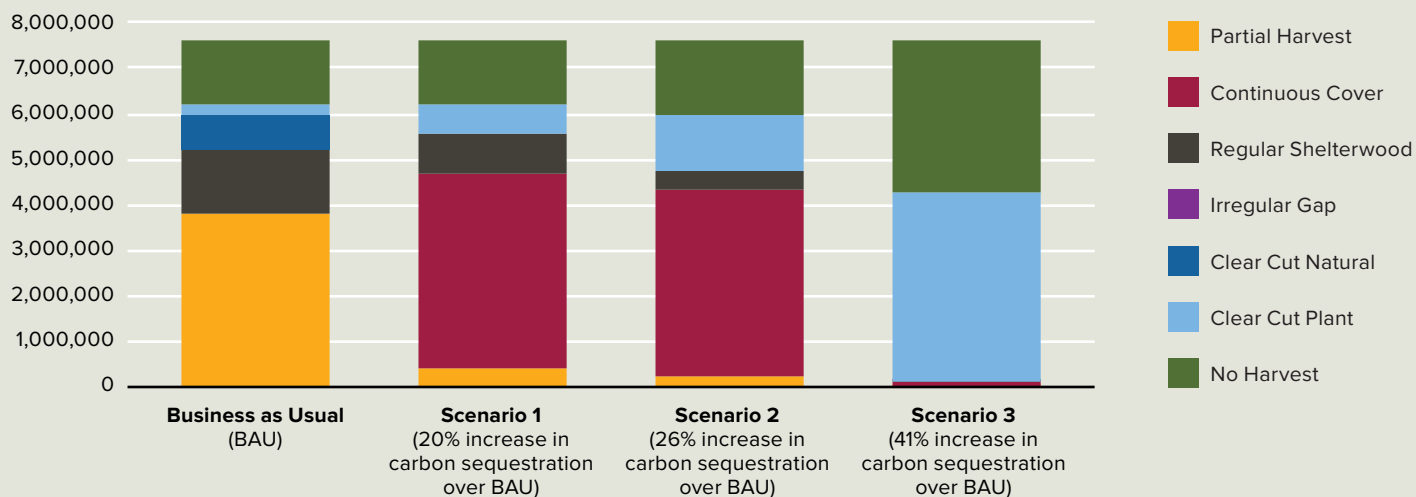
if we put them to work in the fight against climate change while simultaneously improving wildlife habitat and making timber management more profitable in the long-term," said NEFF's Giffen, a coauthor of the report. "The study shows these lands can store more carbon, and researchers have also determined incentive rates that can work for landowners and are more affordable than other standard approaches to reducing carbon emissions."

The researchers didn't make assumptions about which forestry practices would perform best, and simply modelled established approaches, thereby allowing the model to select the "optimum" approach for carbon sequestration. The study compared three possible scenarios to "business-as-usual" management to ensure any carbon sequestration benefits from improved management were truly "additional" (above what would occur under business-as-usual).

The report's two feasible, successful scenarios involve maintaining or raising clearcutting levels from business as usual (researchers included a third scenario only to show the theoretical maximum amount of sequestration that could be achieved while still producing current levels of wood; the FCCL collaboration does not suggest it is feasible to implement). However, as the report acknowledges, carbon capture should not be the only priority considered when deciding how to manage forests.

NEFF believes it is crucial to recognize there are tradeoffs among carbon capture, increased production of climate-smart products, and protection of wildlife habitat and biodiversity—and the FCCL's modeled scenarios are not intended to optimize for all of these values. NEFF advocates for using a systems approach to address these multiple interacting values, and such modeling studies offer a fresh look at what is possible. NEFF's science

Forest Area by Management Type (Acres)



team looks forward to doing more of them and sharing their results until we fine tune the approach for northern Maine’s commercial forestlands.

While there’s more to be done to further the FCCL Initiative’s work, the FCCL report has accomplished something remarkable: it has proven that specific combinations of forestry approaches can have carbon benefits on commercial lands while still maintaining harvest levels, thereby making it possible for millions more acres to fully join the fight against climate change without negatively impacting rural Maine communities or contributing to leakage.

What sets this report apart is that it addresses head-on two major issues that beset other proposals for increasing forest carbon: additionality and leakage. To be valuable, gains in carbon storage must be truly additional to what would have happened in the absence of the proposed action. FCCL addresses this issue by comparing improved forest management to business-as-usual management. Leakage is the spillover of in-forest carbon sequestration gains and losses from one economic market to another, given that the wood products we all use have to come from somewhere. If the United States or a region in the

U.S. reduced the amount of wood it produced, any progress we claimed to make in reducing global atmospheric CO2 levels by storing more carbon in our unharvested trees could, in practice, be eclipsed by CO2 emissions from other forestry markets that increased harvesting to meet our unchanged demand for wood products. Since the FCCL analysis holds harvest levels constant across its modelled scenarios, there is no potential for leakage.

### FCCL NEXT STEPS

The report calls for more research and policy work, in part because of limitations in some of the modelling—and the very practical need to set up a system of landowner incentives. The carbon sequestration benefits of irregular gap forestry, the system included in the modelling that’s most like Exemplary Forestry, are likely understated in the study due to modeling limitations, so NEFF’s forestry and science teams are looking forward to determining its true potential through future research.

Even with the current modelling limitations, irregular gap forestry increased carbon storage by 15 percent in the FCCL study, which means it may be competitive with the current top-performers with more nuanced modeling.

NEFF believes Exemplary Forestry represents the best approach for addressing climate change through forestry because it considers not just timber and carbon, but also the whole array of forest values, including biodiversity, recreational opportunities and ecosystem services.

## Putting The Science to Work

Though the FCCL study, NEFF’s *Forests* article and Highstead’s report were regional research undertakings, they offer solutions that address climate change at a global level by studying scenarios and making recommendations that lead to real reductions in atmospheric CO2 levels by accounting for leakage and additionality.

NEFF will use these reliable studies to shape its new Climate-Smart Commodities Partnership project. The USDA has awarded \$30 million to NEFF and its partners to help forest landowners implement climate-smart forest practices that also protect ecosystem health and biodiversity, and we now have trustworthy, homegrown science to serve as our road map. 🌿



# VERMONT CON

## WRITING BY

NEFF Communications Manager Tinsley Hunsdorfer  
and NEFF Conservation Project Manager Sophie Anthony

While New England Forestry Foundation is a regional forest conservation organization, our protected lands aren't evenly distributed across New England. Through both ownership and easements, NEFF has conserved 33 forestlands in Vermont and 11 in Connecticut; at the other end of the spectrum, NEFF has conserved 116 in Massachusetts and 112 in New Hampshire.

These differences primarily come down to where NEFF was founded—Massachusetts—and the location of land parcels and easements donated to NEFF over time. Regardless of there being a logical explanation for this pattern, it's hard not to root for the underdog, which is why we're pleased to report that 2022 and 2023 are giving some Vermont conservation projects time to shine.

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## Willey Woods Conservation Easement

**STATUS: CLOSED DECEMBER 14, 2022**

The Town of Burke has long identified the 283-acre Willey Woods property, located in the village of West Burke, as an ideal conservation opportunity with good public access and important natural resources. In collaboration with the Town, the Trust for Public Land helped fundraise for the property's purchase, and also asked NEFF and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board to co-hold an easement on the land.

"We were honored to partner with these organizations and the Town of Burke to establish this vital community forest and help protect its range of benefits, from public recreation to carbon sequestration," said Will Brune, NEFF Chief Conservation Officer. "It's a truly beautiful addition

to our suite of conserved Vermont land, and it feels like part of the NEFF family, given that it offers many of the same opportunities and protects many of the same sorts of resources as NEFF's Community Forests do."

The new Willey Woods Community Forest is the first unit of public land in West Burke and is part of a more than 2,000-acre block of connected forestland. This means its conservation helps prevent forest fragmentation, ensure water quality and flood resilience, and prevent the loss of biodiversity. Willey Woods also provides wildlife habitat, allows for sustainable timber harvesting and offers a wide range of opportunities for public recreation, including hunting, fishing and snowmobiling.



# SERVATION

## Caper Hill Farm

**STATUS: CLOSED MARCH 22, 2022**

Anne Turek, Jane Jackson and their siblings—all members of the Leslie family, which has long supported NEFF—sold 88 acres to NEFF at a bargain rate, or very reduced price, in spring 2022. The land was split between a 42-acre property in West Windsor, and an adjacent 46-acre parcel in Reading. Fun family fact: The 42-acre property features a trail their mother once named “The Cathedral Trail.”

NEFF has now combined these two woodlands with NEFF’s existing Reeves-Royster-Liebowitz Forest to create Caper Hill Community Forest; the older NEFF property is located next to the Leslie family land.

Composed primarily of well-managed mixed and northern hardwoods, the 166-acre Caper Hill Community Forest has relaxing walking paths, horseback riding trails, beautiful spring wildflowers, rolling hills, and babbling brooks. It shares a border with NEFF’s own Pineview easement, and Vermont Land Trust also holds an easement on the neighboring Spring Brook Farm, which runs popular children’s educational programs.

## Looking Ahead

NEFF is excited about these Vermont projects, and we hope to soon conserve more land in this beautiful state. NEFF has potential projects coming up in the Stowe-Smugglers Notch Region and the Middlebury-Vergennes Region that could add 600 acres to NEFF’s Vermont conservation easement land, and NEFF is working to expand some of its existing easements in the area. We also plan to continue building partnerships in Vermont in order to help preserve the state’s biodiversity and prevent further habitat loss and forest fragmentation.

## Cold Hollow to Canada Partnership

**STATUS: IN PROGRESS**

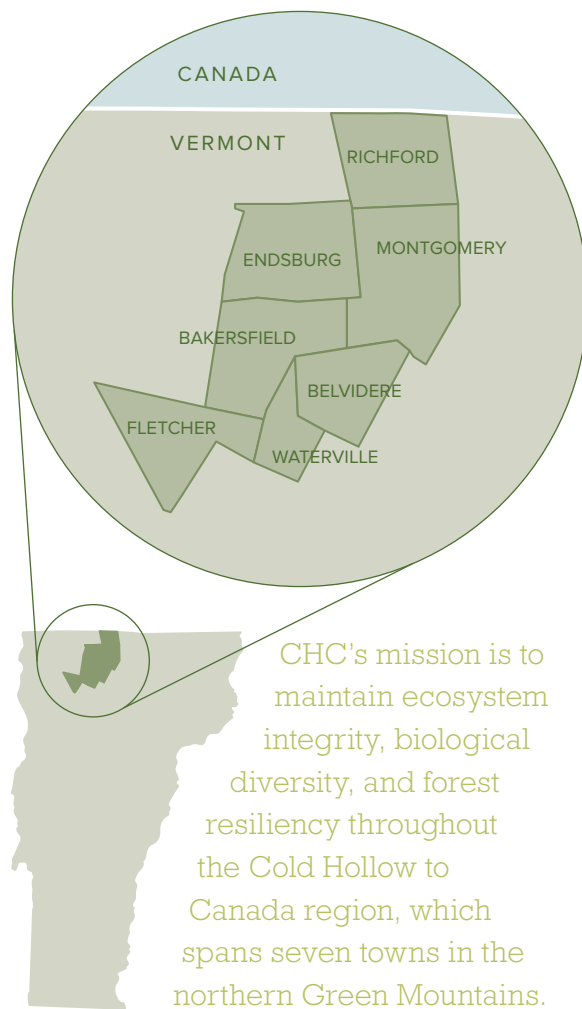
NEFF is partnering with the Vermont-based Cold Hollow to Canada (CHC) organization, which has received funding from the Landscape Conservation Catalyst Fund to enhance collaborative land conservation in the region. CHC’s mission is to maintain ecosystem integrity, biological diversity, and forest resiliency throughout the Cold Hollow to Canada region, which spans seven towns in the northern Green Mountains. Their work includes sustainable stewardship, forestland conservation, and community empowerment.

CHC is in turn a member of the larger Staying Connected Initiative (SCI) landscape partnership, which conserves wildlife corridors across the Northern Appalachian – Acadian Region of the U.S. and Canada, and the Cold Hollow to Canada landscape encompasses a core part of SCI’s 722,000-acre “Northern Greens to Canada” linkage.

“We’re excited to be included in this partnership, and hope to facilitate

conservation that will ultimately support natural systems over the immense Northern Greens to Canada linkage,” said Sophie Anthony, NEFF Conservation Project Manager. “Conserving the here-at-home CHC landscape is also crucial in its own right, as the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources has identified it as highly important for maintaining interior forest and connectivity, and we are grateful to be working with other inspiring conservation leaders in Vermont to protect it.”

As a CHC partner, NEFF will act as a potential conservation easement holder for landowners recruited to participate in the program. The collaborative conservation program includes four virtual coordination meetings among partners, a group workshop for landowners, and follow-up with landowners. This will take place over a two-year timeframe and will hopefully expand conservation in the CHC area. 🌿



CHC's mission is to maintain ecosystem integrity, biological diversity, and forest resiliency throughout the Cold Hollow to Canada region, which spans seven towns in the northern Green Mountains.

Chris Pryor, NEFF Director of Forest Stewardship and one of our most long-term employees, has taken an exciting new position as Service Forester with the State of Massachusetts. NEFF and the entire region are in debt to Chris for the legacy he has left us in New England's forests. Managing 150 forestlands across five states is a herculean task in and of itself, but Chris was also instrumental in bringing Exemplary Forestry to our properties. In tribute to his time at NEFF, we thought it fitting to hear directly from some of the staff members he worked with most closely as they share fond memories and well wishes on behalf of our entire Board and staff.

—Bob Perschel,  
NEFF Executive Director



# CELEBRATING CHRIS PRYOR

## WRITING BY

NEFF Conservation Easement Director Andrew Bentley,  
NEFF Development Manager Penny Flynn and  
NEFF Accreditation Manager/Stewardship Associate Beth Gula

Lauren Owens Lambert

## PENNY FLYNN:

Chris came to NEFF 22 years ago—five years after I joined NEFF—as a licensed forester with wide-ranging forestry experience, including in the southeast, the west, and the northeast. Chris was hired to manage the organization's communications efforts, as then-NEFF Executive Director Charlie Thompson thought it would be easier to teach a forester about communications than it would be to teach a communications specialist about forestry. Chris is a great writer, so it turned out to be the right decision. He's also a great guy who willingly lends a hand wherever help is needed, which is a valuable quality for a nonprofit with a small staff—and a great quality to have in a coworker and friend.

After a couple of years, Chris transitioned to a NEFF Conservation Easement Coordinator position, where for nine years, he was responsible for monitoring 135 easements covering more than 1.1 million acres. Walking woodlots and meeting with landowners was more up his alley, and he excelled in the position. Chris developed strong relationships with landowners and laid the groundwork for NEFF's current monitoring and record-keeping procedures.

Chris became NEFF's Director of Forest Stewardship in 2012, and took responsibility for overseeing the management of NEFF's 38,000 acres of Community Forests as well as supervising and mentoring new staff in the stewardship department—a big

job with a lot of territory to cover. He rose to the occasion, as he always does, and helped usher in the era of Exemplary Forestry at NEFF. Exemplary Forestry is based on the high-standards sustainable forestry NEFF has always practiced on its own lands—a process then overseen by Chris—and with his advice, NEFF codified this in-house style to produce Exemplary Forestry.

Having been at NEFF for so many years, Chris was also a valued source of historical information, a trusted colleague we could go to for almost anything (we have the photos to prove it!), and above all, a friend. We miss him already. The Massachusetts Department of Conservation & Recreation is lucky to have Chris and we wish him the best in this next chapter of his career.

**ANDREW BENTLEY:**

Chris and I first crossed paths ten years ago as colleagues working in different organizations. At that time, I worked for The Trustees of Reservations, and Chris and I helped co-found a “Stewardship Summit” in 2013 where stewardship staff from several regional land trusts headed out to the field together for “group therapy” to discuss challenges and best practices for our work.

That first year, Chris and NEFF’s previous Conservation Easement Manager Eben Syptkowski showed us all a serious easement issue they had been working tirelessly for several years to resolve. NEFF staff members became regular attendees at what soon became an annual event, and we all came to highly respect one another as we shared our experiences managing easements and conservation lands around the region.



Chris Pryor at NEFF’s Nelson Memorial Forest. Photo by Twolined Studio

When NEFF’s Conservation Easement Manager position opened in 2017, I jumped at the opportunity to work with the incredible staff members and organization I had come to know during these summits, though I didn’t expect to inherit the still-present easement issue the group had first discussed four years prior! I think Chris was more than happy to hand it off to me and Beth Gula.

Chris’s institutional knowledge, advice, patience, and sense of humor were invaluable as I adapted to the ever-changing routine of stewarding NEFF’s 1.1 million acres of easements, and then when advanced to Easement Stewardship Director in 2022. I am grateful for all the time we spent collaborating and learning from one another at NEFF, both in the woods and at the office.

Lauren Owens Lambert



Tinsley Hunsdorfer



Chris was given NEFF’s Outstanding Achievement Award by Executive Director Bob Perschel (left) and Board President Rick Weyerhaeuser (right) in summer 2022.

Chris’s institutional knowledge, advice, patience, and sense of humor were invaluable

**BETH GULA:**

Chris Pryor taught me the fundamentals of forestry. I started at NEFF with experience in trails and land stewardship, but somehow never learned about log landings or feller bunchers. In my first week as Stewardship Associate, I tagged along with Chris on both a pre-harvest walk and post-harvest inspection, soaking in the vocabulary and the concepts of forestry. He explained how to look at the trees standing after a harvest and to envision the forest decades into the future.

A few years later, I helped Chris prepare for a visit from young forestry undergrads. There’s an area in Prouty Woods set up to practice marking a harvest, with the decisions run through

a computer program to model the outcome. Chris encouraged me to do the exercise as a test run. He humored my fretting over which trees to take or leave, being patient and supportive, but not really giving any answers so I had to trust my own knowledge and instinct.

I always appreciated opportunities to work in the field with Chris. Addressing issues often took priority, like the times he climbed trees with arborist gear to deconstruct abandoned tree stands, or when we dug post holes in rocky, roadside soil to replace broken property signs or install gates to block unauthorized vehicles. Chris handled the endless to-do list in a critical, thoughtful and efficient way. He works smart and hard, and always with a sense of humor and appreciation for days spent outside. I will miss him as a boss! 🌿

While New England Forestry Foundation staff members were out winning major USDA grants, publishing scientific reports, and conserving Vermont forestland, NEFF's communications team has for more than a year now been hard at work on a new, compelling and beautiful website.

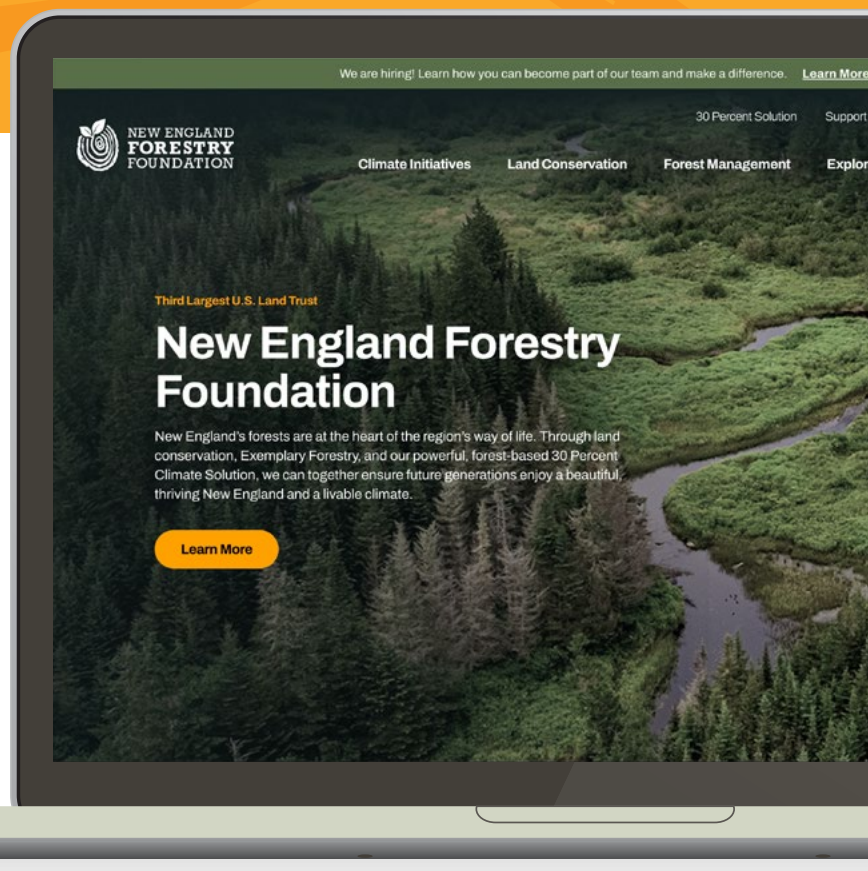
# A NEW WEBSITE FOR A NEW AGE AT NEFF

## WRITING BY

NEFF Communications Manager  
Tinsley Hunsdorfer

We are about a month or two out from launching the website, and in the more than a year of work it's taken to reach this point, we at NEFF have learned a great deal about website development, and our web firm, 36creative, has learned even more about forestry, land conservation, and how challenging it is to explain the concept of leakage.\*

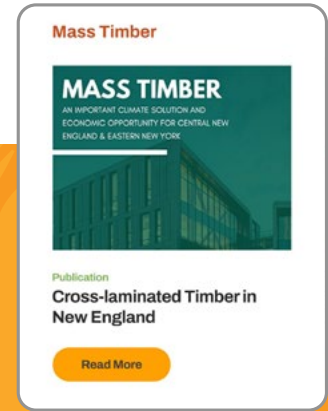
NEFF's expanding vision and exciting organizational growth has been the inspiration for a renewed website. NEFF's current site simply wasn't designed to accommodate the number of complex climate- and forestry-related programs NEFF has undertaken in the past decade. The new website will support the increasingly bold path NEFF is walking, and provide an appropriate platform for the organization as it gains greater visibility.



## ORDER FROM (A LITTLE BIT OF) CHAOS

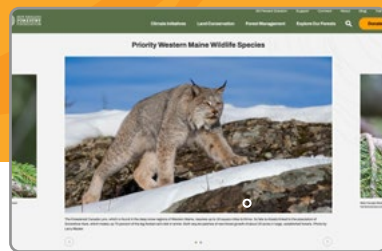
NEFF's initiatives are no longer buried three levels down in the menu! Users can now hop straight to our blog and trail maps rather than digging through multiple navigation levels. Head to our publications section, and discover a library of document covers that link to PDFs—all automatically sorted by topic!

One of our key goals is to make our website easier to use, even as the information it communicates to visitors grows in volume and complexity. As a result, a streamlined navigation menu will allow visitors to find important information quickly, while other design elements bring order and an intuitive structure to the website.



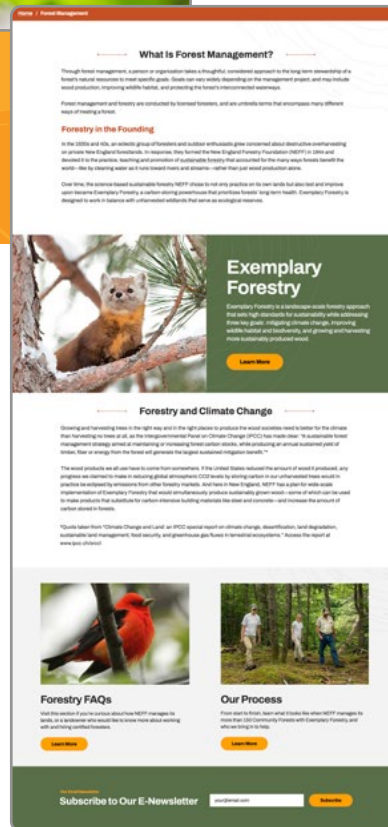
## GIVE INITIATIVES AND FORESTRY ROOM TO BREATHE

NEFF's climate initiative and forest management pages will be easier to find and able to accommodate a great deal of complex information. In general, these pages and their content will no longer feel like they've been crammed into too little space.



## CONVEY THE SCALE OF NEFF'S CONSERVED LANDS

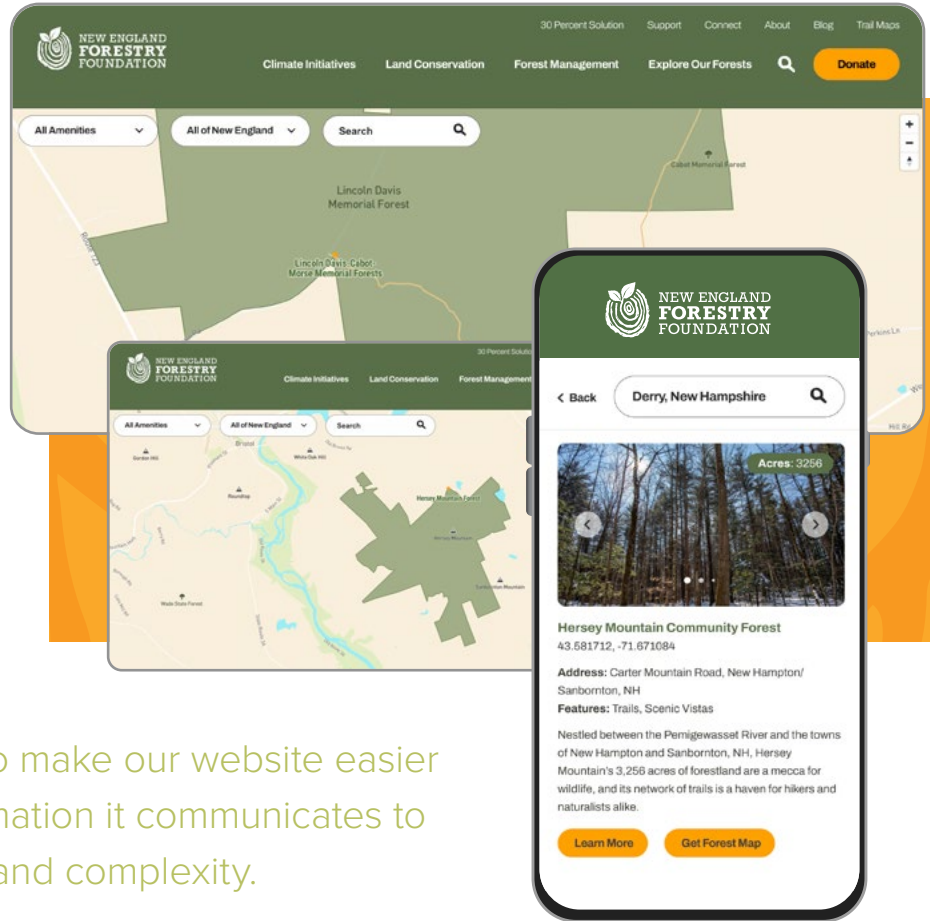
While this project was prompted by NEFF's expanding climate initiatives, we also wanted to increase visibility and awareness of NEFF's immense conservation footprint. NEFF's new website places our conservation impact front and center, starting with the homepage, which clearly declares NEFF to be the, "Third Largest U.S. Land Trust."



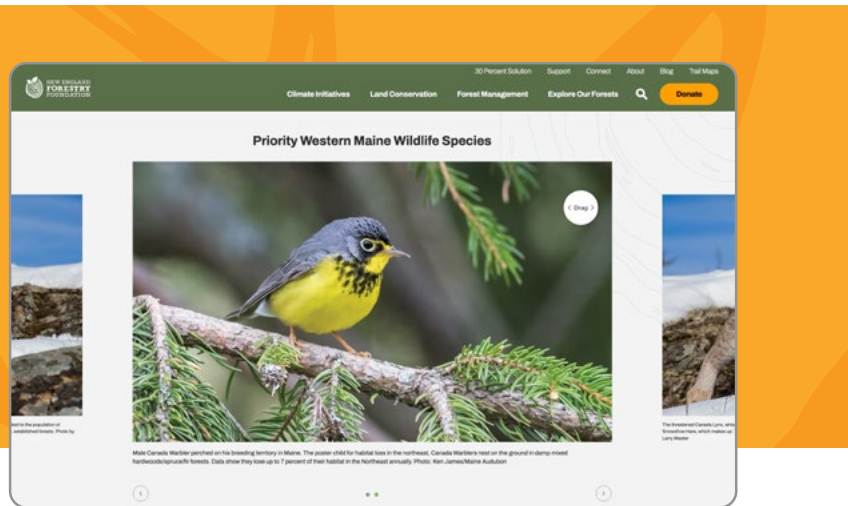
The redesign of NEFF's forestry section is well timed given the sharp increase in interest we can anticipate for this content as the new USDA-funded New England Climate-Smart Commodities Partnership project gains visibility. We're preparing a larger and more diverse suite of content, including material that introduces general audiences to forest management, explains how climate-smart forestry works, offers resources for foresters and climate-mitigation experts, and explainer videos for all audiences.

## RAMP UP THE MAP

NEFF's new online interactive map of its Community Forests will be powered by OpenStreetMap—an open-data service whose maps are generated by a host of volunteer mapping experts—rather than continuing with Google Maps. Despite what its name implies, OpenStreetMap doesn't limit itself to streets, which means outdoor enthusiasts will be able to see NEFF's trails and discover where they intersect with other nearby trail systems. Our web firm has also built custom features that will allow you to learn about NEFF's Community Forests and even in some cases see photos of the properties while still using the map.



One of our key goals is to make our website easier to use, even as the information it communicates to visitors grows in volume and complexity.



## Coming Soon to a Screen Near You

We're excited for you to see NEFF's new website later this spring. Where should you check for updates? You guessed it—the NEFF website, at [newenglandforestry.org](http://newenglandforestry.org).

\*Leakage is the spillover of in-forest carbon sequestration gains and losses from one economic market to another, given that the wood products we all use have to come from somewhere. If the United States reduced the amount of wood it produced, any progress we claimed to make in reducing global atmospheric CO2 levels by storing more carbon in our unharvested trees would, in practice, be eclipsed by CO2 emissions from other forestry markets that increased harvesting to meet our unchanged demand for wood products.

I knew nothing about forestry when I applied for a job at NEFF. Before my hire this October, even my knowledge of forests was largely limited to what I observed during first-hand experiences in the forest: a long thru-hike, an escape for solitude, a moment of quiet reflection. The rest of what I learned, I cobbled together from volunteer opportunities at local land trusts and a handful of online courses centered around sustainability.

Aside from being willing to make a few environmental lifestyle changes, my connection to forests was somewhat superficial. My deep affection for nature was clearly rooted in my ability to continue recreational pursuits. The concept of harvesting trees seemed to me like a clear affront to nature, but I was gravely misinformed, and as my understanding started to shift thanks to NEFF, I came to see forests as the multifaceted, complex systems that they are—and

I came to see them as the source of materials I used on a daily basis.

The truth is we need wood and wood, as it happens, comes from trees. Another truth is that if we treat forests well, using good forest management, we can harvest wood while supporting biodiversity and the health of forest ecosystems. This association should be embarrassingly obvious, and yet it is often a difficult one for many of us to grasp. I've learned it's the way we obtain this wood that matters most. NEFF is using science-backed research to determine the optimal balance between biodiversity, wood production, and carbon stored in the forest—all the while continuing to conserve land for future generations. With its ethically aligned Exemplary Forestry standards, NEFF is positioned to lead the charge on responsible forestry practices.

Wood also happens to be a fantastic low-carbon alternative building

material to concrete and steel. Not only are regionally sourced wood products significantly less carbon-intensive to produce, but the carbon originally stored by the tree remains locked in the lumber. With its Build It With Wood initiative, NEFF is proving that mid-rise wood buildings can be strong, beautiful, and sustainable.

I wholeheartedly believe in NEFF, its mission, and its realistic solutions to climate change. I am convinced that we have the right formula to affect change now. As such, I have made an ongoing financial commitment to the organization with a monthly recurring donation, and I have also included NEFF in my estate plans. While the amount is modest by most standards, I trust NEFF to use my gift efficiently.

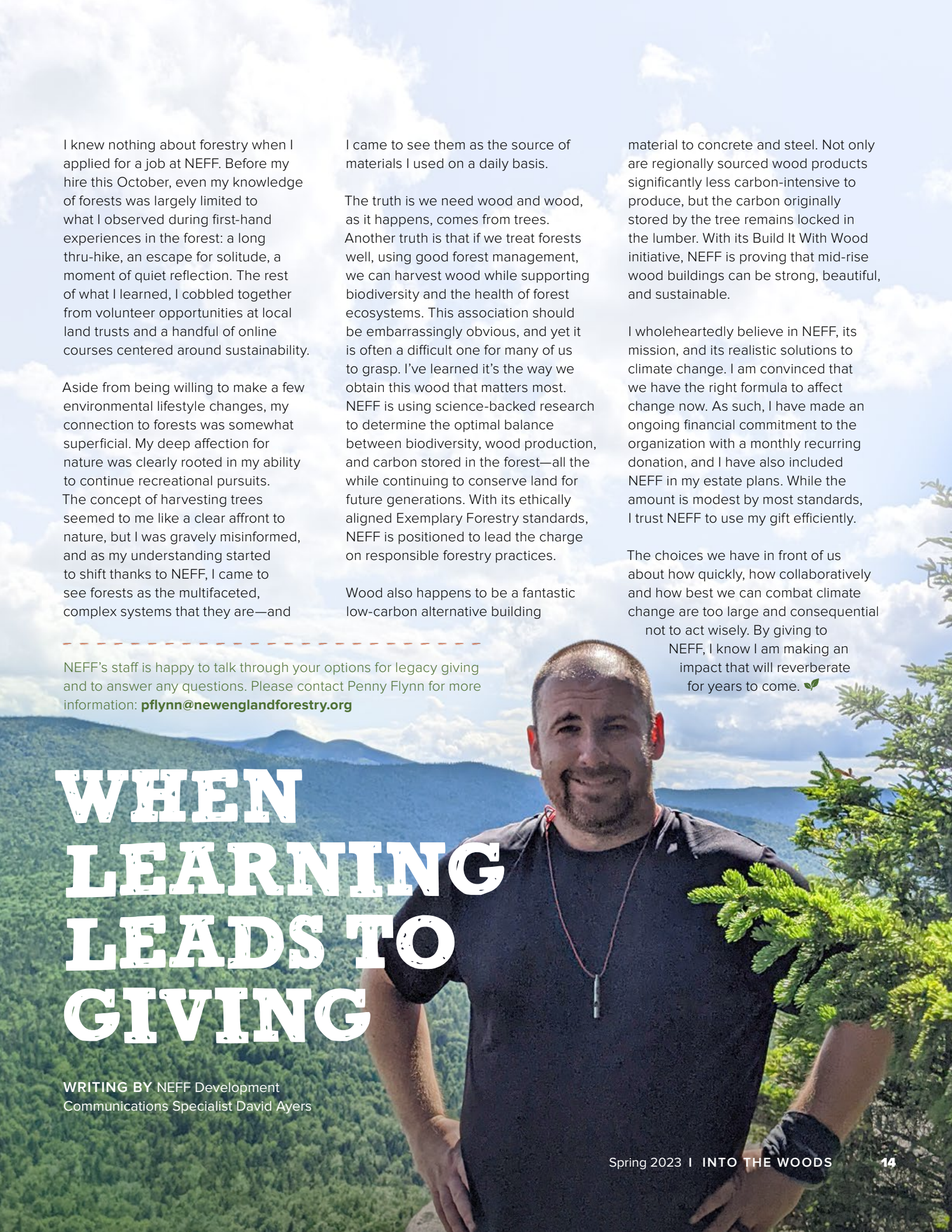
The choices we have in front of us about how quickly, how collaboratively and how best we can combat climate change are too large and consequential not to act wisely. By giving to NEFF, I know I am making an impact that will reverberate for years to come. 🌿

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NEFF's staff is happy to talk through your options for legacy giving and to answer any questions. Please contact Penny Flynn for more information: [pflynn@newenglandforestry.org](mailto:pflynn@newenglandforestry.org)

# WHEN LEARNING LEADS TO GIVING

WRITING BY NEFF Development  
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