

NYS Tree Farm Program, PO Box 705, Salem, NY 12865

Mary Jeanne Packer, Communications Chair, 518-854-7386 (office) 802 236 0881 (mobile)

For Immediate Release, April 25, 2014

Hartwood Club named New York Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year!

ALBANY – During the 2014 Annual New York Arbor Day Celebration today at the Empire State Plaza, the NYS Tree Farm Program awarded the 2013 Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year recognition to the Hartwood Club. The organization is a private family, hunting, and fishing club in the southern Catskills town of Forestburgh.

Erin O’Neill, chair of the NYS Tree Farm Program said, “We are so pleased to recognize the excellent forestry that is taking place on one of our Tree Farms in Sullivan County.”

Each year, The American Tree Farm System, of which the NYS Program is a part, recognizes the superior stewardship of its members through the annual Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year recognition program. These landowners are recognized for their remarkable efforts to enhance and sustain their forests and for spreading the practice of sustainable forestry. Inspecting foresters nominate Tree Farmers whose conservation efforts, outreach in the community, and advocacy for sustainable forest management are exceptional.

The 7,000-acre Hartwood Club was founded in 1893 and is a 28-year certified Tree Farm, with an active management plan dating back to 1979. All aspects of Tree Farm’s multiple use management philosophy are represented by the Club’s membership. The 50 families who own the Club, enjoy outdoor recreation which is compatible with both wildlife and timber management. In addition to deer and bird hunting, fishing in the Tree Farm’s three lakes, and nature observation, the Clubs’ members logged over 3,000 hours of volunteer forest management work on their woodlot last year.

In his nomination of the Club for the award, Paul Kowalczyk, who is a Tree Farm Inspector and the Hartwood Club’s consulting forester, said, “The members of the forestry committee of the Hartwood Club are outstanding ambassadors of cutting edge sustainable forest and wildlife management. The Club encourages NYS-DEC foresters to use the property as a demonstration forest and to host woods walks for other forest landowners to see the various forest management projects.”

Kowalczyk thanked the members of the Hartwood Club for “developing a land ethic of good stewardship for both the timber and wildlife resources.”

Chris Prentis, a consulting forester from Nyack, NY, was named the 2013 Outstanding Tree Farm Inspector of the Year. Prentis, who owns and operates the Rockland County consulting business Lower Hudson Forestry Services, was recognized for his exceptional work on-the-ground and his continued commitment to family forest owners. He serves on the NYS Tree Farm Board and is the area chair for the Tree Farm Program in Dutchess, Nassau, Putnam, Suffolk and Westchester Counties.

O’Neill said, “All of our contacts within the forestry community, both private and public, speak well of Chris’s forestry knowledge, his positive attitude, and his outstanding communication skills. Our review of his forestry plans, and his timely submission of Tree

Farm inspection reports, reflect highly upon his professional skills. Chris exemplifies the core values of his profession and the NYS Tree Farm Program.”

The mission of the NYS Tree Farm Program is to promote the growing of renewable forest resources on private lands in New York State while protecting environmental benefits and increasing public understanding of all benefits of productive forestry. The NYS Program which is part of the American Tree Farm System®, a program of the American Forest Foundation, is committed to sustaining forests, watershed and healthy habitats through the power of private stewardship. There are nearly 1500 Tree Farms in NYS, and nationwide the American Tree Farm System encompasses 29 million acres of privately owned forestland with over 73,000 family forest owners who are committed to excellence in forest stewardship.

O’Neill said, “Tree Farmers share a unique commitment to protecting wildlife habitat and watersheds, to conserving soil, and to providing recreation for their communities while producing wood for America. These individuals hold the key to the kinds of healthy forests, forest-based activities, and forested ecosystem resources that future generations of Americans will enjoy.”

To find out how to become a Tree Farmer, contact the NYS Tree Farm office at 1-800-836-3566) or e-mail nytreefarm@hotmail.com.