



Reforestation in New York with The Nature Conservancy

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Our Reforestation Team



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Forest Restoration Lead



Mandy St. Hilaire
Reforestation Manager



**TNC NY Natural Climate
Solutions Team**

New York's Reforestation Goals



NY State 2050 Climate Goals

- Significantly **reduce greenhouse gas emissions** (85% from 1990 level)
- Drive critical building and **transportation electrification**
- Achieve economy-wide **carbon neutrality**



NY State Reforestation Goal

- Reforest **1.7M acres by 2040**
- Resulting in 4.9+ MMT CO₂e of additional sequestration by 2050

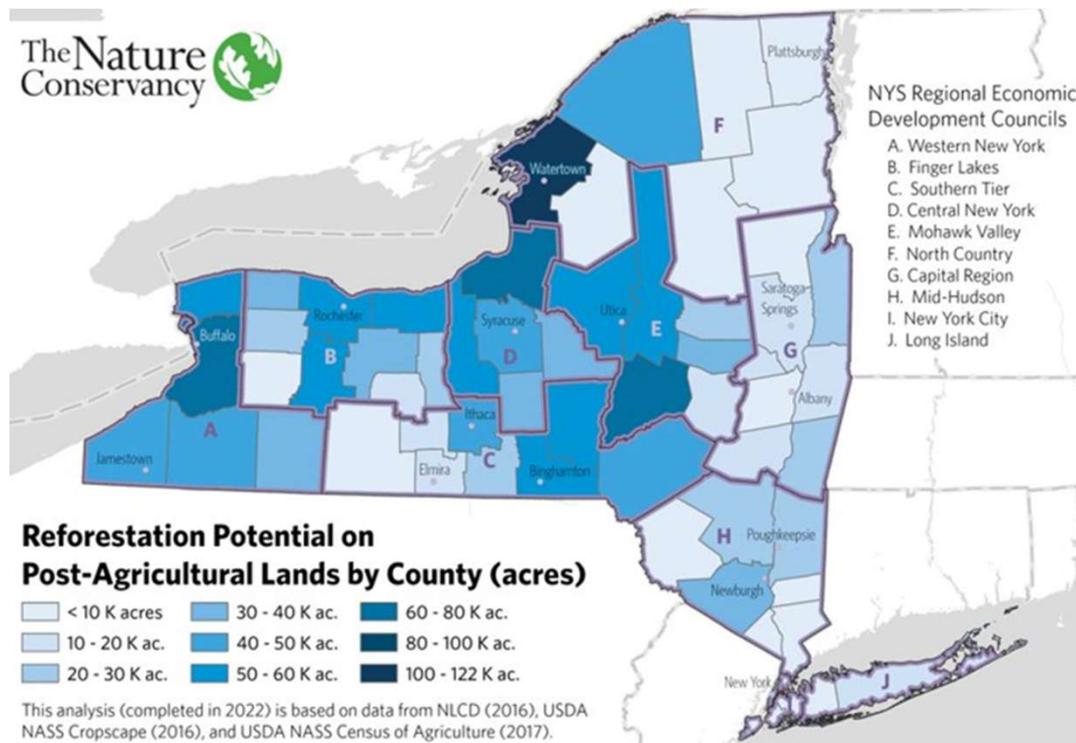


NY State 2033 Interim Goal

- Interim goal of **25M trees by 2033**

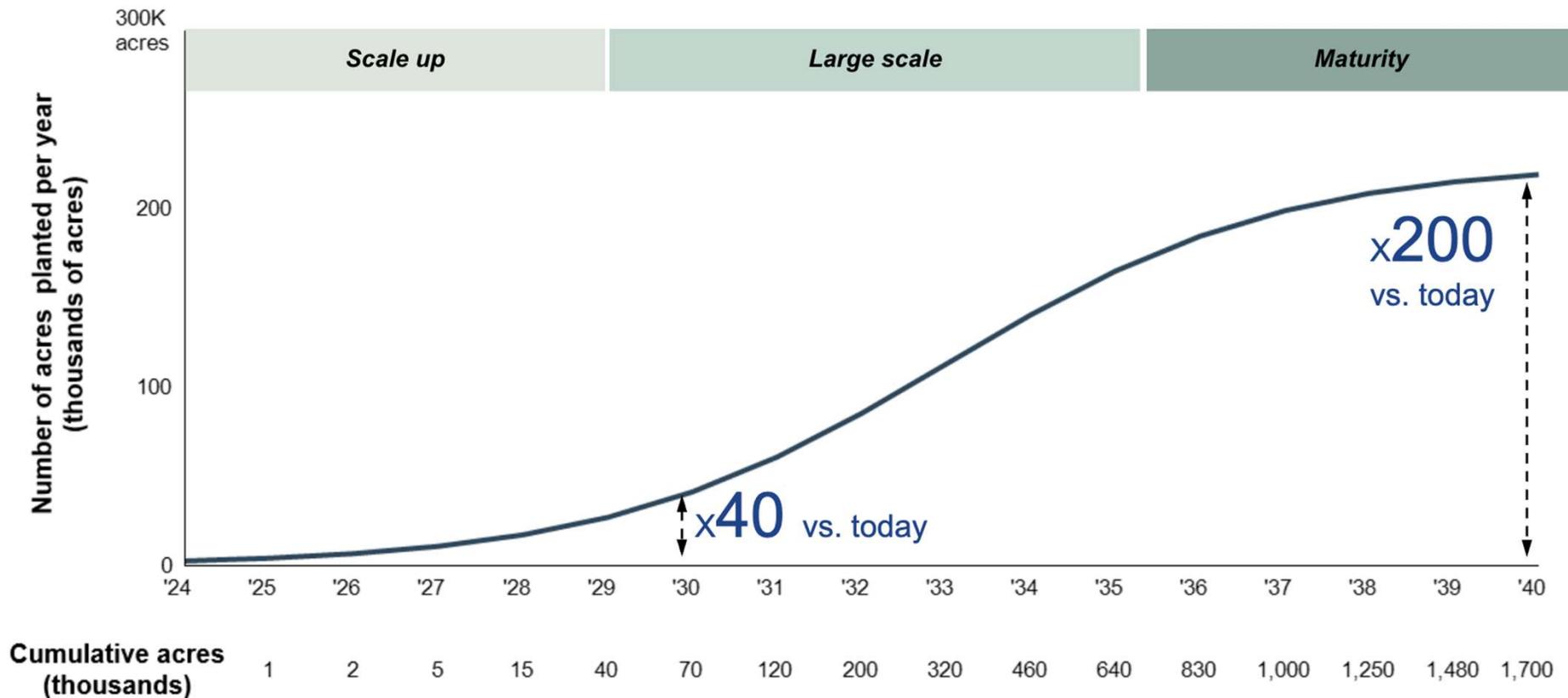


Reforestation Opportunity



- **Reforestation is New York's largest sequestration opportunity**
- There are 1.7M acres of potential reforestation opportunity on post-agricultural lands
- 97% of the opportunity is on private land

Massive Scaling Required



A Reforestation Demonstration to Jumpstart Efforts

Deliver Results & Build Momentum

Show tangible progress against larger NY reforestation ambition to build momentum on path to 1.7M acres



Create Scalable Proof of Concept

Prove it's possible to recruit landowners, scale seedling production, cost-effectively plant & monitor, and secure funding for a scalable pilot



Test & Learn to Inform Scaling & Sustainability

Experiment with reforestation models to gather insights that will inform future scaling and operations



Galvanize Stakeholders

Create opportunities to engage & build excitement for reforestation with stakeholders (donors, officials, etc.)



Slide 6

MSH1 Tessa, can we find a different background photo? Perhaps a bit simpler? It's a bit distracting and hard to read the title.

Also feel like the colors of the goals could change, but realize we are working with a specific pallet....

Mandy St. Hilaire, 2025-09-25T17:14:08.229

CZ2 Can I mention Natural Reforestation under Test and Learn?

Chris Zimmerman, 2025-09-26T13:56:56.324

In Action: Testing Incentives



Create Scalable Proof of Concept

Goal: Understand incentives required to engage landowners and garner interest in reforestation

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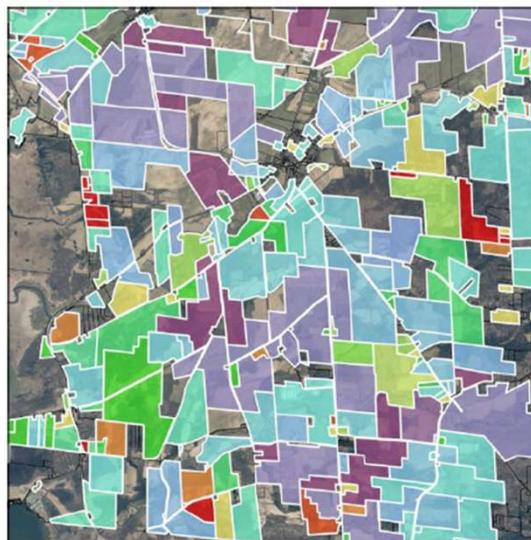


Refining Reforestation Potential at Local Scales to Facilitate Outreach and Identify Co-benefits

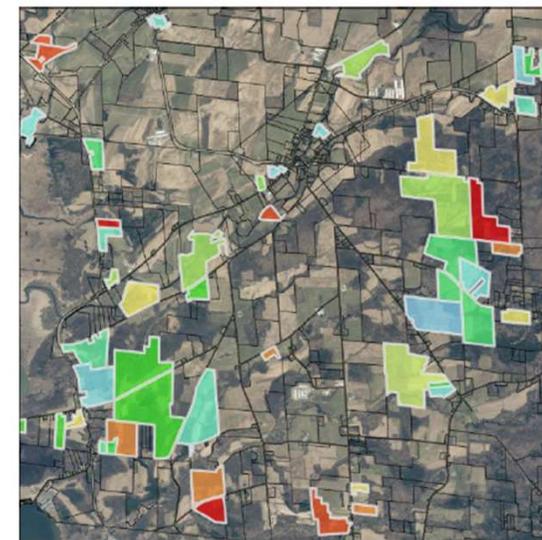
PRE-SCREEN



SCORE

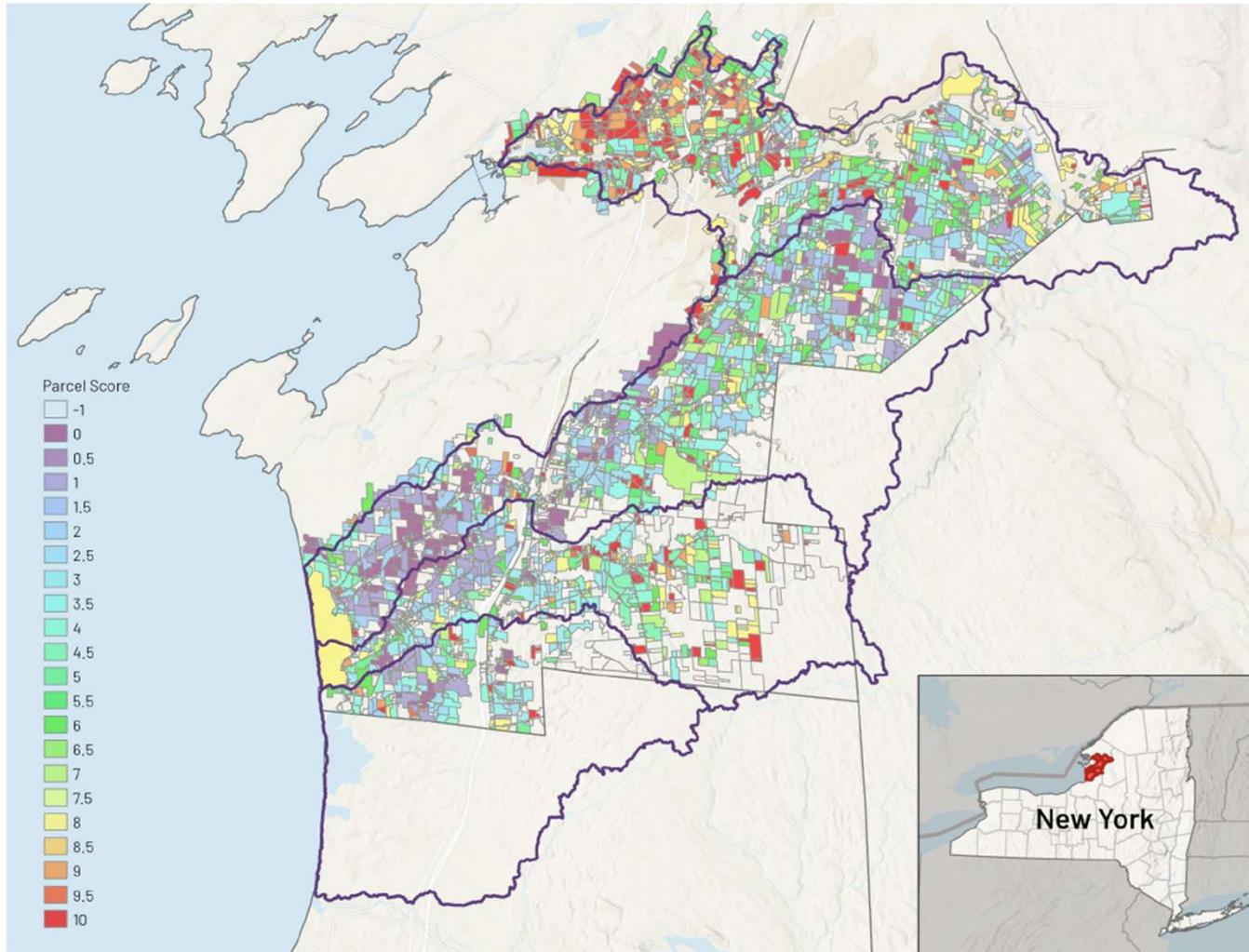


POST-FILTER



Slide 8

MSH1 Tessa – I only have a PDF of a presentation Dave put together, so I'm taking snap shots....
Mandy St. Hilaire, 2025-09-25T20:03:03.825



Example Scoring: Prioritization of Reforestation Potential in the Sandy Creeks & Black River watersheds of Jefferson County, New York, USA.

In Action: Demonstrating Scaling



Create Scalable Proof of Concept

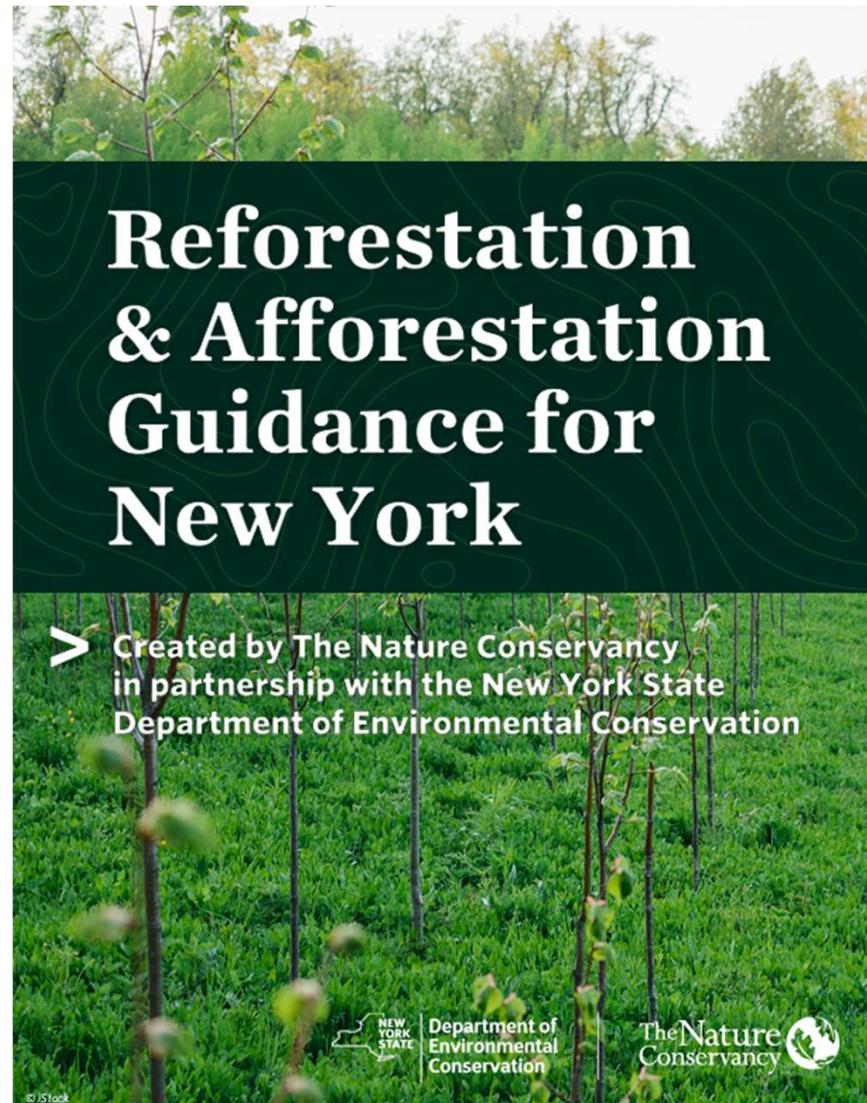
Goal: Determine a cost-effective method for planting with professional crews and longer term maintenance

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Created a Reforestation & Afforestation Guidance Document

For practitioners and landowners, especially those new to reforestation, to utilize for planning, project design, and long-term maintenance.



In Action: Working With Nurseries



Create Scalable Proof of Concept

Goal: Test advance procurement contracts and incubation funds as methods to spur nursery growth



Nursery Incubation Program

ABOUT THE PROGRAM:

- \$300K+ awarded to nurseries to improve seed collection, invest in infrastructure and workforce development and improve coordination and logistics
- Paired with an advance procurement contract for TNC to purchase seedlings from awardees in 2027 and 2028



Slide 13

AH1 Mandy St. Hilaire

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Amanda St. Hilaire, 2025-06-30T20:50:04.073

Nursery Incubation Program

PROGRAM GOALS:

- Increase native trees in the New York reforestation supply chain by investing in native tree nursery capacity
- Increase the number of trees in the New York reforestation supply chain by up to 100,000 trees by 2028



Collaborative Priority Species List for NY Reforestation

Dominant Genera:

Quercus (Oaks): 6 species (15% of total)

Betula (Birches): 5 species (12.5% of total)

Acer (Maples): 4 species (10% of total)

Carya (Hickories): 4 species (10% of total)

Moderate Genera:

Pinus (Pines): 3 species (7.5% of total)

Picea (Spruces): 2 species (5% of total)

Populus (Poplars): 2 species (5% of total)

Single-Species Genera (2.5% each):

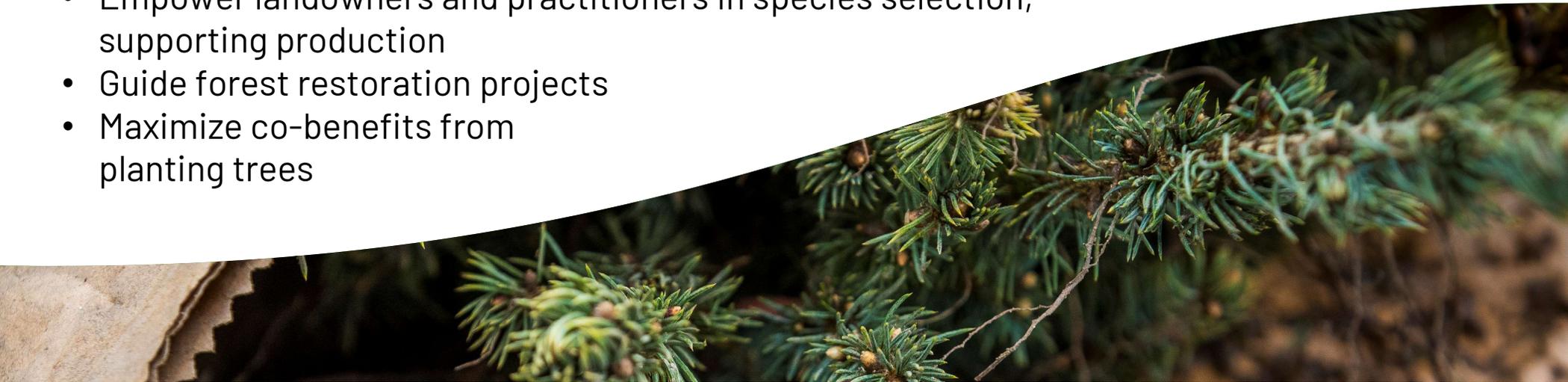
Celtis, Cornus, Juglans, Juniperus, Larix, Liquidambar, Liriodendron, Nyssa, Ostrya, Platanus, Prunus, Salix, Thuja, and Tilia

| Rank | Common Name | Scientific Name | Rank | Common Name | Scientific Name |
|------|--------------------|------------------------------|------|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | Red maple | <i>Acer rubrum</i> | 21 | Red pine | <i>Pinus resinosa</i> |
| 2 | Sugar maple | <i>Acer saccharum</i> | 22 | Tulip tree | <i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i> |
| 3 | Silver maple | <i>Acer saccharinum</i> | 23 | Black gum | <i>Nyssa sylvatica</i> |
| 4 | Northern red oak | <i>Quercus rubra</i> | 24 | Pitch pine | <i>Pinus rigida</i> |
| 5 | Sweet birch | <i>Betula lenta</i> | 25 | Eastern cottonwood | <i>Populus deltoides</i> |
| 6 | Bitternut hickory | <i>Carya cordiformis</i> | 26 | Flowering dogwood | <i>Cornus florida</i> |
| 7 | Shagbark hickory | <i>Carya ovata</i> | 27 | Black walnut | <i>Juglans nigra</i> |
| 8 | Black cherry | <i>Prunus serotina</i> | 28 | Black willow | <i>Salix nigra</i> |
| 9 | White oak | <i>Quercus alba</i> | 29 | Eastern tamarack | <i>Larix laricina</i> |
| 10 | Eastern redcedar | <i>Juniperus virginiana</i> | 30 | Sweetgum | <i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i> |
| 11 | Eastern white pine | <i>Pinus strobus</i> | 31 | Gray birch | <i>Betula populifolia</i> |
| 12 | Chestnut oak | <i>Quercus montana</i> | 32 | Mockernut hickory | <i>Carya tomentosa</i> |
| 13 | American sycamore | <i>Platanus occidentalis</i> | 33 | American hophornbeam | <i>Ostrya virginiana</i> |
| 14 | Boxelder | <i>Acer negundo</i> | 34 | Quaking aspen | <i>Populus tremuloides</i> |
| 15 | Black oak | <i>Quercus velutina</i> | 35 | Bur oak | <i>Quercus macrocarpa</i> |
| 16 | Paper birch | <i>Betula papyrifera</i> | 36 | Northern white-cedar | <i>Thuja occidentalis</i> |
| 17 | Common hackberry | <i>Celtis occidentalis</i> | 37 | Pignut hickory | <i>Carya glabra</i> |
| 18 | Yellow birch | <i>Betula alleghaniensis</i> | 38 | Red spruce | <i>Picea rubens</i> |
| 19 | Swamp white oak | <i>Quercus bicolor</i> | 39 | White spruce | <i>Picea glauca</i> |
| 20 | River birch | <i>Betula nigra</i> | 40 | American basswood | <i>Tilia americana</i> |

Why a Priority Species List?

Project Objectives

- Encourage suppliers to cultivate stocks of species and their ecotypes that are expected to be in the highest demand
- Develop a methodology for identifying and prioritizing tree species for landscape-scale tree planting projects in New York, and to use it to create demand signals to tree nurseries
- Empower landowners and practitioners in species selection, supporting production
- Guide forest restoration projects
- Maximize co-benefits from planting trees



Who Should Use This List?

- Tree planting project planners, particularly for projects in post-agricultural sites or natural areas
- Organizations incorporating tree planting into their workplan
- NY wholesale customers of seedlings
- NY tree seed collectors and nurseries supplying seedlings for reforestation
- Organizations or agencies supporting seed collection initiatives
- Practitioners or landowners who are new to tree planting project planning
- Programs funding tree planting projects
- Academic universities, botanic gardens, and arboreta doing research on regionally important tree species



In Action: Financing Reforestation



Test & Learn to Inform
Scaling & Sustainability

Goal: Develop a sustainable business model to deliver reforestation at scale



In Action: Natural Regeneration Pilot



Test & Learn to Inform
Scaling & Sustainability

Goal: Assess the effectiveness of natural regeneration to meet reforestation stocking objective.



In Action: Coordinating With Partners



Galvanize Stakeholders

Goal: Develop equitable partnerships and programs

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The Nature Conservancy 



Our Partner Study

(In consultation with Evidn, white paper available)

Objectives:

- Listen
- Identify barriers, needs, strengths
- Existing forms of coordination
- Value added from coordination

Findings:

- Strong interest for more tree planting
- Coordination is happening; eases implementation barriers
- Disconnected groups act alone, and resources are stressed
- Funding does not match true project lifecycle

Recommendations

Three recommendations for behavior change to unfold over two next steps:

Commit, Coordinate and Capture:

Work with leaders to build community, buy-in

Build Capacity:

Improve abilities to coordinate, accelerate efforts

Call to Action:

Unify tree-planting groups under a common, motivating goal



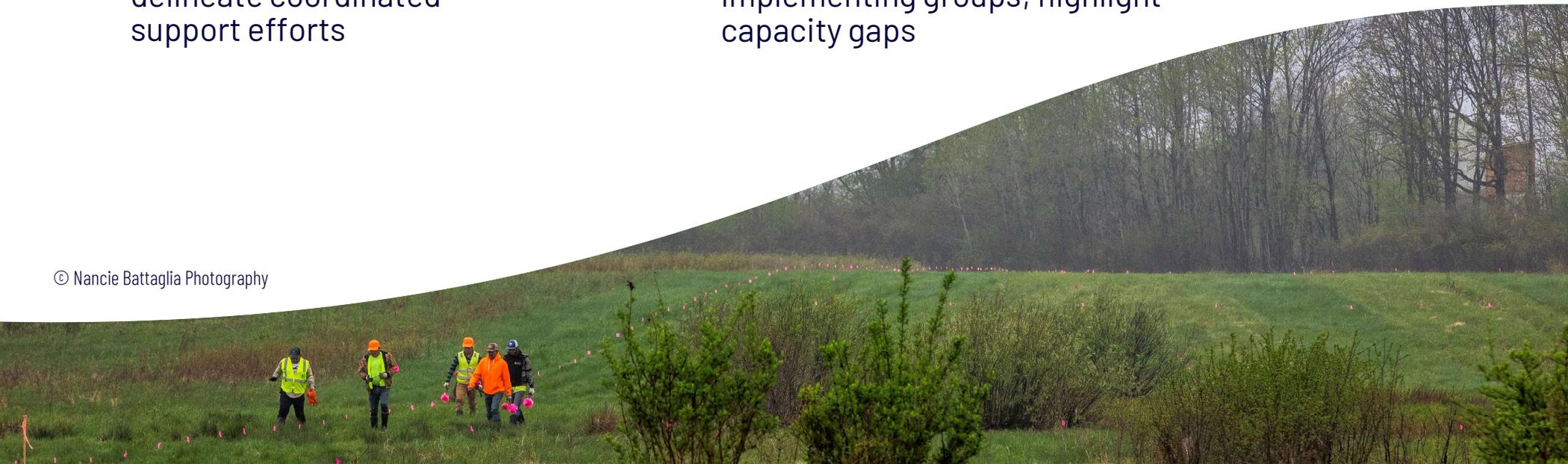
Recommendations

Step 1

- Convene a small group that would develop a call to action, name their needs, delineate coordinated support efforts

Step 2

- Monitor activities and outcomes of convening and network-wide engagements; sponsor training to expand abilities of implementing groups; highlight capacity gaps



MSH1

Thank You!

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Slide 24

MSH1 Tessa, can we ut one of the pictures of Chris in the field here? I love the one of him monitoring this summer at the Neversink 😊

Mandy St. Hilaire, 2025-09-25T20:33:36.934