

YALE FOREST FORUM

The Yale Forest Forum (YFF) was established in 1994 by a diverse group of leaders in forestry to focus national attention on broader public involvement in forest policy and management in the United States. In an attempt to articulate and communicate a common vision of forest management to diverse stakeholders, the first initiative of YFF was to convene the Seventh American Forest Congress (SAFC). After a series of local roundtables, the SAFC culminated in a 1,500-person citizens' congress in Washington, D.C. The principles discussed during the congress remain part of YFF's core philosophy of how forest policy discussions should take place: "collaboratively, based on the widest possible involvement of stakeholders."

Today, YFF is at the core of the Yale Forest School's communications and engagement programming. YFF organizes weekly lunch talks (the oldest speaker series at YSE), as well as other forest-related fora, open to the public. For instance, YFF Lunch talks are organized around two themes each term. Recent themes include "Dismantling Marginalization: Experiences and Lessons from Forest Peoples and Forest Professionals" and "Threats to Forest Health: Local to Global." YFF focuses on inviting leaders representing NGO, industry, landowner, and government sectors in forest conservation and sustainable forestry to present to the YSE community. Speakers often stay on campus for several days to engage with students, faculty, staff, and the greater New Haven community. YFF's activities provide an opportunity for diverse parties to meet and exchange ideas and have led to ongoing dialogue concerning forest-related challenges and solutions.