

# Larch in Connecticut, a Snapshot

## Some facts and photos from three CT larch plantations.

Thomas E. Worthley, Associate Extension Professor, University of Connecticut;  
Timothy Hawley, South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority;

UConn Forest Crew: Ryan Pike, Taylor Hastings, Michael Trainor, Sofia Mancini, David Backhaus, Nicholas Vertefeuille

**Introduction:** At the request of Lloyd Irland, of the Larch Virtual Experiment Station, the following information was assembled from plantations at three sites in southern, central and northeastern CT .

### Site 1: *European larch (L. deciduo P. Mill.) at the University of Connecticut.*

This 75 year-old stand is located on the Moss Tract of UConn Forest, in Willington, CT. Larch was among a variety of coniferous species planted in species-groups on a former agricultural site that included red pine, white pine, Norway spruce & white spruce. No additional management of larch is evident, though nearby red pine was salvaged in the 1980s. Current conditions: approximately 90 trees & 116 sq. ft./ acre. DBH ranges from 6 to 25 inches. Total height of the stand is 110 ft. Suppression and mortality due to competition stress is present, though dominant trees are impressive. Spacing matters.



**Above:** UConn Forest Crew member Taylor Hastings harvests a suppressed European larch at UConn Forest



**Above:** UConn Forest Technician Ryan Pike with a 110-foot dominant European larch at UConn Forest



**Below:** Armillaria (shoestring) fungus rhizomorphs evident on larch mortality.

### Site 2: *European larch (L. deciduo P. Mill.) at Wilcox Preserve, Middletown, CT*

These 60 to 65 year-old stands are located on a former golf course that is now municipal open space, in Middletown, CT. Larch was among a variety of coniferous species planted on former fairways along with white pine and white spruce. No additional management of larch or other plantations is evident, though a management planning effort is currently underway. Low thinnings in pine and larch stands have been recommended. *Target: 150 t/ac and 150 sq ft ba/ac?*



#### Wilcox larch stands: average current conditions:

- 235 trees/acre
- 205 sq ft basal area/acre
- Average DBH 12.5 inches
- DBH range 7 to 19 inches
- Avg. total height 90 ft
- Live crown ratios quite variable.



1934 B+W Aerial Image from UConn MAGIC showing fairways and greens.



Shortly after 1934, the 9-hole golf course portion of the Wilcox parcel was planted to pine, larch and spruce.

Larch Plantations:



2016 Color Aerial Digital Image from CTECO

1:4,514  
0 0.0425 0.085 0.17 mi  
0 0.075 0.15 0.3 km  
Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (China), Swisstopo, NRC, Esri (UK), Swisstopo, IGN, Esri, The Mapbox Contributors, and the GIS User Community  
CT ECO  
Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, NOAA, USGS | CT DEEP, USGS |

### Site 3: *Larch Planted at South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority.*

At SCCRWA (formerly New Haven Water Co.) 30 or so acres of larch from the CT DEP Nursery was planted in the 1950s & 1960s. For one 13-acre stand of mixed larch and white pine on stratified drift, data was available from 8 BAF20 plots taken in 1987 and 20 BAF40 plots taken in 2016. Volume increased during that period from 4,000 BF/Ac to 27,000 BF/Ac. The stand is variable enough that the 95% C.I.s overlap. Basal area about doubled, from 125 to 256 SF/Ac.

A local contractor thinned another larch stand, milled it on his portable sawmill, and the lumber was used for the floor of an office. See accompanying photos.

