

Autumn 2015

NATIONAL WOODLANDS

Magazine of the National Woodland Owners Association

- *Focus on Wildlife—Deer, Bats, Wolves, Grouse, Woodcock and Vernal Ponds*
- *Northern Landowner Alliance Annual Issue*
- *Wildfire's Effect on Water Resources*
- *NWOA Welcomes the Walnut Council*



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NATIONAL WOODLANDS

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On the Cover: Water is a critical resource. This view is a few miles from NWOA President Keith Argow's woodlands on the western slope of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Virginia.

Photo by Connie Blair



Washington Woodland Watch



Private and Family Landowners Can Help Protect Clean Water from Wildfire in the West

Over the past several years, protecting clean water in the West has grown into an urgent and pressing issue, especially with the extreme drought. Adding to this are record wildfire seasons, like the one we just experienced, where wildfires are reaching catastrophic levels, destroying the natural filtration systems in forests that help keep water clean.

Many of our policymakers have been searching for solutions to ensure that the 2016 wildfire season is not worse than 2015. But to do this, they must find ways to protect not only people and homes, but also the limited water supply.

Amid this, the American Forest Foundation has released a new report entitled, “Western Water Threatened by Wildfire: It’s Not Just a Public Lands Issue” that sheds additional light on the issue and offers three important solutions to help forest landowners.

The report shows that, contrary to popular thinking, wildfire is not just a public lands issue. In fact, 40 percent—or 13.5 million acres—of the forests and other lands in important watersheds that are at a high risk of catastrophic wildfire across the West, are actually owned by families and other private entities.

The report also found that private and family landowners want to do the right thing, noting that they are motivated to take action to reduce the threat of wildfire and help protect clean water. However, what prevents most from doing so is the high cost of implementing management actions.

These new findings can be a great tool to help garner support for woodland owner programs from your Congressional members.

In addition to the report’s factual findings, it also describes near-term solutions that policymakers should consider in order to support landowners in their wildfire prevention efforts.

First, we need Congress to fix how it pays for firefighting. The cost to fight wildfires continues to grow. As of September, the bill for the year had exceeded \$1 billion.

Under the current structure, the U.S. Forest Service and the Department of the Interior are forced to fund their firefighting program at the expense of other important programs—many of which are designed to get ahead of the wildfire problem. Even with this additional funding,

firefighting budgets are usually still not enough. This forces the two agencies to go back and borrow funds from these same programs to pay the firefighting bill.

To avoid this vicious cycle, Congress should treat wildfire fighting the same way it treats other disaster funding, especially for the extremely large and costly fires that need the most support.

Second, our policymakers need to find opportunities to stimulate forest restoration across boundaries that incorporate private and family lands into the mix. Authorities and programs are already in place to engage in collaborative efforts to reduce wildfire risk. But, most are implemented across public lands (federal and state), and do not often include private lands. Given the patchwork forest ownership pattern common in the West, conducting forest restoration across an entire region will help raise the resilience of the entire forest.

Finally, it is important to recognize that there will never be enough public funding available to solve the entire wildfire problem. Instead, state and federal policymakers must find ways to create new markets for wood products that can help fund the landowners’ costs of wildfire mitigation and forest restoration. Ongoing healthy forest management efforts both can be both ecological and economical.

Consider sharing these new findings and the recommendations with your state and federal policymakers to help gain support for landowners and thereby reduce wildfire risk. To view the report, visit: www.forestfoundation.org/western-water-forests-report.

*Rita Hite
Vice President, Public Affairs
American Forest Foundation*





Family Forestry Commentary

Keith A. Argow, Publisher



Wildlife Reports, Partners, Awards and More

Our Autumn issue always features an annual review of the concerns and opportunities related to wildlife living on our woodlands. Included in this issue are reports from one quarter of our state affiliates, this time: the Northern Alliance of Landowner Associations.

Also, this quarter, we are pleased to welcome the Walnut Council as NWOA's newest Partner Association. See p. 29 for the announcement and a brief report of the

Council's current programs. We plan to continue publishing updates from this important group, describing its efforts to promote hardwood management in the northern forest, with an emphasis, of course, on walnut. Some of you will want to join the Walnut Council, too.

In this issue's wildlife section, we feature an in-depth review of declining populations of the northern long eared bat. There could be new restrictions imposed on our woodland management now that the bat is determined to be "threatened" by the Fish & Wildlife Service under the Endangered Species Act, as detailed in the article beginning on page 7. On the positive side, we include a sidebar about how landowners can help create and protect bat habitat.

Any news about wildlife and woodlands would not be complete without discussion of the damage resulting from overgrazing by too many deer. This is especially serious in high value hardwood stands where the young understory trees are eaten and are no longer there to replenish stands after a harvest.

Aside from man (hunters and highway collisions) no natural predators remain to control wild deer. As described beginning on page 18, the gradual reintroduction of wolves may provide a bit of relief in the far north, but wolves are wary of civilization and not likely spread very far south.

Woodcock and grouse populations appear to be declining, and wild turkey

are thriving, especially in woodland areas where they have been reintroduced.

Water quality and quantity is now the #6 most important Family Forestry Issue as ranked by our affiliated state landowner associations in the 2015 survey. Vernal ponds are often not recognized and little understood for the abundance of plants

Water quality and quantity is now the #6 most important Family Forestry Issue as ranked by our affiliated state landowner associations in the 2015 survey.

and animal diversity they harbor. And they are part of the watershed. Protected by law, common sense says to stay away from them and the mud, but too little is being said about how we can identify vernal ponds in our stewardship plans and enhance their usefulness.

In late October the American Forest Foundation released an important report on the lasting damage being done to forested watersheds in the western states in large and intense wildfires, especially after many years of drought. Usually thought of as a public lands issue, it turns out that private lands comprise 37 percent of the forested watersheds that community and municipal water districts alike depend upon. A brief summary appears on p. 25.

NWOA Announces Winners Of Two Major National Awards

For 30 years NWOA has recognized the most Outstanding Forestry Law in the United States that affects woodland owners. We are always on the lookout for "not so good" laws that are proposed by organizations that don't like or recognize our property rights, even though society depends on the taxes we pay every year as a condition of owning our woodlands. The best defense is to recognize and honor those laws that prevent inappropriate legal intrusions. This year's winner, a Kentucky law, is described on page 37.

America is blessed with the most

productive woodlands and forests in the world, which has led to some of the best forestry education programs anywhere. For many years NWOA has joined with the National Association of University Forest

Resources Programs (NAUFRP) to present two Family Forestry Education Awards. One is for the diversity and excellence of the

Family Forestry curriculum. The other is for a specific landowner outreach and education program. The winners this year, the University of Massachusetts's Family Forestry Research Center (in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service), and the Women Owning Woodlands program at Oregon State University (which is now a nationwide initiative co-sponsored by NWOA). Details appear on page 42.

Please Consider a Year-End Tax Deductible Donation to NWOA

There are three levels of giving described on the back cover of this issue with attractive benefits as our way of saying "Thank You!" Every donation of \$100 or more receives the popular full color NWOA 2015 Wall Calendar, plus a handy leatherette NWOA Pocket Calendar and Notepad.

Members are our most important source of income. We work hard to earn your respect and support. To remain effective, NWOA is "Independent by Nature" and does not seek grant funding, which can come with strings attached.

Tell us how much you appreciate our role as a truly independent landowner association and give what you feel we are worth to you. NWOA is a 501(c)3 IRS charitable organization and your donations are fully deductible. We spend no money on fundraising.

Thank you for your support.

KAA_argow@nwoa.net

New National Coalition Creates Website to Promote Biomass

A coalition of forest owners, wood suppliers and manufacturers of pulp and paper products has announced the creation of www.biomass101.org, a clearinghouse for information on carbon-neutral bio-energy. The group includes the American Forest & Paper Association, the American Wood Council, the Forest Resources Association and the National Alliance of Forest Owners. The site will include blog posts, infographics, video and other digital media content intended to correct false or distorted information in the press.

The motivation for this ambitious effort is the forthcoming approval or modification of proposed new EPA regulations on carbon neutrality. There is disagreement over the timelines involved in the carbon-capturing power of young trees planted to replace those that have been cut and burned to produce electricity. The environmental community strongly asserts that burning wood is not a carbon neutral as the advocates of woody biomass would have the public believe.

The issue gets more complex. If surplus wood and waste is placed in landfills

to decompose, it produces methane, which has 25 times more warming effect than carbon dioxide. Just how much methane? That is to be determined by another team of scientists. When "sound science" is countered with more "sound science," policymakers have little choice but to make political decisions based on the public's perceptions. Hence the roll out of *Biomass.101.org*, the most ambitious effort of its kind to date.

Chinese Hardwood Market: Complicated But Promising

America has the most productive hardwood forests in the world thanks to its soils, climate, species mix and infrastructure needed to grow, harvest and manufacture wood products. The industry is backed up by groups like the Hardwood Forest Foundation, the National Hardwood Lumber Association (NHLA) and several export councils, which help market hardwood products as well as setting standards for quality.

NHLA CEO, Mark Barford, recently returned from China for the 24th time in his ongoing, career-long effort to understand the ever-changing demand for North American hardwoods. Five years

ago he saw the Chinese market shift from a production and export market to a consumer market. Today, U.S. hardwood exports account for 50 percent of the grade lumber production and half of those exports are going to China.

The Chinese market has grown more complex in recent years, Barford notes. The number of companies buying North American hardwood has increased dramatically, and those buyers are a diverse collection of hardwood users and distributors who each have their own needs. NHLA currently serves 32 Chinese companies who have joined as partners to promote American hardwoods. If the current balloting to create a National Hardwood Checkoff Program (which NWOA strongly supports) to promote domestic consumption fails, it is apparent that China may save the day. Strange, but true.

Oregon Land Board Approves Selling Elliott State Forest

At nearly 90,000 acres of well-stocked coastal forests, Oregon's oldest state forest once fulfilled its mission of providing annual funding for public roads and schools. In 1930, the forest was created through the exchange of 140 square miles of the Sec. 16 and 36 "state school sections" granted to the state on statehood.

At one time, the forest produced \$8 million annually for the school fund, but in recent years lawsuits have blocked timber sales on the forest on the grounds they failed to maintain suitable habitat for coho salmon and the marbled murrelet, a seabird that nests in big old trees. Now the Elliott is running a \$1 million deficit. In August, the State Land Board voted to sell the land, valued at between \$285 and \$400 million. The Board would invest that money in other places to make the trust profitable again.

The assumption is that under private ownership, regulators will be more flexible with logging restrictions. If not, the land would likely sell for much less on the open market. While privatizing public property can sound appealing to taxpayers, selling land "with restrictions" is likely bring much less money than envisioned.

Forestry Quotes of the Quarter

Forestry Quotes is a regular feature highlighting the breadth, diversity, fervor and opposing views surrounding current forestry issues.

"We are witnessing the transformation of fire from an essential element of most forest ecosystems—as vital as sunshine and rain—into a feral force. Megafires are joining calving glaciers and rising sea levels as one more indication that the Earth is warming."

Jane Braxton Little
Sacramento Bee. October 3, 2015

"The United States has five percent of the world population and consumes 27 percent of the world's industrial wood products. Although domestic timber inventory is only eight percent of the world total, 76 percent of the U.S. consumption of industrial wood comes from domestic supplies."

Forest Inventory Analysis (FIA), U.S. Forest Service. 2010

"Red Rock Biofuels in Lakeview OR has been awarded a \$70 million U.S. Department of Defense grant to build a new process bio-refinery that will produce jet fuel, bio-diesel and naphtha. Organizers plan to use up to 170,000 tons of woody biomass annually in both chips and slash from forestry operations and sawdust and other residuals from a nearby sawmill."

Wood Bioenergy. August. 2015



ERIC LAPOINTE

Forest Operations Coordinator



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Protecting the Northern Long-Eared Bat Could Impact Forest Management



by Alexander Silvis*

Though easy to overlook, as a forest landowner and a consumer of global agricultural goods, you should be thanking bats for their invaluable ecosystem services. Worldwide, bats are important pollinators, seed dispersers and voracious consumers of insects. In North America alone, bats provide an estimated \$3.7 billion of agricultural pest control per year. Although the economic benefit of bats to the forest industry has not yet been formally evaluated, bats consume a variety of insects that affect forest health and tree condition, including the eastern tent caterpillar (*Malacosoma americanum*), various leaf rollers, and roost, stem, and fruit borers.

Unfortunately, a lethal infectious disease called white-nose syndrome (WNS) has been decimating the populations of seven bat species in eastern North America. Caused by the fungus *Pseudogymnoascus destructans*, WNS was first discovered in 2006 in a cave near Albany, New York. This disease, with a mortality rate of approximately 90 percent, infects hibernating bats and causes them to prematurely deplete the fat reserves necessary to survive the winter. To date, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) estimates that more than six million bats have died as a result of WNS. Due to severe reductions in populations, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has listed one species, the northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

Many people associate bats with caves, but most bats in eastern North America use caves only for hibernation and spend April through October (this is broadly referred to as the active season by bat biologists) in forests. The northern long-eared bat, in particular, is closely associated with forests, day-roosting and foraging in conditions ranging from mature forests to newly regenerating stands. Prior to 2006 the northern long-eared bat was common and widely distributed across eastern North America and probably occurred in most forested habitats. As a result of its wide distribution, listing of the northern long-eared bat as federally threatened means that many forest landowners

in the United States now are legally obligated to consider the species when managing their forests.

The specific details of USFWS regulations for protection of northern long-eared bats differ slightly among state, federal, corporate and private landowners, but generally, under the current draft regulations (80 CFR § 17974-18033), restrictions on forest management are most strict within close proximity to known hibernacula (caves) and known roosts and roosting areas. In the case of the former, clearcutting activities are prohibited within 0.25 miles, and in the case of the latter, harvesting operations are restricted between

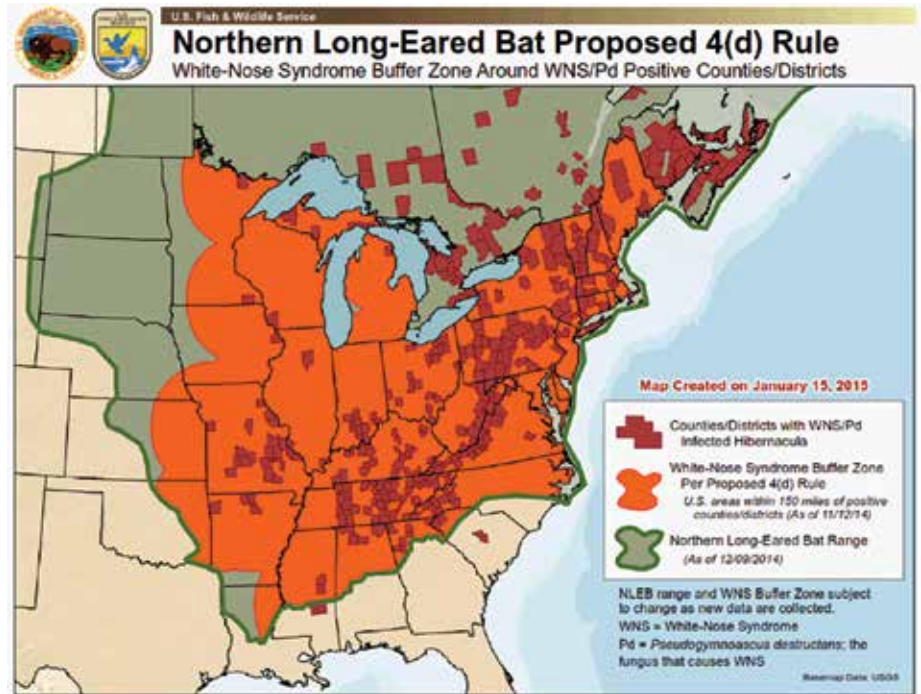


Researcher with bats killed by White Nose Syndrome.

*Dr. Alexander Silvis is a Research Assistant Professor in the Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation at Virginia Tech. A version of this article originally appeared in Virginia Forest Landowner Update. V. 28, No. 1. Winter 2014.

June 1 and July 31. Because few landowners other than public agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service have identified northern long-eared bat day-roost areas, protection of known roosts likely is a non-issue for most. Generally however, forest management activities are permitted under the draft regulations for protection of the northern long-eared bat so long as management activities promote long-term habitat viability.

Though permissible whole-stand forest management approaches (e.g. shelterwood harvesting, single-tree select) are not described explicitly, smaller-scale management activities including right-of-way clearance, hazardous tree removal and projects resulting in minimal tree removal (e.g. firewood cutting, culvert replacement, backyard landscaping, and shelterbelt renovation) specifically are permissible. Notably, conversion of hardwood or mixed-hardwood stands to pine plantations is a prohibited forest management activity.



Measures that seek to project possible or likely day-roosting habitat could create issues for private forest landowners; though at this juncture such measures have not been clearly

Ways you Can Help Create and Protect Bat Habitat

- Maintain at least 60 percent canopy closure after timber harvest within forested stands.
- Retain standing snags, except where they pose a serious human safety hazard due to their location near a building, yard, road or power line. A live tree with less than ten percent canopy should be considered a snag. Snags with no remaining bark and no visible cracks, splits, or hollows may be felled, as well as any snags leaning more than 45 degrees from vertical. When possible, delay removal of hazard trees until bats are hibernating (October 1 to March 31).
- Do not harvest or manipulate shagbark hickory trees (*Carya ovata*) unless there are more than 16 shagbark hickories per acre. If present, maintain at least 16 live shagbark hickory greater than 11 inches dbh per acre.
- Maintain at least 16 live, high-value roost trees per acre on average with at least three live trees greater than 20 inches DBH and six live trees greater than 11 inches DBH. Other retained trees should be among the largest or highest roost value trees present within the stand.
- Do not harvest trees or conduct timber stand improvement within 300 feet of a stream bank or wetland, or within 500 feet of a known bat hibernaculum.
- Do not fell trees greater than three inches DBH while Indiana bats may be present, generally April 1–September 30.
- Avoid prescribed burns from April 1 to September 30 in forest stands containing potential Indiana bat live roost trees and/or snags.
- Avoid prescribed burns year-round within 1,000 feet of a known bat hibernaculum.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



Retain snags, except where they post a safety hazard.

formulated by the USFWS. For those interested in a quick initial assessment of whether they own forest lands that may be potential habitat, research has shown that the species is more closely associated with deciduous forests with closed canopies and an abundance of snags and decaying live trees. My research and that of my collaborators also suggests that northern long-eared bats key in on forests with successional conditions that have resulted in an abundance of snags and decaying live trees; in Kentucky and West Virginia, clearcutting and subsequent old field regeneration have led to the species day-roosting in sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*) and black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) trees. So, forest owners interested in small to medium sized clearcuts where these two species or similar species would regenerate easily could suggest to the USFWS that such actions will create suitable long-term habitat.

Because of the northern long-eared bat's threatened status, the USFWS using 4(d) rule authority from the Endangered Species Act will allow a host of habitat management activities to occur without consultation on state, corporate and non-industrial private ownerships. The USFWS also has a Habitat Conservation Planning process that can be used to develop long-term management plans that minimize legal liability for activities that will not be covered under the



Collecting a swab sample from the wall of a western Illinois bat hibernaculum. Photo by Joe Kath / Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

4(d) rule. Although private landowners are legally required to comply with protections for threatened and endangered species, without a direct Federal "nexus," indirect or unknown impacts from habitat modification typically do not generate close scrutiny from the USFWS. Nonetheless, it is prudent to comply with clearing restrictions and hibernacula protection measures (Federally supported programs like the USDA NRCS cost-share program may require participants to demonstrate compliance) and individuals owning large acreages may want to consider developing Habitat Conservation Plans. In cases when large forest clearing projects, or projects that cannot take place outside of the bat active season, are unavoidable, the most economically viable management option may be to assume northern long-eared bat presence and take mitigation actions.

Forest managers are a resourceful and resilient group, prepared to meet new challenges in constructive and proactive ways. Harvesting restrictions may be a nuisance, but I am confident that forest managers will be able to continue to manage forests and wildlife in economically and ecologically viable ways.



The impact of forestry operations on bat habitat is not completely understood.





Results obtained by RGS wildlife biologists show reproductive success in 2015 lower than the long-term average for both ruffed grouse and American woodcock.

Annual Hunt Suggests Decline in Woodcock & Grouse Stocking

The Ruffed Grouse Society (RGS) held its 34th annual National Grouse and Woodcock Hunt (NGWH) recently in and around Grand Rapids, Minnesota. Harvest results, obtained by RGS wildlife biologists, showed reproductive success lower than the long-term average for both ruffed grouse and American woodcock.

The NGWH is conducted in the Grand Rapids area during the second week in October each year. This world-class event is sponsored and coordinated by the Grand Rapids Chapter of the Ruffed Grouse Society.

More than 100 participating hunters harvested 149 ruffed grouse during the two-day hunt, with each hunter harvesting an average of 0.73 grouse per day, which is the second lowest total on record. Based upon calculated results, the index to reproductive success was 40 percent below the long-term mean, which means there are few young birds in the current population.

"The low proportion of young-of-the-year grouse is a double whammy for hunters. Not only are there fewer birds to pursue, but many of the birds in the woods are adults who have previously encountered hunters and dogs before and they know how to play the game," said RGS Director of Conservation Policy Dan Dessecker.

Participating hunters harvested 357 American woodcock, with each hunter harvesting an average of 1.7 woodcock per day, which is similar to the long-term average. However, based upon the calculated results, the index to reproductive success was 20 percent below the long-term average.

The leaf cover was heavier than normal this year and that may have affected hunting conditions in the southern hunt areas, however much-needed rain the evening before the first hunt day provided excellent scenting conditions for bird dogs.

The NGWH provides an unparalleled opportunity to study the population ecology of ruffed grouse and woodcock. The manner in which it is structured is what makes it unique in the field of wildlife research and so valuable to wildlife conservation.

The late Gordon W. Gullion, universally acknowledged as the world's expert on ruffed grouse, immediately recognized the scientific potential of the NGWH when the event was first held in 1982. Gullion understood that because it is conducted in the same locale, at the same time each year and using the same methods, it provides an outstanding opportunity to study the annual variation of the local ruffed grouse population and how that variation relates to the ten-year cycle.

Ruffed grouse populations in northern Minnesota, and elsewhere throughout the northern portions of the grouse range, exhibit this cycle of approximately ten years. Cyclic lows typically occur in years ending in "4" or "5". These lows are followed by four to five years of increasing populations toward the cyclic high, which typically occurs in years ending in "9" or "0". Four to five years of subsequent population declines lead to another low, and the cycle again begins.

These population cycles have been documented in Minnesota for more than 60 years. Not surprisingly, the ruffed grouse harvest at the NGWH shows a strong correlation with the ruffed grouse population cycle in northern Minnesota. During cyclic highs, each hunter at the NGWH will harvest 2.0 to 2.5 ruffed grouse each day during the two-day event. Daily harvest-per-hunter during cyclic lows is only 0.6 to 1.0 grouse.

Like ruffed grouse, the harvest of American woodcock at the NGWH is related to trends in Minnesota's woodcock population. Since 1997 when the woodcock daily bag limit was reduced from five birds to three, NGWH participants have harvested on average one to two woodcock per day.

In total, the 50 teams at the NGWH (two hunters per team) will harvest approximately 200 to 400 ruffed grouse and 300 to 400 woodcock. Although these totals may seem quite large, The Ruffed Grouse Society says that this harvest is in reality quite small as it is distributed over almost 8,000 square miles of public and private land.



If you're trying to grow it, white tail deer will do their best to thwart your plans. *Photo by Connie Blair*

Deer Have A Serious Impact On Forest Regeneration

by David Tenenbaum*

A recent study has linked at least 40 percent of species changes in the forests of northern Wisconsin and Michigan over the past 60 years to the eating habits of white-tailed deer.

A research group led by Donald Waller, a professor of botany at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, used a pair

of strategies to look at the ecological impact of deer. First, they resurveyed 62 sites across northern Wisconsin and Michigan in 2000-01 that were first studied by former UW-Madison Professor John Curtis and his students in the 1950s. "This showed us just how the forest has changed during a time when deer were becoming much more common, but it did not pinpoint the deer themselves as the cause of the changes," Waller says.

Waller's group later examined plant communities inside and outside 17 fenced "exclosures" built to keep out deer but not smaller mammals. The study was published in the journal *PLOS ONE*.

Waller—together with Katie Frerker, a former graduate student in his lab who earned her master's degree at UW-Madison and is now working for the U.S. Forest Service in Duluth, Minnesota; and Autumn Sabo, a Ph.D. student in the Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology—discovered that many of the plants commonly seen in the early surveys now mostly occur inside the protective exclosures.



A deer exclosure can make a remarkable difference.

*David Tenenbaum focuses on science, environment and technology for University Communications at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Where deer have been common, ferns and grasses—as well as several nonnative plants—have become more abundant. Deer greatly reduced regeneration of native trees, the growth of shrubs, the height of forest understory plants, and the abundance of flowering plants that are neither woody nor grassy.

The two lines of evidence converge on the same general conclusion, Waller says: Deer account for at least 40 percent of the change seen in the forests over the past half-century or so. “The study links microcosm to macrocosm. We have exclosures in the same region where we have documented long-term changes in the plant community over the past 50 years. These are giving us the same message.”

The study may actually underestimate the impact of deer, Waller suggests, citing their attraction to the Canada yew, a shrubby evergreen that has been eliminated across most of the north woods. Thus, yew is no longer counted as a baseline species, even though its disappearance likely reflects deer browsing.

Maples were unable to regenerate under heavy browsing outside an exclosure built to protect a small patch from deer.

Furthermore, deer were already quite common when the exclosures were installed 15 or 20 years ago. “By that point, deer may have already eliminated some species that

have not recolonized since. So this type of study would miss these losses,” says Waller.

Some plants eliminated by deer need decades to recover, Waller says. “If a species is slow growing, or has seeds that are not dispersed readily by birds or as stick-tight burrs, it needs more time to reappear.”

The exclosures, he says, “serve as controlled experiments once they are run for 15 or 20 years, as these were.”

Waller says attributing at least 40 percent of the change in forest structure to white-tailed deer was surprising even to somebody like him who has studied deer for more than two decades. “It’s rare in ecology to find one factor that accounts for so much change,” he says.

Deer hunting is a political subject in Wisconsin, and while Waller would like to see greater harvests, especially of does, he also favors gaining a better picture of deer’s impact.

“I’d like to see more citizen science, with hunters and high school classes paying more attention to (the effects of) deer,” he says. “These groups could build exclosures or plant seedlings and then track what gets eaten. This would be very straightforward. It would not cost much, and would produce valuable data to inform hunters, professional managers and the public about whether deer density is too high or too low.”



Less Cost but More Work: Individual Tree and Seedling Protectors

Tree shelters, also known as tree protectors or tree tubes, protect young trees from wind, deer, rodents, and direct herbicide spray. They also provide a mini-greenhouse effect that stimulates rapid early tree growth



Black walnut (foreground) and red oak (background) in tubes.

which, after emergence above the shelter, slows to the same growth as trees without shelters.

Most tree shelters are made of polyethylene or polypropylene with varying amounts of ultraviolet light (UV) protection and come in lengths from one to six feet. They are available as preformed cylinders, cylinders that ship flat, flat sheets that are folded into cylinders, or square tubes that ship flat.

Tree shelters should be installed after seeds or seedlings have been planted. They are installed with a support stake and with, or without, protective bird netting. Shelters may be installed with or without tillage, chemical, fabric, or mulch weed control. Regular inspection and maintenance is needed for effective protection.

Materials

Tree shelters should be warranted by the manufacturer for at least five years. Five feet or greater height is needed for deer protection and protection against rabbits on top of deep snow. Lengths four feet and greater should be vented (perforations or holes in the middle $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ of the tube provided by the manufacturer) to reduce the chances of winter dieback. Tie holes, (one to two per tube) are located to provide needed tube support when tied to the support stake. The manufacturer should warrant that the top of the tube, when properly installed, will not abrade the tree once it grows out of the tube.

Ties are usually UV resistant plastic that easily thread through the tube holes and tighten around the stake. Ties shall be warranted to last as long as the tree shelter. Some brands of ties allow loosening for inspection of the tree, lifting the tube, or replacing broken stakes.

Stakes may include: 1"x1" white oak or other rot

resistant wood, one-inch diameter bamboo, #3 or #4 rebar, fence posts, ½" or ¾" schedule 40 electrical PVC. Stakes must be long enough to penetrate the ground one foot and extend three to six inches above the topmost tie position on the tube. Stakes should provide support the entire time shelters are needed.

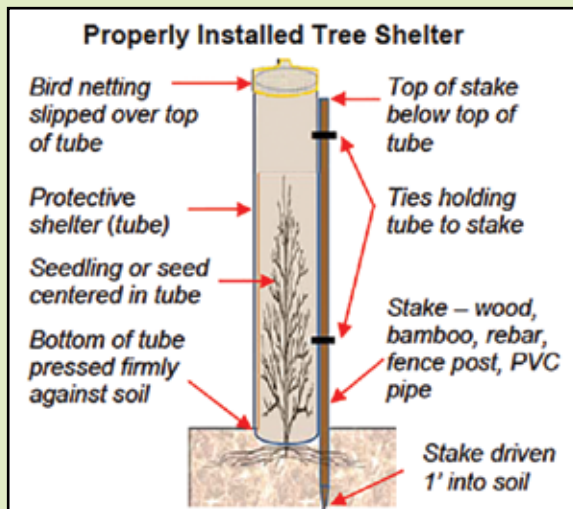
Installation

Drive the stake into the ground two to three inches from seedling or seed, to a depth of 12 inches, ensuring that the top of the stake will be below top of the tube, but three to six inches above the topmost tie position. *Note:* To prevent the PVC from flexing while driving into hard ground, slip a capped sleeve 18 inches shorter than the PVC stake made of steel conduit or pipe, over the PVC and pound on the steel cap.

Insert ties in the appropriate holes on the tube and tie loosely, or leave open, as instructed by the manufacturer. Slip ties over the stake. Center the seed or seedling in the middle of the tube. Press the tube firmly against the soil surface (preferably half to one inch into the soil). Ensure that tree limbs are not caught under the ties. Tighten the ties on the stake. If installing bird netting, follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Maintenance

Inspect at least annually. Straighten tipped shelters. Replace broken stakes. Remove bird netting if trees are at or above the top of the tube. Use fabric, mulches, mowing, or herbicides to control weeds around trees. Remove shelters and stakes when the tube begins restricting tree stem diameter growth. Some types of tree shelters will be destroyed when removed. Removing tubes too early may result in a tree unable to support



itself. Trees need to grow above the shelter for several years to develop wind hardness. Freshly exposed tree bark may take several weeks to "harden" and become resistant to damage.

Tree shelters may encourage weak, V-shaped branch angles within the tube, especially on opposite branching species. Prune off these weak branches when the tubes are removed.

Tree shelters restrict limb formation for the height of the tree shelter. When tall tree shelters are installed on

windbreak trees, additional rows of shrubs or conifers may be needed to provide wind protection close to the ground.

Chemical repellents are also an option for protecting a limited number of trees. One major disadvantage to this approach is that the substance needs to be re-applied periodically, as well as after a heavy rain.

Commercial chemical repellents cover a wide range of natural and synthetic chemicals that deer find unpleasant to smell or taste and are usually sprayed onto the trees in an emulsion of latex or wax that helps it stick to the trees. One common constituent, also popular with gardeners, is derived from eggs.

For those who are leery of chemical treatments, a very effective spray-based repellent is based on cayenne pepper in a wax base. In addition to being an animal repellent it is also sold as an insecticide and is approved for use on fruit and vegetables. Hot Pepper Wax also has the advantage of effectively repelling rabbits, mice and voles.

This article is derived from the Natural Resources Conservation Service's publication, "Tree Shelter and Maintenance Fact Sheet," published by the North Dakota NRCS in 2011.



Tree shelter stakes	Pros	Cons
1"x1" white oak or other rot resistant wood.	Readily available, ready to use. Sturdy. Easy to drive with steel post driver.	Expensive. Some will break at installation. Some break from wind and deer. May rot too soon.
1" diameter bamboo	Cheaper than wood stakes. Easy to drive with steel post driver.	Can shatter when driven in hard or rocky ground. May rot or break too soon.
#3 or #4 rebar	Available locally at a reasonable price. Easy to install by hand, maul or steel post driver. Reusable.	Heavy. Can tip with wind or animal rubbing. If forgotten, tree can grow around the rod.
Steel post	Readily available. Sturdy. Easily installed with steel post driver. Reusable.	Expensive. Heavy. Tree can grow around post. Post flange can damage roots when removed.
½" or ¾" schedule 40 electrical PVC	Readily available. Cheap. Easily processed by common shop tools. Flexes in the wind. Springs back after animal bumping. Uniform strength. Reusable.	May shatter if driven into hard ground. May shatter if bumped in extremely cold weather. May flex too much in high winds. May flex, making installation difficult.



Don't Feed The Deer

by Bill Cook*, photos courtesy of wildernessobsession.com

Feeding deer food they can't digest can have tragic consequences.

Deer feeding is controversial, as is most everything surrounding this wildly popular game species. However, the science is not.

Supplemental winter feeding of white-tailed deer offers no benefit to the size or health of deer herds on the landscape scale. Research has shown this to be true across the northern tier of states from Maine to Montana. Repeatedly. For decades.

It is costly. It is ineffective. There are risks of unintended damage to the herd, non-target species and the habitat. It does not increase quality hunting.

State wildlife management agencies discourage supplemental feeding. Public funds are not typically used because it's been made clear that it's a poor use of money and is counter-productive. The Wildlife Society, the professional group for wildlife biologists, has a position statement that discourages supplemental feeding.

So, why does the cry to feed deer during harsher winters occur as regularly as taxes? That's a good question better put to the social psychologists. Maybe it's as simple as well-intentioned people wanting to "do something." Or, some people just like seeing deer in their backyard. And, on the small local level, a well-designed program might pull a few more deer through the winter.

Severe winters will kill deer and there is nothing that can be done about it. This is true for many species of wildlife.

That is the way of nature and nature is not particularly pretty.

In addition to being ineffective, there are many downsides of supplemental feeding of deer. The wrong choice of feed can kill deer. Deer can starve to death with a full belly. The possibility of disease transmission increases. The most vulnerable are the least likely to benefit. Migration patterns may be disrupted. Social patterns among maternal groups may become dysfunctional. Feeding areas can attract predators and other, less desirable, species. Attempts to push deer populations beyond winter carrying capacity can lead to long-term habitat damage. Car-deer crashes may increase. Deer trail networks can deteriorate if left unused due to attraction to feeding stations.

The list goes on.

Deer herds are spread across the landscape. Access points for feeding are relatively few. Most of the herd will not discover the supplemental feeding areas, especially those deer that live further away from roads.

Deer are not friendly feeders. While many deer may be attracted to feeding sites, the weaker deer will be excluded by the stronger deer, unless there's an unlimited amount of food. And, most of the stronger deer will survive regardless of supplemental feeding. So, feeding may actually result in higher mortality levels than no feeding.

Once a nutritious deer feeding program begins, it needs to be maintained until green-up. If not, deer mortality will be higher than if no feeding occurred in the first place. For a landowner, costs can easily run into the thousands of dollars, with little to show for it.

Deer can starve from eating food that they cannot digest. They'll eat it because it tastes good, but they won't receive any nutritional benefit as it passes through their digestive systems. A diet of about 25 percent corn and 75 percent

*Bill Cook is an Upper Peninsula Extension Forester/Biologist with Michigan State University. His office is at the U.P. Forest Biomass Innovation Center, located near Escanaba. Cook has worked with regional private forest owners and within the natural resource and public education communities since 1997.

second-cut alfalfa has had some success in the Upper Peninsula. Feed pellets are generally recommended for those who insist on feeding deer, as long as the pellets remain in good condition. As for spring fawning, the late summer and early fall nutritional condition is likely more important than winter nutrition.

Better alternatives to deer feeding are habitat improvements and increased hunting pressure. Hunting is a critical tool to help balance deer population size with habitat conditions. Management plans for earlier successional forest types and winter cover will benefit game species. This usually means timber harvesting, including clearcutting in appropriate timber types. Getting the smaller, younger deer into the freezer can save them, and the forest, from considerable hardship.

The key to a healthy deer herd lies in good habitat (forest) management, focused hunting priorities, and accepting



Excessive deer populations often have a negative impact on forest management efforts.

that severe winters will result in the loss of the younger and weaker animals. Winter supplemental feeding is an entirely inadequate substitution.



Deer Herd Management Means Hunting

by Greg Yarrow, Professor of Wildlife Ecology, Clemson Extension Wildlife Specialist

Harvest regulation is an essential part of sound management for white-tailed deer. Regulating the harvest is necessary to keep deer populations in relative balance with their food supply. Where food is abundant and deer are healthy, a sustained but regulated harvest maintains healthy conditions and prevents overpopulation. In areas where deer are approaching overpopulation and food supplies are becoming critical, herd reduction is necessary. Heavy deer harvests become important to prevent further damage to the habitat and a decline in deer quality.

Regulated either-sex harvests are necessary for proper herd management. Hunting bucks alone cannot control a growing population. Hunting deer of both sexes will not exterminate them any more than it will quail, squirrels or other game species, provided the harvest is regulated. When few deer are lost to causes other than legal hunting, a reasonable harvest of both bucks and does assures a healthy population for the future.

Many people believe that deer populations contain a high proportion of old barren does and that this fact can be used as a justification for harvesting antlerless deer. Antlerless deer harvests can be justified for a number of reasons, but this is not one of them. Does that have never produced fawns or have stopped producing entirely are almost nonexistent. Furthermore, when barren does are

found, it is almost always a result of some physiological malfunction rather than age. Obviously, there is a limit to the age at which does remain productive, but very few individuals reach such an advanced age. The effect of these few individuals is essentially insignificant to the productivity of the population.

Inbreeding is another factor which concerns people involved in deer management. Inbreeding does occur in wild deer populations, but is not a problem as it is in domestic livestock. Inbreeding in most wild deer populations is probably of little consequence, since the number of animals in a herd is usually sufficiently large to avoid close inbreeding.

Proper management of deer herds is accomplished by regulating harvests to keep deer populations in balance with their food supplies and manipulating habitats through various land management practices to make an area more favorable to deer. Another factor which must be considered, however, is the compatibility of deer populations with commercial agriculture, forestry and other interests. Problems often arise when adjoining landowners have different interests and objectives. It should be an objective of deer management to annually produce, harvest and utilize an optimum crop of healthy animals consistent with other uses of the land.



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Growing Gray Wolf Populations Unlikely to Affect Deer Stocking

by David Tenenbaum*

Wolves do dine on deer, but research indicates that their impact on the deer herd is minimal.

As another gun deer season starts this fall, some hunters in the northern states will be wondering about the impacts of the growing wolf population.

In Wisconsin, a primary justification for reinstating a wolf hunting season in 2012—the first in 60 years—was to reduce wolf depredation on state’s herd of white-tail deer.

Although wolves certainly prey on deer, Timothy Van Deelen, an associate professor of wildlife management at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, says that does not automatically mean that hunting more wolves will bring more deer.

The situation is just too complicated for that. Numbers are hard—and expensive—to come by, and raising the already high deer population may not be a good thing.

Looking at the available data, Van Deelen says the Wisconsin deer population is doing quite nicely, even as wolf numbers have grown. The impact of 900 wolves in a state with 30,000 square miles of wolf range and several hundred thousand deer is likely to be minimal.

“I’m a population ecologist, and it’s a difficult question whether wolves are real competition for hunters,” says Van Deelen. “There is the potential for competition, but everything about the evolution and life history of the white tail deer is designed to offset losses to predation.”

Wolves hunt by chasing instead of ambush and may train deer to become much more wary, Van Deelen says, “so they may be much less visible to a hunter who is out for a week or so.”

Van Deelen, who grew up hunting in the Lower Peninsula of Michigan, and continues to hunt deer, notes that wolves also kill coyotes, another deer predator, thereby reducing coyote impacts on deer.

In general, he says, scientists estimate that the average wolf kills 17 to 20 deer per year, which comes to about 20,000 kills in the northern two-thirds of Wisconsin.

“We don’t know how many of them would have died from something else,” he says. “Wolf predation on coyote is part of a compensatory mechanism that we don’t fully understand.”

To get reliable numbers on changes in the deer population and predation by wolves and others, Van Deelen has supervised radio-collaring projects in collaboration with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in recent years.

“As near as I can tell from DNR harvest and monitoring data, wolves are not causing a dramatic decrease in the growth rate of the deer population, and whatever level of competition is occurring must be trivial,” says Van Deelen. “There are hunters who are unlucky to have a bad experience at the local level, but at the statewide level, I am not seeing significant wolf impacts.”

Dense deer populations cause thousands of auto collisions, and damage tree plantings and native vegetation.

“Ecologically, the impact is across the board,” Van Deelen says. “If you are a commercial forester, you worry about regeneration of trees with commercial value. If you are concerned about the biodiversity of forest floor plants, deer impact that. [UW-Madison botany professor] Don Waller has done lots of really rigorous research demonstrating that we are losing plant diversity at the same time that the deer population is increasing.”

The problem, Van Deelen says, likely lies in expectations.

“In Wisconsin, we have a generation of hunters who grew up in 1980s, when the deer population was at a historic high level. Even though the deer population is only down a bit, they begin complaining that it’s not as high as they think it should be, but their frame of reference may be unrealistic or incompatible with the conservation of other resources,” he says.

“Numbers from outside sources are clear,” Van Deelen

*David Tenenbaum focuses on science, environment and technology for University Communications at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Gray Wolf Range at Time of Listing Under the Endangered Species Act of 1974



Range at time of listing

Current Gray Wolf Range And Southwest Recovery Area



Currently Occupied Range
Southwest Recovery Area

adds. “Per square mile, in antlered deer, antlerless deer and trophy bucks, Wisconsin is at the top, compared to Michigan, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Illinois and Iowa.

The Quality Deer Management Association, which is independent of the state Department of Natural Resources, puts Wisconsin third in the nation in terms of harvested bucks per square mile, and fourth in the nation in terms of antlered bucks in 2010. The Boone and Crockett club suggests that Wisconsin hunters have reported three times as many trophy class bucks per 1,000 square miles as hunters in Michigan and Minnesota.”

“Taken together these statistics suggest that Wisconsin

is a good place to be a deer hunter, whether your interest is in the opportunity to harvest any deer or the opportunity to harvest a trophy buck,” says Van Deelen.

Controversy is stock-in-trade for wildlife managers, adds Van Deelen, who was critical of the preliminary report on deer management ordered by Gov. Scott Walker, but gave better grades to the final report, issued in June.

“It’s always the same arguments,” Van Deelen says. “People argue that there are not as many deer as there should be, or as many as the DNR says, yet since Aldo Leopold’s time, the deer population has increased.”



Some Facts About Wolves

Gray wolves are listed as endangered in the Southwest under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and threatened throughout the lower 48 states. Wolves in Alaska are not listed under the ESA. Endangered means a species is considered in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range, and threatened means a species may become endangered in the foreseeable future. Regions of Yellowstone, central Idaho and the Southwest are designated as non-essential experimental populations, which isolate geographically-described groups from other existing populations and offer special regulations.

They are capable of covering several miles trotting at about a 10 km/h (6 mph) pace, though they have been known to reach speeds approaching 65 km/h (40 mph) during a chase.

There are an estimated 7,000 to 9,000 wolves in Alaska and more than 3,500 in the lower 48 states. Wolves live eight to 12 years.

Wolves can be found in forests, and on tundra, deserts, plains and mountains.

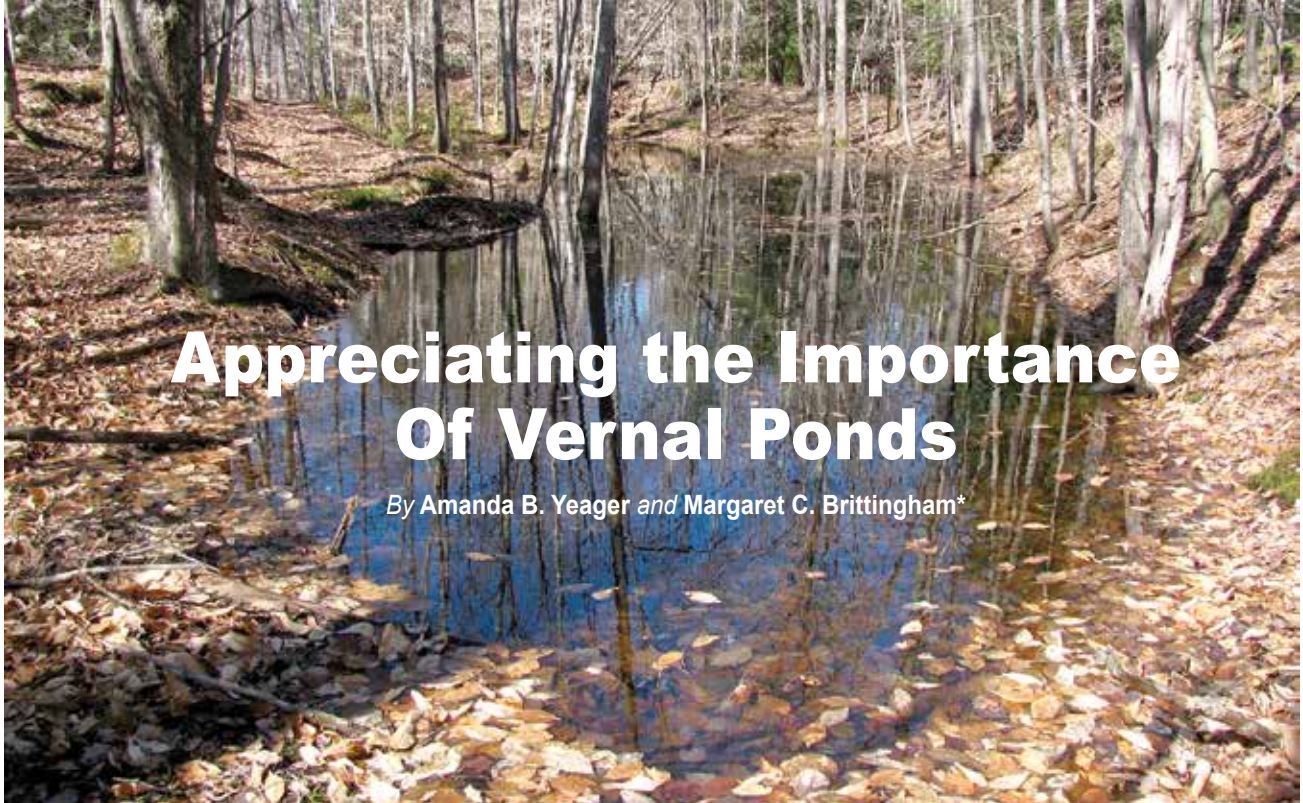
Wolves normally prey on large

hoofed mammals such as deer and elk but occasionally prey on smaller animals such as beavers or rabbits.

Wolves live in packs, which are complex social structures that include the breeding adult pair (the alpha male and female) and their offspring. A hierarchy of dominant and subordinate animals within the pack help it to function as a unit.



Gray wolves live eight to 12 years.



Appreciating the Importance Of Vernal Ponds

By Amanda B. Yeager and Margaret C. Brittingham*

Steve Faccio Photograph

Have you ever walked through the woods in spring and found an immense puddle that wasn't there over the winter? You may have discovered one of the most ecologically important habitats to be found on your woodland.

Vernal ponds are temporary wetlands that fill after the snowfall each spring. They become the seasonal breeding and feeding grounds for many intriguing amphibians and insects, as well as the reptiles, birds, and mammals that depend on them for food. You may have been led to this pond by the unmistakable sounds of spring peepers and wood frogs calling for a mate.

If you crouch by the water's edge, you'll find an entire community of creatures. You might witness the bustling activity of salamanders, frogs, toads, and newts that have come to breed, as well as all kinds of aquatic insects and their eggs that will develop over the spring months. Jellylike masses and strings of eggs will be visible in the water and on the pond vegetation, where salamanders and frogs have left them behind.

Vernal ponds are extraordinary wetlands fascinating to observe and essential to the lives of many woodland species. With the rapid population declines of so many amphibian species, it's crucial that these often unnoticed habitats be recognized and protected.

What To Look For

It's easy to recognize vernal ponds in the late winter and early spring. Named from *vernal*, the Latin word for spring, vernal ponds are formed seasonally in shallow ground depressions from spring snowmelt, precipitation, and rising water tables. Generally drying up in late summer, these ponds are only temporary woodland reservoirs. They are slightly harder to identify during the summer and fall months; however, there are several clues to look for.

Blackened, compressed leaf litter; gray soil; watermarks on surrounding tree trunks; and the presence of moisture-tolerant vegetation all suggest an area that collects water part of the year. Red maple, highbush blueberry, and buttonbush

are all common at these locations.

Vernal ponds themselves are generally less than 40 yards in diameter and no more than four feet deep, although they receive water from a larger surrounding landscape. Much of the topography that makes vernal ponds possible was first formed during the last glacial period and is the result of 10,000 years of irreplaceable geologic history.

Ecological Importance

If a vernal pond's physical features don't tip you off, the wildlife living there will certainly give away its location. Vernal ponds are home for a diversity of animals that count on them for the spring breeding season.

The seasonal nature of vernal ponds means that they are uninhabited by fish. This makes them the perfect habitat for a variety of amphibians and invertebrates to breed and develop with less chance of predation. Species like mole salamanders, wood frogs, and fairy shrimp depend exclusively on vernal ponds for this part of their life cycles. Often a pond is the ancestral home of an amphibian community that resides nearby in the forest each winter, then migrates to the same pond each spring to lay its eggs.

The first creatures to arrive each season are Jefferson salamanders, members of the mole salamander group, which spend most of their lives in underground burrows. On rainy nights from mid-January to early March, Jefferson salamanders travel an often snowy forest floor to reach their chosen vernal pond. Here, they mate and lay a long string of beadlike eggs on branches and other vegetation submerged in the pond. The next mole salamanders to arrive are spotted salamanders, which migrate in late February to early April to lay their eggs on pond vegetation.

During the same period, wood frogs make their trek to the ponds. Finding this species in its breeding season is a guarantee that you have found a vernal pond—and wood frogs noisily make their presence known. Male wood frogs attract females with a loud, distinctive call that sounds like the quacking of ducks. Often an entire chorus of this species



can be heard from afar, and you can easily follow the sound until you find the pond.

Many other species use vernal ponds in spring. The spring peeper has one of the animal kingdom's loudest voices for its size. Choruses of its high-pitched, birdlike peeps can sound like sleighbells from a distance. American toads, spadefoot toads, gray tree frogs, green frogs, and red-spotted newts are among the many other creatures that may come to breed. By the end of the breeding season, ponds are filled with egg clusters that appear as jellylike masses containing small, round eggs.

As young amphibian larvae hatch and develop, they feed on invertebrate species that have emerged from their eggs at the same time. Fairy shrimp, dragonflies, damselflies, caddisflies, mosquitoes, daphnia, and other invertebrates drop egg cases in vernal ponds each year. The egg cases lie dormant over winter and hatch the following spring. While amphibian larvae feast on these delights, insect predators like fishflies, diving beetles, and backswimmers also look for amphibian larvae to feed upon.

As activity inside the pond increases each spring, it attracts other animals to the vernal community. Some turtle species visit the ponds to feed on egg masses, while snakes and raccoons may feed on tadpoles and frogs. Birds like the green heron and red-shouldered hawk also visit ponds to feed.

By late spring or early summer, tens of thousands of young salamanders and frogs that have undergone metamorphosis leave the pond for the forest, to continue their life cycles. The huge number of organisms using vernal ponds each year shows how essential they are to the life cycles of forest species both in and out of the ponds. In fact, the amphibian species developing in ponds alone generally amount to more vertebrate biomass than the mass of all the birds and mammals in a forest. The ability of vernal ponds to continue supporting this biodiversity remains dependent on the activities occurring around them.

Protecting Your Vernal Pond

If you think your property contains a vernal pond, you can do a lot to protect it from potentially harmful effects of land use. The key is to protect both the stability of the forest and the hydrology of the pond. For instance, amphibian species depend on forests for their adult lives and on ponds for

breeding and the development of young. This is especially important because this kind of unique wetland has failed to be successfully replicated through artificial means. Surrounding land that may be used for recreation, timber harvesting, or residential structures can be managed in ways that keep the impact on vernal ponds to a minimum.

Avoid Using Chemicals and Fertilizers

Vernal ponds accumulate runoff water from surrounding upland areas. Even a minimal amount of pesticide, herbicide, or fertilizer can upset the food chain and cause deadly results in a water body as small as a vernal pond.

Maintain Forest Canopy

The forest canopy provides essential shade for regulating pond temperatures, and slows the loss of water from the pond by evapotranspiration. In addition, the forest canopy helps to maintain a cool, moist environment in the surrounding forest, a necessity for many amphibians.

Do Not Add Or Remove Plant Debris

Amphibians use small to medium-sized twigs on which to attach their eggs, so no woody material needs to be added to the pond. Although tree tops and debris should be kept out of the pond depression during forest maintenance, if some material does fall in, it should be left there. Removal could disturb amphibian eggs or young.

Do Not Drain Ponds Or Alter the Surrounding Watershed

A vernal pond's location, dimensions, and surrounding topography are the product of thousands of years of geologic evolution. Diverting or draining the area's water or depleting the underground water table would cause irreversible changes to the ecosystem.

Protect Water Quality

Be aware of water flow patterns and the amount of area that drains into your property's vernal pond. This way, it is possible to prevent the flow of materials like chemicals, fertilizers, and silt from reaching ponds. All earth-moving activities must be carefully managed to prevent silt from flowing into the pond. A minimum 100-foot buffer is recommended between ponds and any activities that can alter water quality or produce

sediment. This material is hazardous because it fills in pond floors, suffocates egg masses, and can harm developing larvae. Nearby roads with water diversion structures should be positioned in a way that keeps sediment from entering the buffer area and pond.

Protect from Off-Road Vehicles and Machinery

Consider fencing off vernal ponds; also be sure to prevent disturbance from recreational and industrial off-road vehicles in the surrounding area, year-round. It is essential that pond beds and walls remain undisturbed even during the dry season. Compaction of the soil can change water flow and damage dormant eggs and larvae buried in the pond leaf litter. Tire ruts in the pond also can promote early drainage at a time when amphibian eggs have not yet hatched. Ruts in the surrounding forested area can cause amphibians to lay eggs in locations too shallow to sustain their young. Ruts also can trap young salamanders and turtles on their way into the forest, leaving them to be eaten by predators or die of dehydration. Existing ruts can be filled in with soil.

Do Not Add Fish or Other Animals

Making a fish pond out of a vernal wetland quickly defeats its ecological purpose. The animals in a vernal pond's food chain rely on the absence of fish or other animals that would feed on amphibian young or compete with them for insects.

Do Not Allow Collection Of Plants Or Animals

Be sure that plants and animals are not removed from the pond. Even small changes in a vernal pond's ecosystem can

upset the balance of predator-prey relationships and could include the removal of endangered plants and animals.

Keep the Effects Of Timber Operations to a Minimum

Timber harvesting in a forest with vernal ponds can be done in a way that minimizes sedimentation threats to the ponds. The most important consideration is to keep a buffer zone around the pond. A buffer of 100 feet or wider is recommended where trees and shrubs are retained and there is minimal disturbance to the leaf litter or soil. Following these guidelines will ensure that the temperature and moisture is adequate for the travel habits of amphibians. To minimize disturbance, forest operations in the buffer area should occur when the ground is frozen and covered with snow; operations should always be avoided in muddy conditions that would cause ruts deeper than six inches.

Silt fences seriously inhibit amphibian migration and should be removed from the buffer and nearby areas as soon as possible.

Regularly used skid trails and landings should be situated outside the buffer. Close existing roads in the buffer area to prevent off-road vehicles from disturbing the buffer and pond areas. At the pond itself, keep tree tops and slash out of the depression. However, to keep from disturbing amphibians, if a tree top falls in, it should not be removed from the pond.

**Amanda B. Yeager is wildlife extension assistant, and Margaret C. Brittingham is professor of wildlife resources, Penn State Extension.*



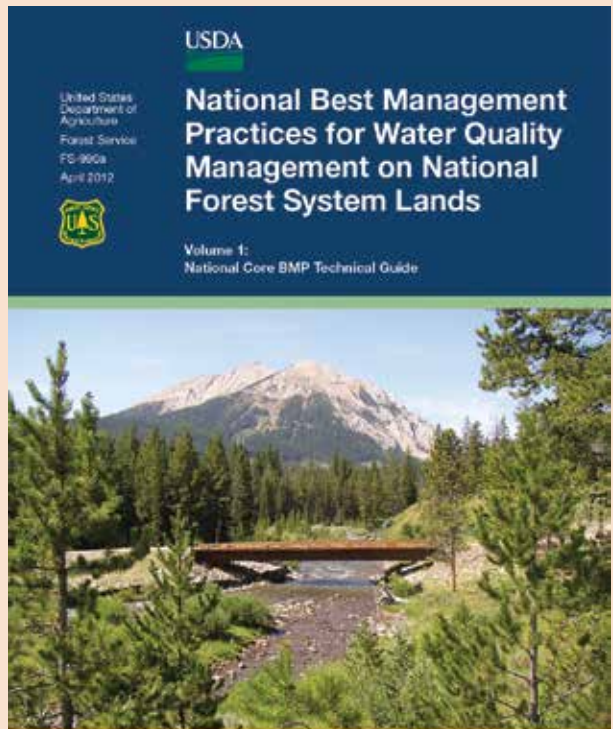
Appreciating the Importance Of Best Management Practices

Forestry Best Management Practices (BMP) are a set of preventive measures that help control soil erosion resulting from human disturbance. The federal government follows its own guidelines, as outlined in the free (downloadable) manual shown to the right. States have their own unique sets of guidelines, but they closely adhere to the federal standards. State manuals can be downloaded from state forestry agencies.

These simple and inexpensive practices have become widely used as a means to divert surface water into undisturbed areas before it gains sufficient speed for large soil removal. Once diverted, the natural control mechanisms of an undisturbed forest floor work to stop rapid surface water flow, absorb it, and recapture any removed soil.

Techniques such as water bars and diversion ditches are BMPs that control surface water flow and help stabilize disturbed forest floors quickly by conserving exposed soil for future vegetative growth. BMPs also provide guidelines for planning and conducting forest activities in a manner such that soil erosion is minimized and vegetative growth is maximized. Steep and unstable slopes are avoided to reduce instability and the potential for increased erosion.

Most states' BMP manuals contain specific sections addressing these planning considerations. Forest landowners are encouraged to get a copy of their state's BMP manual in order to become familiar with what the standards are, and how well they're being observed on their property.



States have their own BMP manuals, but they closely adhere to the federal version, available from the USDA.

Modern Hunting Laws Rooted in Medieval England

by Lloyd Irland*

Medieval kings and feudal landholders tightly controlled rights to hunt on their land. Rules were detailed, making Maine's book of hunting and fishing regulations look pretty skimpy by comparison. King John was not one to allow business to interfere with hunting. On his unsuccessful 1203 military expedition to Normandy, he brought along 60 hunting dogs and their keepers. German Emperor Frederick II, a very busy man, found time to write a treatise on falconry. We may think the control of weapons by the nobility was to protect against rebellions; it may have had a much more prosaic origin—to protect their monopoly of the hunt.

In England, Forest Law, applicable in the Royal forests, defined three categories of game: beasts of the forest or venery, beasts of the chase, and beasts of warren. In addition, unwanted predators were counted as “vermin of the warren.” The “beasts of the forest” were the hart (a red deer stag), hind, hare, boar, and wolf. These were collectively termed “venison.”

In the royal forests, the nobles could hunt, but only “in view” of a forest officer and only when traveling through the forest on royal business. Grazing pigs or cattle during the rutting or calving seasons was forbidden. Protecting livestock against wolves was often an obligation of feudal lords. By the late 17th century, it was moot: Wolves had been extirpated in England. Hunting the boar was dangerous—the hunter was expected, once it was cornered by the dogs, to dismount and dispatch the boar with a knife.

The “chase” was a designated area with specific hunting rights. Various lords had them; the hunting rights were transferable. The chase had no special laws, only the common law. Abbots and bishops prized their hunting rights as much as did the secular lords. “Beasts of the chase” were red deer and roe deer, fox, and marten. A “warren” was an area designated for small game, usually provided with a barrier—often a dense coppice—and actively managed. “Beasts of warren” included the roe deer, hare, coney (rabbit), pheasant, and partridge. Warrens might be developed, with permission, in the King's forests, or on the lands of the nobles, or of free villages or communes. The king's officers rigorously policed development of anything like a warren that would impede the movement of game or the huntsmen.

At the triennial Forest Eyres, the courts enforcing the Forest Laws, Sir John Manwood's treatise identifies some 80 separate offenses that might be tried there. Many dealt with hunting, protecting habitats, or hindering movement of game. The ac-



cused were judged by juries of 12 sworn knights. The knights also served as “regarders” making detailed periodic audits of all activity and revenue on the Royal forests (the original FSC certifiers?) The heavy burden of these duties must have cut into their time for hunting, feasting, and jousting. Magna Carta and later charters promised to lighten these burdens.

If a deer were found wounded or recently dead, it was to be brought to the nearest hospital provided to the poor, the head and skin delivered to the nearest village, and an investigation was conducted. Being caught

in the woods as if equipped for the hunt, or with dogs, was an offense unless cleared with a forest officer first.

Hunting seasons were tied to the church calendar, and included, for hart and buck, the Feast of John the Baptist, June 24, or Midsummer; for fox, Holy Rood Day, Sept. 14; and for boar, Christmas to Candlemas. Some nobles were obsessive trophy collectors. Castles and manor houses still have walls covered with boars' heads and antlers, often labeled with the prominent person who killed it and the date.

Some hunting customs and usages persist. In Germany, ownership of firearms and the right to a hunting license are rigorously controlled. A forester with a master's degree told me that he would have to do a good deal of studying to pass the exam for a license. Bavarian state foresters are trained as hunters. They often hunt as part of their duties to manage overpopulations of deer. Hunting while on duty—how cool is that? They clean and butcher their own kills; next to the local forest office stands a small building where the carcasses hang to cool. In some areas, the hunter keeps the head or the antlers, and the landowner sells the carcass. In Regensburg, you can dine on wild boar from the Prince's nearby forest—where the silviculture revolves around maintaining a large boar population.

Some customs have changed. Today, the prince's buddies shoot as the boar are driven past a stand. No more knife fights. Americans of European stock haven't brought with them the custom of wild game as a commercial product. Vast areas are overrun with deer, which are damaging the forest, but you can't get a venison burger at the local diner. A medieval knight on a time travel visit would have a hard time understanding this.



*Lloyd C. Irland is a consultant in Wayne, Maine. This article originally appeared in the October issue of SWOAM News.

Broadening Restoration to Landscape-Scales and Working Across Land Ownerships

The Forest Service continues to build collaborative partnerships and increase capacity for on-the-ground project implementation and monitoring in support of local communities and their economies. Many Forest Service initiatives, with NWOA support, have become a catalyst for turning local discussions about restoration among diverse interests into fire-resistant woodlands. Dozens of collaborative planning and implementation efforts across the country are enabling the Forest Service and its partners to get more work done.



This is what forest restoration looks like.

USFS photos

Wildfire Damages Western Water Resources

And Everyone Is Affected

A study released by the American Forest Foundation in late October confirms what many family woodland owners already knew: Wildfire is not just a public lands issue at all. Within the West there is a high fire threat on 93 million acres of public lands. And...there are more than 52 million acres of private lands with a similar high fire threat.

Healthy forests are key to clean water. They are a natural filter and water storage system that regulates stream flow and reduces flooding. While only 31 percent of the West is forested, 65 percent of the region's water supply comes from these forested lands. With fuel loads at an all-time high, catastrophic wildfires are a significant threat to clean water. Add to that the persistent drought with record low snowpacks and some of the lowest reservoir levels recorded, with the record 9.1 million acres of burn to date in 2015, and water planners are expressing alarm.

How much is water worth? Whatever you have to pay to get it to your tap!

Researchers from the American Forest Foundation, aided by state forestry agencies and the U.S. Forest Service, paid particular attention to forested land in important watersheds for public water supplies. They found 21 million acres of public lands in these watersheds and 13.5 million acres of private lands. In some states, there was more risk to water on private land than public.

In surveying the landowners involved, 62 percent said fire is a top concern, but only 25 percent said they will "definitely" take action in the coming year. Why so few? 77 percent cited

high costs as a barrier, and 64 percent worry about the lack of action on neighboring land. Family forest landowners are aware and motivated, but they need help.

Local units of NWOA's affiliated state landowner associations are a logical place to initiate the needed programs. There is no better way to focus on the large number of "unengaged" landowners than the proven "neighbor to neighbor" outreach.

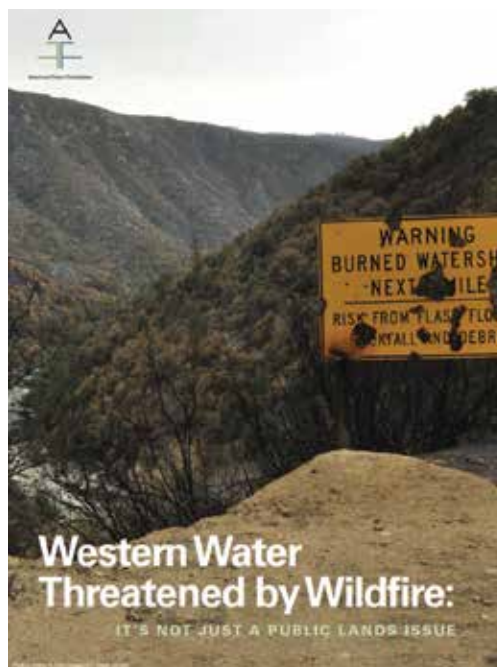
We need Congress to enact overdue provisions within the Wildfire Funding Reform Act (which NWOA and 133 other associations support) this year! The federally-mandated State Forestry Action Plans provide the tools to implement action within multiple ownerships on a landscape level.

And, perhaps the greatest need—tax reforms and other incentives—must be available to stimulate financial investment in the forest products sector. If woodland owners have no place to sell their thinnings, they cannot afford to accomplish the kind of forestry needed for healthy watersheds. Sure, that could also be done with public cost-sharing programs, but

experience shows public funding is realistically available for only a small part of the need.

As this important and timely report confirms, we need new solutions, new ideas, and alternative sources of funding. As water wells and municipal water authorities run dry, as some did this summer, the time to act is now. It only gets worse, with exception of an occasional wet year.

Keith A. Argow
President NWOA





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Forest Research—State & Private Forestry—National Forests

Bats: Masters of the Night Sky

The Battle For Bats

Bats are in serious decline nearly everywhere. Worldwide, there are almost a thousand different kinds of bats which comprise nearly one quarter of all mammal species. Of the 43 species living in the U.S. and Canada, nearly 40 percent are endangered or are candidates for such status.

The biology and ecology of bats is not well understood. Their nocturnal behavior, inaccessible breeding and roosting sites, and migratory behavior have made them difficult to study. As a result, we know little of bat ecology or management needs on public lands. Despite a lack of knowledge, we do know that bats often use trees, cliffs, caves, human dwellings, natural waters and water developments, bridges and mine shafts in a variety of habitats. There are clearly opportunities to begin specific management actions to protect or enhance this diverse and threatened group of mammals.

One method that the Forest Service is using to protect critical bat habitats is the installation of iron grates over abandoned mine entrances. These “bat-gates” serve two primary purposes: They protect the public from stumbling into a mine that might be dangerous, as well as protecting habitat allowing passage for bats. In the past, many abandoned mines have been filled in with earth, often a costly proposition that is deadly for bats. Maintaining the mine for bats provides a win-win situation that is both simple and cost-effective. With approximately 25,000 abandoned mines on Forest Service lands and an estimated 200,000 across the U.S., there is great potential to make a significant positive impact on bat populations through this method of protection.

Abandoned Mines: Bat Barracks

Abandoned mines have become key year-round resources for bats. Mines seem to be most important for rearing young in summer, for hibernating in winter, and for use as temporary rest stops during migration. Throughout the United States, human disturbance of caves, cave com-

mercialization, deforestation, and urban and agricultural development have forced many bats from their traditional roosts in search of new homes. Old mines are often the only suitable temperature-controlled shelters left midway between a bat’s summer and winter roosts; without these protected resting places, many species’ migratory mortality could greatly increase.

Over the past 100 years or more, displaced bats have gradually moved into many mines. In more than 6,000 mines surveyed by researchers in Arizona, California, Colorado, and New Mexico, 30 percent to 70 percent in each state showed signs of use by bats. An average of ten percent contained important colonies. From the Great Lakes Region

eastward in the U.S., up to 70 percent of subsurface mines may be used by large bat populations. Bats, due to their colonial nature, are especially vulnerable during hibernation both to vandals, and to rapid mine closures. The largest recorded hibernating population of western big-eared bats was recently destroyed in a New Mexico mine shaft where vandals had set old timber on fire. In New Jersey, the state’s largest population of hibernating bats was inadvertently trapped in the Hibernia Mine when it was capped. Had state biologists not convinced state authorities to reopen the entrance immediately, these bats would have perished. Likewise, the Canoe Creek State Park limestone mine in Pennsylvania was reopened in the nick of time to save its bats and now shelters the largest bat hibernating population in the state. Clearly, the difference that protecting and stabilizing just one mine shaft can make is tremendous.

Bats are a primary predator of vast numbers of insect pests that cost farmers and foresters billions of dollars annually. Bats also pollinate flowers and disperse the seeds that make the rain forests grow and the deserts bloom. Wherever bats are found, they are critical elements in nature’s delicate web of life.

Bats Are A Big Deal

Bats are a primary predator of vast numbers of insect pests that cost farmers and foresters billions of dollars annually. Bats also pollinate flowers and disperse the seeds that make the rain forests grow and the deserts bloom. Wherever bats are found, they are critical elements in nature’s delicate web of life.



Protecting caves is essential to protecting bats.

Kirtland's Warbler Recovery: Successes and Challenges

The Kirtland's warbler was one of the first species to be listed as endangered after the Endangered Species Act of 1973 was passed by Congress.

The bird, a ground nesting, persistent singer was first discovered in 1851 on the farm of Dr. Jared Kirtland near Cleveland, Ohio. The Kirtland's warbler is a small, blue-gray bird with a lemon-yellow breast, which constantly twitches its tail feathers while perching. The Kirtland's warblers' rareness kept its nesting habitat from being discovered until 1903 when two men fishing on the Au Sable River found one of the birds. The discovery of the bird prompted a search of the area to find more of the species. After months of searching, an avid ornithologist found a pair of the birds nesting on the ground in a large tract of young jack pine.

Today, the Kirtland's warbler faces two significant threats: lack of crucial young jack pine forest habitat and the parasitic cowbird. Each Kirtland warbler weighs less than an ounce, no more than the weight of six Hershey kisses. However, a pair of Kirtland's warblers requires at least eight acres of young jack pine forest to nest, but usually needs 30 to 40 acres to raise a nest of young.

In the 1950s, "Project Pop-Cone" began, which was a series of prescribed burns that mimic natural fire conditions used to create new nesting habitat for the Kirtland's warbler. Intense heat is needed for the cone on the jack pine to pop and scatter the seeds needed for natural regeneration. Wildfires are the natural method of releasing the seeds, or were before fire suppression practices began. Human efficiency at suppressing wildfires, while good for homes and towns, threaten the birds' ability to produce young.

Its exacting nesting habitat requirements and a second problem, the cowbird, caused a drastic decline in the Kirtland's warbler's numbers. The cowbird is a parasitic bird that lays its eggs in warbler nests. Their larger, more aggressive offspring takes most of the food provided by adult warblers, leaving the warbler hatchlings to starve.

The combination of these two problems led the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to list the Kirtland's warbler as an endangered species in 1973.

Today, Kirtland's warblers are found in only ten counties on Michigan's northern Lower Peninsula and four counties in the Upper Peninsula. Until 1995 they had

never been known to nest on the Upper Peninsula. They have also established a population in central Wisconsin. Kirtland's warblers migrate from the Lake States to the southeastern coast of the United States on their way to wintering grounds in the Bahamas.

Efforts in Michigan have caused a rise in Kirtland's warbler populations. In 1958, three separate tracts on

state forest land in three counties that totaled 11 square miles were reserved as management areas for the warbler. A few years later, 4,010 acres of the Huron National Forest were also dedicated to the warbler. Today, more than 190,00 acres of public land are managed to meet the needs of the Kirtland's warbler and the wide variety of species associated with the jack pine ecosystem. Public entry into occupied areas from May 1 through August 15



Kirtland's warbler

is by permit only, to minimize disturbance and provide protection to the bird during the nesting season.

The Huron-Manistee National Forest, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Michigan Department of Resources monitor the population by conducting an annual census of Kirtland's warblers. In 2008 a record 1,792 singing males were counted. The population has been increasing since the 1990s, after reach an all-time low of 167 singing males during the 1987 census.

Most habitat conservation efforts focus on habitat in the boundaries of the United States. Each year millions of dollars are spent on maintaining old and creating new habitat for threatened and endangered bird species. This work has been successful for many species and prompted recoveries of species populations. But there are birds that don't live in just the United States. Some choose to winter where the weather is warm and sunny. The endangered Kirtland's warbler is such a bird. As a result of the Kirtland's warbler spending winters in the Bahama's, a partnership between the Bahamas National Trust and U.S. Forest Service has developed.

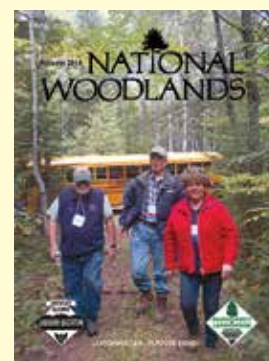
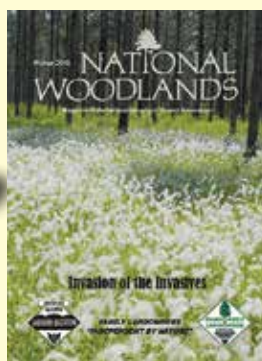
In 1997 and 1998 Phil Huber from the Huron Manistee National Forests' Mio Ranger District went to the Bahamas to search for the Kirtland's warbler and begin establishing contacts to study the Kirtland's warbler's winter habitat. Since that time, members of the research team have worked on project research, fieldwork, and training interns to find and observe the warbler.



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Members of the Walnut Council at a field day event.

NWOA Welcomes the Walnut Council As Our Newest Partner Association

Founded in 1970 to promote hardwood tree management, the Walnut Council is made up of members who have an expressed love for growing trees, especially black walnut, although owning walnut is not a requirement for membership.

Some members have natural hardwood stands with a few walnut spread in the creek bottoms. Others consider walnut a passion and have planted dozens to hundreds of acres of pure black walnut plantations.

The Walnut Council promotes sustainable forest management, conservation, reforestation, and utilization of American black walnut (*Juglans nigra*) and other fine hardwoods. It is a science-based organization that encourages research, discussion, and application of knowledge about growing hardwood trees.

This association represents nearly 900 woodland owners, foresters, forest scientists and wood industry representatives from around the world.

There are 12 state chapters, mainly in the Midwest in the native range of black walnut. Most chapters have spring and fall field days, touring member's woods and discussing best practices for growing quality hardwoods. Local foresters and forest scientists share their experiences and members learn from each other. The Walnut Council's annual national meeting is an intensive three-day program with numerous field tours and indoor presentations, sharing woodland practices and research. A favorite session is "Landowner Show and Tell" where members share their successes and failures. The next annual meeting is July 31-August 3, 2016 in Lawrenceburg, Indiana.

Thousand Cankers Disease a New Threat to Walnut

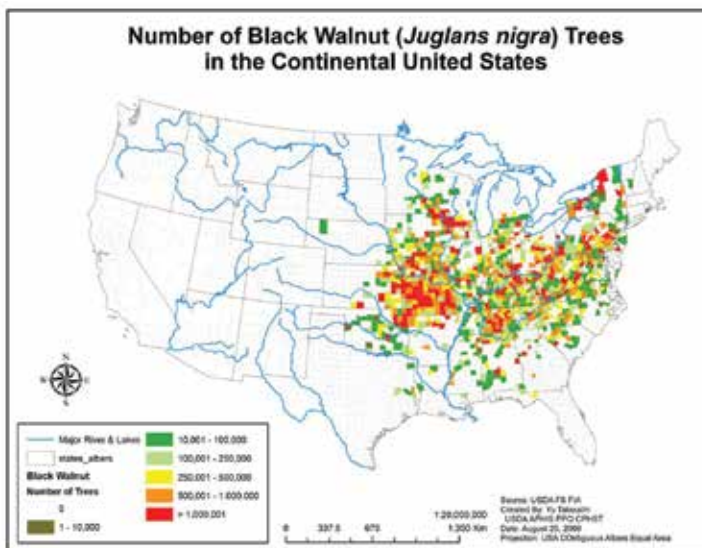
Unfortunately we are now faced with the threat of Thousand Cankers Disease (TCD) to walnut trees. This recently discovered disease has the potential to affect over half a trillion

dollars of black walnut growing stock in the U.S. alone. Scientists are working to understand more about the walnut twig beetle and the fungus it vectors, *Geosmithia morbida*, which work together to girdle walnut trees by creating thousands of small cankers. Little is known about disease spread and there are currently no treatments.

To date no new reports of TCD or the walnut twig beetle have been reported for 2015 east of the Rocky Mountains. Trapping and visual survey efforts are underway in states with

eastern black walnut. Traps are being deployed at wood products facilities, interstate rest stops, state parks, forest, natural areas, and ports of entry.

Like most tree pathogens, TCD is spreading mostly by human movement of infested material. Do your part to reduce the risk by minimizing the movement of firewood and walnut logs. For more information about thousand cankers disease in your state and quarantines, go to www.thousandcankers.com. To learn more about the Walnut Council, visit www.walnutcouncil.org.



Liz Jackson
 Executive Director
 Walnut Council





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WOODLAND OPINIONS & IDEAS

No One Else to Blame

by *Eric A. Johnson*

I suppose I was as surprised as anyone upon learning that my Volkswagen TDI diesel sedan is a fraud on four wheels. It's hard to believe that a company as big and powerful as VW would lie to its customers and environmental regulators about the amount of pollution its diesel cars actually produce. They promoted the technology as "Clean Diesel," which seemed too good to be true, considering that the cars get somewhere in the neighborhood of 50 miles per gallon and have an incredible amount of torque across the RPM spectrum. Plus, so much fun to drive!

It was, in fact, too good to be true, and Volkswagen is facing tens of billions of dollars in fines, recall and repair expenses, not to mention settling class-action lawsuits—all around the world. All this for installing software in 11 million cars that senses when an emissions test is being conducted, and then turns on the pollution control system to pass the test. When not being analyzed, the engine reverts to "dirty" mode, sending as much as 40 times the allowable amount of nitrogen oxide into the atmosphere.

Any way you slice it, I'm a victim of fraud, along with 11 million other TDI customers worldwide. We were promised that an energy-efficient, clean-burning, powerful and long-lasting diesel engine would power our new VWs, and that turned out to be a lie. If the company recalls my car and performs a "fix" that makes the engine burn cleaner but at the expense of power and energy efficiency, I've still been defrauded. I don't know how the company will attempt to remedy this colossal wrongdoing to its customers, but I doubt it will satisfy everyone. Time will tell.

One thing the head of Volkswagen noted, when making his resignation statement a few days after the scandal broke, was that VW has violated the trust not only of government regulators, but its customers. He said it will take a long time to regain that trust, but the company stands determined to do so.

Well, good luck with that, fellas.

Interestingly enough, the issue of trust came up at the recent American Loggers' Council's annual meeting, held in northern California where, interestingly enough, NWOA President Keith Argow gave a forceful presentation on the importance of logger certification. I was talking with some loggers from the Northeast, who pointed out that trust is in short supply in the region's timber procurement system, also known as the "supply chain." Procurement people in all segments of the forest products industry will tell you that some of

the links in the supply chain are wearing thin, almost to the point of breaking. Loggers tend to agree. Where they differ is in their proposed solutions.

As I've said before, procurement people want as many loggers as possible producing wood, so as to provide an adequate supply of timber at reasonable prices for their mills. But I have yet to meet a logger who wants to see new competitors bidding up the price of stumpage in his area. While they may agree that more loggers in the region would be a good thing in general, it's best if it happens somewhere else. What they would prefer is better contracts from the mills they supply and some guarantees that they will be able to continue to stay busy, at a reasonable return and without interruption, for the long haul. They would be willing to make the investment and gear up to supply more wood on a steady basis, but only if they could be sure they wouldn't be cut off or cut down at some point, unable to meet their expenses.

The only problem with this scenario is that very little trust currently exists between producers and consuming mills in the Northeast and Lake States. Mills may realize that they need to repair relations with suppliers in order to secure enough wood moving forward, but loggers are understandably skeptical about claims that things have changed. They've heard that before.

Unfortunately, it's not just a handful of procurement people or specific companies or even a segment of the industry, such as papermaking, that has poisoned the well. The institutionalized corporate exploitation of loggers that has dominated the procurement game for more than a century, continues to this day, if not in reality, than at least in the minds of loggers everywhere. By passing the buck for its behavior up the faceless corporate ladder for all these years, the procurement system has created an atmosphere of doubt and mistrust that, sadly, pervades much of the current procurement environment. Some nameless suit is always pulling the plug.

It's a sad state of affairs, and it threatens to undermine a stable wood supply environment moving forward, as loggers play it safe and bank the profit they make during shortages, rather than investing in new production capacity. Everyone knows that the industrial wood procurement system has no one to blame but itself.

Eric A. Johnson is Executive Editor of this magazine as well as The Northern Logger, where this editorial was originally published, in the October 2015 issue.



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Volume 32, Issue 3

Late Breaking Forestry News from Washington DC and State Capitals
Published for Woodland Owners by the National Woodland Owners Association

Autumn 2015

“Waters of the United States” Faces Opposition, Delay

On June 29 the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Army Corps of Engineers published a proposed rule in the Federal Register to revise the definition of the “Waters Of the United States” (WOTUS). The rule, which was set to become effective August 28, was immediately opposed by a number of different interest groups. Within weeks, 13 states challenged WOTUS in court, citing the apparent invasion of state sovereignty. On August 28, the day the rule took effect, a federal judge in North Dakota blocked its implementation there. Five weeks later, the Sixth Federal Court of Appeals in Cincinnati temporarily blocked the rule nationwide, while the court decides who has jurisdiction.

Thanks to the “Sec. 404 Silviculture Exemptions” in the 43 year-old Clean Water Act, forestry operations would not be affected. However, concerns have been raised that some of the revised regulations will affect forestry through subtle changes in definitions. The bottom line: EPA and the Corps have created a new definition of what is and is not WOTUS. Now the issue goes to the courts and eventually to Congress to decide. Given that it was the courts which found that the definitions in the Clean Water Act were neither clear nor comprehensive, it is likely the issue will be around for a long time.

Canada-U.S. Lumber Agreement Ends What Happens Next?

The 2006 agreement, which expired October 12, ended five years of court battles and returned \$4 billion of the \$5 billion in import duties the U.S. collected on shipments of softwood lumber, to Canada. Half of the billion dollars in tariffs retained by the U.S. government was used to

establish the National Endowment for Forestry and Communities, as well as a grant to the American Forest Foundation for support of Tree Farm and other programs. Although these funds have helped private forestry in the United States, no one wants a repeat of what happened 20 years ago.

The Atlantic provinces of Canada, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, were exempted from regulation. British Columbia, which produces 55 percent of Canada’s lumber exports to the U.S., received the largest penalties in the dispute.

The U.S. Lumber Coalition, an alliance of lumber producers around the country, supported the 2006 agreement to protect American mills. That included a provision that precludes the U.S. from taking any trade action against Canada for 12 months. This prompted a request by the U.S. to open informal market discussions with the British Columbia government. At issue are the same allegations that the provincial government, which owns most of the standing timber, discounts stumpage prices to give Canadian mills an edge over U.S. mills.

Congress in No Mood To Fix Wildfire Funding Issue

In spite of an Emergency Funding Resolution on September 30 to repay the U.S. Forest Service \$700 million in wildfire fighting expenses taken from other forestry programs, Congress is in no mood to make any decisions—either to resolve the wildfire issue or the empty Highway Trust Fund. Both remain in limbo. The most comprehensive proposal, the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act, HR 167, enjoys the most support, including NWOA. On July 9, the House passed the Resilient Federal Forest Act (HR 2647). It combines permanent wildfire funding with the exclusion of environmental laws affecting timber sales, but it will be opposed in the Senate.

Reports From State Affiliates

“All Forestry is Local”



Maine Affiliate Sets Record For Members in the Legislature

The Small Woodland Owners Association of Maine (SWOAM) is one of NWOA's most active state affiliates, both in the woods and in the legislature. Not only can the Pine Tree State claim the honor of being the most forested state in the nation, but eleven members of SWOAM serve in the legislature: ten in the House and one in the Senate. To NWOA's knowledge, no other state affiliate comes even close (but we would love to hear if yours does). Such representation, however, did not discourage the governor and legislators from creating mischief for landowners.

During what has been described as one of the strangest legislative sessions ever, the body considered 40 separate bills that were actively tracked by SWOAM. The list included one bill representing the first positive step in more than four decades toward solving issues that arise when abandoned public roads pass through private woodlands.

- *The Damage to Public Easements Law* is an important bill where private landowners are concerned. It passed both houses easily but was vetoed by the governor. Both houses easily overrode the veto.
- *Arming Forest Rangers* is a recurring proposal opposed by both the Maine Forest Service and landowners. It was both clarified and postponed during the session.
- *The Tree Growth Tax Law*, a signature SWOAM issue, was weakened in the governor's budget, but the changes were rejected in committee.
- *The Fish & Wildlife Landowner Relations Bill* implements long-sought changes to an important state program. It was passed, vetoed and unanimously overridden by both the House and Senate. This process and outcome confirmed the important relationship between landowners and outdoor recreationists.

State Affiliate President Honored

Putnam "Put" Blodgett, president of the Vermont Woodlands Association (NWOA affil.) has been named one of the state's Super Seniors. A professional forester, and president of VWA (which just celebrated 100 years!), he was inducted into the 2015 Vermont Agriculture Hall of Fame.

Ohio Affiliate Wins State Honor

Two individuals and a landowner association have been recognized by the Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources for their efforts to promote forestry. The East Central Ohio Forestry Association (NWOA affil.) was cited as an "association of private woodland landowners in 16 counties that has actively promoted sustainable forestry and wildlife management for more than 30 years. Hundreds of landowners have been involved with the group, resulting in a significant impact on Ohio's forest resource. Congratulations ECFOA!

WV Rules that Fracking Can Lead to Trespass

Landowners who own the rights to their minerals recently won an important decision in a West Virginia court. It found that a gas driller who, without a proper lease, "fracks" into their mineral tract, is trespassing. Furthermore, the driller might be required to pay for the total value of the gas obtained that way. "Might be" required to pay? That is because the oil and gas mining laws are a bit arcane.

The oil and gas regulatory environment is quite different than the one governing forestry. For example, the WV Logging and Sediment Control Act of 1992 was honored by NWOA as the Outstanding Forestry Law of the Year for requiring the use of Best Management Practices. But drilling and fracking for oil and gas remains exempt from BMPs in the state. The Woodland Owners Ass'n. of West Virginia (NWOA affil.) would like to change that.



Annual Reports from The Northern Alliance Of Landowner Associations



for 2015. Seibert is a senior majoring in forest Ecosystem Management. He is a member of Xi Sigma Pi Forestry Honor Society, ISU Forestry Club, Timbersports and the Society of American Foresters.

Seibert currently works for the Army Corps of Engineers as a Park Ranger/ Natural Resource Specialist and intends on working for the Corps after graduation. He is a native born Iowan and grew up in Linden. His hobbies include hunting, fishing, trapping and other outdoor activities. He continues to be actively involved in volunteer work that has to deal with natural resources.

The mission of the Iowa Woodland Owners Association is to:

- Encourage the appreciation of the value of Iowa woodlands, their vital importance to the economy of the state, and to the welfare of its citizens;
- Encourage wise use and management of woodlands and related resources in Iowa;
- Provide educational support and sharing opportunities for members in their efforts to plant, mature, and harvest their trees;
- Promote both conservation of natural resources and the practice of sustainable forestry;
- Encourage habitat for wildlife, opportunities for woodland recreation, and personal enjoyment of Iowa's woodlands.

Minnesota

Contact: miforest@acd.net

Surveys repeatedly show one of the things woodland owners want most is a walk of their land with a knowledgeable person. As a result, the Minnesota Forestry Association (MFA) devised a Boots on YOUR Ground Program.

Under the program, a landowner can have a two-hour visit by a private, consulting forester. The time can be spent at the kitchen table discussing plans and answering questions or touring the land or both.

The goals of the program are to introduce landowners to professional foresters and to the notion that professional help is available for a fee. After the initial visit, it is up to the foresters to follow up and develop long-term, professional relationships with the landowners.

MFA pays the consulting forester \$200 plus mileage for each visit. The landowner contributes \$50 of the cost. (MFA believes that in this and all other efforts, the landowner needs to have some "skin in the game" to confirm their interest). The balance initially came from a grant from the Minnesota DNR and the Forest Service. The program is now being continued for MFA members, financed with MFA funds, in 86 of the state's 87 counties. In the 87th county, Itasca, located in the heart of the state's coniferous forests, the program is open to all woodland owners, thanks to a grant from the Blandin Foundation.

To date, the response to the program



Consulting forester Dean Makey, left, and landowner Maury Schwen of Brainerd.

has been nearly 100 percent positive for both landowners and consulting foresters.

John W. O'Reilly



Iowa

Contact: catwilkie@yahoo.com

Nathan Seibert is the recipient of the new Iowa Woodland Owner's Association Iowa State Forestry Scholarship



Missouri

Contact: fwam.trees@gmail.com

Missouri's 359,000 private woodland owners manage 83 percent of the woodlands in Missouri. The Forest and Woodland Association of Missouri (FWAM) was founded in 2011 as a public advocacy voice for these privately

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owned woodlands, to promote healthy, productive and sustainable forests and trees. We are advocates, conservationists, educators and woodland owners, working together to promote healthy, productive and sustainable forests and trees.

Our membership includes residents from all walks of life—both woodland owners and non-owners, city and rural dwellers, tree farmers, loggers, conservationists, educators—anyone who cares about the health of Missouri's forests and woodlands, and wants to assure those lands receive the care and support they need.

FWAM is also the administrator of the Missouri Tree Farm System. Many of our members are part of both organizations, recognizing the need to broaden the reach of the MTFs and include the greater population of Missouri, if we're to truly have the strength of one united voice on behalf of the state's woodlands.



Wisconsin

Contact: wwoa@uwsp.edu

This past year was very successful for the Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association. The Board of Directors met via conference calls between our regular quarterly meetings this past year. These additional meetings allowed WWOA to use our meeting time more effectively to focus on who we are, what is important to our members, and how we can make sure that these issues do not get diluted within the state's forestry and natural resources communities.

The new 2015-2020 strategic plan was distributed to members and work groups were formed to discuss and improve the identified areas of organizational structure, financial stability, building membership, and education and partnerships.

In working toward strategic plan goals, WWOA was able to recruit qualified members to represent private woodland owner viewpoints on a variety of governmental committees including silviculture guidance, wood turtle



Members of the Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association on an 2015 Annual Meeting field trip.

habitat, oak harvesting guidelines, best management practices for water quality, and Managed Forest Law cutting notices. WWOA also spent time analyzing and commenting on the proposed state budget and its impacts on private woodland owners.

WWOA launched a new website with more content and features to better serve our members. The new website and Constant Contact were used to keep members informed of the state budget bill issues. We also created a new tagline for marketing purposes, "Creating Tomorrow's Woodlands Today."

Women of WWOA, one of WWOA's newest committees, held five gatherings this year to learn more about sustainable forest management including a February sleigh ride, trivia meet and greet, fall tree identification and crop tree release and a wild edibles walk.

This past year WWOA was able to host our first Volunteer Wisconsin

AmeriCorps member, Caleb Klima. He assisted WWOA in recruiting new members and volunteers, promoting WWOA, writing content for our new website, and creating structure for our volunteer program.

Nancy Bozek
Executive Director



Michigan

Contact: miforest@acd.net

Michigan Forest Association has had an exciting year. We took our display trailer, The Wanigan, to about a dozen events around the state. These events ranged from those aimed at school-age kids, such as the Farm Bureau's Project RED (Rural Education Day) to



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trade shows aimed at woodworkers or canoeists.

We conducted our fourth annual Teacher Workshop on Sustainable Forestry at the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center on Higgins Lake. This is a week-long event in which we take teachers to see wood-using plants, managed forests, active timber sales and historic sites. We give a bit of background on Michigan's forest history and tree physiology as well.

Many teachers confess they hadn't known much about forests or forestry, but now will look at our forest resource through fresh eyes. One teacher commented that she had learned a great deal and had even discovered that much of what she "knew" beforehand wasn't true. Our fifth workshop is scheduled for June 20-24 next year.

We are nearly finished with an update of our web site.

This summer we took title to 280 acres of forestland donated by the estate of a former member. There are six parcels of land that we will manage through some of our consulting forester members. Management will be for sustainable yield of forest products and will emphasize educational use as well.

Next year's annual meeting will be in the Detroit area, where we will visit Belle Isle, and other points of interest to forest lovers—possibly concluding at a baseball game at Comerica Park. We are looking forward to another productive year.

Bill Botti
MFA Executive Director

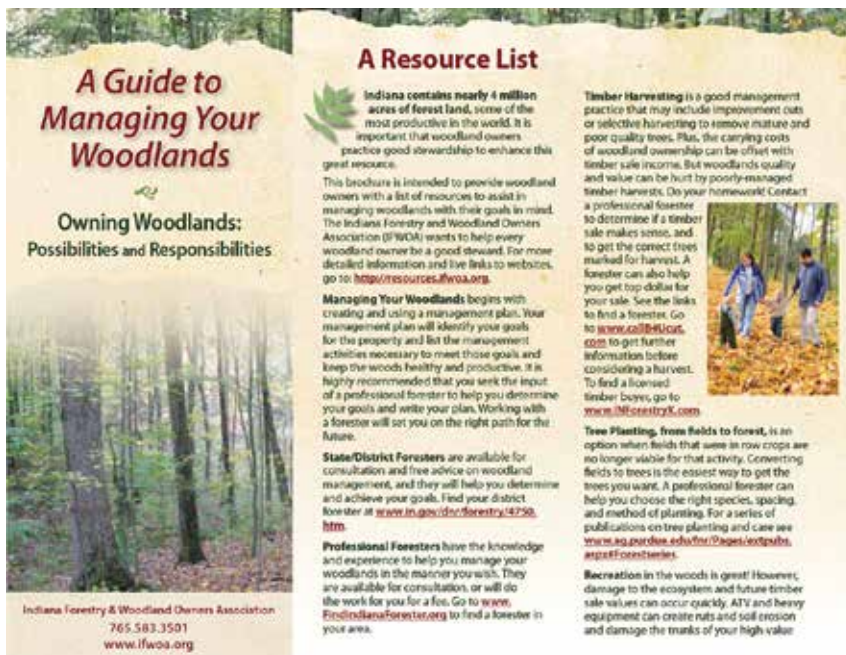


Indiana

Contact: jackson@purdue.edu

The Charles Deam Forest Stewardship award recognizes Indiana woodland owners who have demonstrated exceptional management of their woodlands. It is sponsored by IFWOA. Anyone can nominate a landowner for this award.

Any private landowner possessing ten acres or more of woodland property within the state of Indiana and who has owned the property for no less than one full year is eligible. The owner must have a written forest management plan that



The Indiana Forestry & Woodland Assoc. publishes a quick woodland management guide.

has been approved by a professional forester. Current board members of IFWOA and IFEF or state winners in the last five years are not eligible.

A finalist is selected from each of the five IFWOA areas and a judging team visits the finalists' properties to determine the state winner. Area finalists, the state winner, and their foresters will be recognized at the IFWOA annual meeting banquet.

Nominations can be made by any person or organization. The nominator should contact the landowner for permission before making the nomination and provide basic contact information for the landowner. A landowner may nominate himself for the award.

Another program of the Indiana Forestry & Woodland Owners Association is the Indiana Forestry Educational Foundation, Inc., (IFEF). It is a non-profit 501 (c) 3 corporation that formed in 1983 for the purpose of receiving contributions to help meet the challenges of the future through funding of forestry educational programs, educational scholarships in forest management, and promoting responsible stewardship of our timberlands.

IFEF is managed by a board of trustees which is elected by the board of directors of IFWOA and an executive director.

When a landowner joins IFWOA, \$5 of the dues is donated to IFEF. All donations to IFEF are tax deductible as a charitable donation. Other opportunities for giving are general gifts, designated gifts, installment gifts, and bequests.



OHIO WOODLAND OWNERS COUNCIL

Ohio

Contact: www.ecofa.org

The East Central Ohio Forestry Association (ECOFA) is a private, non-profit association of forest landowners and other individuals interested in conservation and education. ECOFA's monthly meetings and most field trips are free and open to the public. Our \$20 annual membership fee lets members receive our newsletter for details of recent meetings and upcoming events.

One such event, a walking tour of the tree farm owned by Alan Walters, 2015 Ohio Tree Farmer of the Year, was held in mid September.

The organization was founded to provide information to its members and the general public about multiple use management of forest land.

This is accomplished by holding regular educational meetings on the first Wednesday of each month at the Dover Public Library.

Monthly newsletters contain information on upcoming events around the state, past meetings, and current news items.

Several field trips are planned throughout the year. Topics have included sawmill tours, woodland walks, grapevine control, and how to sell your timber.



Kentucky

Contact: KWOA.pb@gmail.com

On September 29th, the Environmental Quality Commission passed a resolution with recommendations to address timber theft. Shortly after the EQC meeting, the Interim Joint Committee on Natural Resources heard related testimony from the Kentucky Division

of Forestry, Kentucky Forest Industries Association and Kentucky Resources Council on this important matter.

The theft of timber is a crime that has been difficult to prosecute in Kentucky. There were attempts last session to establish a Timber Theft Reduction task force through HCR 56, which passed the House but did not pass the Senate during the short session.

In other news, applications are still being accepted for the Invasive Species Removal Program which is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to Kentucky landowners fighting invasive species adjacent or within one-half mile of public lands that have conservation and/or restoration values. The goal of this program is to limit the spread of invasive plant species from private property to

ecologically important public lands.

Invasive species removal financial assistance is awarded through contracts between private landowners and University of Kentucky Forestry Extension which will pay for 100 percent of the estimated cost (up to \$10,000) of controlling invasive plants on eligible private property.

The invasive species control practices are expected to be completed between July 2015 and April 2016. Payments to program participants will be paid after verification of practice implementation.

Kentucky Woodland Owners Association is here to help woodland owners and their families better manage their natural resources. We encourage all to join!



Kentucky “Bad Actor” Law Named Outstanding Forestry Legislation for 2015

For thirty years, since 1985, the National Woodland Owners Association has reviewed forestry laws enacted by legislatures in all 50 states. The association is looking for laws that are potentially hurtful to landowners. Some of these are passed with little review on a fast track fueled in a political reaction to perceived abuses of good forestry practices. These laws can be difficult to spot. They may be disguised in arcane language that can later be used to suddenly prohibit woodland owners from logging on their own land. Fortunately, such laws are discovered by the state woodland owner association (most states have them) before they can do much harm. Sometimes not.

NWOA also looks for *good* forestry legislation. These are laws that protect the right to practice forestry, to reduce or eliminated property taxes on well managed family forests, and to better regulate trespassing on private land. In all, 32 laws have been honored (in two years there were two awards presented). Some of these laws have become a model for legislation in other states. They include sustainable forestry acts, criminal trespass, timber theft, right-to-practice forestry, and logging sediment controls. The award has been presented annually at the annual meeting of the National Association of State Foresters by NWOA President Keith Argow for the past 29 years.

The 2015 winner, the Kentucky Bad Actor Logger Law, closes the serious loopholes in the Best Management Practices (BMP) guidelines, which are usually implemented with voluntary compliance. Citations can and are issued to loggers who are more interested in getting the wood out quickly with limited consideration for soil and water runoff. When followed by a heavy rainfall event, the resulting damages can be large and long lasting.

Effective in January this new law will require loggers who have received bad actor designations to “cease all timber harvesting operations until all required site remediation has been performed and all civil penalties have been paid.” In the future, any loggers so cited will have to provide prior notice to the Division of Forestry before they can again engage in timber harvesting. What makes this law special is the remediation requirement. They must fix all environmental damage (as much as possible)

NATIONAL WOODLANDS AUTUMN 2015



Kentucky State Forester Leah MacSwords receives the Outstanding Forestry Law of the Year Award from NWOA President Keith Argow at the annual meeting of the National Association of State Foresters as Squaw Valley, California.

and pay all fines before they can return to work.

Although warmly supported by the Kentucky Woodland Owners Association (NWOA affiliate), the law is the brainchild of the Kentucky Forest Industries Association, which wisely recognized the black eye a few loggers were giving them and saw the handwriting on the wall. They worked with the Kentucky Division of Forestry along with some very supportive legislators.

Perhaps the greatest compliment of all to this law, especially in this time when legislatures and members of Congress tend to bicker rather than broker, is that the bill passed the Senate by a vote of 36-0, followed by a House vote of 99-0. The whole process, hearings, everything, was accomplished in only six weeks! When it came to his desk, Gov. Beshear signed it right away—as he had signaled he would.



National Historic Lookout Register

FIRE LOOKOUTS = EARLY DETECTION = SMALLER FIRES

Check www.nhnr.net for a complete listing of the more than 1000 fire lookouts in the United States and around the world that are listed on the NHLR. There are pictures, descriptions, a map on how to get there and even the current weather at the site! If the lookout appears to need some maintenance, check www.ffla.org to see how you can help!

Keep Them Standing

Fire towers and lookouts are the most recognizable symbol of forestry and the importance of forests to all Americans, rural or urban. Keep them standing!

This quarter's listing include a wide variety, representing three states.



Beaver Creek



Green Ridge

US# 1022, OH# 11
Located in Columbiana County, **Beaver Creek Fire Tower** is an 80' tower with 7'x7' cab. Constructed in 1936 by Ohio DNR, it is now used primarily as a radio facility.

US# 1023, OH# 12
The **Green Ridge Fire Tower** was constructed by Ohio DNR to overlook the Pike State Forest in Pike County. It is now privately owned.



Sugar Grove



Lone Pine

US# 1024, OH #13
Built by the U.S. Forest Service within the Wayne National Forest purchase

unit in the 1930s, the **Keystone Fire Tower** in Jackson County is an 80' Aermotor with 7'x7' cab. It is now privately owned.

US# 1025, OH# 14
Also within the Wayne National Forest purchase unit on land that remained private is the **Lone Pine Fire Tower** in Lawrence County. The 80' Aermotor with 7'x7' cab is privately owned.

US# 1026, OH# 15
The **Senecaville Fire Tower** was built by the Ohio DNR in Noble County. It is a 100' Aermotor with 7'x7' cab and it is privately owned.



Cove Mountain Lookout

US# 1027, OH# 16
The Ohio DNR built **Sugar Grove Fire Tower** in Fairfield County, staffing it into the 1970s and eventually selling it and the land to a private party. The 100' Aermotor tower was purchased by FFLA Board Chair Keith Argow in 2003. It is currently being restored and will be moved to a nearby hilltop location in a community park in 2016.

US# 1028, VA #19
Cove Mountain Lookout is one of the classic USFS 12'x12' Aermotor metal cabs numbered among the 29 lookouts that dotted the Jefferson National Forest as late as 1971. Located to look

into public lands, the tower itself is not within the forest. Built in 1941, it is an 83' Aermotor tower in private ownership and in need of restoration.

US# 1029, OH# 17
Built by the Ohio DNR in Tuscarawas County, the 80' **Tappan Fire Tower** is privately owned with many radio antennas within a stand of pine trees.

US# 1030, OH# 18
The third oldest in the state, **Woods Ridge Fire Tower** was built in 1929 as a joint effort of the Ohio DNR and the U.S. Forest Service. A 60' International Derrick model with 7'x7' cab, it is privately owned.

US# 1031, MD# 6
Built by the Doncaster CCC camp in 1935, the **Welcome Forestry Tower** is located in Charles County. The 120' tower with 7'x7' cab is now used by the Maryland Forest Service for radio antennas.

US# 1032, VA# 12
Built in 1935 on the George Washington National Forest, **Woodstock Lookout Tower** has been moved once and rehabbed twice. The 60' metal tower with 7'x7' cab has recently been lowered to 40' with a new 12'x12' open cab with roof as a hiker's viewpoint over the North Fork of the Shenandoah River.



Woodstock Lookout Tower





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More than 1,600 Latvian youth participated in more than 30 interactive forestry activities at Meža ABC (Forest ABC).

NWOA Members Travel To Balkan-American Forestry Celebration

NWOA members Kirk and Madeline David from Idaho were invited to participate in a Baltic American Freedom Foundation (BAFF) Dialogue program for two weeks in May of 2015. Dr. Lelde Vilkrīste from Latvia met the couple while attending one of their “Ties to the Land” family forest owner succession planning presentations during her Baltic-American Research Scholar program visit in 2013. Vilkrīste also visited the Davids and Steve and Janet Funk’s (2011 National Outstanding Tree Farmers of the Year) homes and forestland while in Idaho.

Acknowledging the Davids’ past and current experience with forest landowner assistance, Society of American Foresters, Idaho Forest Owners Association, American Tree Farm System and NWOA, Vilkrīste recognized the value of a Baltic-American Dialogue exchange to share her American experiences and information with the Baltic countries (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania).

Among 27 project applications to the BAFF Dialogue grant program for 2015, only three were chosen for funding, including Dr. Vilkrīste’s proposal. During the exchange, the Davids (with Vilkrīste’s capable interpreting skills) participated in discussions with Latvian, Estonian, Lithuanian, Finnish and Swedish family forest landowners, forest landowner associations, industrial foresters, consulting foresters, state forestry agencies, forest certification organizations, and universities. Topics included comparisons of silvicultural techniques, best management practices and regulations, forest certification systems, state funding for forest owner associations, formal and informal continuing education for forest owners, and family forest succession planning.

One very impressive experience for the Davids during the exchange was the Meža ABC (Forest ABC), a two-day Latvian forestry education participatory in-the-woods event

attended by over 1,600 school-aged children on the first day and their entire families on the second day!

This BAFF-sponsored project was not only an opportunity for cross-Atlantic information transfer, but also provided a very beneficial venue for Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians to communicate within their own region. Even though the Baltic countries are (comparatively) small and share a similar environment (much more than half of each country is forested), their languages are distinctly separate. Since all three countries only regained their independence from 50 years of Soviet occupation 25 years ago, the common “translation” language for the older generation is still (the previously mandatory) Russian, while the younger population is now quite fluent in English. In addition to formal meetings with Baltic forestry counterparts, the Davids had several opportunities to engage in informal conversations comparing challenges common to all forest owners. And when conversations delved into politics, the (very palpable) current threat of re-invasion makes consideration of family forest succession planning a quite uncertain topic for Baltic forest owners!

Public or non-profit organizations in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania may apply for funds to host speakers from the U.S. to travel to the Baltics. BAFF provides successful applicant organizations with financial support to sponsor American speakers on topics of mutual importance and interest. This program is designed to provide support for programs that otherwise could not be held. Applicant organizations are encouraged to design programs and invite speakers to address the interests of their unique constituencies. Cross-Baltic institutional cooperation and programs with opportunities for student participation are especially encouraged.



The winning team (l-r) Emily Palacios, Julia Palacios, Rebekah Meese, and Coach Laura Palacios.

Tennessee Team Earns Top Honors At National 4-H Forestry Invitational

NWOA is a Co-Sponsor

Tennessee placed first among 14 state teams that competed in the 36th Annual National 4-H Forestry Invitational from Sunday, July 26, through Thursday, July 30. Teams from New York and Alabama placed second and third, respectively. Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Ohio, South Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia were also represented at this year's Invitational.

The event was held at West Virginia University Jackson's Mill State 4-H Camp and Conference Center near Weston. While at the Invitational, 4-H members competed for overall team and individual awards in several categories. Events included tree identification, tree measurement, compass and pacing, insect and disease identification, topographic map use, forest evaluation, the forestry bowl and a written forestry exam.

Tennessee was represented by Emily Palacios and Julia Palacios, both from Thompson's Station and Rebekah Meese from Columbia. The team was coached by Laura Palacios from Thompson's Station.

Julia Palacios from Tennessee received the high point individual award. Second place high individual award was given to Rosanne Mow from New York and third place high individual award was given to Tim Caswell from Florida.

The Joe Yeager "Spirit of the Invitational" award was given to Devin Hipp from South Carolina. This award recognizes an outstanding 4-H contestant at the Invitational. It is presented to the individual who takes initiative, is enthusiastic, and is eager to lead academic and social situations.

4-H is a youth education program operated by the Co-operative Extension Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Institute of Food and Agriculture and the state land grant universities. More than six million youth, 540,000 volunteers, and 3,500 professionals participate in 4-H nationwide, and nearly 100,000 are part of the 4-H Forestry Program.

The Invitational is sponsored by Farm Credit System, Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Inc., Society of American Foresters, West Virginia University Extension Service, USDA Forest Service State and Private Southern Region, Southern Region Extension Forestry, American Forest Foundation, and Association of Natural Resource Extension Professionals and the National Woodland Owners Assoc. For more information visit 4hforestryinvitational.org/.



Events included tree identification, tree measurement, compass and pacing, insect and disease identification, topographic map use, forest evaluation, among others.



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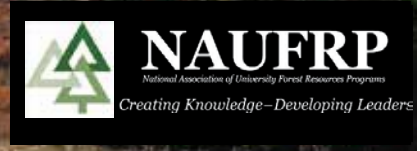
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News From America's Forestry Schools



Univ. of Massachusetts & Oregon State Both Win NWOA/NAUFRP Family Forestry Education Awards

Each year, two awards are given: One for the breadth and excellence of a Family Forestry curriculum, and the second for a specialized outreach program for woodland owners. The awards were presented November 3 at the annual meeting of the National Association of University Forest Resource Programs in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

The Family Forest Research Center



Winners of the WOW Forestry Education Award with NWOA President Keith Argow (far left) and NAUFRP Extension Chair Andrew Ezell.

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is a collaborative effort of the Department of Environmental Conservation at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and the Northern Research Station of the U.S. Forest Service. In addition to teaching and research on the attitudes, behaviors, needs and concerns of landowners and society, the Center administers the National Woodland Owner Survey, the official census of forest owners in the United States. Information gathered by the Center is shared nationwide.

The Center has two primary target audiences: family forest owners and the educators and service providers who interact with them. FRC staff is comprised of Extension foresters, research foresters and support staff. The program has pioneered innovations through the group's Woods Forum programs, Keystone Project, MassWoods website, and the "Your Land, Your Legacy" initiative.

In Oregon, what started out as a small gathering of six women landowners supported by the Cooperative Extension

staff grew to a statewide network of 400 active women woodland managers across the state and a national network comprised of hundreds of women landowners and natural resource professionals.

The project is designed to engage women woodland owners with an empowering, peer-learning approach. In 2013 Extension staff from Oregon, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Arkansas, and the Delaware Highlands Conservancy joined to publish a 75-page "Growing Your Peer Learning Network" handbook. Participants have conducted stewardship practices on 16,241 acres of forestland, are joining their local small woodland organizations and hosting tours on their own land. They are contacting professional foresters as they move forward with their planning and management.

The Women Owning Woodlands Network (WOW.net) is now a nationwide program with support of the National Woodland Owners Association and the U.S. Forest Service.

State Forestry *UPDATE*



National Association of State Foresters “Adapting to Change” in 2015

by Jay Farrell*

In 2015, the National Association of State Foresters recognized the theme “adapting to change” throughout our work. Adapting to change captures the essence of forest management, which mimics natural disturbance, and is a theme to which all landowners can relate.

Like forests, the policy, communications and partnership environments in which state foresters operate in are dynamic ecosystems. Issues and the people behind them are constantly changing.

A milestone for forestry this year was the 25th anniversary of the Forest Stewardship Program (FSP). FSP is a partnership of the USDA Forest Service and state forestry agencies to support private landowner planning and management efforts, including seedling production and landowner education programs. FSP is active in every state and six territories and the program has funded more than 225,000 management plans encompassing approximately 25 million acres of private forests.

FSP helps private forest landowners connect with a professional forester to develop a voluntary Forest Stewardship Plan. By having a written stewardship plan, landowners like you can prepare for the future and adapt to possible changes you can expect to see on your land.

In Michigan, for example, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) uses

private sector land managers to help its 400,000 private forest landowners. More than 125 professional foresters and wildlife biologists are trained and certified by the DNR to develop simple yet comprehensive Forest Stewardship Plans that align with a landowner’s specific goals.

Over the last 25 years, more than 5,400 landowners in Michigan have developed their own plans to help them manage, protect, and enjoy more than 875,000 acres of forestland. Michigan family forest owners often use their Forest Stewardship Plan to obtain financial assistance, enroll in a property tax program, prepare for a timber sale, improve their wildlife habitat, or join the American Tree Farm System to certify their sustainable forest management.

“Private individuals and families own

more than nine million acres of forest land in Michigan,” said Bill O’Neill, Michigan state forester. “Our goal is to attract the folks who currently aren’t actively managing their forest to accomplish their own personal goals for their land.

“A Forest Stewardship Plan helps landowners to adapt to changes in forest health, market conditions, and even transitions in their own family,” he said.

Landowners can contact their state forestry agency to find a professional forester who can help you manage, protect and enjoy your forest. State forestry agencies directly assist more than 200,000 landowners each year and also are trusted sources for referrals to private consulting foresters, loggers and other professionals. Hands-on landowner assistance is just one resource in a state forester’s toolbox that help landowners adapt to change.

Through their national association, state foresters also develop policies that advance issues for healthy forests and support woodland owners throughout the United States. Each year at the NASF annual meeting, state foresters review resolutions that have been presented by subject matter experts. When state foresters approve a resolution, they do so by consensus as a diverse membership. Thus an approved NASF resolution is the strongest possible public statement state foresters can make on an issue.





Forester Tom Stone shows Onaway, MI teacher Scott Steensma how to use a forestry prism. Steensma's school was recently awarded an Outreach and Education grant through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to do a Forest Stewardship Plan for the school's forestland. Photo by Rebecca Pochmara

This year the resolutions focused on several issues that woodland owners care about very much—from Forest Inventory & Analysis (FIA) to tax reform, climate change and endangered species.

The USDA Forest Service's FIA program is the nation's forest census. This year NASF adopted a strategic vision and priorities for FIA, which communicate funding priorities and other recommendations within the program.

NASF members are the primary partners in FIA program delivery, contributing more than \$4 million annually in state

resources to shorten measurement cycles, increase the number of research plots and to measure additional forest attributes. As one of its priority programs, NASF has always supported robust funding for FIA, which provides value to all forest stakeholders.

NASF members also adopted a statement about tax policy, an issue many of you are affected by and likely work to reform. State foresters recognize that the cost of taxes on forest ownership can have a significant influence on a landowner's decision to sell, retain or manage their property. The statement that was adopted outlines policy positions related to the federal estate tax, capital gains treatment of timber, and more.

State foresters also provided recommendations for enhancing the role of forests in climate change mitigation, recommendations for improving the effectiveness of the Endangered Species Act and more.

Visit the NASF website at stateforesters.org to view the resolutions passed this year and to connect with your state forestry agency.



Jay Farrell is executive director of the National Association of State Foresters.



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THE PACIFIC FOREST TRUST



As an example of rehabilitation, these young saplings were released by harvesting poor quality larger overstory trees to improve the future growth and quality of the stand.

High grading: Better quality trees are marked for harvest, leaving the poorer, weaker ones. This is a prime example of poor forest management. *Dan Pubanz photos and captions.*

Why Private Landowners Continue to Highgrade their Forests

By Charles E. McGee*

For decades foresters have prescribed timber stand improvement practices for immature stands and harvesting and regeneration procedures for mature stands. And for decades some forest landowners have continued to reject prescribed stand improvement practices that would leave immature stands in shape to grow in volume and increase in value. Some of the same owners reject prescribed harvest methods that would regenerate a high quality new forest.

For a number of reasons, far too many owners choose to high-grade their woodlands rather than to make the silvicultural investments needed to provide economic viability and long term sustainability.

Why?

Highgrading can come under a number of names but they all wind up with a similar treatment, commonly characterized as “cutting the best timber and leaving the rest.” Two of the more popular types are “diameter limit cutting” and “loggers choice.”

OK, why would a forest landowner reject a forester’s prescription and use a diameter limit harvest? When a forester makes a stand improvement prescription in an immature stand, he will establish a target basal area for the residual stand. This target will be based on age site index, species etc. He will then mark the stand to achieve the basal area target by removing the less desirable trees and thinning among the better trees. This procedure usually produces good results but it does require a substantial per-acre investment in the

forester’s time.

On the other hand, if the owner chooses to use a diameter limit harvest, there is no cost for stand analysis or tree marking. The owner and logger must only agree on the diameter of the trees to be cut and the stumpage price to be paid.

While upfront management costs may influence some owners not to use stand improvement practices, the big item that often influences the decision to highgrade is the big difference in potential income. If a landowner expects to receive \$500 per acre for a marked stand harvest, the logger may offer more than twice that amount if he is allowed to cut the best and largest trees and leave the rest.

The prescription for a mature stand usually involves the timing of the final harvest. The regeneration treatment will require a harvest that removes the overstory as in a clear-cut or shelterwood. However, many landowners reject the clearcut option out of hand. And there is usually a logger who will offer an alternative that is acceptable to the owner: the diameter limit harvest.

A diameter limit cut will provide the owner with almost all of the stumpage value and some trees will be left on the site for crop trees, habitat and aesthetics. The owner is quite happy on the way to the bank because he has avoided clearcutting and has a pocket full of cash. But he probably does not know that he has converted a high quality forest stand into a mediocre stand with a questionable future and far less income potential moving forward.

The forestry profession should be careful about harshly criticizing these short-term actions until we can provide long-term movement toward sustained yields while at the same time meeting short term economic and ecological needs.

*Charles E. McGee is Retired Leader, USFS Suwanee Forest Research Unit, and former Executive Director, University of Tennessee Center for Oak Studies, Knoxville, TN.

NATIONAL WOODLAND OWNERS ASSOCIATION

20 Reasons why we are America's Largest Circulation Family Forestry Magazine

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9. Summary of topics presented in the Wednesday Woodland Word Internet Letter (WWW: available to all NWOA members) in the previous quarter
10. Woodland Opinions and Ideas: Guest Editorials
11. The Readers Respond: What you have to say about current issues.
12. Annual Reports from the 42 affiliated State Landowner Associations.
13. Women Owning Woodlands (WOW): NWOA is a national co-sponsor of this series, developed by Forestry Extension, guiding women managing their own woodlands.
14. The Greatest Good for the Greatest Number: Special reports from the U.S. Forest Service affecting woodlands.
15. Woodland Liability and Wildfire Insurance: What they can mean for you.
16. Quarterly Listings on the National Historic Lookout Register (nhlr.org): "Small Landowners can only afford Small Fires."
17. State Forestry Agency update.
18. The American Loggers Council/NWOA: Working Together
19. News from American University Forestry Schools
20. News From the Regions: Details of markets, regulations, events, and new programs from each of NWOA's ten regions.

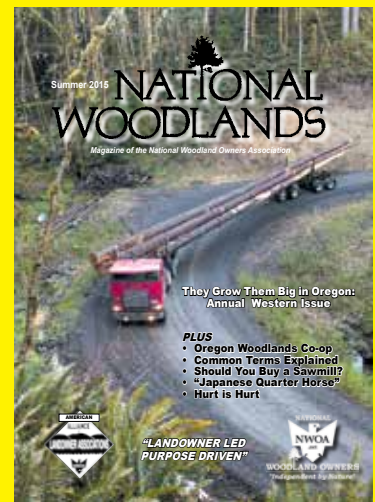
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Keith A. Argow, Publisher
October 5, 2015



**Tax News
You
Can Use**



Timber and Taxes

Tax Tips for Forest Landowners For the 2015 Tax Year

by Dr. Linda Wang

Federal income tax laws can influence a private woodland owner's financial decisions about land management. Yet, special favorable tax provisions on timber that are intended to encourage private forest management and stewardship are commonly unknown. To help woodland owners in filing their 2015 tax returns, this article explains the federal income tax laws on timber. The information is not legal or accounting advice. It is current as of September 30, 2015.

Timber Property Classifications

For tax purposes, a woodland property may be classified as an investment, business or personal-use property. Tax deductions and losses that are allowed for investment or business properties may be limited or denied for personal-use property. So the classification is important in that the tax treatment on each type of property differs widely. If your primary purpose of owning land is for personal enjoyment (such as fishing and family retreat), your property may be taxed as personal-use property. In contrast, if your primary purpose of land ownership is for making a profit from growing timber, your timber may be taxed as an investment property or a business when such profit-seeking timber activities are more regular, active and continuous than an investment. Which status applies depends on the specifics of each case. The IRS presumes a profit motive if profit is realized in at least three of the past five years. Such profit, however, includes expectation of future profit from the appreciation of asset.

Example 1: Mr. Smith sold timber for a \$20,000 profit in 2015. He replanted the land with loblolly pines. He treats his woodland property as an investment.

Basis and Depletion Deduction

Timber basis. Basis is the cost of the timber to the owner. You may deduct it from timber sales, which reduces the tax due on the sales. To establish the timber basis, find out how the property was acquired. For purchased property, the timber basis is the amount you paid for it. For inherited property, the basis of timber is its fair market value (FMV) on the decedent's date of death. If you receive the timber as a gift, the timber basis is the lower of its FMV or the donor's basis.

Example 2: Mrs. Anderson inherited forest land a year ago but didn't establish the timber basis. A consulting forester provided a retroactive professional appraisal on her timber value on the date of the decedent's death, which established her timber basis.

Depletion. Depletion is a deduction against timber sale.

Example 3: Mrs. Anderson sold 600 cords of pulpwood. She took depletion deduction of \$6,000 (\$10,000 of total timber basis ÷ 1,000 cords of total volume x 600 cords of timber sold).

Timber Sales

Sale of standing timber. Sales of standing timber held as an investment for more than one year qualify for long-term capital gain, which is taxed at advantageous lower tax rates than ordinary income. Sale of inherited timber is considered long-term. Report the sale of standing timber held as an investment on Form 8949 and Schedule D.

Both outright sales and pay-as-cut sales of standing timber by a business qualify for long-term capital gain (Sec. 1231 gain) after the timber has been held for more than one year. Report the sale of standing timber held for business use on Form 4797 and Schedule D. If you sell timber outright in a business, you also are required to file Form T unless you only have an occasional timber sale (see "Filing Form T" below).

Example 4: Your consulting forester advised an improvement cutting and estimated that there were 800 cords that should be sold. The highest bid was \$30/cord. You signed the contract for sale of standing timber owned as an investment. You report a capital-gain on Schedule D and Form 8949.

Sale of products cut from timber held for use in a business. If you cut your own timber or have it cut by a contractor working at your direction, either for sale or for use in your business, the gains are ordinary income unless you elect to use sec. 631(a) on Form T, Part II.

Example 5: You paid a contractor \$2,000 to cut standing timber held for business use for over one year into logs and you sold the cut logs to a mill for \$30,000. The FMV of the standing timber was \$23,000 on Jan. 1 and your basis in it was \$1,000. If you elect to use sec. 631(a) on Form T, report a \$22,000 long-term capital gain (\$23,000 FMV – \$1,000 basis) on Form 4797 and Schedule D, and \$5,000 of ordinary income (\$30,000 sale price – \$23,000 FMV – \$2,000 contractor fee) on Schedule C. If you fail to make the election, all \$27,000 profit is ordinary income.

Net Investment Income Tax

For taxpayers meeting income threshold, investment timber sales and passive business timber sales are subject to a 3.8 percent net investment income tax, effective January 1, 2013. This 3.8 percent tax, enacted as part of the 2010 healthcare reform law, applies only to single taxpayers with adjusted gross

income (“AGI”) over \$200,000 or couples with over \$250,000 AGI. “Material participants” in timber business are not subject to this tax.

Example 6: *Husband and wife’s adjusted gross income is \$260,000, including a \$50,000 capital gain from their investment timber sale. The timber gains of \$10,000 (the lesser of the excess of their adjusted income of \$260,000 over the \$250,000 threshold or the capital gains of \$50,000) are subject to the 3.8 percent tax (\$380 tax), in addition to the capital gain tax on the sale.*

Installment Sales

An installment sale involves receiving one or more payments after the year of sale, allowing you to defer tax by spreading your gain over two or more years. Interest is charged on deferred payments.

Example 7: *You sold timber for \$10,000 (\$8,000 after deducting timber depletion and sale expenses) in 2015. Your gross profit percentage is 80 percent (\$8,000 ÷ \$10,000). The buyer paid you \$5,000 in 2015 and will pay the remaining \$5,000, plus interest, in 2016. Report a \$4,000 gain (\$5,000 x 80%) for 2015, using Form 6252.*

Timber Management Expenses

Timber management expenses may include fees to a consulting forester; cost for competition control; the expense for insects, disease and fire control; pre-commercial thinning or firebreak maintenance. Investment timber owners may deduct expenses on Schedule A, but they are subject to a two percent of adjusted gross income reduction. Business timber owners who are “materially participants” deduct them in full on Schedule C. Property taxes are deductible.

Reforestation Costs

Taxpayers (except trusts) may deduct up to \$10,000 (\$5,000 for married couples filing separately) per year of reforestation costs per *qualified timber property* (QTP). Any amount over \$10,000 per year per QTP may be deducted over 84 months (amortized). Trusts are eligible for amortization deduction. Qualifying costs include the direct costs to plant or replant a stand including natural regeneration.

Example 8: *You spent \$17,000 to reforest after a harvest. Deduct \$10,000, plus 1/14th of the remaining \$7,000 (\$500) on your 2015 tax return. Deduct 1/7th of the \$7,000 (\$1,000) on your returns for 2016–2021 and the last 1/14th (\$500) on your 2022 return. If you qualify as an investor, take the \$10,000 deduction as an adjustment to gross income on the front of Form 1040; if you hold your forest land for business use, take it on Schedule C. Elect to amortize and take amortization deductions on Form 4562, Part VI.*

Depreciation and Sec. 179 Expensing

Depreciation is a tax deduction that is based on the cost (basis) of assets used, such as those for machinery, computers, cars, vans, logging equipment, bridges, culverts, fences, temporary roads or the surfaces of permanent roads. For example, light-duty truck and logging equipment are depreciated over five years.

Also, business taxpayers may deduct up to \$25,000 in the first year in qualifying property in 2015, subject to a \$200,000 phase-out and business taxable income limitation (sec. 179 expensing). Land is not depreciable.

Cost-share Payments

If you receive a cost-share payment from a qualified government program, you may exclude part or all of the payment from your income if the cost share is used in capital expenditure. Otherwise, it is ordinary income. Qualified federal programs include the Forest Health Protection Program (for southern pine beetle and mountain pine beetle), Conservation Reserve Program, Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, and Wetlands Reserve Program (discontinued Feb. 7, 2014). Several state programs also qualify for exclusion. The excludable amount is the present value of the greater of \$2.50 per acre or ten percent of the average annual income from the affected acres over the last three years.

Example 9: *You received a \$3,900 cost-share payment from the Conservation Reserve Program and used it as capital expenditure for your 100-acre woodland. If you had no income from the property in the last three years, you could exclude up to \$4,798 ($(\$2.50 \times 100 \text{ acres}) \div 5.21\%$). The interest rate is from the Farm Credit System Bank. If you had \$6,600 of income from the property, you could exclude the entire payment: $(10\% \times (\$6,600 \div 3)) \div 5.21\% = \$4,222 > \$3,900$. Attach a statement to your tax return describing the program and your calculations.*

Timber Casualty and Theft Losses

Loss of timber from a casualty—a sudden, unexpected and unusual event such as a fire or severe storm—may be deductible from your taxes. The deduction is the lesser of the decrease in FMV caused by the casualty or your basis in the timber block (the area you use to keep track of your basis). Similarly, a theft loss deduction is limited to the lesser of the decrease in FMV or your basis in the stolen timber. A competent appraisal usually is required.

Filing Form T (Timber)

You must file Form T (Timber), Forest Activities Schedule, if you claim a timber depletion deduction, sell cut products in a business (under sec. 631(a)), or sell outright timber held for business use. However, there is an exception for owners who only have an occasional timber sale, defined as one or two sales every three or four years.

Conservation Easement

You may take a deduction on qualified donation of conservation easement in 2015. Absent of new legislation extending the enhanced incentives, the deduction is up to 30 percent (vs. 50 percent or 100 percent if qualified by the enhanced provision from 2006 to 2014) of the taxpayer’s AGI in a year. Any excess donation over the 30 percent limit may be carried forward to the next five years.



Linda Wang is the U.S. Forest Service national timber tax specialist, author and coauthor of numerous articles. For more information, visit the National Timber Tax website, www.timbertax.org.



Foresters For the Birds

by *Amanda Mahaffey*

One of the surest signs of springtime is the return of colorful, joyful-sounding songbirds to the forests of the Northeast. Forests along the Atlantic Flyway provides critical nesting and breeding habitat for countless warblers, thrushes, and other familiar feathered friends seeking a summer home.

However, many species are seeing significant decline in population coincident with changes in forest cover and composition. To combat these trends, Audubon Vermont partnered with the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation to launch Foresters for the Birds, an innovative program that pairs silviculture—the art and science of forest management—with migratory forest songbird habitat needs. By educating foresters, woodland owners, and the public about forest stewardship, program partners are working to enhance the health of our forests, local wood economies, and priority songbird populations.

Vermont has developed a “Birder’s Dozen,” a suite of birds that occupy a range of forest structural niches ranging from shrubs and sapling cover to large, old canopy trees. These birds, in turn, are paired with silvicultural treatments that can be implemented to enhance habitat for these birds and for other species that make a home in a similar forest structure. Materials from Vermont can be found on the Audubon Vermont website, and people can visit demonstration sites to see habitat management in action.

Since the project’s launch in 2008, Foresters for the Birds has spread across New England and to states in the Southeast and Midwest as well. Birds are an excellent “spokesspecies” for telling the story of how forests can benefit from thoughtful management. Understanding the habitat needs of birds also simplifies the sometimes-confusing conversations about the

impacts of climate change on our forests and the birds that call our woods, “home.”

Foresters for the Birds has trained hundreds of foresters in silviculture with birds in mind. Some of the basic bird-friendly management strategies that can be implemented on most woodlands include:

- Create/Enhance Vertical Structure
- Limit Management Activities During the Breeding Season
- Keep Forest Buffers Along Streams
- Retain Overstory Trees When Harvesting
- Retain Deadwood
- Soften Edges Between Habitats
- Minimize Linear Openings
- Maximize Forest Interior
- Retain Early Successional Forest Habitat

Many of these recommendations go hand-in-hand with a thoughtful forest management plan that captures the woodland owner’s values. Above all, creating and enhancing vertical structure in the forest—rich cover in the understory, mid-story, and overstory—through a well-planned harvest can provide the diversity of habitat niches that forest songbirds need to grow their populations.

To learn more and explore downloadable resources, visit <http://vt.audubon.org/foresters-birds> and consider signing up.

Stream Reveals Unexpected Fish Population

by *Renée D’Aoust*

We didn’t think our creek had any fish because a section goes dry every summer. But looks are deceiving. Recently scientists conducting field surveys in our area confirmed that we do have trout. This is a Class I stream, and as such, certain rules and regulations apply. As a private landowner, I believe it is important to support the health of this creek. In addition to other factors, this means not logging directly next to it.

Unfortunately, though, years ago, I made the mistake of clearing small spindly Grand firs and hemlocks within a ten-foot margin of the stream bed. I hadn’t kept track of where I was, which is terrible, because one should look up, down, and around when using a power tool, but I was pushing forward with my brush saw, and I ended up right alongside the creek bed.

The following year, I tried planting a few incense cedars (*Calocedrus*) to atone for my mistake. For a year, I thought they might take, but when I walked here recently, I didn’t see any sign of those cedars. So this is just a brief cautionary tale to remind us to pay attention and delight in our small streams and waterways.

Mission Statement

The Women Owning Woodlands web project strives to bring topical, accessible, and current forestry information to woodland owners and forest practitioners through news articles, blogs, events, resources, and personal stories. We support women in forest leadership, women who manage their own woodlands, and all who facilitate the stewardship of forests. The web address is: www.womenowningwoodlands.net





NWOA and ALC: Working Together for Common Goals



Northern California Hosts American Loggers Council Annual Meeting

The American Loggers Council (ALC) held its 21st Annual Meeting in Eureka, California, in late September, attended by more than 250 attendees including loggers and sponsors who have helped support the work of the Council.

The three-day conference included a logging tour, technical sessions, business meetings and awards presentations. Technical sessions included presentations from Mike Rose with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers on how the ALC and the union can work together on issues of mutual interest, such as seeking to preserve jobs and industry in the United States.

Jimmie Locklear with Forestry Mutual Insurance and several other insurance representatives discussed the issues they face when trying to insure log trucks and the need for driver training to keep CSA and safety scores low in order to be able to provide insurance.

Nick Smith addressed the work that he has done with the Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities program, and a panel that included NWOA president Keith Argow, Dan Tomacheski with Sierra Pacific, and Jim Dudley with the Swanson group who discussed what their respective organizations were looking for when hiring a contractor in today's market, as well as the concerns that they have with logger attrition and their ability to seek out loggers for hire.

According to Argow, family woodland owners have a difficult time locating qualified loggers, and when they do they may find themselves on a wait list.

The fact is that loggers with good business practices and a reputation for being careful, especially with residual trees in a thinning cut, are usually contracted in advance by larger landowners who can guarantee them nearly fulltime employment.

Loggers with good and reliable

equipment usually have purchased those on credit with large monthly payments. These requirements do not meet the needs of woodland families who only log periodically. One of the reasons NWOA recommends the use of a professional forester when selling timber is that finding a suitable logger is one of the services they provide, but even this does not always work.

Since 1986, when NWOA adopted the 12 point Woodland Responsibility Code, the association as encouraged its members to use only Certified Loggers. That was 30 years ago, and in spite of vigorous efforts by the 28 state and regional logger associations that make up the American Loggers Council, there are still too few trained and accredited loggers available.

Argow appealed to the assembled members of ALC to help NWOA better manage www.findalogger.com which has yet to reach its intended potential as a service to woodland owners.

The logging tour featured a live demonstration of "shovel logging," also known as high lead timber harvesting, which is common in the West. The job was being conducted by a private company on private land, and was a combination of patch clearcuts and selective thinning.

During the closing President's Dinner, President Myles Anderson from Fort Bragg, California, introduced Florida logger Richard Schwab as the new president of the American Loggers Council. He said, "I plan on moving forward with three goals in mind, 1) increasing the visibility of the organization among our peers, 2) reviewing the five-year strategic plan and coming up with ways to make this organization even stronger, and 3) Increasing our presence in Washington, D.C. by making an extra effort to bring more people to the Spring Fly-In to make visits to the Hill."



Logger Myles Anderson hosted the ALC's 2015 Annual Meeting in Eureka, CA.



The Readers Respond.....

talk@nwoa.net

National Woodlands
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Dear Keith:

Congratulations on the first 64-page issue! I read/skimmed it from cover to cover. I have always appreciated the wide variety of topics and news contained for foresters and woodland owners.

I would like to point out a couple of things I noticed that were not correct. I realize these are not peer reviewed articles but one inaccuracy and one inadvertent omission kind of jumped out at me.

In his article about alternative skidding methods, Mark Havel mentioned replanting with "GMO seedlings"—implying that they are used routinely. To my knowledge, there are no developed GMO seedlings except perhaps hybrid poplar, but even these are not widely available.

All improved seedlings available today have been developed using classical tree breeding techniques. GMOs (genetically modified organisms) are being grown strictly on an experimental basis and have not been all that successful.

That inaccurate statement adds to all the confusing information going around suggesting that GMO is a bad thing. That is not necessarily true.

Also, except under experimental conditions we do not "chemically manage competition" as a matter of course in forest management. Chemicals are expensive and at most they would only be used to control vegetation for site preparation to increase seedling survival or to release conifers from overtopping competition. Chemicals are only used one or two times in a tree rotation, which is much different than in agriculture.

Finally, Bryan Wagner makes a good point in his article, "Hurt Is Hurt" by including cut-resistant gloves as part of the woods worker's PPE. However, on page 23 the picture shows a logger cutting a log with no gloves—a pretty serious oversight in my opinion.

Thanks for your efforts. I appreciate them.

Dennis R. Parent
DRP Forestry, LLC
Hayden, Idaho

The Editor Responds: Bryan Wagner did include gloves as part of his recom-

mended personal protective equipment (PPE) for chain saw users. And it's good advice. The logger in the photograph is not required by OSHA regulations to wear gloves, however. Gloves are only required for those loggers handling cable or wire rope, according to the OSHA regs. That photo may have been a poor choice to illustrate that article as written, but it is a reflection of reality, as it depicts a logger observing the rules.

—E.A.J.

Dear Keith:

I have a couple of questions regarding the fire insurance available for forest land as discussed in the Summer issue of *National Woodlands*.

My wife and I own 112.5 acres in north Idaho and I recently had all the property corners surveyed. I would define all of our property as "contiguous" but one 20-acre parcel only touches another parcel at the property corner, i.e., "kitty corner." Does this meet the definition of contiguous? You could walk from one 20 acre parcel to the other 20 acre parcel without leaving my property.

If I had a fire that killed the trees on 20 acres of the ground but the trees still had some merchantable value, does the claims adjuster attempt to figure what the actual loss is in net value or is a "dead tree" a "dead tree"?

As I am sure you know the value of a dead tree is very ambiguous and highly dependent on whether any local mill actually will accept a fire charred log. I also do my own logging and having the time to do it

immediately during fire season would not likely happen for me due to work constraints in my forestry work.

I would like some clarification on these two questions before filling out the insurance application form and I would imagine that other forest landowners may have the same questions.

By the way the Summer issue was a very slick and informative publication that contained much useful information for this Idaho tree farmer and forester. Keep up the good work.

Jim Nichols

Trinity Tree Farm
Saint Maries, Idaho

Jim, yes, a common corner is "contiguous." How insurance adjusters make their decisions is unknown, but I do know they try to be fair.

—K.A.A.



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News from the Regions



Northeast

Maine Paper Mills Dropping Like Flies

A day after one Maine mill filed for bankruptcy, another one in Old Town announced that it will be closing less than a year after it was restarted, putting nearly 200 people out of work.

The two announcements in one week spell more trouble for Maine's once-thriving paper industry, which already has seen mills close in Millinocket, East Millinocket and Bucksport.

Wisconsin-based Expera Specialty Solutions blamed market conditions for the decision to shutter its Old Town facility, saying that a weak Canadian dollar and depressed pulp prices combined with still-high wood prices in Maine to create a tailspin.

"The combination of these forces does not allow sustainable operations even with a dedicated and talented team of employees," said Russ Wanke, president and CEO of Expera Specialty Solutions.

The Old Town plant supplied pulp to the company's mills in Wisconsin. It will close in December, just shy of a year after the company purchased it.

Democratic Sen. Jim Dill of Old Town

said the shutdown is "a huge economic blow for our region, and devastating news to the mill's workers and their families."

The next day, Lincoln Pulp and Tissue filed for bankruptcy. The operator hopes the Lincoln mill will be auctioned within 45 days to another company that will keep it running.

Gov. Paul LePage, who was holding a town hall meeting in Bucksport, where the Verso paper mill has closed, has urged lawmakers to work with him to redouble efforts to lower energy costs in Maine.

Don Berry, president of the Maine AFL-CIO, said "failed trade policies" are also to blame, causing "a race to the bottom, depressed wages, and undermined American manufacturing."

"Our hearts and prayers go out to the men and women who work at Lincoln Paper and Tissue and at Expera in Old Town," Berry said. "We call on all state officials to remain laser focused on working to find new buyers and keep these facilities open. That should be everyone's top priority," he said.

Boreal Forest Warning

International forestry experts are warning policy makers all over the world to make sure to check into the protection policies for boreal forests. In fact, they made this note in an article that was published recently in the journal *Science*, an article that was part of a special journal issue on global forests which was released just prior to the World Forestry Congress, to be held in Durban, South Africa.

"Boreal forests have the potential to hit a tipping point this century," explains Anatoly Shvidenko, who is a research scholar with the Ecosystems Services and Management Program at Austria's International

Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA). He continues, "It is urgent that we place more focus on climate mitigation and adaptation with respect to these forests, and also take a more integrated and balanced view of forests around the world."

Additionally, IIASA representative Dmitry Schepaschenko notes, "The changes could be very dramatic and very fast."

In response to Schepaschenko's remarks, Bob Weber of *The Canadian Press* reported: "Although it [the boreal forests] remains largely intact, it faces the most severe expected temperature increases anywhere on Earth. Schepaschenko said some parts of Siberia are likely to eventually become 11 degrees Centigrade warmer. That will bring greater precipitation, but not enough to compensate for the dryness caused by hotter weather. A drier boreal forest will suffer new diseases, insect infestations and vast wildfires."

Schepaschenko further commented that the trees cannot move any further north, to reach the cooler climates. "The forests can't go so far to the north. The speed at which forests can move forward is very slow, like 100 metres a decade," he said.

Wood-Burning Power Plant Goes Online in Berlin, NH

A new biomass plant in Berlin, New Hampshire is finally producing electricity for Public Service of New Hampshire under a controversial 20-year contract that a report says will cost PSNH ratepayers \$125 million more than if the electricity was purchased on the open market.

That estimate came from the consulting firm of La Capra Associates which did the report for the state's Public Utilities Commission as part of a wide-ranging review of PSNH's operations.

In a statement PSNH said the La Capra report isn't a sure thing because its conclusions are "highly dependent on a number of issues that are uncertain and difficult to predict—the future price of gas, the retirement of other power plants, and new infrastructure develop-



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ment, among other things."

But La Capra's conclusions are not unfamiliar to PSNH. The La Capra report echoes warnings the Public Utilities Commission staff and the state's Office of Consumer Advocate made in 2011. That's when the three PUC commissioners considered testimony and dozens of documents as they were considering whether to approve the contract.

The PUC staff estimated over 20 years the contract would cost ratepayers at least \$140 million more than if PSNH bought electricity at market prices. In return, the PUC staff said, there would be "what amounts to a modest boost in the economy of the North Country."

"It looks like there is a really significant risk that customers would be locked into making those over-market payments," Meredith Hatfield, who headed up the state's Office of Consumer Advocate, said at the time.



Minnesota Timber Industry Facing Numerous Threats

Minnesota is losing its timber industry. Seven major forest products mills have closed in the past six years. Numerous sawmills have closed. One mill has taken two paper mill lines off production and eliminated hundreds of jobs. Timber harvest volume is down by at least 35 percent. Many multi-generational logging companies have gone out of business. Thousands of acres of public and private land are not accomplishing their forest management objectives.

Recent studies have strongly warned of irreversible threats to the long-term viability of the timber industry if the business model and industry/public policies are not changed. *Timber Harvesting* magazine published a report "2011 Logging Business Survey: Big Squeeze," which illustrated that due to the razor thin profit margins, low mill prices, high fuel costs and other expenses over half (51 percent) of the logging businesses nationwide are operating at a loss or at best break-even. The largest percentage of profitable logging operations

(21 percent) are operating on a one to three percent profit margin.

The Wood Supply Research Institute published a report "Supplier/Consumer Relationship Study—Lakes States Region Report" which interviewed loggers (suppliers) and mills (consumers). The number one issue of concern with loggers was, "An inability to earn a decent return on investment for their harvesting or trucking businesses." In conclusion the study found that, "The industry is at a critical turning point."

Iowa State Nursery Faces Uncertain Future

Changing land use patterns and economic realities have forced the Iowa Department of Natural Resources to consider shutting down its nearly 80-year-old state forest nursery.

In the late 1990s the nursery, with plots in Ames and Montrose, was raising and selling more than four million tree and shrub seedlings per year, according to State Forester Paul Tauke.

Driven in part by shrinkage of the Conservation Reserve Program, demand since has fallen to about one million seedlings per year, and the DNR is losing more than \$500,000 a year on the nursery operations, Tauke said.

"We are supposed to cover our costs. We are examining alternatives because financially we have to," he said.

One of those alternatives—potential agreement with Iowa Prison Industries (IPI)—could ensure the continuation of an institution that has produced more than 150 million trees and shrubs to enhance the state's environment.

"We are hopeful that we can make it happen," IPI Director Dan Clark said.

Calling the nursery "a pretty important program for inmates," Clark said from 25 to 50 minimum security inmates work on a seasonal basis at the Ames facility and another 10 to 15 work at the Montrose facility, just a few miles south of the state penitentiary in Fort Madison.

"It's a very good work training program," he said.

"Don't Haul Firewood" Michigan Extension Warns

As Autumn approaches with its shorter days and frosty weather, the winter heating and hunting seasons are upon Michigan. Given that Michigan is a heavily forested state, many people still use firewood to partially or totally heat their homes and hunting camps. In the late summer and early fall many

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homeowners who burn firewood begin to gather and replenish their supply of wood for the upcoming cold months. Often, people are unaware while cutting and moving firewood around, that there is also the risk of moving unwanted forest pest problems.

For example, while it may be tempting to haul firewood long distances from your home to your hunting camp along with all your other hunting gear, Michigan State University Extension recommends that you leave that firewood at home instead. Because of the extensive spread of certain forest pests such as emerald ash borer, beech bark disease and others that is currently happening in Michigan, people may unexpectedly transport these pest problems to new locations with firewood.

Wisconsin Buys Rec. Easement On 65,867 Acres of Timberland

The second phase of an easement that permanently secures public recreation on 65,867 forest acres in Douglas, Bayfield, Burnett and Washburn counties has been approved by the Wisconsin State Natural Resources Board.

In the second phase, the Department of Natural Resources will acquire an easement from the Lyme St. Croix Forest Company on 21,189 acres at the price of \$5.6 million. The board approved the first phase of the transaction, consisting of 44,678 acres at a cost of \$11.26 million, in June of 2012. The DNR applied for and received \$3.75 million in federal Forest Legacy Program funding for the second phase of the purchase. The remainder of the funding will come from the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program.

Together the properties will be known as the Brule-St. Croix Legacy Forest, because the property is located at the headwaters of the St. Croix and Bois-Brule rivers in the state's northwest sands area. The entire project contains 80 small lakes and ponds, 14 miles of streams, and a globally significant Pine Barrens habitat.

"This purchase assures that all future generations can enjoy hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, skiing, bird-watching, snowmobile trails, portions of the North Country Trail," said DNR Secretary Cathy Stepp. "At the same time, the land remains in private ownership, on the tax rolls and will be managed sustainably for forestry purposes. It's a win-win for everybody that will help maintain the celebrated forested character of the north."

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Mid Atlantic



New York's 480a Tax Law Could Face Significant Changes

The Associated Press reports that thousands of landowners could lose tax breaks as New York regulators consider changes to a program that rewards property owners for good forestry practices.

Charles Stackhouse, president of the New York Forest Owners Association, a NWOA affiliate, told the AP that numerous landowner groups are opposing the Department of Environmental Conservation's proposed changes to the "480-a" forest tax law and have reached out to legislators about it, the *Glens Falls Post-Star* reported.

Some of the changes would increase expenses for landowners, who would face more red tape and high fees to have their management plans certified, Stackhouse said.

One of the proposed changes would squeeze out those who own fewer than 1,000 acres. The current minimum is 50 acres. Another proposed change would limit the maximum assessment reduction to 40 percent. Chris Gearwar, owner of Lake George Forestry, told the newspaper he knows of some local woodland owners who qualify for breaks of up to 80 percent now.

There could also be changes in the types of eligible land.

The agency says part of the rationale is to protect the interest of taxpayers who absorb the tax shift that results from assessment reductions to others. DEC told the newspaper the agency has discussed "conceptual reforms" and is considering feedback before deciding how to proceed.

New York state is 63 percent forested, with 74 percent of the state's 19 million acres of forest privately owned, according to DEC.

The state enacted the 480-a tax law in 1974 to encourage the long-term management of productive woodlands where timber is harvested according to a plan prepared by a professional forester.

West Virginia Publishes BMP Guidelines for Loggers

West Virginia has announced the online availability of its Best Management Practices (BMP) booklet. It can be downloaded at www.wvforestry.com.

The Logging Sediment Control Act (LSCA), West Virginia Code 19-1B, mandates the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to limit and control erosion and soil movement into streams.

While intended primarily for loggers, the recommendations represent advice that forest landowners should familiarize themselves with. This will allow them to monitor BMP compliance on their land during a timber harvest or other silvicultural treatment.

The silvicultural BMPs recommended in this booklet are the most commonly used. Although situations will arise that require custom or alternative practices to minimize erosion and sedimentation as mandated by the LSCA, West Virginia Code 19-1B-7(g) requires that BMPs be used to control erosion and soil movement into streams. The primary goal of BMPs is to limit erosion and sedimentation by handling water in small amounts.



Heartland Region

Indiana DNR's Strategic Plan Comes Under Fire in Public Meetings

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry recently hosted a series of public meetings to discuss its proposed strategic plan. The document establishes the direction of the state forests for the next five years.

At the first public meeting in Indianapolis, the crowd complained about the lack of opportunities to comment on the proposal.

Jeff Stant, Indiana Forest Alliance Executive Director, says environmental groups and Hoosier taxpayers, who own the forests, have been left out of the process.

"These are the only meetings that DNR has agreed to hold for the public. They asserted that they've been holding additional meetings, but we aren't aware of any meetings that they've been holding for the public," Stant said.

John Seifert, Division of Forestry director, says the process his department is following is very similar to what it did for the last strategic plan.

“What we did is we actually announced the plan, if my memory serves me correct, about in April of 2015. And then we’ve had dialogues with people. We’ve had a stewardship meeting, I believe it was in June or July. We reached out to a number of constituent groups, offered to come to their boards of directors or whatever and have conversations about issues,” Says Seifert.

Seifert says the most significant changes in the proposal are the addition of fees for access to the state forest and more recreational opportunities at some locations.

Critics argue the plan is too focused on logging. It maintains timber harvesting levels at 14 million board feet each year for the next four years. They also say the plan allows for more clear cutting and provides for too much development.

The last plan expired in 2013. Stant and the leaders of six other environmental organizations sent a letter to the head of the DNR asking for more time for public comment.

Updated Handbook For Kentucky Forest Landowners

The Mountain Association for Community Economic Development (MACED) has released an updated version of the Kentucky Forest Landowner’s Handbook. Copies may be obtained through the website *maced.org*, where chapters from the handbook can be downloaded

The Kentucky Forest Landowner’s Handbook website is designed to help property owners better understand their forest and develop a management plan suited to their specific interests, goals and financial requirements, according to MACED.

It is suitable for all private forest landowners, whether interested in harvesting wood products, earning income from non-timber forest products (such as herbs and mushrooms), managing for wildlife, recreation or tourism opportunities, or all of the above. This handbook, MACED says, aims to help all private forest landowners make smart decisions about their resources.

The Kentucky Forest Landowner’s Handbook and website is offered at no charge to Kentucky landowners courtesy of MACED with partial fund-

ing through a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under §319(h) of the Clean Water Act.



Southeast


Virginia Riparian Tax Credit

The Virginia Woodlands Association (NWOA affiliate) reminds members that for the past 15 years, woodland owners who maintain a “riparian buffer” are able to claim a credit equal to 25 percent of the value of timber that was not harvested to protect water quality. Contact VWA at *www.viriniawoodlands.org* for details.

Total Ash Quarantine For North Carolina

Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler recently signed an emergency order expanding the quarantine for emerald ash borer to include the entire

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state, following the discovery of borers in several more counties across the state.

"We have surveyed the state to see if we could find evidence of this highly destructive pest in previously undetected counties," said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. "Our staff have now turned up evidence of emerald ash borers in the central, eastern and western parts of the state, including areas near the borders with Virginia, Tennessee and South Carolina."

The quarantine allows for the in-state movement of hardwood firewood and plants and plant parts of the ash tree, including living, dead, cut or fallen, green lumber, stumps, roots, branches and composted and uncomposted chips. However, movement of these items outside the state into non-quarantined areas would be prohibited. Firewood that has been treated, certified and labeled in accordance with federal regulations can be moved outside the quarantine area.

North Carolina becomes the 15th state in the country with a statewide quarantine. The beetle was first detected in the United States in Michigan in 2002.

South Carolina Celebrates Forestry's Significant Economic Impact

South Carolina Forestry Commission officials recently announced the economic impact of the forest products sector in grand fashion, unveiling a large wooden sign representing the industry's \$18.6 billion contribution to the state's economy.

The new economic impact figure was revealed at a statewide meeting of forestry professionals organized by the SCFC, the South Carolina Forestry Association and forest industry allies.

While the updated figure was the main attraction of the meeting, other highlights of a recent economic analysis show that South Carolina forestry represents the state's number one manufacturing sector, in terms of jobs (90,320) and labor income (\$4.5 billion). Forest products is the number one export commodity from the Port of Charleston, at \$1.5 billion. Timber is the number one agribusiness crop, totaling \$759 million.

A day long program of speakers addressed other forestry-related economic issues, including a damage report update from the February 2014

ice storm, the establishment of a forest products marketing program, and the overall U.S. economic outlook.



Gulf South

Wood Approved in Georgia For School Construction

Georgia Governor Nathan Deal recently signed legislation that allows for greater use of wood materials in public school facilities, providing K-12 schools throughout the state with alternative, cost-effective, and sustainable design options.

Senate Bill 301, sponsored by Senator Fran Millar, R-Atlanta, removes language from the Georgia Department of Education (DOE) Guideline for Educational Facility Construction that prohibited the use of light wood framing (or wood stud partitioning) and ordinary wood construction. The bill provides



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school administrators and design professionals with the option to use wood materials as a design alternative—a standard that is readily accepted in the International Building Code.

“Removing any barrier to the use of wood grown by Georgia landowners and milled by Georgia manufacturers is good for the forestry economy and the continued sustainability of Georgia’s timberland,” Georgia Forestry Association (GFA) President Steve McWilliams said. “This new option could save taxpayers a significant amount of money and create more sustainable structures while making use of a Georgia-grown renewable resource.”

Wood-constructed schools meet the current standards for safety while providing many needed advantages related to cost, speed of construction, design flexibility, energy efficiency and sustainability. In recent years, states such as Arkansas and South Carolina have removed similar bans and have uncovered huge savings.

Landowner Assistance in Florida

State agencies in Florida recently took action to reduce the regulatory burden on private forest landowners

who help benefit the state’s protected wildlife species. For example, forest landowners who have demonstrated compliance with the recently recommended Wildlife Best Management Practices (WBMPs) are not required to obtain a permit authorizing the incidental take of State Imperiled Species associated with their operations.

In response, researchers at the University of Florida/IFAS, School of Forest Resources and Conservation are investigating how landowners will benefit from this program. They have developed a survey that will ask Florida forest landowners questions about:

- Opinions about government interventions on private forest lands;
- Preferences for programs that reduce regulatory pressure and your management costs;
- Silvicultural operations and activities; and
- Costs associated with management actions that benefit imperiled wildlife species.

The survey can be taken anonymously online by visiting www.floridaforestry.org.



South Central

More Arkansas Counties Find Emerald Ash Borer

Calhoun, Union, and Bradley Counties in Arkansas have been added to confirmed sites of the emerald ash borer (EAB). Original counties with confirmed sites included: Clark, Columbia, Dallas, Hot Spring, Nevada and Ouachita. The emerald ash borer is an invasive insect that feeds on and eventually kills ash trees that are infested.

An ash quarantine was established in September of 2014 by the Arkansas Plant Board. The 25-county area included in the quarantine originally encompassed Calhoun, Union, and Bradley Counties. The quarantine, to date, has not changed. Traps have been placed outside the quarantined counties to monitor possible spread outside those boundaries.

EAB expansion into additional counties has been confirmed by positive trap findings and/or Plant Board inspections based on homeowner sightings. An expansion of the quarantine is possible, and will directly depend upon EAB trap findings.

Quarantined items continue to include firewood of all hardwood species, and the following ash items: nursery stock; green lumber with bark attached; other material living, dead, cut or fallen including logs, pulpwood, stumps, roots, branches, mulch and composted/uncomposted chips (one inch or greater). Firewood is the only quarantined item that relates to all hardwood; all other quarantined items are relative to ash, only.

Timber Theft Conviction in Texas

A Walker County, Texas timber buyer has received a guilty verdict of timber theft. Conviction carries a possible sentence of a fine as high as \$10,000 and five years of supervised probation plus 120 hours of community service plus spending 180 days to two years in a state prison.

The court found Johnson guilty of stealing an estimated \$16,000 worth of timber from the Nancy Vordahl Estate. Johnson contracted to harvest the

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timber from an adjoining landowner but crossed a marked property line belonging to the estate. The property line marked with flagging prior to the harvesting operation is located on the back side of the tract. According to Texas Forest Service Law Enforcement Officer Clint McElyea, a timber broker working with Johnson testified that he marked the tract before the harvesting began and that there was "absolutely no possible way to get over the line."

"The hardest thing to prove in a timber theft case is intent," said McElyea, "but in this case the property line had been clearly marked." The cutting of the trees on the adjoining property had stopped at no particular boundary line, resulting in 15 to 20 acres being cut on the wrong tract.



Southwest

Arizona Turns to Forestry To Help Prevent Wildfire

Six new forestry projects announced in Arizona are designed to help the state avoid fire losses in the future. It was part of the recent two-day Healthy Forests, Vibrant Economy Conference in Scottsdale, attended by 300 leaders in forestry, business and government.

The conference was sponsored by the Salt River Project, the largest

provider of water and power in the state. Project spokesman Jeff Lane said protecting the forest is crucial to ensuring a clean, ample water supply. "You have a lot of this silt and sediment that comes down from burnt-out forest areas," he said. "Rain just washes that sediment into the reservoirs."

The six projects will thin out overgrown forests, work to decrease erosion and sedimentation, improve wildlife habitat and fix trails near Stoneman Lake, McCracken, Oak Creek, Red Flat, Black River and the West Pinto Trail.

The money comes from the Northern Arizona Forest Fund, a partnership between SRP and the National Forest Foundation, working with the U.S. Forest Service. The city of Phoenix recently pledged \$600,000 for the fund, and Lane said he hopes others will follow the city's lead. "It provides an easy way for businesses and residents to invest in the lands and the watersheds that they depend on."

Impact of Fire on Soil A Growing Concern in California

California's forestland has experienced a dramatic increase in the number of high-intensity forest fires. In the past few years, the acreage of severely burned landscape has increased from an average of 20 percent to more than 30 percent since the mid-1980s. Severe high-intensity fires can destroy the foundation of a healthy ecosystem: the soil.

While low-intensity fires, which are natural to the landscape, can help renew a forest by providing nutrients to the soil, spreading seeds for regrowth, and replenishing vegetation, severe

fires accomplish none of these things.

Healthy soil absorbs water and much-needed nutrients to grow plants and trees. When soil is burned at high intensity, organic matter, which recycles nutrients and binds soil particles together, is incinerated and lost. The waxy residues created by these high-intensity fires increase runoff, allowing rain to carry away vulnerable topsoil. Severe fires can impact the soil's water-holding capability and coniferous regeneration potential for decades.



Rocky Mountain

"Wood Torrefication" Comes to Kansas

Five years ago, a group of companies in the Topeka and Meriden, Kansas, area started a business called Konza Renewable Fuels to focus on commercializing wood torrefaction technology. They are reportedly now in the process of fabricating the equipment for their first sale of this wood-based wood fuel.

Thompson Dryers and Ernest Spencer Companies joined forces to create Konza Renewable Fuels LLC in early 2010, and later that year fired up a pilot-scale torrefaction unit to produce torrefied product.

"In 2009, we started looking into torrefaction and trying to determine whether



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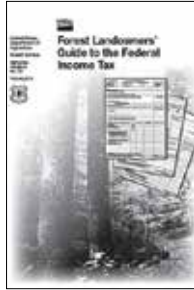
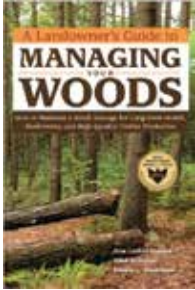
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or not we wanted to get involved in that industry," said Ted Thompson, CEO of Thompson Dryers and administrator with Konza Renewable Fuels. "We came up with a couple of different ideas and designs that we wanted to do, and then we went about finding some partners to work with on it."



Gypsy Moth Traps Yield Growing Numbers of the Pest

After six straight years of single digit detections, the Oregon Department of Agriculture has trapped 14 gypsy moths this summer including two Asian gypsy moths in the Portland area. The results signal an increased concern of the threat posed by the plant-eating invasive species and has prompted an evaluation of next steps to deal with the insect pest.

"This is an exceptionally destructive insect that would change the health of our forests, making them far more vulnerable to other invasive plant issues, causing a loss of foliage on trees as well as damaging agricultural-related industries that would face quarantines should the gypsy moth get established," says Clint Burfitt, manager of ODA's Insect Pest Prevention and Management Program.

After placing approximately 15,000 traps statewide this spring, ODA has found seven gypsy moths near Grants Pass in Josephine County, five in the greater Portland area, one in Forest Grove in Washington County, and one in West Linn in Clackamas County.

Perhaps most significant is the detection of Asian gypsy moth—one in Forest Park, the other near St. Johns. The other 12 moths are the more common European strain of the insect.

Asian gypsy moth is potentially a much more dangerous insect. Unlike its European cousin, the female Asian gypsy moth has the ability to fly, which could lead to a more rapid infestation and subsequent spread. The Asian gypsy moth also has a larger appetite for what grows in Oregon, including a taste for conifers.

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Claims Illustrations:

Landowner A owns 33 acres of standing timber mostly comprised of mature hardwoods. Landowner A selects a limit of \$25,000 to protect his timber stand from fire damage and subsequent reforestation cost. A lightning strike causes a fire and burns 10 of the 33 acres. The actual cash value the adjuster comes up with for the 10 acres is \$18,000. In this scenario the most Landowner A would receive for his claim is \$7,500 or the per acre maximum of \$750 per acre based on the overall limit chosen of \$25,000. (Subject to deductible)

Landowner B owns 33 acres of standing timber mostly comprised of young pine trees. Landowner B selects a limit of \$25,000 to protect his timber stand from fire damage and subsequent reforestation cost. A lightning strike causes a fire and burns all 33 acres. The actual cash value the adjuster comes up with for the 33 acres is \$22,500. In this scenario Landowner B would receive the entire value of \$22,500 because it is less than the per acre maximum based on the overall limit chosen of \$25,000. (Subject to deductible)

Higher limits and additional perils can be purchased upon underwriter review. If you have any questions or concerns please contact Outdoor Underwriters at 1-866-961-4101.

Application

- Complete the questions below.
- Calculate the premium charges according to the premium calculation area at the bottom of this column.
- Return this form, completed and signed along with your check made payable to **Outdoor Underwriters, Inc.; 140 Stoneridge Drive; Suite 265; Columbia, SC 29210**. Any application that is received after the desired effective date will have an effective date 30 days after the payment was received and a corresponding approval from Outdoor Underwriters, Inc.
- Upon receipt of your completed application and payment, Outdoor Underwriters, Inc., will send a Certificate of Insurance to you.
- This policy provides coverage for Standing Timber at the locations described in the policy with respect to the peril of fire. The valuation basis in the event of a loss takes into account both merchantable and non-merchantable timber.

Please note that this policy does not cover the burning of slash.

NWOA Member ID # (above your name on newsletter mailing label): _____

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State & Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: (____) _____ Mobile Phone: (____) _____

Email Address: _____

Location of Timber (County, City, State, Zip Code, or coordinates): _____

Tract # 1 - Type of Trees: _____

Age of Trees: _____ # of Acres: _____

Please choose one of the following limits.

Effective Date: January 1st to January 1st June 1st to June 1st

Fire Damage Limit	Per Acre Limit	Deductible Amount	Premium Amount	
<input type="checkbox"/> \$2,500	\$500	\$500	\$15.00	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> \$5,000	\$500	\$500	\$30.00	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> \$25,000	\$750	\$1,000	\$110.00	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> \$50,000	\$1,000	\$1,000		
<input type="checkbox"/> \$100,000	\$1,000	\$5,000		

Subject to underwriting review

Application Fee \$ 5.00

Total Due: \$ _____

Application Signature: _____ Date: _____

▶ I own more than 200 acres or have land in multiple tracts and would like to discuss my coverage options with an underwriter. PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE PAYMENT IF YOU CHECK THIS BOX.

Binding is subject to 30 days after the receipt of payment along with your signed application and underwriting approval.

IF YOU DO NOT HEAR FROM OUTDOOR UNDERWRITERS WITHIN 30 DAYS, PLEASE CONTACT NWOA

DO YOU REALLY NEED WOODLAND LIABILITY INSURANCE?

This Top Rated Insurance—A M Best Rating “A” Provides “peace of mind” at a “best buy” price.

The decision whether or not to buy additional woodland liability insurance is a personal choice. Many landowners have not given it much thought, believing that any liability that may occur on their woodlands is already covered by their homeowners or other insurance. You should think about this.

Check to be sure you are in fact covered. Get it in writing if you can. With the low cost (\$150/year for up to 535 acres) with no deductible, many agents recommend this group policy as well.

WHAT DOES THE NWOA WOODLAND LIABILITY INSURANCE COVER?

We cover the liability of the landowner(s) in whose name the land is listed for any acts of negligence for which you are found to be legally responsible, whether you knew it or not.

- NWOA is not in the insurance sales business, but we do have a national Woodland Liability insurance policy as an optional benefit. The risks covered are spread across a nationwide base, which is much cheaper than individual policies. This makes possible the low group rate.
- NWOA researched and approved this master policy because of the excellent service record of Outdoor Underwriters, Inc. and the depth of their experience in the London Insurance Market.
- Participating NWOA members receive a one year Certificate of Insurance within three weeks.
- Lawsuits for damages, real or imagined, are becoming more frequent.
- If you are sued and have this insurance, Outdoor Underwriters contracts with claim adjusters and attorneys with years of experience specific to woodland liability issues.

TWO INSURANCE OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE:

Woodland Liability Insurance—our most popular (includes incidental hunting—trespassers or guests)

Hunt Lease Liability Insurance—the necessary option if you lease your property. Includes falling out of a tree or harm caused to other hunters or other people, even on adjacent land. A “Best Buy” at only 16 cents/acre.

Or the two policies can be combined. See www.NWOA.net and click “Land Insurance”

WOODLAND LIABILITY INSURANCE

INSURANCE APPLICATION: FOR LANDOWNERS ONLY



Woodland Liability Coverage provides legal liability coverage for woodland owners. This coverage is designed to provide general liability protection for owners of woodland who do not lease their land to a hunting club.

- ✔ Comprehensive General Liability
- ✔ Limit of Liability: \$1,000,000 each occurrence; \$2,000,000 aggregate
- ✔ Deductible: none

- ✔ Owners, Landlord & Tenant - Liability Limit to \$1,000,000 per occurrence
- ✔ Special Master policy rating basis. A certificate will be issued to each landowner
- ✔ Liability coverage for the Landowner does **not** provide protection for owned timber.
- ✔ Coverage does not apply to commercial hunting operations including for-profit guided and/or fee hunting.

Named Insured
NWOA member landowner named on the application

Did you find us through a state affiliate promotion?
If so, please staple your ad coupon to your application to ensure credit to your association.

Landowner Name _____ Telephone _____
 Address _____ Telephone (work/mobile) _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____ email _____
(email will not be shared or abused)
 Woodland Location (County, city and State) _____

Please answer the following questions.

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Are locations fenced or posted? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Any lakes or ponds? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Any leased hunting or commercial hunting? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Any dams/spillways/bridges? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>If yes, are Certificates of Insurance required?</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Any property ever used for mining? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Any watercraft or docks? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Any of the property leased for farming? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Any buildings? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <i>If yes, do you ask for a Certificate of Insurance?</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

What is the property used for? _____

Signature of Landowner _____

Premium Calculation - Woodland Liability Insurance

Number of acres to be covered _____ x .28 cents per acre = \$150 minimum
(subject to a minimum premium of \$150 for up to 535 acres)

Subtotal: _____

For your convenience, you may add your NWOA membership (\$35/year **\$45/year sustaining**) _____

Total Payment Due: _____

Please Specify Effective Dates:

- January 1, 2016 to January 1, 2017
- April 1, 2016 to April 1, 2017
- July 1, 2016 to July 1, 2017
- October 1, 2015 to October 1, 2016

Return this form completed and signed along with your check to:

National Woodland Owners Association
374 Maple Ave E. Suite 310: Vienna, VA 22180

WILDFIRE COVERAGE Now Available




Protecting an investment that takes 25 years to mature,
and just 25 minutes to destroy, deserves your attention.
Give us 25 seconds.

MINIMUM PREMIUMS STARTING AT \$15

INSURABLE TIMBER VALUE LIMITS
FROM \$2,500 - \$25,000
(HIGHER LIMITS AVAILABLE)

Insurance programs also available from NWOA/Outdoor Underwriters:

 Hunt Lease Liability
 Woodland Liability
 Tractor & Farm Implements

Standing Timber 
Consulting Forester 
Prescribed Burn Liability 

NWOA.net/wildfire

(703) 255-2700

info@nwoa.net



140 Stoneridge Drive, Suite 265 Columbia, SC 29210

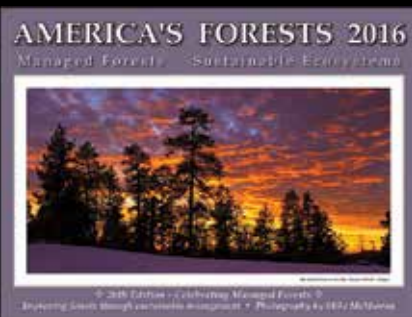


374 Maple Ave. Suite 310 Vienna, VA 22180

**Help NWOA
Do More
With a**

**Tax Deductible
End of Year
Donation**

**Your Investment in Our Work Helps Us
Bring Your Issues To Lawmakers**



NWOA 2016 Wall Calendar

**Donate \$100
and Receive
Both Gifts!**



NWOA 2016 Pocket Calendar

**Call today to pledge at one of our three
levels of support—(800) 410-0010**

Checks and credit cards accepted, make check payable to NWOA



\$500

- 2016 Full Color Calendar
- Leatherette 2016 Pocket Calendar and Note Pad
- Polished Brass NWOA Lapel Pin
- One Book from Forestry Service Bureau
- One 18" x 18" Family Forest Landowners Sign



STEWARD

\$250

- 2016 Full Color Calendar
- Leatherette 2016 Pocket Calendar and Note Pad
- Polished Brass NWOA Lapel Pin



\$100

- 2016 Full Color Calendar
- Leatherette 2016 Pocket Calendar and Note Pad