- Remembering Our Editor Eric Johnson
- Recommendations for the 2018 Farmbill
- An “Old” Blueprint for 21st Century Conservation
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These are four of a PERFECT TEN REASONS to join NWOA!
**REMEMBERING ERIC JOHNSON**

Wonderful Friend, Master Communicator, and Extraordinary Editor

Eric A. Johnson, age 59, died on Tuesday, July 18 following a 7 year bout with cancer which he fought with an ever-positive attitude. Surrounded by his entire family, he passed away after a day of working together on the family tree farm that he loved so much in Coloma, Wisconsin. He was a logger, journalist, and family man, and was born on June 13, 1958 in San Francisco, CA, the son of David C. and Marcia A. (Caudle) Johnson. He graduated High School in Taipei, Taiwan, and attended UW-Stevens Point, and graduated with a degree in Journalism from UW-Madison. While at Stevens Point he met the love of his life, Patricia (Patti) Bove. They were married in Madison on May 5, 1978. His first literary job was as a cub reporter for the Marquette County News.

Following a brief career as a logger, Eric was hired as the editor of the Northern Logger and Timber Processor magazine in Old Forge, NY. He worked for the Northeastern Loggers’ Association (NELA) for almost 35 years becoming widely read forestry magazine in America.

Many of Eric’s own stories recounted experiences in logging and forest management with his father on their family woodlands near Coloma, WI. His most recent article featured the use of drones with cameras as a way to look at the woods from above. He admitted to crashing his drone only once, and his related story included the wry observation of the importance of getting enough altitude to clear the tops of the trees! A fitness advocate, he enjoyed back-country skiing, biking, gardening and, producing prodigious stacks of fire wood for personal home heating.

Eric is survived by his wife Patti of Clinton, NJ, his mother Marcia of Coloma, WI, his two children, Jason Johnson of Duluth, MN and Sarah Johnson-Schulman of San Francisco, CA, his nephew Ryan Devine of Baraboo, WI and his sister Julie Klenko of Coloma, WI. He was preceded in death by his father, David and an infant brother. Private family services were held in Utica.

Keith A. Argow

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**BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU FEAR FOR...**

There is an old adage: “be careful what you wish for.” The implication being that one might get something they wished very much for, and when they got it found they didn’t want it at all. In previous columns, I have commented on President Trump’s intentions to reduce taxes and significantly reorder established federal funding. Although forestry and conservation have not been singled out, I expressed my concern for their future. It was also clear that a growing number of our readers are worried. The “call out” (summary statement) in my last column left little doubt: “As a group, woodland owners are very much aware of the changing conditions, as evidenced by how they voted to rank the Top Ten Family Forestry Issues for 2017.”

Those issues are the result of an annual ranking by the leaders of the National Alliance of Landowner Associations (NWOA’s 42 state affiliates). It is our best effort to gage the feelings of our 18,000 affiliate members.

Always a useful measure, this year the ballots reflected a clear and growing concern for the future of Extension Forestry education programs from the state university foresters, especially those in states whose Congressional delegations include members on important committees, to quickly adopt resolutions in support of the recommendations of the National Association of State Foresters (Google it). NWOA has signed on to those goals, as have many other associations.

**A REMARKABLE EDITOR AND A CLOSE FRIEND**

To be honest, I never feared the loss of Eric Johnson as Editor of National Woodlands. He fought cancer for several years and did so with such a positive outlook that I was beguiled into thinking he would last forever. His abilities in editing, selecting articles, and always finding just the right pictures to illustrate a story are a major reason National Woodlands has grown steadily to become the largest circulation forestry magazine in America.

I acknowledge the wonderful support of our printer, Mercury Publishing, in helping us get this issue to press. As Executive Editor Eric did everything, leaving us with a steep learning curve and a deepened appreciation of what he accomplished. You are sorely missed good friend, and forever warmly remembered.

—KAA
argow@nwoa.net
Forestry in the Farm Bill
Recommendations for the 2018 Farm Bill

Conservation, including forestry, was one of the primary purposes of the first Farm Bill in 1933. A separate title for agriculture extension education was included in 1914. In 2002, the first Forestry Title appeared as a result of vigorous efforts by forestry and related organizations. Now known as the Forestry in the Farm Bill Coalition, NWOA is a founding member. Here are our recommendations for the 2018 Farm Bill.

Keep Forests as Forests

To encourage the retention and perpetuation of forestland and associated values, goods, and services, we recommend:

- Developing a 5-year dedicated National Reforestation Initiative that establishes a priority for such purposes within Forestry Title programs and directs the Forest Resource Coordinating Committee (FRCC) to put together a plan for incentivizing reforestation within priority areas (regions projected to experience forest loss from the pressure of rapid land development, as identified in the USDA Forest Service (USFS) Resources Planning Act Assessment and/or State Forest Action Plans/State Wildlife Action Plans), using Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Farm Service Agency (FSA), and USFS programs.

- Restoring the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)/Agricultural Land Easement Program (ALE) funding level to $500 million annually, through the life of the Farm Bill and modifying the program to:
  - Explicitly include forests, including ownerships that are solely forestland, by allowing the Secretary to waive the current rule, which limits enrollments to no more than two-thirds of property in forest, when the Secretary determines such a waiver is necessary to protect forests with important conservation benefits;
  - Allow the eligibility of land owned by non-governmental organizations on a temporary basis, to facilitate a “buy-protect-sell” model of conservation (vs “buy-sell-protect”);
  - Allow a co-eligible entity process to account for two entities that are typically involved in an easement process: the entity that develops the easement and the entity that holds the easement;
  - Allow forests of special significance, determined by the Secretary, to be eligible for up to 75 percent cost share assistance; and
  - Require forestland projects to have a forest management plan.

- Explicitly include for reforestation purposes of special significance, determined by the Secretary, to be eligible for up to 75 percent cost share assistance; and

- Allow for reforestation purposes of special significance, determined by the Secretary, to be eligible for up to 75 percent cost share assistance; and

- Require forestland projects to have a forest management plan.

First, we must maintain funding and support for forest owners in the two acres of the Farm Bill that advance our management efforts—the forestry and conservation titles. But just ensuring these programs continue to benefit forest owners is not enough. We’re also seeking to improve and expand technical assistance and improve program implementation for woodland owners.

Third, we’re strongly supporting cross-boundary, Landscape Scale Restoration efforts to tackle the countless forestry issues that do not respect property lines. Be it hazardous fuels removal or invasive species management, we cannot allow ownership boundaries to slow down our ability combat these threats. Encouraging willing landowners, while respecting property rights, to undertake management practices with beneficial spillover effects not only better-protects federal lands, but also encourages cooperation among the myriad private, state, and local landowners.

Legislation has been introduced in the Senate already to advance cross-boundary management; the Empowering State Forestry to Improve Forest Health Act of 2017, introduced by Senators Amy Klobuchar (MN) and Steve Daines (MT), is currently awaiting consideration in the Senate. Even still, the Farm Bill remains our best chance to ensure these policies are adopted across the government.

And finally, we want to make sure the 2018 Farm Bill supports a strong and diverse forest products industry that helps grow markets for landowners. We’ve seen successful U.S. Forest Service programs like the Forest Products Lab produce invaluable research on products like Cross-Laminated Timber (CLT), and the expansion of woody biomass markets could only add to our nation’s continued energy revolution.

Take this opportunity to get involved! Urge your state associations to endorse the FIFB Coalition’s recommendations. Connect with your Members of Congress and let them know how valuable these programs are to you. And, if you get the chance, attend one of the listening sessions hosted by the House Agriculture Committee and let them know where you stand on these priorities.

Together, we’ll ensure a vibrant future for forestry in the Farm Bill.

—Rita Hite

Rita Hite as Executive Vice President, ATFS, Woodlands and Policy, for the American Forest Foundation, a strong partner of the National Woodland Owners Association.
Address Fire and Forest Health

To achieve effective long-term protection of forest resources from threats such as wildfires, insects, and disease, we recommend:

- Increasing prescribed fire occurrence on forested lands where appropriate:
  - Authorizing State Prescribed Fire Teams, consisting of prescribed fire oversight and implementation agencies (including federal), relevant stakeholders, businesses and contractors, and landowners (including tribal owners);
  - Establishing a competitive Farm Bill program with a $5 million authorization level to fund innovative strategies and activities to increase the use of prescribed fire on public and private lands; and
  - Encouraging State Prescribed Fire Teams to submit applications to this fund, in competitive funding cycles, for $250,000-$500,000, with a funding match, for 2-3 years.

- Supporting cross-boundary work to reduce hazardous fuels by allowing a portion (20 percent or $20 million, whichever is greater) of US Forest Service wildland fire hazardous fuels funding, when amounts exceed $300 million, to be used by states, private landowners, and non-governmental organizations, for work on cross-boundary projects on non-federal lands, prioritizing high risk areas (modeled after Stevens authority).

- Increasing access to funding for emergency invasive forest pest response before they have a direct impact on trees in North America by amending the Plant Protection Act to clarify the Secretary’s authority to use up to $10 million from existing sources of funds (Commodity Credit Corporation) to deal with invasive species emergencies, including when the immediate threat to agriculture is “indirect” – i.e., urban trees.

- Prioritizing long-term funding for research to restore forest tree species severely damaged by non-native pests within the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture to support research through competitive grants.

- Creating authority for Accelerated Landscape Scale Restoration on National Forest System lands with the following characteristics:
  - Collaboratively designating large landscapes where enabling conditions support restoration at a large scale;
  - Including sideboards that focus work on ecologically-based restoration;
  - Undergoing a full National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review at the landscape level (report language to support NEPA Strike Teams with USFS);
  - Requires consultation take place as the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) progresses;
  - Allowing project implementation without further review provided projects and its impacts are within the scope of the landscape plan analyzed in the NEPA documents; and
  - Applying Healthy Forest Restoration Act judicial review.

- Authorizing State Preregistered Fire Teams, consisting of prescribed fire oversight and implementation agencies (including federal), relevant stakeholders, businesses and contractors, and landowners (including tribal owners);

- Establishing a competitive Farm Bill program with a $5 million authorization level to fund innovative strategies and activities to increase the use of prescribed fire on public and private lands; and

- Expanding land management goals to allow for road maintenance to improve public safety and enhance public access (not to be expanded to road building).

Improve and Streamline Forest and Conservation Programs

To help address all of the issues noted above and, more generally, support active forestry on public and private forests we recommend:

- Allowing the Secretary to waive Adjusted Gross Income limitations for all Conservation Title programs if the Secretary determines such a waiver is necessary to fulfill the objectives of the program and address high priority, high impact conservation projects with multiple resource benefits.

- Increasing payment limitations on Conservation Title programs to reflect changing economic conditions in agriculture and forestry that, if not increased, would reduce program participation.

- Providing continued funding for forest owner assistance for obtaining clear title and estate planning that encourages long-term retention of forest land, through the Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers Program, authorized in Section 2501 of the Farm Bill.

- Codifying the US Forest Service Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) program to support state Forest Action Plans, including establishing a system for measuring results of the Program consistent with systems of other federal programs delivered by State Foresters, allowing levels above a base level of competitive funding (suggestion $14 million) to be allocated for flexible non-competitive projects, and ensuring the competitive portion is higher than the flexible funding portion.

- Modifying the permanent Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) included in the 2014 Farm Bill to allow states to perform road reconstruction, restoration, and repair as part of GNA agreements.

- Improving stewardship contracting authorities by:
  - Expanding to all other federal land management agencies;
  - Allowing up to 5 percent of stewardship retained receipts for planning and NEPA for future stewardship projects within the same region/forest, with an appropriate tracking mechanism; and

- Streamlining forest management plan requirements in conservation programs by:
  - Eliminating the need for agencies to require landowners to have duplicative forest management plans to participate in the USFS Forest Stewardship Program and NRCS programs, and
  - Allowing landowners who utilize an area-wide or landscape-scale multi-ownership plan, developed by or in partnership with state forestry or wildlife agencies, to qualify for USDA Conservation Programs without also needing an individual forest management plan or Forest Stewardship Plan.

- Amending conservation program authority, including RCPP, to allow NRCS to pilot test aggregating financial assistance payments in priority landscapes to a landowner cooperative or similar non-governmental entity, where the aggregation allows leveraging of non-governmental organization and/ or water utility funds for practices that enhance or maintain water quality and quantity from forested landscapes.
Conserve and Enhance Habitat for Forest-Dependent Wildlife
To conserve and enhance wildlife habitat through voluntary conservation activities, particularly habitat for at-risk species, to prevent the need to list species under the Endangered Species Act, we recommend:

- Reauthorizing and providing $12 million in annual mandatory funding for the Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFSP), maintaining HFSP program eligibility within the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, and amending HFSP to:
  - Ensure land that is restored and providing current species’ benefits (as only land to be restored) is eligible;
  - Include habitat conservation for species of greatest conservation need in State Wildlife Action Plans and Forest Action Plans;
  - Ensure forests that already provide suitable habitat but are at risk of conversion are eligible for easements;
  - Clarify that restoration can be achieved through forest management, and
  - Allow tribes to sell permanent easements on lands they own in fee.
- At a minimum, maintaining Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage levels and strengthening and improving CRP’s forest-related components to:
  - Ensure wildlife resource concerns continue to be met throughout the life of the CRP contract by ensuring mid-contract management activities address wildlife habitat goals and objectives in state and regional plans, including State Wildlife Action Plans and Forest Action Plans;
  - Limit re-enrollment of CRP tree practices only for contracts where necessary management activities have been completed to the maximum extent practical, consistent with wildlife objectives identified in State Wildlife Action Plans and State Forest Action Plans;
  - Continue funding for incentive payments for management of existing pine stands, including thinning and prescribed burning, at $10 million;
  - Limit new forest contracts to one re-enrollment (for total of 30 years, maximum), with the option to transition into a working lands program like the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) or Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), while encouraging the agency to maintain forestland acreage enrollment consistent with historic levels, and
  - Target forest enrollment to areas:
    - That are prioritized in large-scale conservation initiatives including State Forest Action Plans, State Wildlife Action Plans, and private sector initiatives; and
    - That have the forest market conditions to sustain management of the CRP acres over the life of the contract and beyond.

Grow Jobs and Rural Economies Through Forestry
To increase rural employment, manufacturing, sustainable forest management, and support a strong forest products industry, we recommend:

- Enacting the Timber Innovation Act (HR 1380/S 538);
- Continuing authority for U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Research & Promotion Programs (a.k.a. “check-offs”) in their current form.
- Maintaining mandatory funding for Rural Development business, housing, and utilities programs and making the programs more accessible to forest-related entities and businesses by broadening the categories of eligible matching funds and clarifying that logging equipment is eligible for loan guarantees.
- Maintaining mandatory funding for the Biomass Research and Development Initiative and the Bio-based Markets Program as important economic development tools in heavily forested regions.

Support Forest Research, Education, and Information Needs
To ensure forest management decisions, on both public and privately owned lands, are informed by the latest science and information, we recommend:

- Directing the US Forest Service Forest Inventory and Analysis Program to incorporate remote sensing technologies when appropriate and to implement a nationwide sample-based assessment design with an annual reporting of results for the Timber Products Output Program. Further encourage the US Forest Service to continue delivering a strong Forest Inventory and Analysis program, with specific focus on meeting the requirements of 20 percent annual plot re-measurement and continuing to implement the National Woodland Owner Survey.
- Reauthorizing McIntire-Stennis and Renewable Resources Extension Act (RREA) authorities, maintaining funding authorization levels, and allowing Tribal Colleges to be eligible for funding under RREA and McIntire-Stennis provided they meet the same requirements as other eligible entities and if funding above current funding levels is provided to accommodate these colleges.
- Requiring 10-year updates of State Forest Action Plans and establishing a funding authorization to assist state agencies and their partners with the plan updates.
First, 60% of the U.S. is privately owned and also contains most of the land and water with the highest values for biodiversity and endangered species. Second, conservation is based on command-and-control, primarily from Washington, D.C. but also state capitals, is outdated and unsustainable due to ignoring or working against six realities.

First, 60% of the U.S. is privately owned and also contains most of the land and water with the highest values for biodiversity and endangered species. Second, conservation is based on command-and-control, primarily from Washington, D.C. but also state capitals, is outdated and unsustainable due to ignoring or working against six realities.

Therefore, command-and-control management has lead to declining forest health and is highly invasive type of conservation known as "command-and-control" because it is "a non-regulatory entity", "has strong ties to the local community and economy", and "has established solid working relationships with local landowners and agricultural producers," according to the program's website.

Unfortunately, the newer, more aggressive and highly invasive type of conservation known as command-and-control is increasingly displacing cooperative extension. If this trend is to be reversed, America needs to realize that its landowners are the key to successful conservation, remove the biggest barrier to effective conservation by abandoning command-and-control, and chart a new course for conservation in the 21st century based on the successful old blueprint called cooperative extension.

Sixth, over the past decade a significant body of scholarly surveys, covering landowners in 19 states, reveal factors that encourage and discourage participation in efforts to conserve endangered species, including that landowners: strongly prefer conservation programs based on incentives and cooperation, instead of penalties and compulsion; possess a strong stewardship ethic; have significant concerns about risks to their property and livelihoods associated with protecting endangered species; believe they should be compensated for conserving species; and very much prefer to have significant management and decision-making authority if they are involved in a conservation program.

Yet command-and-control conservation destroys such relationships because it works against and ignores these six realities. Command-and-control conservation—which relies on severe penalties, locking up property and forcing unlucky landowners to bear the costs of providing what is often regarded as a public good—fosters mistrust, resentment and hard feelings.

America’s landowners are increasingly fearful and resentful of government, especially at the federal level, and groups that support command-and-control conservation. “Disgruntled landowners make poor conservationists,” observed law professor David Farrier, describing a “powerful over the past several decades, through laws the federal government has locked up property and forced unlucky landowners to bear the costs of providing what is often regarded as a public good—fosters mistrust, resentment and hard feelings.”

Unfortunately, the newer, more aggressive and highly invasive type of conservation known as command-and-control is increasingly displacing cooperative extension. If this trend is to be reversed, America needs to realize that its landowners are the key to successful conservation, remove the biggest barrier to effective conservation by abandoning command-and-control, and chart a new course for conservation in the 21st century based on the successful old blueprint called cooperative extension.

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Colorado's Forest Crisis

By Lyle Lavery

Director, Rocky Mountain Region, NWAO
Colorado/Wyoming Society of American Foresters

The conditions of the forests in our beautiful state are not good, in fact they are terrible. The most recent update of forest inventory data for National Forests in Colorado reveal that recent mortality is more than twice the annual growth, over 266 million cubic feet. Simply stated, we are losing more than we are growing.

Active management of Colorado's forests can create a diversity of species, age and size classes, enhancing the ecological integrity and productivity of our forests. Dan Casey, President of the Colorado Timber Industry Association, pointed out the importance of managing these young stands that provide essential habitat for Colorado's wildlife. He believes it is incumbent upon us to implement prescriptions in the Southern Rockies Lynx Amendment for pre-commercial thinning of young lodgepole stands to ensure the continued diversity of this important habitat.

Decisions we make today will have profound implications on the health and resilience of our forests in the future. Choosing to passively manage our forests will lead to unacceptable outcomes for generations of your grandchildren and mine. The impacts of invasive management on our forests are real. Big fires like the Cameron and Buffalo Creek continue to occur unless we actively address the wildfire issue.

Before the Colorado Senate and House Joint Committee meeting on the Annual Forest Health Survey Report February 15, 2017:

- Pine beetle and spruce bark beetle outbreaks. Decades of successful re suppression and other factors have led to unnatural fuel accumulations. Wildfire potential has increased dramatically with large fires of higher intensity fueled by excessive woody material. People love to live in the "wilderness" and have moved increasingly to wildfire prone areas of Colorado. These new settler's dream homes become one of Colorado's worst protection problem in the wildland-urban interface. A mixture of flammable vegetation and homes makes the interface a "design for disaster: When wildfire occur firefighters often have to sacrifice natural resources to same people and homes.

Colorado's forests are in poor health. With active management, these lands can be returned to good health. Active management of Colorado's forest resources will improve the resiliency of these lands, reduce effects of wildfires, create jobs and improve community economies throughout Colorado.

There needs to be active management of Colorado's forests, using all the tools in the toolbox such as expedited NEPA and Good Neighbor Authority. We need strong state government support to help move our forest lands to a more desirable condition, a condition of health and resilience.

We need to think creatively to establish and support markets for our timber resources. Wood competes, unfairly, with other energy sources, sources highly subsidized by you and me. A bold action to show state support for Colorado wood utilization would be for you to require all new building or other projects funded with state funds to use Colorado forest products if they are available. The time is right to rebuild the forest products industry in Colorado with an infrastructure essential to maintaining healthy forests and watersheds. The current atmosphere in the federal government is encouraging the reestablishment of basic industries with high paying family wage jobs. It is time to take advantage of that opportunity.

Your leadership to create an investment environment in Colorado where market forces can properly function will significantly help address our forest health conditions and revitalize Colorado's rural communities. We absolutely need a viable forest products industry in Colorado to address current and future forest conditions. Actively and sustainably managing Colorado's forest resources will create healthy forests, healthy watersheds and healthy communities.
WHAT MAKES NATIONAL WOODLAND OWNERS UNIQUE?

• “Made in America,” 11 million families own half of the forested landscape in the U.S.
• NWOA is the only nationwide forestry organization founded, funded and led by family woodland owners. By design, NWOA is independent of both the forest industry and government. The primary focus is service and education to landowners to promote responsible stewardship. NWOA works closely with industry associations and public agencies to provide a landowner perspective on markets, extension education, tax, fair taxation, forest health wildfire.
• Through the Alliance (see p. 34), NWOA is also a nationwide federation of affiliated state landowner associations and councils. All of them are independent like NWOA.
• NWOA is the only organization to ballot the Top Ten Family Forest Issues in the U.S., every year since 1986. Voting is by the 42 affiliated state landowner associations.
• Half of the NWOA Board of Directors is elected by the State Affiliates.
• NWOA is part of a Washington, D.C. network of forestry associations. (see below)
• NWOA is a fully tax deductible, federally recognized 501c3 organization.

NWOA’S WASHINGTON, D.C. FORESTRY NETWORK

American Forest Foundation
Parent organization of the Tree Farm program, the Forestry in the Farm bill Coalition and Project Learning Tree. AFF is an important NWOA partner;
American Forests
Founded in 1875 as the American Forestry Association that sponsored the first Forest Congress leading to the founding of the U.S. Forest Service. American Forests magazine carries features about the nature of the forest. Annual subscriptions at a special rate are available to NWOA members.
Cooperative Forestry Extension
The nationwide network of forestry extension agents is the best source of good forestry education through field visits, webinars, and training sessions. Adequate support for these programs is NWOA’s #1 advocacy mission. NWOA is a co-sponsor of the annual 4H National Forestry Invitational.
Hardwood Federation
The U.S. is home to the best hardwood forests in the world. NWOA is a member of the Hardwood Federation, a D.C. based advocacy group.
National Association of Conservation Districts
There are soil & water conservation districts providing landowner assistance in every county. NACD is their national association. NWOA is an active partner of the NACD Forestry Committee.
National Alliance of Forest Owners
Organized a decade ago to represent the private investment groups that had recently acquired most of the timberlands sold by the forest industry, NAFO has a focused forest policy staff in Washington D.C.
NWOA is a member of NAFO.
National Association of State Foresters
NWOA works closely with all state forestry agencies. They are a landowner’s first line of defense from wildfire and declining forest health while providing forestry advice and market assistance. State Foresters are important as legislatures debate laws affecting woodland owners.
National Association of University Forest Resources Programs
The state land-grant universities are the home to the state schools of forestry and the cooperative forestry extension faculties. Forestry education is the foundation of successful family woodland stewardship. In partnership with NAUFRP, NWOA presents two annual awards, one for the Outstanding Family Forestry Education Program, and a second award for the outreach project to help woodland owners.

TOP TEN FORESTRY ISSUES, 2017

1. Fair Income, Inheritance & Property Taxes
2. Timber Markets, Biomass & Fair Trade
3. Extension Education & Service Forestry
4. Invasives & Forest Health
5. Right-to-Practice Forestry & Private Property Rights
6. Keeping Forests as Forests
7. Water Quality and Quantity
8. Stewardship Incentives: Cost Sharing & Tax Credit
10. Certification: Woodlands & Service Providers

The National Woodland Owners Association: Who We Are And What We Do

Organized in 1983, the National Woodland Owners Association is a nationwide organization of family woodland owners. Funded through landowner dues and donations, the group is entirely independent of government agencies and the forest industry, but works with both to promote effective legislation and open markets for a lasting Family Forest Legacy.

There are two classes of membership: 1) National Members are eligible for all the benefits of membership (see p. 49), including all four issues of National Woodlands magazine. 2) Affiliate Members belong to one of the 42 State Landowner Associations that are State Affiliates of NWOA. The state associations use NWOA as a Washington D.C contact and as a partnership to exchange information and ideas. Members of the state affiliates receive an annual issue of National Woodlands as a benefit of belonging to their state association.

The leaders of the affiliated state associations perform two important roles in the national association: 1) Elect half of the NWOA Board of Directors (by regions). 2) Select and rank the Top Ten Family Forestry Issues. NWOA is the only national association to use annual voting of this scale to guide forest policy advocacy in Washington D.C. • Access to Forest Markets • Timber and Land Taxes • Right-to-Practice Forestry • Forestry Extension Education have consistently been issues of greatest concern.

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

• Four quarterly issues of National Woodlands, America’s largest circulation forestry magazine. See p. 49 for 20 good reasons to subscribe.
• Optional top rated $1 million Woodland Liability Insurance, only $160 for up to 500 acres. Hunt Club liability insurance also available.
• Effective advocacy of the Top Ten Family Forestry Issues in Washington, D.C. and in 48 state capitals through affiliated state landowner associations.
• Free subscription to Wednesday Woodland Word, a weekly email with landowner advice and news.
• Optional subscription to American Forests magazine for $10/year.

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What We Do

Created in 1875, American Forests is America’s largest circulation forestry magazine. See p. 49 for 20 good reasons to subscribe.

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American Forests magazine carries features about the nature of the forest. Annual subscriptions at a special rate are available to NWOA members.

The nationwide network of forestry extension agents is the best source of good forestry education through field visits, webinars, and training sessions. Adequate support for these programs is NWOA’s #1 advocacy mission. NWOA is a co-sponsor of the annual 4H National Forestry Invitational.
Project Learning Tree and Sustainable Forestry Initiative Join Forces to Expand Youth Environmental Education Programs

Award Winning Environmental Education Program Partners with Sustainability Leader to Reach New Geographies and Audiences Across North America

By Daniel Pellegrmom

WASHINGTON, DC—The Sustainable Forestry Initiative Inc. (SFI) and the American Forest Foundation (AFF) announced today that SFI has become the new home of Project Learning Tree (PLT). PLT is an award-winning environmental education program that uses trees and forests as windows on the world to increase youth understanding of the environment and actions they can take to conserve it. PLT’s integration into SFI provides an opportunity for the program to expand its reach and impact. And SFI’s role as a sustainability leader will be bolstered by PLT’s expertise in education, an increasing focus in the forest industry to support engagement work. PLT was previously housed at the American Forest Foundation.

PLT has consistently received prestigious awards and recognition from leading educational and community organizations. PLT state coordinators, workshop facilitators, and educators have won the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching and the Presidential Innovation Award for Environmental Educators. More than one quarter of U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools are PLT GreenSchools. PLT’s instructional materials are U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools Environmental Educators. More than one quarter of Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science teaching and the Presidential Innovation Award for Environmental Educators. More than one quarter of U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools are PLT GreenSchools. PLT’s instructional materials are recognized for providing high-quality, engaging curricula that integrate science, environmental literacy, and active learning activities that are STEM-focused and inquiry-based.

“We are happy to announce the news that Project Learning Tree has joined Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and, in doing so, become a critical component of SFI’s umbrella program. SFI’s umbrella will further both SFI’s and PLT’s reach in ensuring today’s youth will be effective future leaders with a strong understanding of the value of well-managed forests,” said Laura Downey, PLT Education Operating Committee Co-Chair and Kansas PLT State Coordinator. “Over the years, we have worked closely with SFI to help youth make a commitment to sustainability, and to give them the skills to make responsible decisions about the environment.”

SFI is an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to promoting forest sustainability and supporting the links between sustainable forests and communities through grant programs, carefully targeted research, youth education, supply chain assurances, and partnerships that effectively contribute to multiple conservation objectives. SFI works collaboratively with conservation groups, local communities, youth, resource professionals, landowners and countless other organizations and individuals who share our passion for and commitment to healthy forests, responsible purchasing and sustainable communities. SFI Inc. is governed by an independent three-chamber board of directors representing environmental, social and economic sectors equally. Learn more at sfi program.org.

About the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Inc.
The Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) is a sustainability leader that stands for today's youth can be effective future leaders with a strong understanding of the value of well-managed forests, and this partnership between organizations and individuals who share our passion for and commitment to healthy forests, responsible purchasing and sustainable communities. SFI Inc. is governed by an independent three-chamber board of directors representing environmental, social and economic sectors equally. Learn more at sfi program.org.

About Project Learning Tree®
Project Learning Tree helps develop students’ awareness, knowledge, and appreciation of the environment, builds their skills and ability to make informed decisions, and encourages them to take personal responsibility for sustaining the environment and our quality of life that depends on it. Since 1976, Project Learning Tree has trained 700,000 educators to help students learn how to think, not what to think about complex environmental issues. Learn more at plt.org.

About the American Forest Foundation
The American Forest Foundation (AFF), a forest conservation organization, works on the ground with families, partners and elected officials to promote stewardship and protect our nation’s forest heritage. A commitment to the next generation unites our nationwide network of forest owners working to keep our forests healthy and producing the clean water, wildlife habitat and sustainable wood supplies that all Americans count on from forests.
S
ome 7 million acres of prime sugar and ponderosa timberlands in the Sierra foothills have been killed by an ongoing attack of bark be
tles since 2010. It is a continuing disaster whose magnitude has been lost in the frequent news of wildfires and flooding over the years. Especi-
ally hard hit is Tuolumne County where 39,000 trees suddenly died in 2010. Within six years that number had soared to 7,679,000 dead trees on 437,000 acres.

The impacts on this one county alone are enormous. Dead trees are now beginning to fall onto homes and public property. There have been “near misses” to people, creating a sense of urgency and fear. Roads are occasionally blocked by falling debris, schools have removed trees around playgrounds, and some
high-country subdivisions look like “war zones.” The State of California initiated emergency assistance and several counties created a Tree Mortality Task Force to work with the California Dept. of Forestry & Fire Protection (CALFIRE) and the Office of Emergency Services (OES) to provide relief. Thousands of trees were removed. Some went to sawmills that still had the capacity to turn them into lumber, but most ended up in landfills.

As the emergency operations moved forward the mandatory use of “Right to Enter Permits”, provided by the state OES, concerned woodland owners and homeoweners alike. Hundreds of dead trees along county roads are on private land. Contactors may not come and cut those trees without permission of the landowner. On its face, the permit presented to landowners seems routine. But it is crafted in such a way that provides permanent authority for a public entity to enter the property for reasons other than the current emergency.

Tree removal was proceeding apace when Mark Thornton, a long term member of NWOA, spotted a “Hold Harmless” clause in the fine print. The clause appears to make the landowner liable for anything that goes wrong in the tree removal process, regardless of the responsible party. If that were not enough, the permit is a non-project specific, open ended right to enter for any reason with no sunset clause, and it goes wrong in the tree removal process, regardless of the responsible party. If that were not enough, the permit is a non-project specific, open ended right to enter for any reason with no sunset clause, and it transfers with the title of the land. The OES “Right to Entry” form has all the appearance of a permanent warrant-less search permit.

Thornton, who previously served three terms as a Tuolumne County Supervisor, asked authorities for an explanation of the form and why it was being used. He soon found answers hard to come by and vague at best. He contacted NWOA to ask if we had ever seen such a clause in other states, and we had not. Other landowners were now asking for clarification too.

As more questions came in, the Tuolumne County Supervisors directed the Project Coordinator of the County Tree Mortality Task Force Project, Mike Abrecht, to prepare a background report to provide some answers. Part of Abrecht’s report defined the issue well:

“The most challenging legal issue Tuolumne County has faced centers around obtaining a specific “Right of Entry Permit” required by Cal OES to be obtained from each private landowner prior to performing work (inspections, tree marking, or tree removal) on their property. At face value, obtaining permission from a private landowner for government employees or their agents to enter property to provide tree removal of dead and dying trees seems straightforward. The Tuolumne County Right of Entry Permit process starts with a positive and informative letter to the private landowner describing the need for the permit and what services the county is willing to provide at no cost.

The county letter contains the statement “All contractors working on or near your property will be fully licensed and will carry liability insurance.” Landowners are generally agreeable to the tone and intent of this cover letter. Unfortunately, agreeable often changes to skeptical and/or hostile as soon as they read clause #2 of the Right of Entry Permit itself:

“2. Hold Harmless. County shall not be liable for, and Owner shall indemnify and hold harmless the County, the State of California, Cal OES, and any of their officers, agencies, agents, contractors, subcontractors, employees and volunteers, against any and all claims, deductibles, self-insured retentions, demands, liability, judgments, awards, fines, mechanics’ liens or other liens, labor disputes, attorneys’ fees and court costs (hereinafter collectively referred to as “Claims”), which arise out of or are in any way connected to actions arising out of this Permit, and hereby release, discharge and waive any claims and action, in law or equity, arising therefrom.”

This clause appears to indemnify everyone from anything that might go wrong during the tree removal process, seemingly nullifying the requirement for a county contractor to insure his/her work. The wording of this clause, and the unnecessarily “legalistic” tone of the Right of Entry Permit has created heated debate, and in some cases, landowners refusing to sign the permit. I believe it would be time well-spent for California OES to modify the Right of Entry Permit, making it easier for landowners to understand.”

As National Woodlands went to press, California officials were still looking into the wording, why is was there, and where it came from in the first place. Folks are still waiting for the answer, and the dead trees continue to weaken and fall. National Woodlands will carry a follow-up report when this vexing issue is resolved (or not).
Canadian Federation of Woodlot Owners

(Re-)Introducing the Canadian Federation of Woodlot Owners

Canadian Federation of Woodlot Owners
Fédération Canadienne des Propriétaires de Boisés

By Peter deMarsh

Thank you, Keith, for the invitation to contribute again to this great magazine. It has been a few years since we last reported, so a re-introduction is probably in order.

450,000 families in Canada own private forests, or “woodlots” as we generally call them here.

Of these, about 1000 hold licences to public forest woodlots in British Columbia. Over the years, owners have formed associations in eight provinces. These associations, many of which are themselves federations of local associations, formed the national Federation in 1989 to provide them with a common voice on issues of concern with federal government policy. While most forestry-related policies and programs are the responsibility of provincial governments in the Canadian system, income tax policy, trade negotiations, and some areas of environmental regulation are Federal government responsibilities. Four issues in these areas are getting most of our attention these days.

1. The Softwood Lumber Agreement negotiations

We would like to express gratitude for recent efforts to relieve the “collateral damage” being experienced by woodlot owners. Specifically, we are experiencing significant price reductions for a positive and speedy resolution of this dispute. A Cooperative, best management practices approach to application of the Species at Risk and Migratory Bird Convention Acts

Woodlot owners and License holders respond well to recognition for good work, and to financial incentives and education efforts aimed at improving forest management practices. When restrictive regulations and penalties are used to try to influence our practices, especially if there is a significant impact on management costs, on revenues, and in the absence of appropriate compensation for loss of land or of ability to manage, interest in cooperation is damaged.

Application of the Species at Risk and Migratory Birds legislation is currently under review. When deciding how to apply them to woodlots, we are telling the Federal Government it will have to choose which approach will be most effective in achieving its goals. We have asked the Federal Dept. of Environment and Climate Change to work with us to:

- recognize the proactive efforts of landowners to provide high quality habitat for endangered species and to avoid damage to migratory bird nesting habitat
- support research to broaden the set of management options in which habitat protection and active management are compatible
- develop and promote the use of Best Management Practices for habitat management

- encourage the use of voluntary conservation agreements
- establish uniform scientific criteria with the Provinces for establishing status of species, identification of critical habitat, and measurement of the impact of forest management activities.
- focus first on public land, and only involve private land as a last resort
- establish a process for adequate compensation for woodlot owners impacted by restrictions

2. A Personal Silviculture Savings and Investment Plan

In most parts of Canada, proper forest management of woodlots involves a disconnect between years when planting and thinning should be done, and years when harvesting is appropriate. This disconnect is accentuated after natural disasters or insect and disease outbreaks. In order to recover at least some value from the silviculture investments of previous decades, a woodlot owner or license holder must desperately try to salvage as much damaged timber as possible before decay makes it unsaleable. The resulting spike in revenue has significant income tax implications. The disconnect between revenue from sale of timber and silviculture expenses is unlike the circumstances faced by other small businesses. Some provision exists in Canadian Income tax policy for carrying back or forward a portion of the costs of planting and thinning, but these are limited. This limited ability to deduct expenses from revenue is a major disincentive to increased silviculture and reforestation.

Based on this argument, we have proposed a “Personal Silviculture Savings and Investment Plan” (PSSIP’s) as a solution. Revenue from harvests could be deposited in a registered account similar in structure to a Registered Retirement Savings Plan (the Canadian equivalent of your 401 (k) accounts). Principle and interest would be withdrawn when planting and thinning are required on the woodlot. Appropriate administrative guidelines for PSSIP’s have been discussed for several years with officials from the Dept of Finance and the CRA. We believe there are no practical or technical impediments to our proposal. If PSSIP’s become a tool available to woodlot owners and license holders, they will provide a big incentive for more tree planting and silviculture, with broad benefits for rural development and climate change mitigation.

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4. A Tree-planting and Silviculture program, as part of the Federal Government’s efforts to combat climate change

The Federal government has identified fighting climate change as one of its top three priorities.

Our response has been as follows: we work in our forests on a regular basis so we see the damage being done to forests by extreme weather and increasing insect and disease outbreaks. We also see how our silviculture and tree planting work increases the growth and health of forests.

- A program to vigorously encourage more tree-planting and silviculture will contribute to Canada’s efforts to fight climate change in five ways:
  - As forest growth is increased through silviculture and tree planting, carbon will be taken up from the atmosphere for long-term storage.
  - As this increased forest growth contributes to an increase in sustainable production of timber in the medium and long term, the lumber used in building construction, furniture and other long term wood usage will add to the long term storage of carbon.
  - Increased use of wood for construction and household goods will reduce the Green House Gas emissions from the production of concrete and steel that would otherwise have been used in those buildings and goods.
  - The programs will allow many tens of thousands of Canadians to make a concrete and meaningful contribution to fighting climate change, and in a way which carries a positive benefit for rural economic development; the tradeoffs between the environment and the economy that are frequently encountered in actions related to fighting climate change are avoided.
  - Public awareness of the critical role of forests in fighting climate change will be increased with field day events organized by the associations near urban centers.

These are the main issues the Federation is working on at the present time. Thank you again Keith, for inviting us to share some of our experience as small private forest owners from across your northern border. We look forward to being part of a larger conversation.
Saber-rattling and tariffs slapped on Canadian lumber by the Trump administration are not keeping the chief executive of North America's largest lumber company awake at night.

Saber-rattling and tariffs slapped on Canadian lumber by the Trump administration are not keeping the chief executive of North America's largest lumber company awake at night.

“We’ve had duties put on us and we just reported earnings in the second quarter,” Ted Seraphim, CEO of West Fraser Timber Co. Ltd., said from the company’s head office in Vancouver last week. “So we are under no pressure to settle.”

In fact, U.S. duties are a minor distraction compared with forest fires, Seraphim said.

He was just back from two days visiting four mills that West Fraser shuttered for three weeks. The worst forest fires in the province’s history forced evacuation of 800 families who work at West Fraser. “The fires have been a much bigger worry for me than the softwood lumber dispute,” Seraphim said. “I can’t even compare the two.”

This week the U.S. government announced a — widely anticipated — temporary reprieve from the 20 per cent countervailing duties it imposed in April on lumber from Canada. “Our focus at West Fraser is we want a long term durable deal and if we can’t get one we’re prepared to litigate,” Seraphim said.

Philippe Couillard, premier of Quebec, another big lumber province, said this week that higher lumber prices have raised prices for American consumers buying new homes and hurt U.S., not Canadian, workers. The most threatened jobs by these policies are not Canadian but American jobs in several states, notably in the construction sector,” he said.

West Fraser began operations in 1955 when brothers Sam, Pete and Bill Ketcham bought a sawmill in Quesnel, B.C. Hank Ketcham, the second generation, ran West Fraser until 2013, when Seraphim took over. Ketcham remains chairman, and the Ketcham family retains the majority of West Fraser shares.

From those modest beginnings West Fraser has built a forestry empire in B.C., Alberta and the U.S. south. In July, West Fraser announced a deal to buy the Gilman companies, with sawmills in Florida and Georgia, for U.S. $430 million. With that deal, the U.S. now accounts for 43 per cent West Fraser’s production. West Fraser employs 9,000.

“Great time to be a forest company,” he said.

Shares of West Fraser, with a market cap of US $4.83 billion, have surged 32.7 per cent year-to-date and rose 1.94 per cent to US $63.73 on the Toronto Stock Exchange Tuesday.

“There is much like to like in WFT — good management, an impressive best-in-class lumber margins, a solid balance sheet, EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxation, depreciation and amortization) upside from a recovery in the U.S. housing, and an attractive valuation,” said BMO Capital Markets analyst in a note earlier this month.

Seraphim said Canada should stand up to the United States on softwood lumber, refuse to cut a bad deal, and take the U.S. to court if need be.

“Our focus at West Fraser is we want a long term durable deal and if we can’t get one we’re prepared to litigate,” Seraphim said.

West Fraser employs 9,000.

NWOA is pleased to welcome Claire McAdams as our Southwestern Regional Director. An active member of the Forest Landowners of California (NWOA affil.), she splits her time between the Humboldt redwoods and a real estate practice in Austin, TX.

As a non-industrial (family) forest landowner/manager, I use my environmental sociology training to advocate for regulatory and legislative measures properly scaled for small forest landowners. My family came to own our redwood/Doug-fir forestland in the 1940s, when my great-grandfather and his daughter and son-in-law, my grandparents, saw that the premier-charitable second growth redwoods of Humboldt County, CA, were larger than the trees of the East Texas Pineywoods that my great-grandfather had been milling for decades. Their gamble paid off as the second-growth redwood market grew, and today we harvest annually, sustainably under a Non-Industrial Timber Management Plan with the state of California. Our California forest is sustainably managed and SFC- and ATFS-certified. We manage our forest, doing salmon and wildlife restoration, selective timber harvest, grading of logging slash, and compost production. Through educational tours of our forest for teachers, legislators, and regulatory officials, we try to build public awareness of how key it is that small family-owned forests be economically viable enough that they can be well-managed.

Through visits to our forest throughout my life, including long summer trips to help our son come to love this place, I have come to realize that our forest— and all forests—are key to our planetary survival. The best contribution to our climactic future that I can make, is to enable our forest to remain as working forest forever. Various skills which I picked up as a college teacher (at Southwestern University; College of the Redwoods; and Humboldt State University); Realtor, historic preservationist, property manager, neighborhood association member, and citizen’s commission member in Austin; and not least, daughter learning the ‘politics and diplomacy’ of a family business, have all proven useful in protecting our forest. I ‘citizen lobby’ for estate tax reform and regulatory affordability, both as an individual and with The Buckeye Conservancy, a Humboldt County group advocating protection of working ranches, farms, and forests. I am an officer of Forest Landowners of California, California Women in Timber, and The Buckeye Conservancy. At 64, my life is way too interesting to consider retiring. There is much yet to do and enjoy.

I have come to appreciate and respect the strong educational component of NWOA, and am honored to join its Board and help continue its efforts. I am looking forward to getting to know you and working with you, and thank you for this opportunity to join you.
The state’s recent decision to dissolve Iowa’s Bureau of Forestry should be disconcerting to all Iowans.

Maintaining a visible and strong forestry bureau is important to ensure sound forest conservation and management across the state. Iowa’s 3 million acres of forests and trees provide a diverse and important range of benefits and services to Iowa’s citizens and tourists including wildlife habitat, cleaner air and water, recreation opportunities, increased property values, timber, and wood products, among others.

Through outreach and cooperative programs, the Bureau of Forestry supports and enhances these vital benefits; and, ultimately, promotes the ecological and economic health of communities of all sizes across the state.

Despite the bureau’s excellent work with farmers, landowners, towns and residents, Iowa’s forests, trees and waterways are in trouble. For the first time since the 1970s, Iowa’s forests are being depleted faster than they are being replanted; they lost 192,000 acres from 2009-2013, according to the U.S. Forest Service’s most recent five-year inventory.

Compounding this rapid loss of forests is an already growing threat from invasive pests and an increasingly costly problem with water quality for drinking standards and recreation. Perhaps now more than ever, Iowa needs to focus on investing in the health and sustainability of its forest and tree resources.

Iowa has had more great conservation leaders than any other state in the country. Some examples:

• **“Tama” Jim Wilson** wrote the letter authorizing the U.S. Forest Service.

• **Ding Darling** of Sioux City — the famous editorial cartoonist for the Register & Tribune — was unsurpassed as a national advocate for wildlife programs.

• **Aldo Leopold** of Burlington was the father of game management and the Land Ethic.

• **John Lacy** of Oskaloosa authored the first and still most powerful federal law treaty to control illegal trade in wildlife, and now timber.

• **Buffalo Bill Cody** of Le Claire was quite a conservationist in his own right.

• **Norman Borlaug** of Cresco was the leader of the green revolution, helping feed millions with better crop varieties.

As an Iowa State forestry graduate and Iowa native, I am proud of Iowa’s great tradition and national leadership in forestry and natural resources. By dissolving the bureau, I worry that this legacy will be diminished as quality foresters choose to go elsewhere, and as programs and services are undermined and become targets for future cuts.

With our forests, trees and water supplies facing mounting threats, Iowa needs a dedicated team of forestry professionals to help save these essential resources. Join the Society of American Foresters and me in urging Gov. Reynolds to reverse this decision and restore the bureau and its leadership.
Spruce Mountain Fire Lookout

**Spruce Knob Fire Lookout** in Wyoming is honored as the 1100th listing in the NHLR. This quarter, sites in four states are mentioned. Fire lookouts are the most recognizable symbol of forestry in America. They are important historical landmarks, and of growing value for fire detection in many regions. Even as they age, they are too valuable to destroy.

**Birdnest Fire Tower**, a landmark on US 13 in Northumberland County in the lower Delmarva Peninsula. It is an 80’ Aermotor tower with 7x7 cab built by the Va. Dept. of Forestry and now used for radio communications.

**Heybrook Lookout** is a 55’ wooden tower with a 15’x15’ R6 Flattop cab with catwalk. The site is maintained by the Wyoming Chapter of the FFLA, a Friends Group, and the USFS.

**Barton Knob Fire Tower** is similar in design to an Aermotor tower. It was completely restored by 2002 by the Everett Mountainneers and the FFLA and placed on the Mt. Baker National Forest cabin rental system. Vandalized twice, it is again undergoing repairs and alternative plans for the future.

**Bickle Knob Lookout** is a vintage L-4 cab with catwalk on a 10’ wood tower. It was completely restored by 2002 by the Everett Mountainneers and the FFLA and others.

**Red Oak Mountain Lookout** is a 100’ steel X-B tower features a 732-6A cab. It was originally located in the Wenatchee National Forest. It has been adapted a standard 732-6A cab in place of the previous electronics equipment.

**Ivy Knob Fire Tower** is a simple gable roof and narrow wood slats for siding. Wofford is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Birdnest Fire Tower** is a 100’ Aermotor tower with 7x7 cab. It was completely restored by 2002 by the Everett Mountainneers and the FFLA and others.

**Keeney Knob Fire Tower** was built in 1957 on the San Jacinto Ranger District, the Aermotor MC-39 steel tower is 80 feet high with a 7x7 foot steel cab. The site also includes a wood frame cabin (1935) and storage shed (1937). The cabin measures 12X16 feet, and has a simple gable roof and narrow wood slats for siding. Wofford is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Wofford Lookout** was erected in 1953 by the CCC. Located on the Sacramento Ranger District, the Aermotor MC-39 steel tower is 80 feet high with a 7x7 foot steel cab.
Women Owning Woodlands

We all have something to learn, we all have something to share

By Tiffany Fegel and Oregon State University

Over ten years ago, sitting on a truck tailgate at a forest management workshop, the wife of a woodland owner said, "you know what? We need our own group, one where women of all skill levels feel comfortable sharing and learning from each other!"

And so, a revolution was born!

In 2015, the Oregon Women Owning Woodlands Network (WOWNet) celebrated ten years of being a resource for women who are managers and owners of woodland property. It was all spurred by this conversation around a truck bed with a bunch of women who were discussing how apprehensive they felt at mixed gender workshops.

WOWNet is an Oregon State University College of Forestry and Natural Resources Extension education program which recognizes the growing number of women taking on a wide range of active woodland management roles. The program raises basic forestry and decision-making skill levels among women through hands-on opportunities. It supports and increases women’s access to forestry-related resources and encourages communication among Oregon’s women woodland managers through the development of statewide and local networks.

WOWNet Coordinator Tiffany Fegel says times are changing for female woodland owners. “Forestry has traditionally been a male-dominated field. Sometimes at mixed-gender events, women are afraid to ask questions and interact with their male counterparts. Often, this is because they feel as though they do not have the same knowledge base, therefore their questions may be considered dumb. At WOWNet events, women can collaborate and learn in a comfortable and uplifting environment,” says Fegel. Brenda Woodard was one of the women around that truck bed ten years ago. She remembers that conversation. And was so passionate about it that she became one of the founding members of WOWNet. “For me WOWNet has been a joy to be involved with. There are a whole variety of women who have a sincere interest in forest management with a wide range of management objectives. I enjoy the company and I have learned a lot from the women of WOWNet,” says Woodard.

WOWNet WOWNet member Wylda Cafferata is a newer member but has quickly become very active. “My friends are not woodlands owners,” she says. “Much of what I do on our forest – site preparation, pruning, planting, tubing, road repair and cruising – is just foreign to them. At WOWNet gatherings, I can talk about forest management issues without getting those odd, glazed stares,” she explains. Cafferata manages four parcels of land in Benton, Lane and Lincoln Counties with her husband. Cafferata has made a point of learning forest management alongside her husband. However, some women are not as fortunate. “I have learned a lot from the women of WOWNet,“ says Woodard.

Recent WOWNet events included a one-day retreat, walks in the woods tours, focus groups, non-timber forest product production, and wild crafting. Women were able to discuss the issues they are having with their own properties and were able to learn from each other’s experiences.

And WOWNet is there for me, and that gives me confidence,” says Cafferata. “When they can come together and share that, it’s amazing. The energy and the positivity, the encouragement, it’s not like any other event out there.”

Since ten years ago on that tailgate, the Oregon WOWNet has inspired many others across the country to start similar programs. It inspired a national movement. But maybe most importantly it has inspired countless female small woodland owners, it has showed them that they can do it, they can make a difference, their voices can and will be heard.

This article was joint authored by Tiffany Fegel and the College of Forestry at Oregon State University.
NEW WILDFIRE FUNDING BILL INTRODUCED

A bi-partisan Wildfire Disaster Funding Act of 2017 has been introduced by Rep. Mike Simpson (R-ID) and Rep. Kurt Schrader (D-OR). The bill’s new approach to wildfire suppression funding would help avoid the disruptive practice of “fire borrowing” from other Forest Service budget accounts including cooperative forestry, landowner assistance and cost sharing. Sometimes this money is reimbursed by Congress, sometimes not. Since 1995 the Forest Service fire budget has increased from 15% to over 50% of the appropriated amount. Even so, since 2002 the agency has exceeded those amounts 12 times and have had to “borrow” funds from other programs.

This bill would change how the federal government budgets for the suppression of large fires by placing most of the fire funding in the emergency funding authority under the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The Partner Caucus on Fire Suppression Funding Solutions, of which NWOA is a member, endorsed and supports the bill.

FIRE FUNDING INCLUDED IN FLOOD INSURANCE BILL

On July 18, Senators Mike Crapo (R-ID) and Sherrod Brown (D-OH) took a significant step forward by adding wildfire funding to the must-pass reauthorization of the Flood Insurance Act. The bill is a little different to the House bill (above) and is almost identical to the fire funding fix that was included in the “Omnibus Deal” that nearly passed at the end of 2015. Both would evoke FEMA authority in funding wildfire emergencies.

HARDWOOD PLYWOOD FROM CHINA ASSESSED WITH A 115% IMPORT DUTY

Following an investigation requested by U.S. hardwood plywood producers, the U.S. Commerce Dept., assessed a 115% anti-dumping penalty on hardwood plywood produced in China. The Chinese bill is a little different to the House bill (above) and is almost identical to the fire funding fix that was included in the “Omnibus Deal” that nearly passed at the end of 2015. Both would evoke FEMA authority in funding wildfire emergencies.

U.S. IMPORTS OF GERMAN SOFTWOOD UP TENFOLD IN WAKE OF DUTIES ON CANADIAN LUMBER.

U.S. imports of softwood from Germany have grown tenfold in the first half of the year as punishing duties pushed imports of Canadian softwood down. Germany and the U.S. are trying to negotiate a new softwood trade deal to replace one that expired in 2015, but thus far have been unable to come up with a plan acceptable to the U.S. lumber Coalition. In the meantime, Canadian companies are paying duties and prices are rising, making imports from places like Germany suddenly more attractive.

In the first six months of this year, German softwood imports into the U.S. soared more than 900 per cent over the same period last year. Germany’s share of imports rose from 0.35 percent in the first six months of 2016, to 3.6 per cent this year.

NATIONAL WOODLANDS SUMMER 2017

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WILDFIRE MAJOR CAUSE FOR WASTE IMPORTS

A major cause for American hardwood waste imports has been natural wildfires. The Western Governors’ Association recognized the importance of forestry jobs in the West by adopting three new policy statements aimed at improving the western rural economy and specifically jobs in forestry. In doing so, they laid down a line to the Trump Administration and Congress by calling attention to the consequences of huge budget cuts that appear to have been based on ease of defunding instead of honest evaluation of long term effectiveness.

Stronger and Better Forest Management: With tacit recognition that decades of contentious lawsuits have removed millions of acres of federal forests from active management, the Governors seek to go around the stalemate with increased focus on workforce development, and support for programs that reduce wildfire risk and improve forest health and resilience. Special emphasis is directed to encourage collaboration to achieve community-supported and durable land management outcomes.

Forest Management Support for Programs: Programs that enable the owners of farms, forests and range lands to be important to the economies and quality of life in the western states. Better management of adjacent public lands can be achieved by including new legislation in the 2018 Farm Bill currently being developed.

Refinements in the Endangered Species Act: While expressing continued support for the ESA, the Governors advocate targeted legislative, regulatory, and funding refinements that could improve the operation of the Act.

AFFILIATE EXEC. IS NEW STATE FORESTER

Rick Oates, the Executive Director of the Alabama Treasure Forest Association (NWOA Affiliate), is the new Alabama state forester. He was also the forestry director at the Alabama Farmer Federation.

WASHINGTON FOREST OWNERS SHOW EXCELLENT COMPLIANCE WITH STATE LAW

A recent report from the Washington Dept. of Natural Resources reveals that private forest landowners are approaching 100% compliance with the state’s forest practices rules over the last two years. Performance for 98% for forest roads, 90% for timber haul routes, 98% to 94% in the five riparian zones, and 97% on harvest in forested wetlands. The Forests & Fish Law was passed by the legislature in 1999. It established set of forest practices regulations to protect 60,000 miles of streams running through 9.3 million acres of state and private forestland.

WESTERN GOVERNORS VOICE SUPPORT FOR NEW PRO-FORESTY POLICY RESOLUTIONS

Meeting in Whitefish, Montana in late June members of the Western Governors Association recognized the importance of forestry jobs in the west by adopting three new policy statements aimed at improving the western rural economy and specifically jobs in forestry. In doing so, they laid down a line to the Trump Administration and Congress by calling attention to the consequences of huge budget cuts that appear to have been based on ease of defunding instead of honest evaluation of long term effectiveness.

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IOWA ELIMINATES STATE FORESTER POSITION

Although Agro-Forestry is a $4 billion business in Iowa (primarily because of walnut), that did not stop the Dept. of Natural Resources from eliminating the Bureau of Forestry on July 15 to save $277,000 to offset a $1.2 million budget cut. State Forester Paul Taulke, a highly regarded career employee was terminated along with seven other staff positions. The decision came suddenly and without discussion.

The District Foresters and other field positions will continue their forestry roles but be reassigned to the Div. of Wildlife or the Div. of State Parks. The focal point for forestry within the Dept. of Natural Resources will end.

Two statewide organizations, the Iowa Woodland Owners Ass’n. (NWOA Affiliate) and Trees Forever, promptly and sharply criticized the abrupt action as done will little forethought and lacking recognition of the importance of forestry to both the economy and environment.
Local decisions on the small forest landowner community is large. We have personnel that track proposed legislation that is likely to impact family forest landowners and advocate for changes that will ultimately support continued forest ownership. During the development of the state budget, we help advocate for funding at state agencies for personnel and programs that support small forest landowners. WFFA members also serve as small forest landowner representatives in policy and science discussions in the Adaptive Management Program (AMP). The AMP is a multi-stakeholder process that provides science based recommendations to the Forest Practices Board (FPB) on forestry related regulatory changes. We also have volunteers that work with agency staff with time commitments to the Small Forest Landowner Advisory Committee, Oregon Resources Conservation and the Recreation Conservation Office. And finally the WFFA state office supports our chapters with information and outreach materials, provide assistance for annual meetings, produces regular newsletters, and partner with Oregon, Idaho, and Montana chapter’s area are invited to participate. The four completed, at this time, had 550 participants. We have one scheduled for September and one in the October. These are great outreach opportunities.

OSWA focuses specifically on state issues, but does get involved on federal issues through our partnership with Oregon Forest Owners Association and with OTFS through their affiliation with American Forest Foundation (AFF). OSWA is proud to have their Washington DC in collaborative efforts related to the Farm Bill and federal tax issues.

OSWA’s success relies on the support of our allies and partners. Without this collaboration, it would be difficult to accomplish our mission. OSWA also partners with Washington, Idaho, and Montana family forest owners to publish a quarterly magazine, Northwest Woodlands, that focuses on topics of interest to family forest owners. A quarterly newsletter, an informative annual meeting, and many informational woods tours round out our direct educational efforts.

OSWA is made up of thirteen county or multiple county chapters that are their own separate organization with their own budgets, officers and boards. The state organization is the umbrella that brings these chapters together to address state level issues and finds partners to assist in meeting our mission. This has been a formula for success since 1960.

In partnership with Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI) and Oregon State University’s Forestry Extension, OSWA conducts six Neighbor to Neighbor woods tours each year. They are centered by one of OSWA’s 13 active county and multi-county chapters. All family forest landowners in the sponsoring chapter are invited to participate. The four completed, at this time, had 550 participants. We have one scheduled for September and one in October. These are great outreach opportunities.

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Idaho

Idaho Forest Owners Association (IFOA) is a 501(c)6 organization that was formed in 1982 as an alliance of members primarily dedicated to the management, use and protection of private forest resources in Idaho. The objectives of IFOA are to: encourage the multiple use concept of forest management; preserve the rights of forest owners to practice forest management; educate the public on the value of the state’s forest resources and the need to manage them; inform and educate members about legislative issues pertaining to forest land; cooperate with forest industry, state and federal agencies and other organizations in all areas which further the Association’s objectives, and; educate the public and forest landowners about the economic and environmental benefits of sound forest management.

IFOA is an affiliate of NWOA. IFOA membership offers a membership sign, the 16-page quarterly IFOA Newsletter and full subscription to the 32-page regional quarterly Northwest Woodlands magazine, and a discount gallon issue at Forestry Suppliers, Inc., and operates a Forest Seedling Program to produce appropriately sourced and genetically improved quartz hillings for reforestation on family forest land.

IFOA maintains family forest representation on important boards and committees such as the
The state legislature ended for 2017 with no new regulations. There was some minor “tweaking” of the ag land classification law that seems to be neutral to slightly beneficial to small forest landowners. Since most Tree Farmers own less than 160 acres, the application and administration of ag land laws remains in the hands of the various counties.

The SD Tree Farm Committee is a subsidiary of the SD Family Forestry Foundation and works closely with the S.D. Family Forestry Association supporting a full program of Tree Farm activities.

The Kansas Forestry Association was organized in 2009 and is one of the newest NWOA affiliates. It includes a diverse membership of owners of the famed lowland hardwoods along the Missouri river, windbreak managers, tree farmers, walnut growers, and high plains ranchers. It is the umbrella association for the Tree Farm program as well as the Kansas chapter of the Walnut Council. Programs include forestry field days, and participation in Forest Stewardship Plans for tree owners and the use property tax program, best management practices and forest stewardship.

Members recently participated in extensive prescribed fire training sponsored by the NM Prescribed Fire Council, and the NMSU Cooperative Extension Office. Of special note, NM Tree Farm participated in a statewide meeting of tax assessors held by the NM Association of Counties to further understand and promote consistency in apply the state’s approved methods of valuation for woodlands for tax purposes. Nearly all of the 50 states and one Canadian province passed a bill in August that allows them to become a member if a compact. The one they join could be the Great Plains Interstate Fire Compact comprised of six states and one Canadian province.

The Nebraska Forest Service is seeking to establish a Nebraska Forestry Association to bring together woodland owners and individuals engaged in the harvesting and manufacturing of traditional and non-traditional forest products to share information, develop networks and provide opportunities for peer-to-peer learning. We continue to make strides as we develop workshops and seek input from different groups to determine their level of interest and how we might best serve their needs. One area of growth has been the development of workshops designed to help individuals with portable sawmills understand the sawing and drying process and how to maximize sawtimber and minimize loss to inefficiency and mistakes. We are also in the process of re-establishing an annual fall field day at our Hornsung Demonstration Forest south of Omaha. This year’s event will take place on Saturday, September 30th and we hope to engage a number of landowners and woodland enthusiasts to understand their needs for information, education and technical assistance and how an Association might help to meet those needs.

This Council is not just another study group,” Laverty said. “It is an action group. It is not about managing a crisis. It is about doing everything we can to protect and restore Colorado’s forest resources.

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LANDOWNER LIABILITY INSURANCE and HUNT CLUB LIABILITY FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers About NWOA's Popular Membership Benefit:

- How much does woodland liability insurance cost? The cost is $160/year for up to 535 acres. Additional acres cost $.28/acre.
- What is the value of the coverage? You are covered for $1,000,000 each occurrence, or $2,000,000 aggregate/year. There is no deductible.
- What liabilities does the insurance cover? The coverage is designed for the most common legal liability issues a woodland owner may encounter. This includes a person injured on your land, or something you might do by mistake such as falling a tree across a boundary line and damaging a neighbor's property. Hunting accidents are covered, providing you did not receive payment. If you receive payment for hunting, the Hunting Lease Liability Insurance (see below) is recommended, because receiving money may compromise the landowner liability limitations in your state.
- Do I have to be a NWOA member to buy this insurance? Yes, you must be a current NWOA member to qualify for our low-cost liability insurance. If you are a member of a state landowner association affiliated with NWOA, you must also join as a national member of NWOA for this benefit.
- When does my insurance take effect? There are four open season dates a year when NWOA members can purchase insurance: January 1, April 1, July 1 and October 1. If coverage is needed immediately, your policy will renew one year from the preceding open season date. The insurance takes effect two weeks after we process your application.
- Can multiple tracts be included on one policy? Yes. You may cover several tracts under one policy provided they are each deeded under the same exact landowner or group of owners. The tracts do not have to be contiguous. Many people list several tracts and still stay within the minimum cost of $160/year.
- My land is in a limited liability corporation (LLC). does that protect me from lawsuits? No, but it probably limits your loss to the value of your land and timber. Anyone has the right to sue to correct a perceived wrong or an injury. As a landowner, it is your responsibility to protect your assets.
- If I am sued, should I hire a lawyer even if I believe the suit is without merit? If you are covered by the NWOA policy, our insurance company will provide a lawyer skilled in liability law to represent you.
- Why do I need hunting lease liability insurance? This policy is designed for paid hunting leases. It protects the hunt club from liabilities the hunters may cause. (i.e. wrongful death, falling from a tree stand, campfire). The landowner may also purchase this protection via the "additional insured" rider for $26 per landowner.
- Does the hunt club need to be a NWOA member to purchase hunt club liability insurance? Yes. A hunt club or at least one member of the hunt club must hold a NWOA membership to qualify for Hunt Club Liability Insurance.
- How much is hunting lease liability insurance alone? The cost is $165/year for up to 1000 acres. Additional acres cost $.16/acre.
- Can I combine woodland liability insurance and hunting lease insurance? Yes. A combined Woodland and Hunting Lease Liability Insurance Policy is available.
- How much is the combined woodland liability and hunting lease liability insurance? The cost is $210/year for up to 525 acres. Additional acres cost $.40/acre.
- Can I get a copy of the policy? You will receive a Certificate of Insurance to certify you are covered within specified dates and the amount covered. If you would like a copy of the policy, you must request that a copy be mailed to you.
- Who is the insurance company and underwriters for this liability insurance? Outdoor Underwriters, Inc. developed and services this insurance. It is backed by certain Underwriters at Lloyds of London.
- Questions on insurance? For questions concerning applications call NWOA at 703-255-2700.

The Sheriff & Summons

Your first notice of a problem is when the sheriff drives up with a subpoena for you to appear in court. You read the charges against you, and are stunned by the amount of money sought for restitution. You may not even know the plaintiff, nor the law firm filing suit. Chances are pretty good that it is a firm specializing in liability litigation. They took the case on contingency, which means they don’t get paid unless they win.

Your next step is to call your attorney. If you don’t have one, find and hire one. It is never recommended that you represent yourself in court. It is your money they are after.

OR

Call NWOA—if you have our top-rated Woodland Liability insurance—and relax. The bail is now with our claim specialists, who have 20 plus years of experience dealing with woodland liability issues.

WOODLAND LIABILITY AND HUNT CLUB LIABILITY INSURANCE

Ensure your peace of mind with NWOA Insurance

Starting at $160/year for up to 535 acres
get legal protection from liability lawsuits
with Coverage to $1 million per occurrence ($2 million aggregate)

An Important Benefit of National Membership

www.woodlandowners.org/insurance
I enjoyed (as always) reading your most recent Wednesday Woodland Word newsletter. Unfortunately, I found Secretary Perdue’s comments not totally consistent with the President’s proposed FY18 budget. “We must treat our forests so that we are not spending more on fighting fires than we are on making sure that our forests are healthy”, and “We have world-renowned scientists and researchers engaged at the USDA, and only the best science and data will inform our decisions”, yet the FY18 proposal has a considerably higher Fire Preparedness and Suppression budget than the past, while substantially reducing fire research that supports the fire management program as well as most other non-fire related research and management budget lines. The Joint Fire Science Program, after almost 20 years, is eliminated from the USFS budget and cut almost in half on the DOI budget – a total 77% reduction. And the other two fire research lines in the USFS budget (Wildland Fire Management R&D, Wildland Fire & Fuels R&D) that support fire research also took a $6 million hit. I guess on the positive side (if there is one), the fire research cuts pale in comparison to how some other forest resource programs fare in the proposed budget. I fully understand the wildfire situation across the country, but it is disconcerting that once again the suppression budget increases at the expense of other important and supporting programs, despite the Secretary’s philosophical guides.

Alan Long
Administrative Director, Southern Fire Exchange

I am particularly impressed by how well uneven-aged management, long adapted to shade tolerant forests of Europe, has been successfully adapted to US shade intolerant forests...i.e., loblolly and shortleaf pine forests.

With Best Regards,
Joshua C. Dickinson, PhD
The Forest Management Trust
Bozeman, Montana

I can do one better than Joshua. Most folks do read Readers Respond. They will find a short item. They will find a short review of “From the Black Forest to the Piney Woods” in this quarter’s Regional Round-up section.

—KAA
augow@nuoa.net

Editor Responds:

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- We are proud to be ranked #7 on the EPA’s Green Power List and purchase 100% renewable energy for our facilities in the US.
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WHY? Because it is the right thing to do!

The Readers Respond

Wednesday Woodland Word

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WHY? Because it is the right thing to do!
It’s no surprise to State Foresters that wildfire suppression, fuels reduction and early detection rank among the National Woodland Owners Association’s top 10 family forestry issues. Compared to the 1970s, today’s wildfire “seasons” last 78 days longer, are less predictable and tend to be more catastrophic.1 But the truth is that nowadays it is always wildfire “season” somewhere in the United States.

People on the frontlines of wildfires, including forest and rangeland owners, firefighters, and federal and state forestry agencies, understand all too well the devastating effects of a catastrophic wildfire, and realize the importance of advanced preparations and rapid response.

In 2016, wildfires destroyed or damaged more than 5,000 homes and other structures in the United States. For those living in fire-prone localities such as the wildland-urban interface, wildfire prevention and mitigation techniques are imperative for family forest owners because such measures can protect lives.2

From January through June 2017, wildfires burned more than 4 million acres across the United States.3 Wildfire is a pressing problem and landowners, researchers, wildland firefighters and others continue to search for more effective ways to mitigate and adapt to the effects of wildfires.

The National Wildfire Coordinating Group defines wildfire as an unplanned, unwanted wildfire. Many landowners may be unaware that in the United States, more than eight out of every 10 wildfires are human-caused. It is important to note that not all fires are bad or even “unplanned”. Landowners like you all across the country work with professionals such as their state forestry agencies to conduct controlled burns to conserve, protect and enhance trees on their land. Prescribed burns are conducted by people with proper certification and safety gear in a controlled setting. These science-based fires help prevent and mitigate catastrophic wildfires by decreasing fuels levels while also improving the health of many forest ecosystems by allowing for regrowth and stimulating germination of some trees.4

Furthermore, wildfire species of trees are adapted to naturally occurring prescribed burns. For example, one of the most effective and cost-efficient methods of providing critical young growth, or early successional processes, is prescribed fire.5 Many species of wildlife prefer forest habitats at this early growth stage, including wild turkey. Landowners can learn more about creating turkey habitat from the National Wild Turkey Federation (www.nwtf.org/conservation).

Even as controlled burns improve the resilience of forests across the country, catastrophic wildfires continue to take place every single year. Managing wildfires is inherently complex and challenging. Because wildfires do not stop at property lines or state borders, safe and effective response to wildfires demands strong partnerships with landowners, neighboring counties and other local and federal entities. For example in 2015, 85 percent of state and local resources that were mobilized outside their geographic locations area supported federal fires.

State Foresters rely on many tools and resources to prepare for and respond to wildfires across various landscapes. In fiscal year 2014, state forestry agencies spent $1.7 billion on wildfire control, prevention, protection, and management.3 To help direct these financial resources where they are needed most, members of the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) have coalesced to promote several strategies, including national and state fire prevention symbol since 1944. The National Interagency Fire Center. Accessed June 26, 2017. https://www.fs.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2016/05/17/ usda-fs-service-and-partners-gear-significant-2016-wildfire.

State forestry agencies work with stakeholders across every state, this statistic demonstrates the value that education programs may have on reducing the number of human-caused wildfires.

Although catastrophic wildfires pose a serious, year-round threat to people all across the United States, there are steps that can be taken to reduce risk. America’s landowners and communities are not alone in wildfire prevention and mitigation, and are working hard with many partners to protect lives, homes, and property. Learn more about wildfire in your state by contacting your state forestry agency: http://stateforesters.org/contact-your-state-agency.

by Nicole Pomish National Association of State Foresters

The National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy is an all-agency tool that programs in the state of Florida paid for itself many times over.6 This study found that every additional dollar spent on wildfire prevention education in Florida would have reduced wildfire related losses and suppression by 35%--a benefit to cost ratio of 35:1. Although this ratio likely varies in every state, this statistic demonstrates the value that education programs may have on reducing the number of human-caused wildfires.

If you’re looking to take action on your land, the National Association of State Foresters recommends that you either create a written, fire-on-your-land management plan or have an existing plan reviewed by a professional forester. A plan to mitigate catastrophic wildfires may include tactics such as conducting controlled burns, introducing fire breaks, providing safe access for first responders, and staying aware of burning conditions in the area. To learn more about actions that communities are taking to address life with wildfire, visit the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network at facade.net.org. The Cohesive Strategy website can be accessed at www.forestsandrangelands.gov/strategy.7

If you are interested in hosting a campfire event in your community with a local chapter of the National Association of State Foresters, please contact your state forestry agency for more information:

By Nicole Pomish National Association of State Foresters

Smoky Bear has been America’s recognized wildfire prevention symbol since 1944. The National Association of State Foresters partners with the US Forest Service and the Ad Council to manage this iconic wildfire prevention campaign which aims to help reduce the number of human-caused wildfire in the United States. Smoky Bear turns 73 years old this August; you may consider hosting a campfire safety training or equipment maintenance field day on your land and invite Smokey Bear and your state forestry agency! For more information about preventing wildfires please visit www.smokebear.com.


Endnotes

Photo Courtesy NIFC

STATE FORESTRY UPDATE

NATIONAL WOODLANDS SUMMER 2017

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For Flathead Valley resident Charlotte Chrisman, wildfire on her private land is not a question of if, but when.

“It’s like, you know, have you hit a deer? Well not yet,” Chrisman says.

Chrisman owns a 310-acre lot up the North Fork of the Flathead River in a remote, densely forested area abutting the northwestern boundary of Glacier National Park.

“Fire’s becoming a bigger and bigger part of our life in the Pacific northwest, the greater Pacific northwest. Certainly in the Flathead Valley we’ve found out with Wedge Canyon, and Roberts, Red Meadow and all the other fires fires that it can be a devastating force, so you better be ready!”

Chrisman says each year, she, her husband and her in-laws take on projects to lessen the likelihood of a devastating wildfire. They’ve thinned some of the denser parts of the forest and removed brush from around their cabin with help from grants administered by the state Department of Natural Resources and Conservation. Still, Chrisman says one family doing this kind of work isn’t quite enough. What’s needed, she says, is “herd protection. Everybody needs to get on the bandwagon here.”

That’s why she’s at “Era of Megafires,” a touring multimedia presentation about the rise of devastating fires in the west, how humans have tempted to feel afraid,” says Dr. Paul Hessburg, a research ecologist with the U.S. Forest Service’s Fire Protection Association for the steps it’s taken to reduce its wildfire risk. But she knows her neighborhood isn’t the norm.

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Dr. Paul Hessburg at the “Era of Megafires” presentation in Kalispell, MT April 25, 2017.

“What’s needed is a cultural shift by us from being purely reactive to fire, to being primarily proactive about fire. Using fire to fight fire,” Hessburg said.

Hessburg meant that literally. He said prescribed burning is an extremely helpful but largely underutilized tool for preventing uncontrolled wildfire. Prescribed burns remove brush and deadfall that would fuel a future wildfire. Firefighters can use them to create natural barriers to prevent the spread of future fires.

“It would be extremely helpful to firefighters during the fire season, right? we would have created containers with this burning and grazing, and firefighters would steer fires into those containers to keep the wildfire small from the start,” said Hessburg.

But we’re not doing that, Hessburg said, because people are afraid of smoke from prescribed burns. Smoke is considered a nuisance, and in some places it’s regulated. Hessburg pointed out that smoke from prescribed burning tends to be less harmful and last for shorter periods of time than uncontrolled wildfires.

“We all need to work to get this changed. We can make less total smoke if we prescribe burn, and we’ll have more benign wildfires,” Hessburg said.

After the presentation, Charlotte Chrisman, the woman with the 310-acre lot up the North Fork, says some of Hessburg’s talk was new to her, but for the most part, people in her community already operate under a proactive fire-ready mindset.

“People up there take it very seriously,” Chrisman said.

Like Chrisman, property owners up the North Fork thin their private forests, clear brush away from structures, and keep roads of ingress and egress clear in case they need to evacuate. Chrisman’s neighborhood was designated a Firewise Community 10 years ago by the National Fire Protection Association for the steps it’s taken to reduce its wildfire risk. But she knows her neighborhood isn’t the norm.

“I think in town, people in town they think they’re in town and the fire dept will come and they’ll be ok. And it may very well be, but especially in that urban edge, or a little ways out of town, you still have a risk. You still need to be ready,” says Chrisman.

Carol Free lives in a subdivision in Kalispell. She called the Era of Megafires presentation “an inspiration.”

“As well as giving so much basic information that we’re not hearing about anywhere,” Free said.

The idea that fire itself can be used to help manage wildfire — as it is with prescribed burns — was so compelling to her, she asked Paul Hessburg if he could deliver his presentation to Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke.

“He [Zinke] lives in the same area we do. He comes with a western perspective, and now he is head of Interior. That’s a very powerful position, especially for this issue, where he could have significant impact on promoting the ideas we heard tonight,” Free said.
Dealing with Timber Loss Due to Fire: The Federal Tax Implications

By Tamara L. Cushing
Starker Chair of Private and Family Forestry, Extension Specialist Oregon State University

It’s another busy fire season here in the west and as I write this, the south is dealing with another major storm system. I hope most of you don’t need to read this but we need to talk about what to do if you had a fire or other natural disaster on your property in 2017. Normally, taxpayers are only able to recover their investment in timber at the time of a harvest. This is done through the use of depletion. However, if you have a loss on your property, you can also reclaim some of that investment in the form of a casualty loss deduction.

The Internal Revenue Code considers any event that is sudden, unusual and unexpected to be in the casualty loss category. Fire, ice, tornado, and hurricanes all fit that description. The sudden part of the definition is talking about the loss in value. The timber must experience a very sudden drop in value not a slow deterioration. If your trees die or suffer a deformity due to insects or disease, that loss would not meet the standard for a casualty loss due to the slow nature of the loss in value.

If you meet the definition of a casualty loss, the next step is figuring out the amount of the loss. Tax law allows you to take a deduction in the amount of the lower of a) reduction in fair market value or b) your adjusted basis in the single identifiable property (SIP). For those of you who have established basis accounts for your timber, the SIP will align with those accounts. For example, if you have a tract of 40 acres and you have a basis account for the land and one for the timber, that is your SIP. If you haven’t set up basis accounts for your timber yet, that can be done retroactively but make sure you have a defensible logic behind how you set it up. The IRS is aware that taxpayers may retroactively set up the account to take advantage of a large SIP. I alluded to having a large SIP and that being an advantage. If you have a large unit and lose timber on only a small portion of it, you will most likely be able to claim the entire loss. Remember the limitation is change in fair market value or your adjusted basis ( whichever is lower). The larger the unit, the more basis available. There are problems with using a large unit though. In an audit situation, it will be necessary to show how fair market value was determined before and after the casualty event. This will require good records and/or an appraisal, both of which will have a cost attached to it.

In addition to calculating the dollar value of the loss, you must account for any insurance proceeds or salvage received. It is possible that you end up with a taxable gain due to salvage. The gain may be postponed if qualified gains on the property is acquired within two years. Make sure to keep records related to the casualty event. It is important to show what the event was that caused your loss, when it occurred that the loss was directly related to the event and whether you made any claims for reimbursement or salvage attempts.

If you were the victim of a casualty event, make sure you contact a forester. The forester can be helpful in determining your options in planning going forward including whether or not to salvage. You may also need the assistance of a forester in determining your fair market value before the loss. An accountant can help you with determining what your loss limitation is for the event and assist you in filing the return. While none of this erases the frustration associated with the loss, hopefully it can help you recover some of your loss.

*Disclaimer: These comments are general in nature and your awareness; your facts and circumstances may require different tax treatment.

Working forests – those managed to grow and harvest timber – have a long history as economic drivers and valuable assets. For many rural communities, timber is the local economy – working forests support 2.4 million jobs and $98 billion in payroll, mostly in rural communities. For the private forest owners who plant, grow and manage working forests, and for the increasing number of Americans who invest in working forests as part of their retirement portfolios, timber is an attractive long-term investment that withstands market volatility.

As they grow, working forests are an environmental asset too – filtering 25 percent of our drinking water, providing habitat for 60 percent of our at-risk species, and sequestering enough carbon to offset 12 percent of our industrial carbon emissions annually. These valuable environmental benefits are largely underwritten by the investments of private landowners over decades, and in most cases are provided to the public for free.

As Congress embarks on the challenge of modernizing our tax code, there is one surefire way to support rural communities, the economy and the environment all at the same time – maintain provisions supporting long-term private investment in our nation’s 460 million acres of abundant, privately owned working forests.

The economic viability of private working forests depends on tax provisions that recognize that growing trees is unlike any other business or investment. Timberland stewardship is uniquely long-term. Unlike business or investment cycles tracked annually or over a few years, forests are managed over decades. Timber takes between 20 and 80 years to mature, so landowners face an investment horizon of between 20 and 80 years. That means that landowners planting seedlings today won’t see a return on their 2017 investment until at least 2037; trees that take longer to mature might not be ready to harvest until 2097.

As trees grow, forest owners make significant investments – often millions of dollars – in regular operating costs like road maintenance, weed control, thinning and many rounds of fertilization. Tax law allows forest landowners to deduct these operating costs, which in turn, allows them to afford forest health treatments that reduce the risk of forest fires and other natural disturbances. It also keeps other beneficial investments like research and conservation projects affordable. Tax provisions that allow the deduction of reforestation and tree planting costs encourage landowners to continue investing in trees, keeping our nation’s forests abundant and strong.

The tax code also rightly treats timber revenue as long-term capital gain and properly defines timberland as real property instead of inventory. Trees are different from inventory because they are held for decades rather than days or months, and they appreciate rather than depreciate in value. Current provisions in the code appropriately accommodate these facts, treating timber as a long-term real property investment. This allows ordinary investors to own professionally managed timberlands; in fact, working forests are now part of most American’s retirement portfolios.

Forest owners will always face the dual challenge of low liquidity and substantial risk. These tax provisions ensure their economic viability. Without them, forest owners will face mounting pressure to convert timberland to other uses in search of a better return on their investment. Fewer forests is not a good outcome for anyone.

When it comes to the complex task of tax reform, this piece is a no-brainer – working forests are an economic and environmental asset that legislators on both sides of the aisle can get behind.
ABOUT NWOA’S AFFILIATE MEMBERS
The Alliance of Landowner Associations

• NWOA has 36,000 Affiliate Members in 46 State Affiliates

• Each State Landowner Association is an Independent Partner

• The Affiliates are Grouped into Four Forest Zones (North, South, East and West)

• Affiliate Members Receive Only One Issue a Year

Upgrade to a National Membership
Receive Four Magazines a Year and Qualify for Optional Liability Insurance Only $35/year. Use the Card Above

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Each quarter we mail an introductory copy of National Woodlands to landowners, foresters and loggers who are good prospects for joining NWOA.

We try hard to remove duplicate addresses, but they do slip through.

Share your additional copy with our Compliments.
Eggs, a Dairy, a Woodland, and Minority Floor Leader in the Washington Legislature

Wilcox Family Farms is a household name in the Pacific Northwest. Managed today by the fourth generation of the Wilcox family and long renowned as one of the region’s largest, and most successful, producers of egg and egg products, the company celebrated its first century in business with a complete restructuring of its business model. According to J.T. Wilcox, “Wilcox Farms decided about a decade ago to move towards value added products and away from commodity products. We sold a business and closed down several processing plants to redeploy capital towards organic and other value added egg products. We wanted to do the same with our forests lands.”

The change was a bold move into the future for a $200 million dollar per year company owning 1,500 acres of extensively timbered, farm, a network of food processing plants around the Northwest, an 800 cow dairy herd, and feed mills.

The move was equally bold for J.T. who’d been appointed Chief Financial Officer of Wilcox Dairy Farms and its sister company, Wilcox Farms Inc. in 2006. Ultimately it led to an entire life change. The one-time CFO of a $200 million dollar company stepped down, bought a portable sawmill, was elected to the Washington State House of Representatives in 2010 and, in terms of his work life, turned his attention to harvesting on a sustainable basis from the Wilcox family’s own forest. Today, J.T. serves as a member of the House Republican leadership and, in his district and for all of rural Washington State. J.T. is also, he laughs, an “employee” of his daughter Katie, an undergraduate at Whitworth University who has developed a substantial business working with her dad milling lumber and slabs then utilizing the slabs to create beautifully finished slab furniture.

Wanting to improve upon the sustainability and utilization of the Wilcox family’s forestslands beyond the already in place planned rotational commercial harvest, JT began his new career, and the quest to move towards sustainability with the purchase of a Wood-Mizer LT15 bandsaw mill. “We do quite a bit of building on the farm,” he comments. “The use of lumber from our own trees provides a considerable amount of added value to the logs we harvest.”

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At the time, Katie was just beginning her college career. “The first mill was very useful, supplying dimensional lumber to be used on farm projects such as when we remodel chicken houses, converting them into cage-free houses,” she said. “I would come home to visit and he would want me to help him saw. It wasn’t love at first sight!”

All that changed when Katie discovered woodworking. Seeing the usefulness of the mill, and its potential to play a bigger part in his goals for the farm’s timber resource, JT upgraded to an LT35 with hydraulic log handling assist. The move up not only allowed for more efficient lumber production, it allowed the ability efficiently handle bigger logs for slab production.

At about the same time, with the expanded capacity the new Wood-Mizer brought, Katie and J.T. began to grow a new firm, Harts Lake Pioneer Lumber, focusing on building slab furniture including tables, benches, conference tables and other products. For the most part, Katie explains, Harts Lake utilized only fiber harvested from the Wilcox holdings although, recently, she received a commission to create furniture for another company using slabs grown on that company’s own timberlands.

As members of the Washington Farm Forestry Association (NWOF affiliate) their several hundred acres of their timber land is managed so as to be sustainable for many generations to come. “We have a forest management plan and when we are commercially logging, we divert a few loads that fit our sawing needs to our log yard,” he puts forward. “Salvage of wind-blown and diseased trees is also a factor. We actually like the logs that have been on the ground for a year or two because the onset of decay gives the wood more character.”

As a small rural business based on a portable band sawmill, a forklift, small tractor, sanders and a planer, Harts Lake Pioneer Lumber also has a smaller budget than the giant firm it coexists with so, Katie explains “Harts Lake markets primarily through Facebook and word-of-mouth. ‘So far this has been effective – I think because the people who live around us value the type of product we are making. A local, father-daughter business, with unique, handmade products is something people want to support,’” she says.

Asked how J.T. enjoys running a furniture business, he answers with a chuckle, “Haha, I’m not running it. I’m working for Katie and after a lifetime of being in charge, working for my daughter is one of the best things I do.”

J.T. turns more serious when he discusses how being involved in a smaller rural based business has been beneficial to his work as State Representative serving a largely rural district. “For my job as a Washington State Representative, I think it’s important to understand the kind of business that many of my constituents operate and especially to understand how small business interacts with government. It’s been an eye opener for me because for most of my life in management I’ve had staff and attorneys to work on regulation, and licensing. It’s easy to see why people get frustrated and sometimes give up on small business. Bureaucracy doesn’t make it easy!”

As House Floor Leader, JT continues, “I represent small towns and a rural district. People from my generation grew up in a place where they could work near where they live. No more. The rural economy has almost died in Western Washington and most people here are commuters. I’ve always told people that I had just one litmus test in our capital. I would always consider a bill’s impact on the rural economy first. Being involved in a very small business has strengthened that commitment. Being able to work directly with my kids and see them as decision-makers at a young age has been tremendous. Whether they stay with it or not, it is still an experience that will enrich their entire lives.”
When Choosing a Consulting Forester, Ask if They Are Members of NWOA.

Many Are. It Indicates an Understanding of Family Forestry.

There are many ways to find out information about your woodland. The best place to start is to talk with a professional forester. Your forester will do a “walk through,” which is like a periodic health checkup of our woods. Learn about the diversity of the species and the possible presence of unwanted invaders. If it is time to sell some timber, getting a forester involved is highly recommended. You would not sell your cattle without counting them, nor should you sell your trees without counting them, either. Foresters come in all sizes and specialties. It is easiest to decide which is best for you by finding out where they work.

STEWARDSHIP or SERVICE FORESTERS, often known as “county foresters” work for your state forestry agency. They are funded with tax money because the public has an abiding interest in the good management of their property. County foresters provide an initial visit at no cost. They will provide an overview of what stewardship plan upon which to base your decisions. Most of the time you will want a more detailed forest management plan, which introduces the next kind of forester.

The CONSULTING FORESTER is a person you hire to work for you, just like a lawyer, to provide a service. If a timber sale is contemplated, hiring a consulting forester is a must. The consulting forester will mark your timber and advise your sale to assure that all prospective buyers know about this. It almost always brings a better price, which more than covers the consultant fees, plus leaving the managed woods in better condition to grow in value with potential future income.

EXTENSION FORESTERS are university employees who provide continuing education classes. This is an “inside job” that you have to do yourself. It takes an effort to learn tree species, to understand silviculture, decide to plant or not, and most important: learn the ever-changing tax code. To be forewarned is to be fore armed. Taking advantage of the natural resource extension courses is an “inside job” that you have to do yourself.

PROCUREMENT FORESTERS work for a forest products mill. It is good to remember that their first priority is to buy wood, and there may be a conflict of interest. Unless they ask for your forest management plan, they will not know your long-term plans for your land. In the past, many sawmills and pulpmills provided cooperative forestry planning as a service to woodland owners and to secure a source of wood for their mill. Only a few still do, but this is a service worth checking out.

HOW TO FIND THE RIGHT FORESTER FOR YOU. A good place to start is with your neighbors. It is smart to know them and understand where boundary lines run. County or Service Foresters are easily located in the phone book.

HOW TO FIND A CONSULTING FORESTER. Every state forestry agency now maintains a list of Consulting Foresters including their education, qualifications and specialties. If they list a membership in your state landowner association or NWOA (or advertise with NWOA), that is a good indication that they are interested in working with family woodland owners.

Forests and Families

Recognizing Outstanding Inspecting Foresters

2017 National Outstanding Inspector of the Year:

Tom Westergreen of Sumas, Washington

WASHINGTON, D.C. (March 6, 2017)—The American Tree Farm System® (ATFS) is pleased to recognize Tom Westergreen of Sumas, Washington as the 2017 National Outstanding Inspector of the Year. Westergreen was selected from among four regional winners for his exceptional on-the-ground work with family forest owners in Washington and commitment to the American Tree Farm System.

The Outstanding Inspector of the Year award annually recognizes forest inspectors for exceptional sustainable forest management and exemplary work for ATFS. The award was presented on February 23 at the 2017 ATFS National Leadership Conference in Greenville, South Carolina.

“Tom does what he loves most: talking to, sharing with, and learning from his fellow Tree Farmers,” said Tom Martin, president and CEO of the American Forest Foundation, which manages ATFS. “He uses his personal story to help other landowners understand the importance of sustainable forest management and recognizes that his role as an Inspector goes beyond assigned reviews.”

Westergreen has a life-long passion for tree farming and ATFS. He was raised on and currently manages the 1888 McMillion Tree Farm, which was recognized by ATFS as a Washington Tree Farm in 1988. It is one of the oldest Tree Farms in Washington, having been recognized by ATFS for decades. He became an ATFS Inspector in the early 1980s and currently serves as a Region Inspection Coordinator in Washington.

Westergreen is an active member of the forestry community in Washington. For example, he has testified at state legislative committee hearings on topics and issues that are important to Washington’s landowners and forests. He is also responsible for developing and overseeing the Whatcom Women in Timber “Woods Tour,” an annual event that for more than 30 years has taken the public out to the woods to see sustainable forestry management first-hand. Westergreen was nominated by the Washington Tree Farm Program.

We also recognize the 2017 Regional Outstanding Inspectors of the year:

Derek Albers of Maryland
Michael Hughey of Mississippi
Christine Walrho of Wisconsin

The American Tree Farm System® is a network of 82,000 family forest owners sustainable managing 24 million acres of forestland. ATFS is the largest and oldest sustainable woodland system in the United States, internationally recognized, meeting strict third-party certification standards. The American Tree Farm System® is a program of the American Forest Foundation.
Scientists can assess with some degree of confidence the likely effects on salmon runs of removing (or maintaining) a particular dam. Scientific information alone, however, is an insufficient justification for removing (or maintaining) a dam. (Photo U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)

Scientists are certainly able to assess the likely effects of removing (or maintaining) a particular dam, but scientific information alone is an insufficient justification for removing (or maintaining) a dam. There are biological consequences of dam removal (or maintenance) and those consequences may be substantial from a salmon perspective, but ecological consequences are, however, one of many elements that the public and policy-makers must assess when making a policy choice.

The public and policy-makers—not scientists—decide whether preserving salmon runs should trump flood protection, irrigated agriculture, or electricity generation. As the public and policy-makers balance these competing priorities, what they need from scientists are facts and probabilities. What they do not need from scientists are their—or their employer’s—values and policy preferences masked within scientific information disguised as being policy neutral.

There are other common examples in scientific literature and discourse. In working with scientists, I often encounter value-laden terms like degradation, improvement, good, poor, impact, alien, or invasive. Scientists should avoid these normative words in conveying scientific information. Such words imply concepts such as ecosystem health. It is normative science! Ecosystem health is a value-driven policy concept. How do you decide which ecosystems are healthy and which are damaged? Without a normative lens, how can we decide which ecosystems should be protected and which should be eradicated?

Or, what about North American feral horses—the cultural icon of the Wild American West—another nonnative species, but one that enjoys an exalted status by many. Pity the unfortunate government employee tasked with culling the ever-expanding population of this invasive, nonnative species. One vocal group regards wild horses as pests that are overgrazing the open range and they should be eradicated. But another group, also vocal and committed, regards mustangs as sacred icons of the Wild West that ought to be protected even at great cost. Values drive these policy preferences, not science.

In practice, notions of healthy or damaged ecosystems are subtly calibrated by societal values and preferences. Think what the average person actually hears when scientific data or assessments are packaged or presented under the rubric of ecosystem health. Label your preferred condition of an ecosystem as “healthy” and you have the political high ground. The alternative policy choice must be a “damaged” or “degraded” ecosystem. In reality, one person’s “damaged” ecosystem is another person’s “improved” ecosystem. For example, a “healthy” ecosystem can be either a malarial infested swamp or the same land converted to an intensively managed agricultural field. Neither condition can be labeled as “healthy” except through the lens of an individual’s values and preferences. These labels are not determinations rooted in science.

Along the same line, why is it that native species are almost always considered preferable to nonnative species? Nothing in science says one species is innately better than another, that one species is inherently preferred, or that one species should be protected and another species should be eradicated.

To illustrate, most people lament the apparent sorry state of honeybees in North America, a nonnative species. In Europe, that has become more abundant than North American native bee species. Yes, people call honeybees in North America in reality nonnative, what many people might label as an invasive species, but people value their agricultural role.

Conversely, zebra mussels, another common, and nonnative species in North America, are nearly universally regarded as a curse. Where are the advocates for this species? Even with their ability to filter large volumes of water resulting in increased water clarity in lakes where they are abundant, there are no outspoken champions for zebra mussels.

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Colorado Studying Water Enhancer Effectiveness on Fire Attack During 2017 Wildfire Season

By Jason Pohl

Molecular bonds from water enhancers, however, slow evaporation by creating a thermal protective coating. SEAT drops of water enhancers are purposely used in direct attack to slow or halt the fire’s rate of spread long enough for ground resources to access the fireline and mop up or supplement the knockdown process.

These gels have generally been limited in use in recent years, and field testing has been minimal. Information about water enhancers’ availability, use and effectiveness is sparse at best.

The study, lasting throughout the 2017 wildfire season in Colorado, has the following objectives, according to the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control:

1. Observe and evaluate drops of water enhancers on wildfires and record information about 1) whether the water enhancer stopped or slowed the forward advance of the fire; 2) whether the water enhancer reduced fire intensity to a sufficient level for ground crews to manage the fire; and 3) whether the water enhancer persists on the surface fuels long enough to prevent hotspots from redeveloping or the fire from burning through the drop.

Determine whether water enhancers delivered from a SEAT are effective on wildfires in Colorado. Effectiveness will be viewed in terms of how effective the products were in achieving the desired suppression objectives.

Collect as much data as possible regarding the effectiveness of water enhancers used during initial attack and on emerging fires.

Share lessons learned from the evaluations with interested parties, including cooperators and researchers.

Test and evaluate newly developed ground-based mixing/batching equipment to assess the efficiency of the mixing and loading processes and the ability of the equipment to reduce response times.

SEATs loaded with water enhancers will respond to fires on State and private land, as well as to fires under the jurisdiction of BLM, the National Park Service, and USFS. Mixing will be at the recommended ratios in the USFS Qualified Products List for each product on all drops. For the first load on each fire, State and Federally contracted SEATs will respond to the incident with water enhancer unless the ordering unit clearly specifies the need for LTR instead.

Decisions regarding where, when and how to apply a particular aerial retardant or suppressant are typically under the discretion of the Incident Commander, so if at any time the Incident Commander or the Air Tactical Group Supervisor feels that the enhancers are not performing as desired, the Incident Commander can immediately order that the SEATs be loaded with retardant.

The three water enhancers being evaluated in the study are: FireIce HVO-F BlazeTamer 580, and ThermoGel 200L — each is approved by the U.S. Forest Service for use in SEATs.

The Center of Excellence for Advanced Technology Aerial Firefighting, with support from the Division of Fire Prevention and Control and Control’s Aviation Unit and the Bureau of Land Management, is conducting the study.

After weighing input from researchers and firefighters, investigators will compile a preliminary and final report about the project’s findings.
Lignin can make building materials less toxic

(East Lansing, MI - August 4) - A researcher at Michigan State University School of Forestry reported that lignin, a byproduct of paper and bioethanol production, can completely replace phenol in phenolic adhesive formulations, which will help the housing market to be less dependent on petroleum-based raw materials.

Currently, phenol-formaldehyde resins are used to manufacture construction materials including plywood, oriented strand board, and laminated veneered lumber. Its vapors can cause sickness that can become debilitating. Lignin is an ideal substitute because it's considered a waste product. Isolated lignin is mostly discarded or burned to generate fuel for manufacturing. Lignin is the most abundant aromatic polymer, which makes up about 30 percent of the dry mass of plants. Possibly it can be repurposed into green building products to replace phenol in commonly used glues.

**Enhance Songbird Habitat in Forest Management**

As part of a long term goal of integrating timber and songbird habitat management, the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation and its key partners established the Foresters for the Birds initiative in 2008. The project included forester trainings, habitat assessments, and demonstration harvest as well as workshops. Over 200 foresters have participated in trainings, collectively managing more than one million acres. More than 1,000 people have attended tours. At least nine states are currently implementing Foresters for the Birds programs.

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**Ghost Forests: What they are and why they are becoming more common.**

They're called "ghost forests" - dead forests that once dominated this ecoregion as oak-hickory-pine Conifer Forests [NA0529]. Despite its name, Kühler (1985) classified this ecoregion as oak-hickory-pine forest. Little of the long-leaf pine forests that once dominated this ecoregion remain. Pine plantations are widespread and the effects of fire suppression have caused considerable ecological damage to this ecoregion.

Kumar Pictures has produced a film and placed it on the web. Google: “From the Black Forest to the Piney Woods.” Currently, the film is being entered into film festivals globally and is available on video on demand. They seek to share the film with as many people as possible in sustainable forestry management practices of this forest type common in east Texas.

**New Film: From the Black Forest to the Piney Woods**

The Piney/Woods Forests stretch across eastern Texas, northwestern Louisiana, and southwestern Arkansas. This ecoregion includes parts of what is commonly known as the Big Thicket region of east Texas. The Piney Woods occupies the western extent of the Southeast coastal plain and its vegetation reflects similarities with the communities found within the Southeastern Mixed Forests [NA0413] and the Southeastern Conifer Forests [NA0529]. Despite its name, Kühler (1985) classified this ecoregion as oak-hickory-pine forest. Little of the long-leaf pine forests that once dominated this ecoregion remain. Pine plantations are widespread and the effects of fire suppression have caused considerable ecological damage to this ecoregion.

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**Generation NEXT Program in Virginia**

A new two day short course by Virginia Tech Forestry Extension and the Virginia Dept. of Forestry designed to help woodland owners expand their concept of transferring their land to the next generation is more than title to the land. If the past Grandma and Grandpa handed the land down to their four children by dividing it into equal parts. In time the second generation gave it in equal parts, and eventually there was nothing left by small tracts owned many heirs. The message of Generation NEXT is helping landowners understand that they can pass ownership of their land in a manner that does not break it into smaller pieces, and carries a legacy of family stewardship for generations to come. Of those who have completed the short course, about 80% indicate that their lands have a much better chance of remaining "Intact, In Forest, and In the Family. To date 235 landowners have attended the program. The sponsors hope the other 404,765 family woodland owners in Virginia will consider doing the same.
Drones Help Detect Early Threats to Ash Trees

Drones may be a key tool to the future of battling emerald ash borer and other blights that can impact the urban forest, and that buzzing some might have heard in southeastern Boulder on July 13 was the sound of a team setting out to prove just that. A group of scientists and researchers recently sent drones as high as 335 feet over areas including ash trees showing varying levels of damage from the emerald ash borer, an invasive green jewel beetle that feeds on the ash tree species.

The work was made possible both through a matching $50,000 Innovation Grant that Spectrabotics has received from the Colorado Office of Economic Development, as well as a $10,000 grant to Arbor Drone from Denver, where approximately 15 percent of the city’s 300,000 urban trees are ash species and potentially at risk.

The “octocopter” eight-motor, equipped with a MicaSense RedEdge 5-band multispectral cameras. The sensors have the capacity to distinguish between species and report on vegetation health. Flown at drone height levels, images are two to three times sharper than images from airplanes.

Utah Mobile Pyrolysis Unit Clears Debris and Sequesters Carbon

Working in partnership with Utah State University Forestry Extension, the Utah Mobile Resources Group has been demonstrating their mobile unit to landowners in several states. The work “pyrolyses” dead vegetation and breaks down the decomposition of organic material (such as low value wood) at elevated temperatures in the absence of oxygen. It involves the simultaneous change of chemical composition and physical phase and is irreversible. The wood material is charred at 400-590 (degrees) F. What is left is high carbon charcoal called bio-char.

Biochar has many uses, including to ability to sequester carbon as carbon and out of the atmosphere for a very long time. It is used as a soil enhancer, as a trap for water contaminants, and myriad of other uses. For most wood materials undergoing pyrolysis, the end product ration is about 30% biochar, 60% bio-oil, and 10% gas. Bio-oil has some uses but is typically not sold.

The abundance of beetle killed wood in the west (22 million acres) will take decades to rot in a dry climate, releasing most of the wood carbon to the air. There is good opportunity here for landowner associations to make land quickly available to mobile pyrolysis units through their state forestry agencies and utilize that along with an emerging industry. Public lands will benefit too, but it could take years of environmental impact analysis and statements, plus more time for legal challenges and resolution.

There is a window of time right now for NWOA’s western state affiliates to facilitate this new industry, get ravaged woodlands back into healthy production, and sequester carbon safely. The megadeath now played between these two is removal biomass too but they quickly return it to the atmosphere. Everyone, urban or rural, has a stake in this huge issue that is with us now, and later.

Lake Tahoe Report Highlights Threat of Dying Forests

When the University of California, Davis, released its annual State of the Lake Report this month it broached an unusual topic. The report that delves into the health of Lake Tahoe typically focuses on water quality issues that affect the famed and peerless clarity of the largest alpine lake in North America. But this year, scientists and researchers cast an eye toward the forests that surround Lake Tahoe, noting an increasing presence of brown, desiccated and dying trees. Large swaths of the stately pines of the Lake Tahoe Basin have turned brown. Dying and dead trees intermingle with the otherwise healthy coniferous forest, the signs of enduring years of a sustained and deep drought.

“Tree mortality in Tahoe has been epidemic,” Davis said. “In the last two or three years, but this year it was through the roof,” said Geoffrey Schladow, director of the Tahoe Environmental Research Center. Sugar pine have been hit disproportionately by the drought. There are species in the system that rely on certain trees or live at certain altitudes, so it has ramifications for the entire system. Residents and visitors to the Tahoe Basin may have just begun to notice the strain on the forest created by a 5-year drought started in 2011 and ongoing in both intensity and duration.

Compounding the problem is an ill-timed explosion of the population of bark beetles, which are drought-stressed to finish the job. While Tahoe’s job is just manifesting itself, the southern stretches of the Sierra Nevada have been devastated.

“Tahoe’s witnessed tree mortality recently, but it is not nearly as bad as Southern California,” according to Brian Sparks, who works on the west side with UC Davis. “In some areas of the Southern Sierra there are entire watersheds where 80 or even 90 percent of the trees are dying.”

The U.S. Forest Service estimates that more than 102 million trees have died in California forests since 2010. More than 60 percent of the dead trees have pined in the last year alone. Most agree on the two primary factors in tree mortality – drought and insects. But scientists and some forest managers debate whether decades of fire suppression in the Sierra, in the interest of protecting private property, has rendered the forests of California’s most prominent mountain range overcrowded, unhealthy and prone to catastrophe.

Senator Tester advocate for wildfire fund to help offset USFS fire costs.

Wildfire continues to ravage thousands of acres of Montana forests, burning not just trees, but millions of dollars of Forest Service funding. Senator Jon Tester (D-MT) is proposing new legislation to create a wildfire relief fund to help mitigate that cost — similar to relief funds already in place for other natural disasters. The Democrat believes this would help ensure the U.S. Forest Service does not have to divert all of its funds from one burning area to another.

“While Tahoe’s problem starts, and we need to make sure the Forest Service has the dollars it needs to manage the forests in a way that they know it needs to be managed,” explained Tester. “What’s happening now is we’re taking over half their dollars, and we’re funding fires all across the country. That money that should be used for forest management that’s simply not there because it’s gone,” Sen. Tester added. “It’s just gone.”

For the last month, it’s been going out the door to the tune of a $1.5 million a day. And that’s just for Montana, I might add. That’s not California or Nevada or anywhere else in the west.”

But Sen. Tester says crews should have a separate fund with which to pay for wildfire costs, as fires are an annual occurrence. “What’s so very, very frustrating is the fact that these fires are always going to happen, but if they had

Hawk and snake combination start wildfire in Montana

Wildfires are an annual occurrence. In 2016, scientists began trapping bees at 43 sites in forests burned by the 2013 Douglas Complex fire north of Grants Pass. The sites ranged from places where fire severity was low—flames were confined to low-growing vegetation and failed to reach the canopy—to places where severity was moderate and high. In the latter severity sites, bee populations were normal. However, the resurgence of flowering understory plants and results in the open canopy supported increased number of bees.

Florida man billed $50,000 for wildfire that started from his book fire

On March 23 in Nassau County, Florida a fire escaped from Brian Sparks’ yard while he was burning books. The Garfield Road Wildfire burned 705 acres and two homes.

Monday he received an invoice from the Florida Department of Agriculture for the costs of suppressing the fire — $59,403.8. The bill includes the costs incurred by a dozer/plow, rangers, five hours for a fixed wing aircraft, and other firefighters from several counties. Mr. Sparks is also facing a misdemeanor criminal citation for failure to obtain a department permit and reckless land burning which included paperback books and other clutter.

Weeds Thrive after Severe Forest Fires

Because Oregon’s more than 500 species of native bees are important half the pollination of wild plants and crops, the study suggests that fires may promote weed growth. Those weeds in turn may influence agricultural productivity and overall floral diversity.

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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.

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 __________________________

Woodland Location (County, city and State) __________________________

Are locations fenced or posted? _______ Any lakes or ponds? _______ Any dams/spillways/bridges? _______
Any leased hunting or commercial hunting? Yes _______ If yes, are Certificates of Insurance required? Yes _______
Any watercraft or docks? _______ Any property currently being used for mining? _______
Any buildings? _______ Are Certificates of Insurance required? _______

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 = __________
(subject to a minimum premium of $160 for up to 535 acres)

Subtotal: ________________

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

Total Payment Due: ________________

Please Specify Effective Dates:

- January 1, 2017 to January 1, 2018
- April 1, 2017 to April 1, 2018
- July 1, 2017 to July 1, 2018
- October 1, 2017 to October 1, 2018

Total Payment Due: ________________

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

National Woodland Owners Association
374 Maple Ave E, Suite 310; Vienna, VA 22180-4718

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