

Summer 2008

NATIONAL WOODLANDS

THE VOICE OF FAMILY FOREST LANDOWNERS
Growing half of America's wood, forests, water and wildlife

Forest Recovery

- Lessons Learned After Hurricane Katrina
- **The Role of Family Forests in Firefighting**



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The Readers Respond.....

talk@nwoa.net

National Woodlands
374 Maple Avenue East
Suite 210
Vienna, VA 22180

Dear Keith:

Greetings, and good wishes after all of these years! Your big smile in the Winter 2008 issue is so characteristic of the Keith I remember from our days in Virginia and North Carolina. Also, the energy that is needed to keep the association and magazine going. I had to begin with the personal because of our past association but I also want to comment on the articles in the Winter issue.

Before arriving in Virginia in 1972 I was supervisor of the San Isabel Forest, which lies immediately south of most of the Hayman Fire. During our three years on the San Isabel, the southwest monsoon brought thunder showers to the mountains every summer afternoon. The forest people had no fire training, and when I required it, did not see the need for it. There were no fires on the forest in those three years, but the entire Colorado River Basin is now in drought and forest fires are common. Perhaps some of the old attitudes were hard to erase when climate changed.

The San Isabel has 20 peaks over 14,000 feet high and miles of the Continental Divide. At the time I felt it was critical to protect the forest's 350,000 acres of alpine terrain. We worked with local trail bike and 4WD clubs to educate them about the sensitivity of the area that even foot traffic could damage. I hope the Continental Divide Trail locaters and promoters keep the impact of trails to a minimum in the alpine areas.

I also had some comment on John Lowe's insightful testimony before the Federal Forest Lands Advisory Committee. Under biological issues he mentions that overly dense stands result from lack of fire. I wish that all foresters and the public could recognize that fire has been suppressed for more than 100 years precisely because before that time there was no law to prevent anyone from burning the woods whenever they wanted. In our area, dense stands came in after logging when trees and shrubs filled in. Forestry ended when new rules and lawsuits came along, so the condition worsens because no thinning is done.

I know from personal experience that burning the woods in the South and probably other parts of the country with high summertime humidity had many benefits. But those burns often escaped to a neighbor's property and could cause property damage and damage to forest values as well. The southern experience is not directly applicable to most of the West, certainly not to California. I burn every winter after fire season and hold my breath when the north wind blows. Even in winter, burning is chancy here.

His testimony mentioned the threat of development to public forest lands. That may be the most important threat of all. Here in California, the Board of Forestry and legislature are dominated by preservation interests and have promulgated laws and rules that make it impossible for small landowners

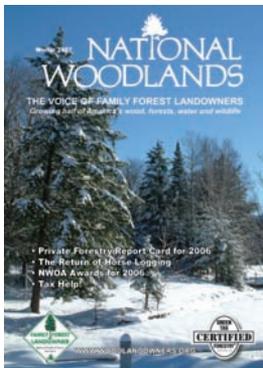
(Continued on page 18)

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NATIONAL WOODLANDS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL WOODLAND OWNERS ASSOCIATION

Volume 31, Number 3

Summer 2008



www.woodlandowners.org

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On the Cover: Judd Brooke took this photograph of his property in Hancock County in southeast Mississippi which took the full blown fury of Hurricane Katrina. The visible regeneration is all natural and is representative of about 70 percent of Brooke's 4,000 acres. This photo shows trees that were snapped by the winds and also trees that died from the water damage. Around 50 percent of the trees had to be taken out of this area due to the damage and were used for chip-n-saw or pulp that would have otherwise been sold for poles. Brooke has replanted 200 of the most devastated acres where literally 80 percent of timber had to be taken out after the hurricane. He replanted with containerized longleaf. Special thanks to the Mississippi Forestry Association.

Manage Your Sustainable Forest with GIS

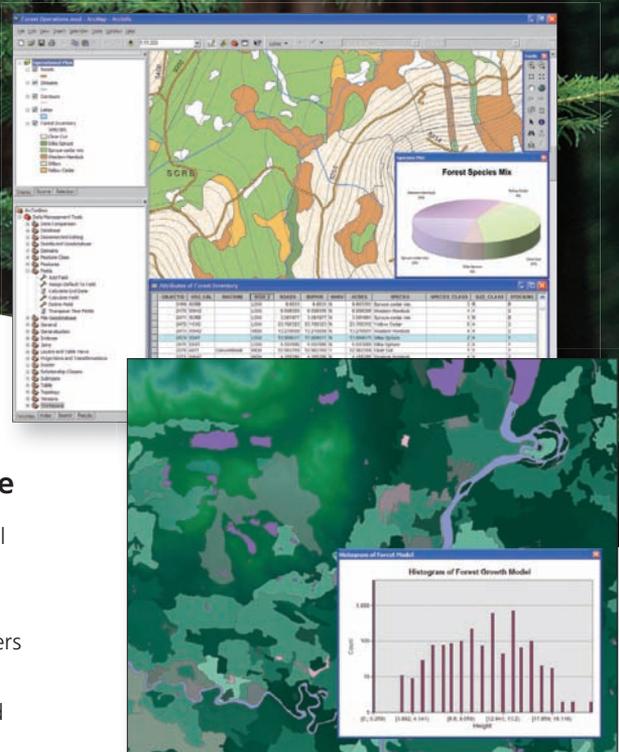


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Non-Industrial Private Forestry Commentary

Keith A. Argow, Publisher



It's a Fact, Trees Grow Back! Special Issue on Forest Recovery

When a hurricane or a wildfire wipes out a family forest, nature goes to work right away on regeneration. Depending on the intensity of the fire or the strength of the wind, the speed of regeneration can vary greatly. This is when the hand of man, through a trained forester working for a responsive landowner, can make the difference between a rapid recovery (as illustrated on the cover of this issue) and a drawn out process of natural succession.

When there is a clear economic incentive, such as timber income or urgent watershed stabilization, the process can be surprisingly rapid. When left to nature, as many folks say they prefer, the process can take years, even decades. The scars of major forest fires at the dawn of the 20th Century in the Pacific Northwest remained visible on some locations 100 years later. Severe erosion was followed by spotty growth until roots could take hold, then dense scrub cover that built soil. Eventually shade tolerant trees became established. This forest will have to run a full cycle before the diverse Douglas-fir/true fir species mix is again established.

A family forest landowner is not likely to want to wait this long. At what point does society step up and offer financial assistance and tax incentives to encourage landowners to speed the process along? What worked? What did not work?

Our lead story explores in depth the public policy advocacy lessons learned after Hurricane Katrina. Early on, folks in Mississippi recognized a

huge task before them and launched an impressive multi-year effort. Bruce Alt, a long time NWOA member and Executive Vice President of the Mississippi Forestry Association, was deeply involved and committed from Day One. When their work was completed, they took the time to review what had been learned, including ten important public

At what point does society step up and offer financial assistance and tax incentives to encourage landowners to speed the process along? What worked? What did not work?

policy advocacy lessons. Bruce shares that information with us in this issue. It is a practical reference that organized landowners across the U.S. will want to keep handy should disaster ever befall their land.

Our second feature examines the role of family forests in forest fire fighting and suppression. As regional droughts and global warming continue and annual wildfires escalate in intensity and damage to ever more acres, family woodland owners are rightly concerned. While they may be managing their lands responsibly, Congress and the courts have so completely screwed up fuel conditions on intermingled federal lands that the result is a slew of unintended consequences that pleases no one.

Montana extension forester Peter Kolb, also a longtime NWOA member, examines conditions in the northern Rocky Mountains in detail. In that region, the role of thinned forests in stopping raging crown fires made a noticeable difference that translates to big savings in fire fighting costs as well as less damage to the resource. A shin-

ing example is the woodland of Thorn Liechty, founder of the Montana Forest Owners Association and former NWOA Advisory Council member. It is a tale of common sense as well as inspiration. Elsewhere in this issue we bring an update of legislative progress in Washington, D.C. We finally have a Farm Bill, with excellent private forestry provisions, after two presidential vetoes. Now NWOA and its partners must remain involved to assure that

the regulations developed to implement these programs are both reasonable and fair to all concerned.

Not just any forest does a watershed make. Some species are better than others. We continue our long running series entitled "Soil & Water, the Foundation of it All" by looking at the importance of putting the right trees in the right places. Our second running feature examines three forward-looking online Internet resources being developed by the U.S. Forest Service and related agencies. We have a very practical discussion by Bill Siegel in our continuing timber tax chronicles the implications of the self employment tax for woodland owners. After all these years, taxes remain the number one concern of woodland owners nationwide.

Last but not least, NWOA welcomes three new Directors (p. 6) elected by our affiliated state landowner associations in New England, the Lake States, and the Ohio Valley. In short, there is a whole lot of useful information in this issue.

—K.A.A.

argow@nwoa.net

NWOA NEWS



The National Woodland Owners Association understands, assists, and joins together people who are stewards of private lands and care deeply about the future of forests, forestry, and land use.

Our members, staff, and Board are passionate woodland owners and foresters dedicated to the health, maintenance, and sustainability of private forests, but we need your help.

Join the National Woodland Owners Association and help us shape the future landscape in the best way woodland owners can. Together.

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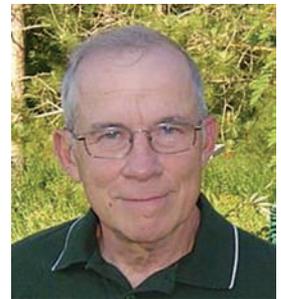
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Affiliates Elect 3 New Board Members



Robert Tindall is a small woodland owner from Perryville, KY. He is employed as a timber buyer and forest consultant. He worked extensively with forest landowners managing forest as well with forest industries working with primary and secondary wood manufacturing helping them improve production performance, improve products, and search out new markets for their products, and many other aspects of wood manufacturing.

A lifetime member and past president of the Wisconsin Woodland Owners' Association, **Dale Zaug** spent his career working in the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources as a forester and was promoted to be the agency's first data administrator. He retired from the DNR in 2000 and has been a part-time consultant forester since then.



Paul Boisvert is the Executive Director of Southern New England Forest Consortium, Inc. which assists various forestry organizations throughout Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island on forest land issues with a mission towards fragmentation problems. He is currently working with the Rhode Island Resource Conservation and Development Area as the coordinator of the Rhode Island Coverts Project issues such as taxation and open space.

AFFILIATED STATE LANDOWNER ASSOCIATIONS

Northeast

- Small Woodland Owners Association of Maine
- New Hampshire Timberland Owners Association
- Vermont Woodlands Association
- Massachusetts Forestry Association
- Rhode Island Forest Conservators Organization
- Connecticut Forest & Park Association

Mid-Atlantic

- Pennsylvania Forestry Association
- Delaware Forestry Association
- Woodland Owners Association of West Virginia

Ohio Valley

- Ohio Woodland Owner Councils
- Kentucky Woodland Owners Association
- Indiana Forestry & Woodland Owners Association

Mid-South

- Virginia Woodlands Association
- North Carolina Woodlands
- Tennessee Woodland Owners Council

Southeast

- Alabama Treasure Forest Association
- Georgia Federation of Forest Owners

North Central

- Michigan Forest Association
- Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association
- Minnesota Forestry Association
- Iowa Woodland Owners Association

South Central

- Ozark Woodland Owners Association (AR)

- Oklahoma Woodland Owners Association
- Texas Forest & Woodland Owners Council
- Louisiana Forest Owners Council

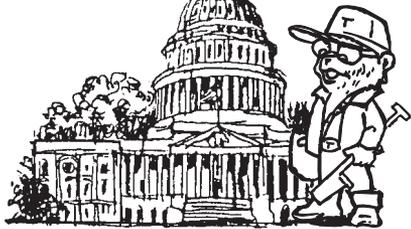
Northwest

- Washington Farm Forestry Association
- Oregon Small Woodlands Association
- Idaho Forest Owners Association
- Montana Forest Owners Association
- Alaska Forest Owners Council

Southwest

- Forest Landowners of California
- Colorado Forestry Association
- Utah Woodland Owners Council
- Hawaii Forest Landowners Network

Late Breaking NEWS



from Washington, D.C.

FLAME Act Passes House More Work Needed

The Federal Land Assistance, Management and Enhancement Act (FLAME) H.R. 5541, which is supported by NWOA, passed the House July 9 by a unanimous voice vote! Likely the raging wildfires in California at the time had something to do with the swift agreement.

The bill authorizes emergency events to be funded with a wildfire account separate from appropriations for normal fire preparedness, initial attack and predictable firefighting efforts. This will put a stop to the current practice of paying for emergency firefighting efforts, which can be huge, from other funds appropriated for recreation, forest management, watershed restoration, fish and wildlife, road maintenance and historic heritage projects. Often Congress does not fully restore the money spent by these forestry programs and important jobs go undone.

The National Association of State Foresters, which has taken a leading role in supporting this urgent funding reform, expressed disappointment that the final draft of the bill omitted earlier language that would have ended the requirement that the Forest Service fund all wildland fire suppression costs at a ten-year rolling average within its constrained budget. Thus, the problem is not entirely fixed. The NASF and NWOA will work to get this important language restored in the Senate version of the bill when it considers the bill later this summer.

Farm Bill Good For Family Forest Owners

On June 18 Congress voted to override President Bush's veto of the 2008 Farm Bill a second time. The redux was made necessary because of the inadvertent omission of one of the 15 titles (sections) in the first bill sent to the president. The mistake postponed the implementation of dates of some programs (i.e. illegal logging).

As a member of the Forests in the

Farm Bill Coalition, NWOA has worked with partner associations for two years to create and authorize Farm Bill programs for individual private woodland owners that would assist in long-range sustainable forest stewardship. As regulations are developed to implement these initiatives, NWOA will monitor these programs and describe how landowners can put them to use if they want to participate.

FY Appropriation Bills Moving Slowly

The FY09 appropriation process is moving forward in the House and the Senate, although it is not clear if the bill will get to the floor before the summer recess, and possibly before the budget due date of October 1. NWOA is working to restore money for Cooperative Forestry and the Forest Legacy programs. Both have been targeted with big reductions in the president's 2009 budget proposals.

Ninth Circuit Court Makes Remarkable Turnaround

A unanimous 11-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit (San Francisco) issued a remarkable and unexpected opinion on July 2 ruling that in the past decisions have improperly interfered with the role of the U.S. Forest Service as the "expert agency" regarding decisions about forest management. The ruling overturned an injunction issued by a three-judge panel that had halted a successful National Forest thinning and restoration project in Idaho.

The opinion included seven significant provisions, such as: the National Environmental Policy Act is not violated any time there is some uncertainty in the science or the law. The court also held that the Forest Service need not verify its scientific predictions before it can engage in forest management. If the federal government will rise to the opportunity, this ruling could restore more reason to Federal land management programs.

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Public Policy Advocacy Lessons Learned After Hurricane Katrina

Bruce C. Alt*

As the “Voice of Forestry” in Mississippi, the Mississippi Forestry Association (MFA) quickly assumed a leading role in organizing the forestry community’s response to the devastating impact of Hurricane Katrina on the state’s vast forest resources. In September 2005, and for many months thereafter, MFA members and “friends of forestry” worked to facilitate the maximum amount of timber salvage and resource renewal in order to help landowners recover and continue their long term investment in forest stewardship. An important part of this overall effort was MFA’s leadership and participation in the public policy process at both the state and federal levels. These “Top 10” lessons were derived from MFA’s government affairs efforts and experiences.

1. Be the preferred provider of information & data

When disaster strikes, do you know where to get accurate information? We relied on the Mississippi Institute of Forest Inventory, the Mississippi Forestry Commission and the US Forest Service Forest Inventory and Analysis Unit for early estimates of timber damage, which we then shared immediately with members of Congress, their staffs and state and federal authorities. As a result of finding the most accurate data available, MFA and our sources were recognized as credible by decision makers and the news media, positioning us to be reliable sources of information in the future.

2. Be unified

When disaster strikes, do you have an emergency reference source for all of your important partners? Do you know what their concerns and challenges are? Do you have an information and support system to handle the volume of information and demands—or do you need help from other organizations? Do you already have effective working partnerships with them?

Shortly after the storm, MFA facilitated a large and inclusive meeting of the entire Mississippi forestry community that included manufacturers, wood suppliers and professional timber harvesters, landowners and land managers. Our purpose was to share information and to identify challenges, opportunities and resources. We sought to bring all parties to the table and keep them involved and informed.

3. Be a complete and unified advocacy team

The key to crafting good public policy is unity. Our friends in Washington, both in Congress and the executive branch, really dislike a lack of unity in requests and policy proposals. They expect us to form coalitions, consider policy alternatives, and develop consensus proposals. The foundation for this teambuilding process must be built long before a disaster strikes.

4. Be in Washington, DC quickly, before your adversaries & competitors

There was a limited window of opportunity after Hurricane Katrina. Washington, DC, filled up very quickly with lobbyists, opportunists, and competitors seeking to leverage the disaster and its damage to their advantage. There were a limited amount of resources that Congress could allocate to disaster relief and recovery. We prepared our policy requests quickly but thoroughly. We gained strategic credibility with decision makers early after the disaster. When we went to see our decision makers, we were well prepared and unified.

5. Be reasonable, but be bold

When we went to Washington, we had done our homework and developed consensus policy proposals based on the best data available. The timber damage estimates, both in terms of cost and volume, were huge; far beyond our historical paradigms. We had never experienced a landscape disaster of the magnitude that Hurricane Katrina inflicted. Although

*Executive Vice President, Mississippi Forestry Association

forestry professionals tend to be conservative by nature, our proposals for disaster relief and resource recovery were bold, but were fully substantiated by our data. Clearly there is one truism to remember: you don't get what you don't ask for.

6. Be ready to answer the "key question"

You already know what the "key question" is if you've ever been asked pointblank by a U.S. senator!

When you meet with legislators or staff in Washington, get to the bottom line quickly and answer their key question—What do you want *me* to do?

Imagine the setting: you and your coalition partners are explaining the terrible disaster that Hurricane Katrina wrought, showing PowerPoint presentations of timber damage and data, making appeals for help.....all to a seemingly interested and patient audience, whether elected officials or their staffs. Now close the deal. Tell them what you want. They expect that you will offer a solution since you hopefully have already convinced them that you are the expert!

I have had legislators confide in me about their visits with other organizations and their representatives, complaining that they had listened for thirty minutes and still didn't know what the group actually wanted them to do. Remember, you really only get one opportunity to waste an elected official's or staff member's time.

So remember the key question, whether it comes from a Member of Congress, the Administration, or their professional staffs: What do you want *me* to do?

You had better be ready to answer clearly and concisely.

7. Be real to be (more) credible

Real people are those most directly impacted by a disaster and who will be directly involved in the recovery. REAL people in the forestry community include loggers, landowners, foresters, consultants, and wood dealers, not lobbyists and paid executives of trade associations. Association executives and lobbyists serve a very important and useful role in the public policy formation process, but a disaster can best be described by those actually affected.

We conducted a unique briefing in the U.S. Capitol. In the meeting room were staff members from Members' offices, professional committee staff and agency personnel - both Democrats and Republicans, from both the Senate and House of Representatives. For effective communications and maximum impact, we put real people in front of decision makers: Mississippi's Secretary of State, a professional logging contractor, the State Forester, the Dean of MSU's College of Forest Resources, and later on, a professional consulting forester and forest landowner.

You might be surprised to know who the staffers remembered, found to be very credible, and asked about months later. It was the logger. It was so refreshing! But what made that professional logger from Mantee, Mississippi an effective advocate? I could tell you that he had a sense of humor, a "curious" accent (at least to those in Washington), and that most, if not all, of those staffers had never met a professional logger before. The staffers knew he was a genuine "small businessman" who had to produce a quality service at a competitive price. Moreover, he wasn't being paid to be there. In street language, although he was wearing a suit, he wasn't "a suit." With both heart and "skin in the game," he was *real*.

8. Be "on message"

Simply put, develop your coalition's message in advance; get on it, and *stay on it*.



9. Be compatible with policy requests from the State & Governor

Remember the need for unity! It was critical for us to be able to leverage our public policy working relationships in state government into new opportunities for cooperation and teamwork with government officials, both at the state and federal levels.

10. Be thankful—recognize and reward those who work with and for your team

Congressional staffers are underpaid and overworked; they might work for food, but they are driven by their passion and commitment. Their bosses need something else. Primarily they need two things: public recognition and re-election support. It's not complicated.

We recognized and rewarded those who worked to assist the forestry community in a variety of ways:

- MFA's members and the forestry community were well informed about our efforts and successes, especially about who helped us.
- Elected officials were invited to speak at association functions, and were publicly recognized with special plaques and affinity items such as "forest recovery" clothing at awards ceremonies.
- MFA and our partners held a private reception in Washington for Members of Congress, the administration, and their staffs to say "thanks" personally.
- Personal letters of thanks and appreciation were written to staffers, with suitable recognition provided to their supervisors.

Part of being thankful is being selfless. Remember, what we can accomplish by working together is truly amazing if we don't focus on who gets the credit.

(Continued on page 13)



Looking northeast towards the community of Evaro the aftermath of the drought, wind and steep topography driven Blackcat fire can be seen. Under these conditions and in heavy fuels there is no chance of containing a fire like this. In forests managed for good tree spacing and reduced fuels fire suppression teams can make a huge difference.

The Role of Family Forests In Forest Fire Fighting and Suppression

Peter Kolb*

Nationally there is much agreement that the wildland-urban interface (WUI) is an area of high concern with regard to wildland fires. Given the number and magnitude of wildfires that have been occurring across Montana, it provides a good example of what we are facing nationally. However, it is important to understand why the WUI has become the focal point of fire suppression and cost discussion.

First and foremost, all Montana landscapes that contain some level of natural vegetation can support wildfires, and under extreme weather conditions these wildfires can burn with a high intensity that escapes and prevents effective direct suppression efforts. This is part of the undisputed natural history of Montana landscapes. When the climatic trends are right, human development on these landscapes is at risk.

So far, this impact has been most significant where communities and human assets interface with vegetation. The wildfire impact in the WUI is not, however, because the communities and urban areas themselves are not flammable, but because the WUI is where wildfires must be contained unless they are allowed to burn into more concentrated human development. Recent and historical wildfires offer evidence of this. The Jocko Lakes Fire this past summer offered the real possibility of burning through the town of Seeley Lake; the Blackcat fire, blown by high winds had significant potential of burning into Missoula; the Black Mountain fire of 2002 had the same potential; and across the rest of the U.S. in the summer of 2007, numerous towns and communities in Arizona,

California, Florida, Georgia and Minnesota were evacuated because of real eminent risk of climate-driven wildfires burning through them. The California fires of this past summer did burn through communities around Lake Tahoe, and parts of San Diego and Los Angeles, where many homes lost to the fires were within the city limits.

The last time we had similar weather patterns was during the late 1800s and early 1900s. In 1871 the Peshtigo forest fire raced with the dry wind across northern Wisconsin and Michigan burning trees, towns, and people. On the same day the identical climatic conditions also fanned the great Chicago fire. And again in 1894, the Hinckley forest fire in Minnesota burned down 12 towns.

Forty years later another climatic spike led to the great fires of 1910, when much of the town of Wallace, Idaho and numerous other smaller communities burned along with three million acres of pristine forest. Currently, many regions across the United States face identical--if not worse--climatic conditions. The increased human population in fire prone areas increases the potential harm these fires can do. However, the greater knowledge about wildfire behavior, organization and technology of fire suppression, and proactive wildfire fuels management strategies offer tools to mitigate the impact.

It has by now been well documented by climatologists, fire behavior specialists and ecologists that drought coupled with hot summers and windy conditions is the primary driver of the wildfires that escape initial suppression efforts and develop into large conflagrations. The largest fuel accumulations in the world will not burn if they are wet and cold. Alternatively,

*Montana State Extension Forestry Specialist, Associate Professor of Forest Ecology & Management, University of Montana, Missoula.

very light fuel loads can burn in intense infernos if they are dry and fanned by the wind. The large escaped wildfires, both across rangelands and forests, have caused the greatest damage and costs to human interests.

To add to our modern woes is another exacerbating factor: On federal lands, a fire suppression policy of “let burn until it reaches areas in need of protection” has been implemented. This is because of the acknowledgement that on many federally managed lands there are: 1) very high fuel conditions, 2) a widespread inability of federal managers to conduct timely and adequate fuel mitigation treatments (due to a variety of regulatory, funding and activism reasons), 3) a resignation that wildfires are the only way for federal managers to reduce fuels, and, 4) the reality that it is much safer for wildfire suppression teams to follow passive containment strategies rather than directly attacking extreme wildfires.

Passive containment strategies rely on creating fuel breaks and fire lines well in advance of an existing fire by connecting strategic topographic features such as waterways, ridge tops, valley bottoms and rock faces to areas where fuels have been reduced such as old burned areas, past timber harvest units, grazed pastures and existing roads. Where such features do not exist, fire breaks are constructed using large mechanized equipment and back burning. In general, the more current fuel treatment areas and natural barriers that exist, the quicker, more effective and less expensive it is to build containment zones.

Preexisting fuel treatment areas can be pivotal in determining how quickly and effectively an escaped wildfire can be controlled, and this is where the role of family forest landowners must be clarified in the WUI discussion. Over the past decade I have examined the record of progress and containment of many large Montana wildfires that burned across mixed ownerships including family forests. In each circumstance, family forest lands that were managed for multiple resources including healthy tree growth and regeneration proved essential in helping contain large wildfires.

In 2000 the Bitterroot Valley Complex (roughly 500,000 acres burned) was contained on the flank that burned into the Shiny Mountain ranch because of the forest thinning, debris cleanup and grazing implemented across those lands. The Blodgett fire north of Hamilton was contained on its east flank as it burned into the community of Pinesdale, and although several houses were lost, fire suppression tactics worked because of the fuels treatment that had been conducted by landowners there.

The Fridley fire in 2001 burned across 25,000 acres of dense federal forests within one week and was then contained on its northeast flank when it burned into private ranchlands where the contiguous forest canopy had been broken up with patch cuts and thinning and where surface fine fuels had been reduced by livestock grazing. The Rye Creek fire east of Missoula was contained on private ranch lands because of land management practices that allowed for successful back burning and access by water trucks. The east side of the Black Mountain fire, which started in dense federal forest five miles from developed areas, was successfully contained only when it burned onto managed private lands that bordered the city of Missoula.

The Packer Gulch fire two years ago burned out of control until it burned onto the property of a ranch that has conducted extensive forest thinning along its property line. When it hit this forest it dropped to the ground and was contained. Last year’s Blackcat fire that quickly turned into the number one national priority fire, was laid to the ground when it hit thinned forests on private lands.



NWAO member Thorn Liechty contemplates the defensibility of his forest as the Blackcat fire burns in his direction.

When fire suppression teams first entered this area a day later, the fire was still only smoldering as a surface fire and was easily contained along a preexisting access road. An adjacent private landowner’s thinned forest became the safety retreat zone for nearby fire crews, and the landowner himself, who stayed in spite of the local Sheriff’s draconian mandatory evacuation tactics, became a local source of access information to firefighters. Another nearby forest landowner, who also stayed home because he had significantly treated his forest for fire resilience and had a good safety zone, alerted fire crews to a closer source of water for helicopter dipping.

In all cases, the wildfires were actively fought with all available capabilities as they burned through dense forests and large landscapes. It is not insignificant nor coincidence that these fire suppression actions became more effective when the fire burned onto managed family forest lands. Similarly, the same fire, that started on federal lands and became uncontrollable on the same, caused the most property damage when the southern flank burned into a grassland setting and was pushed by a wind event through a developed area with multiple houses. The speed and intensity with which the fire moved caught even the most experienced fire teams by surprise and it was only through the quick actions of the local fire chief, and the green zones that local homeowners had around their homes that the fire did not burn down multiple houses. Extreme wildfire behavior that knows no boundaries is something that everybody must learn to deal with.

Modern wildfire suppression costs have become astronomical and a significant proportion of this cost is commonly attributed to the resources “required” for protecting homes as the landscape level fires burn into private property. However, this statistic taken at face value can be extremely misleading because it is often at the WUI where these wildfires are caught and contained. It is analogous to placing the blame for a robbery on a victim for being in the wrong place at the wrong



While the fire still rages in the heavy timber and fuels of the background it became quite manageable when it burned into the private lands in the foreground.

time. Even with the many expensive and sophisticated fire behavior models and mapping tools, fire suppression strategy still must rely on the incident command teams' experience and wisdom, which for some teams is incredibly good (and some severely lacking).

For the bureaucrats who are trying to find money to pay for wildfire expenses, and the wild-land fire fighters who don't like having to spend their time protecting homes when they would rather be fighting forest fires, some of whom point their fingers at the WUI and family forest landowners as causes of the problem, there is one major point they are missing. *Wildland fires need to be contained somewhere.*

To be fair, there are circumstances where homes are built in places that increase firefighting costs, or where homeowners and landowners do not manage to reduce wildfire fuels. Most family forest landowners feel very strongly that landowners and homeowners who build in wildfire prone areas share a burden of responsibility for where they live, particularly in building fire-wise homes and in creating defensible space. There are homes built into areas that may not be defensible. There are landowners who have hazardous fuel buildups around their homes. There are communities built into areas that are equally indefensible from wildfires *if* fuel buildups in the surrounding landscape are not managed.

However, the majority of forest landowners who own five or more acres of forested land and have management plans through the assistance of state service foresters, Conservation Districts, the Tree Farm System, the Forest Service-funded Forest Stewardship Program or Extension Forestry programs, have lands that allow for the better and safer containment of wildfires.

As our climate continues to create conditions for extreme wildfire events, everyone with a dry lawn and house is at risk from these fires. Family forest landowners and the management practices they pursue in their forests have proven themselves to be a valuable asset towards helping fire suppression teams contain wildfires, particularly those developing and burning out of federally managed lands towards communities. Rather than being penalized, they should be encouraged to continue to practice sound forest management on their lands that in addition to providing zones of wildland fire containment, also provide a majority of the wood fiber needed by our economy, wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities, open space and quality view-sheds, and watersheds that supply communities with clean water.



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POST KATRINA PUBLIC POLICY

(Continued from page 9)

11. Bonus

We were indeed blessed in our policy and advocacy efforts after Hurricane Katrina by the fact that our congressional delegates were in key legislative positions that could facilitate the process. Mississippi's senior Senator, Thad Cochran, was the Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman. The junior Senator, Trent Lott, was the former Senate Majority Leader and a member of the Finance Committee. He and his family had been personally and tragically affected, losing their family home in Pascagoula. Congressman Gene Taylor of the 4th District had lost his home, too. In addition, Senator Cochran and his Chief of Staff had actually flown over south Mississippi right after the hurricane and had seen the devastation with their own eyes and had personally vowed to help the forestry community before we even asked.

What Went Right

The great news is that more "went right" than "went wrong". Here are a few major factors:

1. The free market system - Fundamentally, all the timber that was salvaged was due to the effectiveness of the free market, free enterprise system. For example, wet storage woodyards that allowed damaged timber to be stored for up to two years before being milled into useful wood products were quickly built. Old woodyards that had been "mothballed" were quickly put back into service. This level of teamwork and cooperation dramatically increased the number of markets for timber, and directly accounted for the success of our timber salvage effort.
2. The Law Enforcement Division of the Mississippi Department of Transportation granted an emergency provision that allowed higher gross weights of salvaged timber, 95,000 pounds, to be hauled by trucks. The current law normally allowed only 80,000 pounds gross weight and with a special harvest permit an added 5% tolerance, for a total of up to 84,000 lbs. This emergency weight provision allowed more salvaged timber to be hauled by fewer trucks, a critical factor in salvage success due to the high cost of fuel and limited supply of trucks and drivers.
3. Communications after the initial response phase—MFA functioned as "communications central" for all news and information pertaining to timber salvage and recovery. For example, for the first time we created a special Mississippi Hurricane Forest Recovery blog and updated it constantly. This source of information was available to everyone via the internet. We also utilized existing newsletters, magazines and email capabilities.
4. Government—Despite what the news media focused on after the hurricane, Mississippi's state government, particularly the Executive branch, functioned quickly, efficiently, and decisively. Governor Haley Barbour and his team performed in an outstanding manner, lifting spirits and encouraging our citizens to "hitch up their britches" and get to work. Congress moved very quickly, acting to enact disaster recovery legislation that provided over \$1 billion in assistance to forest landowners in five states affected by the 2005 hurricanes.
5. US Forest Service—Forest Service fire control personnel and aerial attack and suppression equipment were quickly deployed to the Gulf Coast. We simply can't thank these dedicated professionals enough—they cooperated with Mississippi Forestry Commission personnel to protect all of southern Mississippi and our citizens from the increased

potential of catastrophic wildfires due to excessive amounts of dry woody fuel.

What Did Not Work

1. Limited timber salvage—The salvage of hurricane-damaged timber was hampered and limited by many factors. Utilizing hurricane damaged timber to manufacture quality solid wood products is a risky proposition, made even more risky by internal shake and structural failure in damaged trees. Hurricane Katrina occurred in late August, when many woodyards were already near storage capacity due to summer logging for winter inventory, leaving relatively little space to store large amounts of salvaged timber. Fuel was scarce and costly, timber harvesting and transportation labor was scarce, transportation costs were high, and the value of damaged timber was very low. The end result was that essentially no damaged timber was shipped by barge or rail outside of truckwood procurement zones.

Major Lessons Learned

1. Business relationships and partnerships that had been built and nurtured prior to Hurricane Katrina were absolutely critical to the success of our advocacy and timber salvage efforts. People recover from disasters by working together under adverse conditions. If you have not built and nurtured these relationships, you will not have the time to do it after a disaster strikes.
2. The dysfunctional aspects of any organization will only be magnified by adverse conditions. People will not magically begin to get along better, communicate better, or work together more effectively after a disaster. Therefore, as disaster recovery plans are prepared and fine-tuned in preparation for the next major challenge, the functions of personnel development, partnership building, and developing effective working coalitions must receive a large proportion of our managerial attention and energy. All this takes time; it is indeed work; but it was critical to our success.
3. In my opinion, government can not and should not be the major, or primary, long-term disaster recovery mechanism. What the churches and faith-based community have accomplished on the Mississippi Gulf Coast helping people recover from Hurricane Katrina has been epic and monumental in scope.

Jack Westoby of the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization had it right when he told us that "forestry is not about trees, it's about people." It is about people such as private family forest landowners, loggers, foresters, and mill workers. It is about people who have lost the means to send children and grandchildren to college, to pay for medical emergencies and provide for their own retirement needs.

The three biggest problems we have on the Mississippi Gulf Coast today, 24 months after Hurricane Katrina, are housing, housing, and housing. We need housing for people, for our citizens who are society's teachers, nurses, doctors, construction tradesmen, service providers and taxpayers. Today we are still desperately trying to rebuild a healthy society on the Coast. So let's keep our focus on trees and natural resources in perspective.

When we told Congress in the fall of 2005 that we, the Mississippi forestry community, were dedicating ourselves to renewing the natural resources of the state, restoring the economy, and rebuilding our society, we knew we would be working for a very long time to come. Today, we remain dedicated to that long-term effort.



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Keith A. Argow, Editor
Washington, D.C.

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Climate Change Bill Stalled for '08

The Lieberman-Warner Climate Security Act of 2008 (S.3036) felt the wrath of partisan politics this past June and came out largely defeated as Republicans filibustered and Democrats refused to consider further amendments to what has been described as a massive, ground-breaking piece of legislation sure to influence many sectors of the US economy and the day-to-day lives of its citizens.

The bulk of the bill proposed to place a 'cap' on total emissions of recognized greenhouse gases by domestic manufacturers and mandated that emitters purchase 'credits' from the government to continue to pump-out emissions. While sometimes decried by detractors as a surreptitious method for pandering to the environmental movement, the legislation's supporters see the bill as a necessary first-step in combating the ills of global warming, and in either case, the debate over how to address climate change with public policy is not close to being resolved.

When a handful of positive aspects of the bill are identified and praised, like reduced output of CO₂, methane and nitrous oxide, a fistful of negative aspects are then unleashed to counter them, like the dramatic claims made about serious increases in the cost of goods and services to consumers.

The next administration as well as the forthcoming 111th Congress will certainly have their hands full as constituents and interest groups clamor for attention and action on this popular and critical topic. Bottom line – this will be no easy compromise.

Northeast U.S. Weathers Fuel Challenges

The Northeast region of the United States, New England in particular, is experiencing a series of problems in home and commercial heating due to steep price hikes in domestic and international petroleum markets. Long dependent on sources of heating energy not often used for the same purpose in other parts of the country, homeowners in New England states are facing a hard transition away from fuels regularly used

for heating, mainly fuel oil, natural gas, propane, and electricity. The thought of turning to firewood deliveries rather than oil deliveries has many residents looking with longing eyes toward efficient devices like stoves which burn wood pellets, a renewable fuel source relatively easy to store, combust, and clean-up after.

Modern woodstoves, while many times more efficient than their rough progenitors, bring the added challenges of storing multiple cords of split wood and then getting that wood into the house as a cold winter howls outside.

Another heating device gaining popularity in the northeast is the external wood-fired boiler, a tall, boxy contraption that makes short work of extra-long sticks of wood, quickly heating water and piping it back into a house's hot water baseboard system. While external wood-fired boilers are seeing some proposed air-quality roadblocks in a few state legislatures, they are unlikely to go away as manufacturers continue to develop models that are cleaner and more efficient. Pellet manufacturing is also seeing a boom in investment and

manufacturing capacity as major pellet mills have recently opened in Athens, Maine and Schuyler, New York.

California Wildfires Set Record

While many forests in moister parts of the country have settled into typically calm summer rhythms, forests in the west, California in particular, face brutal odds against a record number of wildfires. Recent reports from the US Forest Service and CalFire indicate that a nearly one million acres of forest have been charred by over 2000 fires since June 20.

The staggering number, size and intensity of California's conflagrations in 2008 have shattered previous records, forcing mandatory evacuations and extended highway closures upon owners of houses and woodlands alike. While over 15,000 hardworking personnel statewide have been able to limit losses of residential and commercial buildings to less than 200 as of this report, thousands more structures have been directly threatened by fast-moving wildfire.



Forestry Quotes of the Quarter

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

"Can the federal government afford the luxury of allocating so little of its very productive federal forestland base to the growing and harvesting of timber for the needs of our ever expanding nation?with their vast timber, water, mineral and energy reserves, [federal forests] constitute our country's largest single monetary asset."

Jim Peterson, Exec. Director, The Evergreen Foundation
Western Forester, May-June 2008 p.14

"With some 350 million U.S. timberland acres in private hands, even a small portion of poorly managed and inaccurately assessed acreage could amount to tens of millions, if not billions, of dollars in diminished value."

Bruce Borders, Warnell School of Forestry, University of Georgia
Imagetree news release July, 2008

Trees don't need nitrogen fertilizer, which causes massive downstream pollution problems and which is itself a potent greenhouse gas. A European study recently found that the heavy use of nitrogen on corn nullifies any carbon-cutting value to corn ethanol.

Hardwood Matters, NHLA April 2008, p. 11



National Historic Lookout Register

THE NATIONAL HISTORIC LOOKOUT REGISTER is a project of the American Resources Group®
374 Maple Avenue East, Suite 310, Vienna, VA 22180, (703) 255-2700, www.firetower.org

Check www.firelookout.net for a complete listing of the more than 700 fire lookouts in the United States and around the world that are listed on the NHLR. There are pictures, descriptions, a map on how to get there and even the current weather at the site! If the lookout appears to need some maintenance, check www.firelookout.org to see how you can help!

Nine Lookouts Added in 2nd Quarter from Five States



Rendezvous Mtn.

US# 726, NC# 20

Famed in Revolutionary War history, **Rendezvous Mountain Lookout** is the centerpiece of the state forest of the same name. Constructed by the North Carolina Forest Service in 1936, the 50' Aermotor tower with 7'x7' cab is now restricted for electronics use.

US# 727, NC# 21

Located on the NC/TN state line on the Pisgah National Forest, **Rich Mountain Lookout** is just off the Appalachian Trail. The 14'x14' live-in cab with catwalk is on a 30' metal tower. The NC Div. of FFLA is planning a joint restoration effort.

US# 728, NC# 22

Walker Top Lookout is a 100' Aermo-



Walker



Rich Mountain

tor tower with 7'x7' cab built by the N C Forest Service near Carthage in 1951. In 1990 it was moved to become a centerpiece in the new South Mountains State Park.

US# 729, NC# 23

A popular landmark on the Appalachian Trail in the Nantahala National Forest, **Wesser Bald Lookout** was a 14'x14' live-in cab with catwalk on a 30' metal tower built in 1936. Burned by vandals in 1979, and the Forest Service replaced the cab with a viewing platform in 1993.



Lookout Mountain

US# 730, WA# 57

The first lookout on the Mt. Baker National Forest was a cathedral style cupola erected on **Lookout Mountain** in the remote North Cascades in 1928. The present 15'x15' R-6 flat roof live-in cab was constructed by in 1967 and is a popular hiker destination with great views.

US# 731, MA# 42

The Massachusetts Bureau of Fire Control built the **Brewster Fire Tower** on Cape Cod in 1949. It is a 68' steel tower with a 10'x10' cab.

US# 732, MA# 43

The 68' **Chelmsford Fire Tower** with a 10'x10' wooden cab was constructed by Ma. BFC in 1938. It is the fourth tower to be constructed on the site, including one that was destroyed by the hurricane of 1938.



Chelmsford



Carver

US# 733, MA# 44

The tallest and largest lookout in Massachusetts, the 80' tubular steel **Carver Fire Tower** has a unique slant window cab without a door to the catwalk! Built in 1988, it is the third to overlook this section of the Miles Standish State Forest.

US# 734, NY# 31

Now owned by the Luther Forest Corp. and maintained in partnership with the Town of Wilton, **Cornell Hill Fire Tower** was erected by the NY Conservation Commission in 1924. It is a 60' Aermotor LS-20 tower with 7'x7 metal cab.



Cornell Hill



High Point

US# 735, CA# 80

Built in 1964 on Mt. Palomar on the Cleveland National Forest, **High Point Lookout** is a 100' tower with a 14'x14' CL-160 metal flat roof cab that replaced a shorter live-in tower built in 1938. It is being restored and staffed by the Riverside-San Diego Chapter of the FFLA in partnership with the USFS.

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THE READERS RESPOND

(Continued from page 2)

like us (40 acres) to sell any timber and have caused at least one local larger forest management concern to invest in New Zealand forest lands for future operations. The Board's actions leave owners of small forest properties little choice but to sell to land developers. When considering actions for public lands the privately owned forest land must also be in the mix.

Lowe's testimony ends with the political arena and the lack of support for protection and management of public forest lands. This is the vital issue. Years ago when the Forest Service was a decentralized agency, each line officer was expected to keep in contact with the politicians in his area. For example, the Plumas Forest supervisor and other north state supervisors were good friends with the U.S. Representative for northern California. He was also very close to the state senator from our area. The supervisor of the Angeles personally knew the members of the L.A. county Board of Supervisors, the power in the area. Those days are gone and won't return until, and if, a major overhaul of the agency takes place. That won't happen until the Forest Service and other resource agencies develop a strong political power base.

The agencies cannot do that themselves because of the tight grip on them by the party in power. I do not think that such a base can be developed using forestry as the main theme. Fish and wildlife already have such a base. So much so, that it is sometimes to the detriment of forestry. Water management and production is now and will probably be the most important issue of all, but will probably end up pitting different interests against each other. In my mind there is only one wildland issue around which we can muster major support across the county from groups, from the general public and from politicians and that is protection from wildfire.

In California alone we have more than three million people living in wildlands. That is the Board of Forestry's figure, and I believe it is grossly understated. There were a half million people evacuated during the recent fire catastrophe in southern California. Other major evacuations have taken place in Florida and Georgia and fire threats have occurred in most of the states in the Union. Areas where wildfire was not considered a problem by local government have now become threatened simply because they have been developed. This then puts adjoining public land in danger. This situation will continue and accelerate because of the population shift to the South and West, because of movement from urban to exurban areas, and because of climate change. There are literally tens of millions of people in the U.S. who are vitally concerned about wildfire.

Landowners need to be mobilized into a force for good wildland fire control and, as a result, good forestry. We used to believe that forestry was good for other activities too, including fire control. Now the shoe is on the other foot. There are many groups, companies and associations in the country that could participate, but they need a national direction that is simple and straightforward. For example: Goal: Stop the wildfires; Objective #1: Manage fuels by managing forest and shrub lands. Primary and secondary benefits are obvious. The only way I can contribute is through this blasted word processor that makes my backache worse. I have 57 years as a forester in seven states including 25 years of hard work restoring bushy cutover to forest. I don't want our family forest to burn, even though I'm 80 years old and won't see it at maturity.

Bob Cermak
Oroville, California





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A Sampling of Three Forward-Looking Online Resources

Healthy forest ecosystems are ecological life-support systems. Forests provide a full suite of goods and services that are vital to human health and livelihood – natural assets we call ecosystem services.

Many of these goods and services are traditionally viewed as free benefits to society, or “public goods” – wildlife habitat and diversity, watershed services, carbon storage, and scenic landscapes, for example. Lacking a formal market, these natural assets are traditionally absent from society’s balance sheet; their critical contributions are often overlooked in public, corporate, and individual decision-making.

When our forests are undervalued they are increasingly susceptible to development pressures and conversion. Recognizing forest ecosystems as natural assets with economic and social value can help promote conservation and more responsible decision-making.

The Forest Service is exploring national opportunities to advance markets and payments for ecosystem services. With help from partners and others, the agency will encourage broader thinking and collaboration that stimulates market-based conservation and stewardship.

How can we make good stewardship profitable?

Mechanisms are needed by which private forest landowners can seek returns on their forestland in addition to those commonly associated with commercial forest products. The ability to capture the financial value of ecosystem services may help landowners who currently do not benefit from the true value of their land and all of the goods and services forests provide. Because ecosystem services are not traded and do not have a “price,” landowners are not typically compensated for the critical benefits forests naturally deliver to the public. New natural revenue streams might help forest owners cover the costs of owning forestland and provide them with incentives to hold onto their land and practice sustainable forest management. Valuing ecosystem services will encourage forest restoration and may provide a new means to finance reforestation and afforestation activities. Valuing forests as natural assets will increase society’s appreciation and support of lands that are already protected and healthy.

New approaches to conservation are emerging that may financially compensate landowners for providing ecosystem services. Markets and payments for carbon sequestration, watershed management, ecotourism, and a host of other services may supplement traditional forest revenues and promote good stewardship, especially when used together with other conservation tools.

Learn more about ecosystem services:
http://www.fs.fed.us/ecosystems/About_ES/index.shtml

Viewing Threats to Forests State-by-State

The Forest Service’s Eastern Forest Environmental Threat Assessment Center (EFETAC) recently launched its ‘forest threats summary viewer,’ a tool that will provide images, threat distribution maps, additional forestry contact information, and brief descriptions about forest threats throughout the eastern U.S. EFETAC partnered with the University of North Carolina Asheville’s National Environmental Modeling and Analysis Center (NEMAC) to develop the tool, which is available on EFETAC’s Web site, www.forestthreats.org.

The viewer is a user-friendly, Web-based tool searchable by forest threat (e.g., hemlock woolly adelgid) or by State. Threats are categorized by today’s familiar forest concerns, including invasive plants, insects and diseases, loss of open space, climate change, and wildland fire. The user is also provided current and credible Web links to other Federal, State, and local resources that offer additional in-depth information. This initial version of the multi-phased tool will be continually updated with environmental threats as well as additional search features.

Identify threats to forests in your area of the country:
www.forestthreats.org

Woody Biomass Utilization: “An Opportunity We Cannot Afford to Waste”

One of the greatest challenges facing forest managers in the United States on both public and private lands is restoring and maintaining the health and resilience of forest ecosystems. Adapting to climate change and mitigating the effects increases both the magnitude of the effort needed and the urgency of taking action. One option for adaptation and mitigation is sustainable woody biomass utilization.

The Forest Service’s goal to increase the amount of America’s energy that comes from forests requires it coordinate to improve the use of woody biomass in tandem with forest management activities on public and private lands.

What is Woody Biomass Utilization?

- Woody biomass: The trees and woody plants, including limbs, tops, needles, leaves, and other woody parts, grown in a forest, woodland, or rangeland environment, that are the by-products of forest management.
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Timber and Taxes

William C. Siegel, J.D.

Implications of the Self Employment Tax For Woodland Owners

A woodland owner may owe self-employment tax if he or she is engaged in a timber business as a sole proprietor, independent contractor, or member of a partnership or limited liability company. This tax is used to provide Social Security and Medicare coverage to self-employed taxpayers. It is imposed on net earnings from self-employment, which includes earnings derived by an individual from a trade or business less all business deductions allowed for income tax purposes. The self-employment tax must be paid if net earnings for the year from self-employment equal \$400 or more.

Components of the Self-Employment Tax

The self-employment tax is 15.3 percent and is composed of two parts: 12.4 percent Social Security tax plus 2.9 percent Medicare tax. Net earnings from self-employment up to \$102,000 for 2008 are subject to the Social Security portion of the tax. If a taxpayer also earns wages as an employee in 2008 that are subject to the Social Security tax, this tax will apply only to the first \$102,000 of the combination of wages and net earnings from self-employment. All net earnings without limit, however, are subject to the Medicare portion of the self-employment tax. Woodland owners are not exempt from the self-employment tax if they are receiving social security benefits, are fully insured under Social Security, or are not otherwise required to file an income tax return. Nor are they exempt on account of age.

Treatment of Spouses

If you are a sole proprietor of a business and your spouse works for you in the business, he or she may be your employee and therefore not subject to the self-employment tax. Alternatively, both spouses may be engaged in a business as co-owners. In that case, the net business earnings of each are subject to the self-employment tax.

Spousal Partnerships If both spouses join together in the conduct of a business and share in its profits and

losses, a partnership may have been created. If so, the business income should be reported on a partnership income tax return, IRS Form 1065. Schedules K-1 should be attached to the Form 1065 to show each partner's share of the net income. Separate Schedules SE of Form 1040 should be filed to report each spouse's self-employment tax.

Qualified Joint Ventures Beginning in 2007, however, spouses joining together in a business who file joint income tax returns and who elect to have their business considered a qualified joint venture, will avoid having the business treated as a partnership for federal tax purposes. Rather, each spouse reports his or her share of income and expenses on the appropriate form (usually Schedule C or Schedule F of Form 1040). A qualified joint venture is defined as any joint venture involving the conduct of a trade or business if (1) the only members are a husband and wife, (2) both spouses materially participate according to the criteria of the passive activity loss rules without regard to the rule that treats participation by one spouse as participation by the other, and (3) both spouses make the election.

Excluded Income

Certain timber-related items are not included in computing net earnings from self-employment.

Rental Payments Rental payments received for the use of real estate, and for personal property leased with real estate, are not included if the recipient is not a real estate dealer and does not provide substantial services with respect to the rental activity. Rental payments received for leasing timberland for hunting are generally excluded unless the owner provides lodging, guiding and other services.

Capital Gains Income that qualifies for capital gain treatment is excluded. Proceeds from the sale or other disposal of standing timber (stumpage sales) generally qualify as capital

gains if the timber has been held for more than one year. Woodland owners who cut their own standing timber or have a contract logger cut it for them, and who elect to treat the cutting as a sale under the provisions of Section 631(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, are also not subject to the self-employment tax for the capital gain portion of the transaction. The profit on the sale of the logs or manufactured products, however, is subject to the self-employment tax.

Other Considerations

Christmas Trees Christmas tree growers are subject to the rules applicable to timber producers in general. The self-employment tax applies to ordinary income received from the sale of the trees. Gains from Christmas tree sales, however, may qualify as capital gains and therefore not be subject to the self-employment tax.

Other Forest Products The sale of forest products other than standing timber usually produce ordinary income. Examples include pine straw and firewood. Receipts from these sources thus are included in self-employment income.

Cost-Share Payments Net payments received under federal and state cost-share programs, such as those for reforestation, are included in self-employment income if the activity is considered a business unless a specific election is made to exclude the payments from reportable income for federal income tax purposes. All or some portion of such program payments may qualify for exclusion. Only the amount actually excluded from gross income may be ignored for self-employment tax purposes.

Conservation Reserve Program Payments Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) cost-share payments fall under the rules discussed in the preceding paragraph. CRP annual rental payments, however, are subject to the self-employment tax for those recipients who materially participate in the farm operation. Those

who do not materially participate are not subject to the self-employment tax for such payments. This position is based on the rationale that even though the payments are characterized as rents, they are not rent in the usual sense of the word in that they do not involve lease of real estate.

Calculation of the Self-Employment Tax

The self-employment tax is calculated by completing Schedule SE of Form 1040, "Computation of Social Security Self-Employment Tax." If a taxpayer works as an employee and earns wages or salary subject to withholding that equal or exceed the maximum amount subject to the Social Security portion of the self-employment tax, and also has income from a business, he/she does not pay Social Security tax on the earnings from the business. However, if wages or salary subject to Social Security withholding total less than the maximum amount, and there is business income subject to the self-employment tax, the business income will be taxed to the extent of the difference between the wages/salary and the maximum. In addition, as noted above, all self-employment income is subject to the Medicare tax.

Including Timber Gains in Self-Employment Income to Guarantee Benefits

Qualification for Social Security benefits for you and/or your dependents depends in part on how much Social Security and/or self-employment tax you have paid. For example, certain public employees and some school teachers do not pay Social Security tax. If you are not certain that you will qualify for full benefits upon retirement, you can check your status by contacting the Social Security Administration office listed in the telephone directory. You should also be able to make this determination from the annual report received from the Social Security Administration.

Woodland owners who need to make additional contributions in order to obtain benefits, and who cut their own timber, may prefer not to elect under Internal Revenue Code Section 631(a) to treat the cutting of the timber as a sale. In this situation, the net income from the cutting is not a capital gain and is reported on either Schedule C or Schedule F of Form 1040 as ordinary income. As such, it is subject to the self-employment tax and would be reported on Schedule SE of Form 1040. Remember, though, that if the Section 631(a) election has been made in a prior year, you may generally not forgo the election in any following year without IRS approval. There is a one-time exception to this rule, however.

Woodland owners who are considered to be holding their timber primarily for sale in the ordinary course of a business, as opposed to an investment, must make a stumpage sale under the provisions of Section 631(b) of the Internal Revenue Code in order to qualify

the sale proceeds as a capital gain. In this situation, the sale income will be ordinary income if the Section 631(b) election is not made and therefore will be subject to the self-employment tax.

If standing timber is not held primarily for sale, however, but rather is



FLTC Tax Report by Frank Stewart, RF



Farm Bill: The 2007 Farm Bill passed with a one-year version of the TREE Act, which provides a maximum 15 percent corporate tax rate on qualified timber gain for regular tax and AMT purposes. Timber must be held more than 15 years to qualify. It also includes a number of REIT modernization provisions, also for a one-year period from date of enactment. Also, the bill has tax deductions for landowners who take steps to conserve habitat for species listed under the Federal Endangered Species Act. These provisions provide for the first time financial incentives associated with taking affirmative steps to protect listed species on private land. The Bill included a new, \$1.01 per gallon production tax credit for cellulosic ethanol. This credit reflects a reduction from the original amount of \$1.25 per gallon which was contained in the Senate passed version. The idea is to incentivize—on a temporary basis—the establishment of a new alternative energy industry.

Alternative Minimum Tax: In June, the House Ways and Means Committee approved a one-year "patch" to the alternative minimum tax, but the bill is likely to see major changes before it becomes law. The committee voted 22-16, along party lines, to approve the bill after turning aside three Republican amendments. The measure would prevent 21.4 million taxpayers from paying the AMT for tax year 2008. That part of the bill has wide acceptance among lawmakers, but there are sharp splits over whether the bill should be offset. Democrats insist that the \$62 billion bill should comply with the House's pay-as-you-go rule. But Republicans say that is unnecessary, and leading Senate Democrats concede that, like a version enacted last year, the AMT patch will not be offset.

Congress: Democratic leadership staff convened a meeting with a number of key lobbyists at the end of June with aides from Senate Finance Chairman Max Baucus (D-MT), House Ways and Means Chairman Charlie Rangel (D-NY), Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), Reid and House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD). One Democrat described the as designed to push lobbyists to abandon its allegiance to the GOP and throw its weight behind a package of tax extenders that would favor business and manufacturing interests. Several Democrat congressional offices are hinting that, in the 111th Congress, they may take an opportunity to rewrite much—if not all—of the tax code.

Capital Gains: From the campaign trail both nominees-apparent have indicated, if elected, they'd like to see capital gains rates increase. McCain is reportedly satisfied with a 20 percent rate and Obama is said to prefer a 28 percent rate or to dissolve the differential between capital gains and ordinary income.

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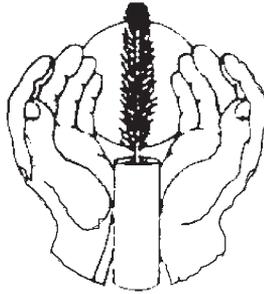
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considered an investment, stumpage sale proceeds will be considered a capital gain and thus not subject to the self-employment tax. Capital gains cannot be reported as self-employment income simply to receive Social Security credit.

Conclusion

For more information on the self-employment tax, see IRS Publication 533, Self-Employment Tax. If you have farming as well as timber operations, refer to IRS Publication 225, Farmer's Tax Guide.

William C. Siegel is an attorney and consultant in private practice specializing in timber tax law and forestry estate planning. He is retired from the US Forest Service where he served as Project Leader for Forest Resource Law and Economics Research with the Southern Forest Experiment Station, where he still serves as a volunteer. He provides this column as a regular service to National Woodlands readers. Mr. Siegel welcomes comments and questions. They may be directed to him at: 9110 Hermitage Place, River Ridge, LA 70123; tel. (504) 737-0583; email: wcsiegel@aol.com



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News from the Regions



WEST

Western States Suffer Huge Wildfire Losses

While California holds an astonishing lead in overall wildfire activity, significant summer fires have burned thousands of acres in Colorado, Louisiana, Montana, Nevada, North Carolina, Texas, Utah, Virginia, and Washington, according to the National Interagency Fire Center based in Boise, Idaho.

The facility, in conjunction with the National Interagency Coordinating Center, acts as an information, operations, and logistics hub for firefighting efforts by the US Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, US Fish & Wildlife Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and National Weather Service.

Broadly Supported Forest Tax Bill Defeated in Idaho

Despite two years of effort by the Idaho Working Lands Coalition, including the Idaho Forest Owners Association, the Idaho Ranch, Farm, and Forest Protection Act (H467) met its demise after a hearing with the ID House Revenue and Tax Committee.

The hearing revealed the presence of critical opposition to a piece of legislation designed to dole out tax credits to landowners committed to protecting their lands from development. Over 100,000 Idahoans had expressed support of the legislation via the Coalition, but further amendment of the bill in committee would have altered what some advocates referred to as a

'carefully crafted compromise.' Efforts continue by woodland owners and others, however, to stimulate free-market conservation methods in the region.

Further Statewide Harvest Restrictions Fought in California

The Forest Landowners of California have worked with partners to tame burdensome legislation in what has been described by landowners as an increasingly difficult and complex forest management environment.

California recently shelved AB 2926, a bill designed to prohibit clearcuts greater than ten acres with certain exceptions for sanitation-salvage, selection silviculture, and commercial thinning. The bill also intended to restrict any clearcutting operations on properties adjacent to previous clearcuts, unless the previously harvested parcel had regained at least 50 percent softwood canopy cover.

Given the management lag time this rule would place on any given woodland owner by his/her neighbor, the financial and harvest planning implications for local woodland owners became clear. Many landowners in CA feel that additional impediments to silviculture are unnecessary in a state with stringent forest protection statutes already in place.



SOUTH

*William G. Hubbard, regional editor
FAX #706-542-3342*

New Mississippi Law Means New Protections

Championed by the Mississippi Forestry Association and a diverse group of allies, Mississippi recently passed an important bill that focuses on improving water quality by mitigating the damaging effects that trespassers often wreak on private lands.

HB 1357 means to protect private property rights, decrease the widespread practice of ATV trespass on private lands and the associated destruction of aquatic ecosystems and fisheries habitat, and increase the penalties for trespass. While state law will still permit public use of 'public waterways' as defined by the MS Department of Environmental Quality, stream beds and banks are considered private property under the law and may not be disturbed by land vehicles. Showing that the law exhibits balance between interests public and private, it is still legal to ford waterways when carrying out agricultural, forestry, or recreational activities.

Rural Venture Fund Invests in NC Wood Pellets

The North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center recently announced it will invest \$350,000 in a wood pellet manufacturer in Franklin. The company, Carolina Wood Pellets, will convert scrap wood and sawdust into pellets suitable for use in stoves, fireplaces and some coal-burning electric plants. The investment is the fifth since the center launched its Rural Venture Fund last fall.

"Carolina Wood Pellets will make money and create jobs while turning a waste product into fuel," said Rural Center President Billy Ray Hall. "We are pleased to be a partner in a company that makes environmental as well as business sense."

The center's investment is part of a larger financing package to build and equip the manufacturing plant. Carolina Wood Pellets will be located adjacent to Steve's Custom Log Homes, which will be a primary source of wood scraps. Both are owned and operated by Steven H. Smith. Lumber mills and flooring companies in and around Macon County also are expected to supply raw materials.

Wood pellets are a relatively new fuel source promoted as an alternative to fossil fuels. The residential market accounts for the vast majority of sales.

Once fully operational, the new plant is expected to create 32 jobs. The Rural Venture Fund has previously invested \$1.4 million in four companies across the state.

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NORTHEAST

Entrepreneur Aims to Convert Maine Homes to Pellet Heat

With oil prices continuing to rise, a former ski industry mogul and part-owner of the Boston Red Sox has started a venture that aims to convert thousands of home heating systems in the Northeast from oil to wood pellets. Les Otten is investing \$10 million to launch Maine Energy Systems, which will import pellet-fueled boilers from Europe and install them in homes beginning this summer. The company initially will focus on Maine, with Otten hoping to switch 10 percent of the state's

oil-burning residences—about 44,000 houses—to pellets within five years. The company also plans to expand to New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts and New York.

With oil prices topping \$125 a barrel, wood pellets provide cheaper energy for those willing to spend money to install a new furnace, Otten said. Currently, about 80 percent of Maine homes are heated with oil or kerosene, the highest share in the nation. "This is like a giant social experiment," Otten said. "Our surveys show people want to switch from oil, but are they really going to do this?" "There are plenty of risks with the venture. If oil prices fall, that could negate the cost advantage of wood heat. There are questions about whether certified technicians can be trained fast enough to install and service the boilers.

New Firewood Transportation Regulations in New York State

Conservation officials have banned hauling, importing or selling untreated firewood in New York in an effort to stop the spread of tree-killing insects. The Department of Environmental Conservation said in early June that the emergency regulations are effective immediately for 90 days. They prohibit importing out-of-state firewood unless treated to eliminate invasive insect species, fungi and pathogens. Transporting any untreated firewood within the state is limited to less than 50 miles.

"These invasive pests and diseases have a damaging effect, not only on the environment, but also the economy," according to DEC Commissioner Pete Grannis. "One of the easiest and most common ways for these pests to spread is by the unintentional transportation of infested firewood." He said three major pests are being targeted: The Sirex woodwasp, a native to Europe, Asia and north Africa which kills pines and sometimes other conifers; The Emerald Ash Borer, native to China,



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has destroyed an estimated 20 million ash trees nationally over the past five years; The Asian Longhorned Beetle, which has larvae that bore into trees and fed on healthy wood until emerging as adult beetles to eat twigs and leaves.

The DEC plans to develop permanent regulations after public comment.



MIDWEST

Charles Barden, regional editor
FAX #785-532-6949

Lake States Holds 30 Percent Of Certified Forests in N. America

The Great Lakes region (Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan and Ontario) holds 30 percent of North America's forest lands certified for sustainability, according to research commissioned by the Blandin Foundation.

The study, conducted by Dovetail Partners of Minneapolis, found that certifications through the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) in the region have "undergone another wave of growth, and further accomplishments are expected before the end of 2008."

According to Dovetail, some of the most significant growth has been achieved in the number of companies that hold FSC or SFI chain-of-custody certificates, which allow for manufacture and labeling of certified products.

"In just the past eight months, at least 120 more companies--a leap of 39 percent--in this region have achieved chain-of-custody certification to allow them to label and market certified products," said Kathryn Fernholz, executive director of Dovetail Partners and author of the report. Minnesota led this growth with a 56 percent increase.

Riparian Forestry Summit Scheduled for South Dakota

Souix Falls, South Dakota will be the location for the Great Plains Riparian Forest Management Summit from September 9-11, 2008.

Experts from across the country will

address various issues, including the historical extent of riparian forests, restoration techniques, wildlife, water quality, biofuels, and more. For registration costs and other details, go to the conference website <www.unl.edu/nac/Riparian_Summit.htm>.

Kansas Forestry Field Day To be Held October 16

The Kansas Fall Forestry Field Day is set for October 16, 2008. The farm of Greg Ellis, near Lawrence in north-east Kansas will be the setting for the day-long educational event. Timber and wildlife management will be discussed in the native mixed oak-walnut stand, and plans for successfully establishing several acres of new walnut plantations

will be shown. For questions, or to receive a registration brochure, contact Charlie Barden at (785) 532-1444, or via email at <cbarden@ksu.edu>

Clarification:

The article by Brett Butler in the Spring 2008 issue, "Forest Ownership Patterns are Changing," was reprinted from Butler, Brett J. 2008. *Forest ownership. In W. B. Smith et al. Forest resources of the United States, 2007. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Washington, DC.*



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Water is a precious national resource. Too often, human activities degrade the quality of the water in the streams, lakes, estuaries, wetlands, and aquifers on which we depend. Pollutants from agricultural and urban sources have made many of our water sources unsuitable for swimming or fishing. Excessive sedimentation, pesticides, and fertilizers are harming fish and other aquatic life. Changes in land use have also demonstrated dramatic effects on floodwater damage and frequency. Both surface and subsurface drinking water supplies are being strongly impacted by human activities.

Water quality is the end result of the individual actions of all the 'neighbors' in a watershed. Rural landowners and community residents need to look beyond their own boundaries to improve water quality and coordinate resource management.

Too much runoff and too many pollutants

Fertilizers, pesticides, animal wastes, and soil sediments can enter streams, ponds, and lakes unabated when permanent vegetation is absent from upland and riparian areas. Displacement of permanent vegetation such as trees, shrubs and grasses by annual crops or development does two important and related things: It increases runoff volume and the speed at which those waters are delivered. More water flowing at a faster rate results in greater distribution of pollutants and contaminants that may have otherwise been slowed down or captured. Speed and volume combined can have costly consequences like reservoir sedimentation and clogging, faster-than-usual stream channel shifts, and much needed soil moved quickly to places elsewhere.

Working trees reduce flooding and flood damage

The leaves and branches of trees intercept rainfall, reducing their erosive energy and slowing the movement of rainwater. Root growth and plant litter improve soil structure and enhance infiltration of rainfall, reducing surface runoff. Stiff stems of trees and shrubs resist and slow out-of-bank streamflow. Plant debris protects exposed soil and roots bind soil particles to resist erosion and stabilize slopes.

Working trees improve aquatic habitat: Trees provide shade that reduces water temperature and, more importantly, prevents large and sudden temperature fluctuations. Trees supply debris to streams which creates habitat structure and detritus which contributes to the aquatic food chain. Woody roots promote stream channel stability

and permanence of habitat structure. Improved infiltration of runoff results in contaminant filtering and the gradual release of groundwater into streams, which helps maintain base flow.

Working trees filter contaminants: Vegetation and plant debris slow surface runoff, encouraging sediment and sediment-bound contaminants to settle before entering surface water. Root growth and plant residue improve soil structure which enhances infiltration of dissolved contaminants.

Once in the soil, contaminants can be immobilized, transformed by soil microbes, or taken up by vegetation.

Groundwater flowing through the root zone is also filtered by these processes. Additionally, trees can trap windblown dust before it enters streams and lakes.

Working Trees – What, Where, and How? The functions the trees perform should be tailored to address the problems within a given area. Landscape planning is best but demands coordinated action among landowners within a watershed. Site based assessments will help individual owners look at the big picture: soils, hydrology, and topography. These basic factors are critical pieces of any ecosystem. Certain tree, shrub, and cover species are adapted to thrive in streamside areas while others may be particularly useful in drought tolerant zones, rehabilitating waste areas, or absorbing excess nutrients like nitrogen or phosphorus.

Most watersheds support a mixture of land uses, such as agriculture, forestry and communities. An integrated watershed approach is an effective way to manage water resource issues. This approach coordinates the planning and activity of all land uses to address ecological, social and economic concerns throughout the watershed. A linked system of upland and riparian agroforestry plantings, in conjunction with other conservation practices, can restore ecological functions and reconnect hydrologic practices.

Professionals have developed a variety of ways for private owners to efficiently mitigate damage: Silvopasture, windbreaks, alley cropping, green infrastructure, wastewater treatment, waterbreaks, and riparian buffers are all vetted techniques that can be used singly or as a suite to combat soil loss and diminished water quality. While individual landowners often act alone to benefit conservation and ecosystem health, they can have the greatest positive impact by planning and working together with neighbors to benefit both themselves and the sustainability of the larger landscape.



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Landscape planning for environmental benefits

Purpose

Producing some environmental benefits of agroforestry, such as cleaner stream water, healthier aquatic ecosystems and greater wildlife diversity, requires a larger planning area than individual farms and ranches. In this Agroforestry Note, we:

- Explain why larger landscape areas should be considered when planning agroforestry practices.
- Describe a technique that facilitates such landscape planning.
- Discuss landscape assessments and plans, and how they are used.

A landscape perspective

Agroforestry practices are typically planned and implemented for sites on individual farms and ranches. Understanding how individual sites function in the larger landscape will help to identify where to locate and how to design agroforestry practices to efficiently produce landscape-scale environmental benefits. A landscape perspective involves looking beyond the fence line to determine how a planning site is affected by off-site conditions and how the site affects the surrounding landscape.

How far you look beyond the fence line is determined by the problem you want to address. For example, if improving water quality is the goal, then each site needs to be evaluated for its relevance to water quality problems in the larger watershed. If enhancing wildlife populations is the goal, then each site needs to be evaluated for its relationship to existing habitat and migration routes.

Examples of natural resource problems that can be addressed by planning at a landscape scale:

- Excess sediment and nutrients in water
- Limited and fragmented wildlife habitat
- Degraded aquatic habitat
- Stream bank erosion
- Blowing dust and snow
- Monotonous and undesirable scenery

A technique for landscape planning

Most landscape-scale problems involve the movement of things; the movement of organisms, air, water, and materials that are carried with them. Understanding the sources and pathways of movement is critical to addressing these problems with agroforestry.

A useful technique is to visualize the flow of things through the landscape: how water pollutants flow off of agricultural land into streams; how fish travel along streams to suitable habitat; how wildlife move to and from large habitat areas through corridors; and how soil blows from cultivated fields in prevailing winds, for example.

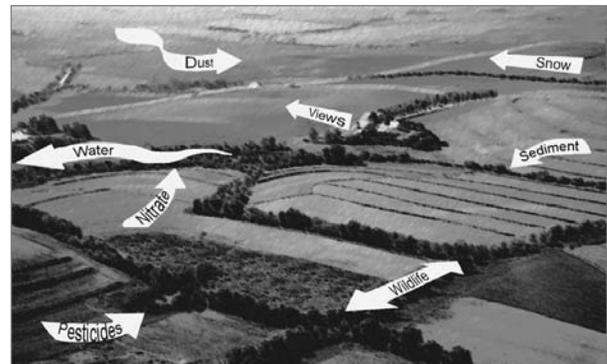


Looking beyond the fence line allows agroforestry practices to be located and designed to address landscape problems like water quality and wildlife habitat. In this example, riparian forest buffers were located to connect habitat patches and to help downstream water quality problems. *USDA NRCS file photo.*

How things flow is influenced by how the landscape is structured. Landscape structure is determined by the various land cover elements and the pattern that they create. Most landscapes are dominated by a particular land cover type – forest, grassland, row-crop agriculture, urban, etc. This dominant land cover is called the matrix. Other types of land cover are usually present that break up the matrix. These smaller land cover elements are called patches if they are in block shapes, or corridors if they are linear. The pattern that is created by the arrangement of these patches and corridors in the matrix, along with the land form characteristics (hills, valleys, etc.), determine how things move through the landscape.

Agroforestry practices alter the structure of the landscape by creating new patch- and corridor-shaped forest elements. When designed properly, these new vegetative elements can perform important functions, such as:

- Increasing water infiltration and slowing runoff flow
- Stabilizing and protecting stream banks from erosion
- Filtering pollutants from runoff water
- Shading streams for controlling temperature
- Providing woody debris that promotes good stream habitat
- Providing habitat for wildlife
- Providing conduits for wildlife movement
- Slowing erosive winds and promoting dust and snow deposition
- Providing visual diversity that improves scenic quality
- Screening undesirable views



Landscape structure determines where the major sources of water pollutants, wildlife, and soil erosion are located, where those resources flow, and how easily they do so.

Original photo, USDA NRCS.

For more information on how to design agroforestry practices to address landscape scale problems, see AF Note – 40.

The role of landscape assessments

Agroforestry installations will function better and generate greater landscape benefits if the appropriate designs are put in the right places. Such places might include locations where runoff water is known to converge before entering a stream, where large gaps between habitat patches prevent movement of wildlife, and where soil erosion is occurring. Landscape assessments are needed to determine the right places. Geographical information systems (GIS) are helpful in this process for collecting and organizing spatial information about various types of resource problems and where they occur, where sources of the problems likely occur, where and how resources flow across the landscape, and for providing an understanding of landscape structure that determines spatial patterns of resources and their movement. More information about conducting landscape assessments is provided in AF Note – 39.

Creating a landscape plan

Typically, agroforestry practices are planned for sites on individual farms and ranches. A single site may have little impact on landscape problems such as overall water or air quality of an area, but when combined with other sites in a systematic way significant impact can be achieved.

If this is the case, planners working with individual landowners can still assess the larger landscape conditions to identify landscape problems and determine appropriate locations for agroforestry practices to help solve these problems. A larger landscape plan identifies off-site concerns and strategies for solving landscape-scale problems. Formal planning efforts may exist in some communities that address landscape-scale problems. Such efforts would include Watershed and Basin Area planning, Areawide planning, and Coordinated Resource Management Planning. These special types of planning bring multiple landowners and other stakeholders together to make landscape management decisions.

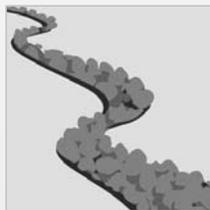
Landscape ecology

Landscape ecology is the study of the biological, physical, and human interactions of a geographical area. It looks at the spatial patterns of fixed landscape elements (landscape structure) and things that move in the landscape, (which include animals, water and nutrients); how the landscape functions (the flows of things between landscape elements); and changes in the landscape over time. These concepts are used in this note to help understand the larger landscape and how agroforestry practices can be used to effectively address larger landscape problems.

Illustrations from Stream Corridor Restoration: Principles, Processes, and Practices, 1998.

These concepts can be used at various scales: At the site scale to understand how nutrients and organisms move in a farm field; at a watershed scale to understand wildlife migration routes or water pollutant sources and movement, for example.

Agroforestry practices create new landscape elements that affect the biological, chemical, and physical processes that occur in the landscape. These new elements create either patches or corridors that are different than the dominate land cover of an area. These new elements affect how the larger landscape functions by creating:



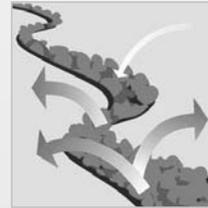
Habitat – the spatial structure of the environment that allows species to live, reproduce, feed, and move.



Sink – a setting where input of materials, energy and organisms exceed output.



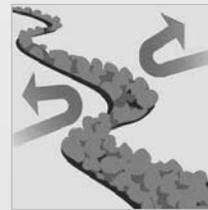
Conduit – the ability of the system to transport materials, energy and organisms.



Source – a setting where output of materials, energy and organisms exceed input.



Filter – the selective penetration of materials, energy and organisms.



Barrier – the stoppage of materials, energy and organisms.

The culmination of these efforts produces a plan that helps locate agroforestry practices and provide design guidance for achieving larger landscape goals.

Whether done by an individual resource planner for their area or part of a formal planning effort, a landscape assessment can be used to inform and educate landowners and communities about existing and potential resource problems in their area and about how agroforestry plantings might contribute to solving them. Armed with this knowledge, individual landowners and community residents can develop objectives for what they want to achieve and options for how and where to attain them. This planning process will create a general plan that identifies the best landscape locations for agroforestry. The plan can be used in several ways to guide more effective and efficient agroforestry installations.

One important use is to identify landscape-scale objectives to consider when developing agroforestry designs for individual sites. Information on how to conduct a planning process is provided in AF Note – 20.

A landscape plan has many uses:

- Indicates how effective agroforestry might be at addressing landscape problems
- Provides options to landowners that inquire about agroforestry
- Identifies how best to design sites to achieve landscape and landowner benefits
- Targets agroforestry to landowners and sites located in hot spots
- Evaluates tradeoffs and limitations associated with agroforestry options
- Addresses multiple issues simultaneously
- Creates more-efficient systems of practices that connect across land ownerships

Summary

Agroforestry can be an important component of plans to address environmental problems that reach beyond the farm or ranch. A landscape perspective is needed to properly locate and design agroforestry practices to address these problems. Landscape planning and design can help to ensure that individual agroforestry practices provide desired environmental benefits.

Additional information

Related Agroforestry Notes

AF Note – 20: Planning agroforestry practices. USDA National Agroforestry Center.

AF Note – 39: Conducting landscape assessments for agroforestry. USDA National Agroforestry Center.

AF Note – 40: Guidelines for fitting agroforestry into the landscape. USDA National Agroforestry Center.

Instructional books

Landscape Mosaics by R.T.T. Forman, 1995. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK.

Ecology of Greenways by D.S. Smith and P.C. Helmund, 1993. University of Minnesota Press.

Green Infrastructure: Linking Landscapes and Communities, by Mark Benedict and Ed McMahon, 2006. Island Press, Washington D.C.

Related handbooks

Stream Corridor Restoration: Principles, Processes, and Practices by The Federal Interagency Stream Restoration Working Group, 1998. U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Conservation Corridor Planning at the Landscape Level: Managing for Wildlife Habitat by C.W. Johnson, G. Bentrup, and D. Rol, 1999. USDA NRCS National Biology Handbook.

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This is one of three Agroforestry Notes available from the USDA National Agroforestry Center (NAC) on the topic of landscape planning. The other two are: AF Note 39 – Conducting Landscape Assessments for Agroforestry and AF Note 40 – Indicators and Guidelines for Landscape Assessment and Planning for Agroforestry. The technical Notes are part of a series of that provide agroforestry information in a useful “how to” format. These and other products are available, at no cost, from NAC’s website (www.unl.edu/nac) and include: Inside Agroforestry newsletter, a collection of *Working Trees* brochures, agroforestry planning tools, and more information on the latest research on conservation buffers and agroforestry. NAC is a partnership of the Forest Service Research & Development, and State & Private Forestry and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.