



# Woodland Report

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Late Breaking Forestry News from Washington DC and State Capitals  
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## Where is National Forestry?

The summer 2006 issue of *Woodland Report* carried the headline "Woodland Report Now in a New Wrapper!" That new wrapper was a brand new publication: *National Forestry* magazine. For the first 22 years, *Woodland Report* was a direct mail newsletter that first appeared in early 1984, just months after NWOA's founding in November 1983. With the byline: "Late Breaking Forestry News from Washington DC and State Capitals," the newsletter was monthly communication with the growing membership until 1990 when *National Woodlands* was acquired and became our signature publication, alternating with the newsletter each month.

When the National Forestry Association evolved from in 1996 from NWOA's long-term partner, the National Forestry Network, the *Forestry Advantage* newsletter appeared as a regular insert in *National Woodlands* with the intonation: "Because Good Forestry Matters."

Unfortunately, "good forestry" took a number of hits in the decade that followed. Production of timber, pulp and biomass from the National Forest system dropped precipitously as environmental groups won a series of lawsuits derived from laws that Congress had passed to appease special interests. The loss of the wood supply from public lands led to a temporary spike in stumpage prices for both industrial and family owned timber, but eventually led to the predictable decline in the American forest industry.

Unfortunately for *National Forestry* magazine, a healthy forest economy was essential for the publication to be financially viable. To survive, it has shifted from twice a year to a single schedule and will become an annual report on forestry until it can return to the goal of a more frequent schedule.

Due to unexpected high postage increases, *Woodland Report*, which has been mailed First Class, will go to a schedule of three per year, appearing in the Spring issue of this magazine, again in the annual issue of *National Forestry*, followed by the traditional special Season's Greeting mailing in December. We will continue to maintain our regular monthly reporting by increasing the news postings on our active web site: [www.woodlandowners.org](http://www.woodlandowners.org).

—KAA

### National Woodland Owners Association

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#### Participating State Associations

Alabama Treasure Forest Assoc.  
[www.atfa.net](http://www.atfa.net)

Alaska Forest Owners

Ozark Woodland Owners Association (Arkansas) [www.ozarkforestry.org](http://www.ozarkforestry.org)

Forest Landowners of California  
[www.forestlandowners.org](http://www.forestlandowners.org)

Colorado Forestry Association  
[www.coloradoforestry.org](http://www.coloradoforestry.org)

Connecticut Forest & Park Association  
[www.ctwoodlands.org](http://www.ctwoodlands.org)

Delaware Forestry Association

Georgia Federation of Forest Owners

Hawaii Forest Landowners Network  
[www.ctahr.hawaii.edu](http://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu)

Idaho Forest Owners Assoc.

Indiana Forestry & Woodland Owners Assoc.  
[www.fnr.purdue.edu/inwood/ifwoa%20home.htm](http://www.fnr.purdue.edu/inwood/ifwoa%20home.htm)

Iowa Woodland Owners Assoc.  
[www.iowawoodlandowners.org](http://www.iowawoodlandowners.org)

Kentucky Woodland Owners Association  
[www.kentuckywoodlandownersassociation.com](http://www.kentuckywoodlandownersassociation.com)

Small Woodland Owners Assoc. of Maine  
[www.swoam.com](http://www.swoam.com)

Massachusetts Forestry Assoc.  
[www.massforests.org](http://www.massforests.org)

Michigan Forest Assoc.  
[www.michiganforests.com](http://www.michiganforests.com)

Minnesota Forestry Association  
[www.mnforest.com](http://www.mnforest.com)

Montana Forest Owners Association  
[www.forestsmontana.com](http://www.forestsmontana.com)

New Hampshire Timberland Owners Assoc.  
[www.nhtoa.org](http://www.nhtoa.org)

New Jersey Forestry Assoc.  
[www.njforestry.org](http://www.njforestry.org)

North Carolina Woodlands

Ohio Woodland Owner Assoc.  
[www.ohiowoodlandowners.org](http://www.ohiowoodlandowners.org)

Oklahoma Woodland Owners Association

Oregon Small Woodlands Association  
[www.oswa.org](http://www.oswa.org)

Pennsylvania Forestry Association  
[pfa.cas.psu.edu](http://pfa.cas.psu.edu)

Rhode Island Forest Conservators  
[www.rifco.org](http://www.rifco.org)

Tennessee Woodland Owners Council

Texas Forest & Woodland Owners

Utah Woodland Owners Council

Vermont Woodlands Association  
[www.vermontwoodlands.org](http://www.vermontwoodlands.org)

Virginia Woodlands Assoc.  
[www.virginiawoodlands.org](http://www.virginiawoodlands.org)  
Washington Farm Forestry Association  
[www.wafarmforestry.com](http://www.wafarmforestry.com)

Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association  
[www.wisconsinwoodlands.org](http://www.wisconsinwoodlands.org)

Woodland Owners Assoc. of West Virginia  
[www.woaofwv.org](http://www.woaofwv.org)



# National News

## CANADA CUTS OUTPUT, US PRICES UP

Lumber prices jumped more than four percent on the Chicago market in early April after a major Canadian lumber producer said it has seen reduced demand as a result of the U.S. housing market decline.

Some market observers noted that mills had been slow to reduce production on both sides of the border and that more reductions are likely before lumber prices make a solid recovery. About one third of U.S. lumber is produced in Canada. The company involved is Canfor.

## USFS ANNOUNCED LEGACY GRANTS

The U.S. Forest Service recently announced a total of \$54 million in Forest Legacy grants to protect 35 working forests in 32 states. Strongly supported by NWOA for many years, this is a federal program administered in partnership with state forestry agencies to protect environmentally sensitive private woodlands through voluntary partnerships with landowners.

The program uses conservation easements to permanently protect forest ecosystems while maintaining the productivity of the woodlands through timbering and careful stewardship of other forest values. Projects approved in 2008 include a rare pine barren ecosystem in New Hampshire, a forest with important wildlife and cultural values in Georgia, and a valley in Montana with rare fish and many recreation opportunities.

## MORE FIRE FUNDING BILLS INTRODUCED

Rep. Collin Peterson (D-MN) chairman of the House Agriculture Committee along with Ranking Minority member Bob Goodlatte (R-VA) and a group of bipartisan cosponsors have introduced HR 5648 to control catastrophic fires.

The bill is similar to the FLAME Act already endorsed by NWOA (HR 5541) but also includes a variety of non-emergency provisions, including a new grant program for communities judged to be "fire ready." Four former Forest Service Chiefs have endorsed the FLAME Act.

## SAME TAX, NEW NAME

Last year Senate Finance Chairman Max Baucus (D-MT) promised to hold hearings on the elimination of the estate tax. Those hearings were held in March and in the discussions that followed, the focus shifted to replacing the estate tax with an inheritance tax rather than repealing it. The change reflects the realization that there are not enough votes to repeal an estate tax entirely, especially following an eight-year period during which the gap between the rich and the poor has widened.

Although the estate tax is not a huge revenue generator, it retains an aura of fairness that continues to translate to opposition to outright repeal. At the hearing, all the witnesses were in favor of some form of "wealth transfer" taxation. Support was expressed for an inheritance tax (on the persons who inherit an estate), as compared to the estate tax which is levied on the assets of the deceased. While a small distinction, if such a new law were to be introduced, it would provide an important opportunity to carve out a recognition of the importance of family woodlands—maintained intact—from generation to generation to society as a whole through sustainable forestry and the benefits timber jobs as well as clean water, wildlife habitat, and natural beauty.

Intergenerational transfer of family woodlands, recognition of the many benefits of well-managed forests, the negative impact of huge tax assessments, and the resulting litany of unintended consequences remains the Number One priority issue for NWOA. Each quarter, National Woodlands magazine devotes significant space to the discussion of timber and land taxes. The Siegel Tax Chronicles and other tax information are posted at [www.woodlandowners.org](http://www.woodlandowners.org).

During a time of gridlock in national legislation, it is a difficult issue to pursue. NWOA works with many groups with similar concerns, including our sister organization, the Forest Landowners Tax Council, (see. p. 19) and many of our state affiliates with tax committees.



# Reports from the States

## VERMONT

### NEW CURRENT USE TAX LAW PROPOSED

The State Senate has passed, by a wide margin, S. 311 revising the use Value Property Tax appraisal regulations. In addition to relaxing paperwork, the bill allows new landowners to keep land enrolled by electing it on the property transfer tax return. It also extends forestry inspections from every five years to every ten.

The bill would increase the opportunity for landowners to enroll ecological areas such as wetlands and rare natural communities into the lowest tax valuation. Opposition has surfaced against a new fee of \$25. The Vermont Woodlands Association (NWOA affil.) has been active in drafting and promoting the new legislation

## WISCONSIN

### WOODLAND LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Developed by the Univ. of Wisconsin Extension Service, this institute is designed to educate and equip woodland owners to become leaders. It is co-sponsored by the Wisconsin Woodland Owners Ass'n. (NWOA affil), other landowner groups, and the DNR.

Most of the board members of WWOA, as well as most leaders of the association's 14 chapters, are graduates. The Institute covers seven days split into three sections. Space is reserved for attendees representing woodland owner associations from adjacent states.

## OREGON

### STATE COMMITTEE ON FAMILY FORESTS

The Committee on Family Forestlands was commissioned by the Oregon Legislature to advise the State forester and the Board of Forestry on issues of importance to family forest owners. There are 40,000 Oregonians managing tracts between 10 to 5,000 acres.

The Oregon Small Woodlands Ass'n. (NWOA affil) supported the legislation creating this important committee to help assure its representation on state and federal regulations and programs that impact its members.

## WEST VIRGINIA

### OIL & GAS RIGHTS STUN LANDOWNERS

West Virginia is a state with abundant oil, gas and coal. The value of the resources was recognized a century ago and many landowners made a quick buck in selling their sub-surface rights. Their descendants are paying the price.

The recent surge in oil and gas prices has sent drilling teams into many family woodlands, many of them actively managed for timber. The owners of the sub-surface rights have the right to cut the timber to make way for new well sites and access roads with only brief notice to the landowner.

The Woodland Owner's Association of West Virginia (NWOA affil) devoted its annual meeting in April to landowner rights and options, as well as the regulations governing oil and gas drillers. NWOA President Keith Argow will also address the meeting on the opportunities for landowners from carbon sequestration.

## MARYLAND

### SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY ACT INTRODUCED

HB 1552 the Sustainable Forestry Act of 2008, is being considered by the Maryland General Assembly. Among the benefits to private woodland owners is a "right-to-practice forestry" provision by inserting "silviculture" in the current statute limiting nuisance suits against agricultural operations.

Other provisions add sustainable forestry to local planning and zoning powers as well as state finance and procurement laws.

## COLORADO

### FOREST HEALTH COUNCIL CREATED

Gov. Bill Ritter has created the Colorado Forest Health Advisory Council to guide multi-agency efforts to address the mountain pine beetle epidemic and other threats to the 22.6 million acres of forests in the state. Although not named to the Council, the Colorado Forestry Ass'n. (NWOA affil) will be able to provide guidance from landowners.

News From

# The Canadian Federation Of Woodlot Owners

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## A 100-Mile Wood Products Market

In a recent column, I described the devastation that has occurred to the forest products industry in Canada. My home province of New Brunswick has been especially hard hit, and we may not have seen bottom yet. As suggested in the column, part of a recovery plan will be to place more emphasis on meeting the needs of local markets for energy, building materials and consumer products based on wood.

The notion of the "100 mile diet" seems to be catching the interest of growing numbers in these parts. Its appeal is based on a mixture of virtue and insecurity, as rising energy costs lead more and more of us to wonder how long we will be able to count on cheap produce trucked from the other side of the continent. The same pressure of rising and volatile transportation costs may be a significant constraint on plans to rebuild our forest industry as a bigger and better version of the export-oriented industry we have known.

Portable bandsaw mills have been popular among woodlot owners for several decades. They appeal to the dream of independence that is not far below the surface with most of us. Being able to sell processed forest products that originate on our own woodlots directly to consumers is a logical extension of the reasons many of us are woodlot owners to begin with. This interest has grown in the past few years with the added motivation of desperation. Shelter, maintenance and improvements to shelter, furniture and other household necessities that combine utility and beauty are all basic human needs. The demand for these things is a long-term certainty and the advantages of being able to meet these needs from local sources appears to be growing. Obviously two-person bandsaw operations are not the only way to supply local markets. Larger scale operations will also be needed. And, I'm hearing of more and more woodlot owners who are getting rigged up with portable mills.

This is happening by itself. Is anything needed to encourage this trend besides hard work and dedicated entrepreneurship? In particular, can our associations play a role that will help give this development a solid foundation?

As discussed in *Deep Economy*, a recent book by Bill McKibben, local economies are an intricate web of relationships among producers and consumers, workers with various skills

from timber harvesters to craftsmen and designers, organizers, distributors and promoters. These functions are filled by individuals more or less directly known to each other. Local relationships aren't necessarily more friendly or cooperative--we've all experienced the opposite, but at very least, they carry the promise of greater durability.

Significant movement to build these local relationships will require, among other things, promotion of local products, especially with nearby town and city folk, services such as lumber grading and other types of quality assurance, and education, training, and mentoring opportunities for a wide range of skills. Some of the training required may be very basic indeed: It is too early to say how much of our timber harvesting labor force will survive the crisis, but to some degree, possibly a large one, it will require rebuilding.

This small vision is no different from many others in at least one respect: It bases itself on a somewhat tangled mix of choice and virtue on the one hand, and necessities imposed by forces beyond our control on the other. The rosy predictions which follow these two types of assumptions rely in part on the hope that uncertainties on the one side will somehow magically cancel out the uncertainties on the other. This would not seem to be a very satisfactory basis for our hopes and fears about the future. Keeping things simple, building real relationships based on real interests and real needs, rooted in a shared connection to a place and to the people of that place may be the source of something more lasting and hopeful. It's not entirely a hypothetical leap of faith: Not so many generations ago, our woodlots supplied all the local shelter and energy needs of our ancestors and their communities. Maybe they will again.

**Peter deMarsh**

**Affiliates of the Canadian Federation of Woodlot Owners include:** Federation of British Columbia Woodlot Associations; Woodlot Association of Alberta; The Farm Woodlot Association of Saskatchewan; Woodlot Association of Manitoba; Ontario Woodlot and Sawmill Operators Association; Fédération des Producteurs de Bois du Québec; New Brunswick Federation of Woodlot Owners; Nova Scotia Forest Group Ventures Association and the Prince Edward Island Woodlot Owners Association.



**Two Nations  
One Forest & Woodland**