



Wye Research & Education Center

2009

Dear Forest Steward:

It is my pleasure to invite you to begin the application process to become a *Maryland Woodland Steward*. The Maryland Woodland Stewards program is an outreach of the University of Maryland Cooperative Extension. The training process is meant to teach you, as it has 405 other Maryland forest owners, managers, and environmentally-concerned citizens over the last 16 years, how sound forest management practices can be used to make wildlife healthier, more diverse and abundant, while enhancing other forest benefits. In addition to improving larger forest properties, we also continue efforts to target landowners of 1-10 acres.



Each year, a select group of 25 individuals is chosen from our applicants to participate in a three and one-half day seminar that emphasizes “*education through demonstration*.” The workshop will be September 17-20 at Camp Pecometh in Centreville, Queen Anne’s County, MD. Through this intensive seminar, participants will learn about the ecology and management of Maryland’s forests and wildlife, sources of professional assistance to help them, and how they can put this information to work in their communities.

If you are selected to receive the training, the seminar cost, including lodging, meals, and reference materials, is only \$95. After the training, participants, called *Maryland Woodland Stewards*, agree to return to their communities and actively serve for one year as advocates of wise forest and wildlife management. Stewards are asked to contribute 40 hours in outreach effort over the next year. The emphasis of outreach efforts is on "Neighbor Helping Neighbor," and Maryland Woodland Stewards share information in ways with which they feel comfortable. Some may have talents for speaking or writing while others are able to share through their job or local organizations. We greatly encourage using your own property or the property you manage to demonstrate to neighbors, friends, and relatives, the importance of good forest wildlife management.

The training will help you see the potential in your forest and others regardless of the size, and be able to recommend to others the professional assistance and resources available to better manage their properties. We request that Maryland Woodland Stewards get to know their local forester, wildlife biologist, Extension agent, master gardener, and others who are valuable contacts and sources of information.

Please also refer to the brochure, application, and position announcement found on our website that clarifies what we are asking of participants, as well as an overview of the training workshop topics and activities. Applications are being accepted on a rolling basis until all 25 slots have been filled, so **please submit your completed application as soon as possible.**

If you are selected and participate in the Maryland Woodland Steward training you will be considered a volunteer with the University of Maryland Cooperative Extension. Being a volunteer provides you liability protection for activities you may undertake on behalf of the Maryland Woodland Stewards program. If you would like to contact another Maryland Woodland Steward in your area or have questions or concerns about the program please feel to call me directly.

It has been our experience over the last 15 years that the workshop opens the eyes of participants to a whole new world of knowledge that they continue to use for the rest of their lives. Our society is so focused on technology that the opportunity to learn about the natural world of wildlife and forestry is a pleasant diversion. The workshop also allows you to meet other individuals with shared interests and many Maryland Woodland Stewards develop relationships with others that last for years. I encourage you to visit the Maryland Woodland Stewards program link on our website (www.naturalresources.umd.edu) and read about the accomplishments of program members and their personal comments regarding what they learned. A detailed agenda and other information are also available.

Remember, **applications are being accepted now** and the slots are filling up, so please act quickly! You will be contacted by mid-August regarding your selection. I look forward to your interest and participation.

Sincerely,

Nevin Dawson
Associate Agent, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Forest Stewardship

Enclosures

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