



BRANCHING OUT

Maryland's Forest Stewardship Educator

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The Woods in Your Backyard: A New Publication for Landowners

A survey by Baltimore County found that landowners often use only about 1 acre of their 3-acre lots. The remaining acreage is often maintained as lawn, costing owners valuable time and money invested in mowing and lawn care. Have *you* taken into account the resources you put into your lawn or other low-use areas of your land?

Many landowners may have existing natural areas on their properties but don't really do much with it because they don't know what to do, there is no access, or for other reasons. There are many practices that could be done to improve wildlife habitat, improve recreational access, or better protect water quality. There are many land use alternatives for you to consider that will benefit yourself, your family, and the surrounding land and wildlife.

Know Your Land Use Type

Whether you enjoy the sounds of birds chirping, seeing wildlife visit your property, or you're just tired of mowing so much lawn, you may want to consider converting some of your unused land to a natural area, or improving existing natural areas.

There are three types of land use: intensive, intermediate, and natural. Intensive use lands include buildings, sheds, paved areas, and formal gardens while intermediate land uses include lawns, gardens, pasture, and orchard. Natural use lands are forested areas and those that are unmowed, with small trees and shrubs.

What percent of your property falls into each of these three categories? Would you like to transition some intermediate use area into natural areas to create a more natural and ecologically friendly landscape?

Owners of 1-10 acres of land who are interested in making the most of their property can greatly benefit from using the newly published *The Woods in Your Backyard* (WIYB) manual. The book helps you to identify your goals for your land, and walks you through the steps to achieve them. Whether you are interested in converting lawn to forest, enhancing an existing natural

area, creating wildlife habitat, or providing a useful outdoor space for your family, this book is for you.

Experts from Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia created this publication for small landowners who usually do not have access to professional foresters and natural resource managers. It includes a self-assessment manual and workbook that guides users to make informed decisions that ensure clean water, viable native wildlife populations, recreational opportunities, and good forest health.

The manual is made up of five parts that include a series of lessons, activities, and relevant information. It presents a step-by-step process for creating a personalized management and action plan. The lessons include detailing objectives, drawing a map, conducting an inventory, planning activities, and converting lawns to forest.



The outlined areas are two different properties. The owner of the land on the left has planted trees, encouraged wildlife habitat, and maintained a walking trail through the woods. The property on the right is mostly lawn which requires regular maintenance and provides little benefit to wildlife and surrounding woodland.

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Information for each potential management goal is provided. The workbook section allows individual landowners to complete the self-assessment for their own property using a case study as a guide.

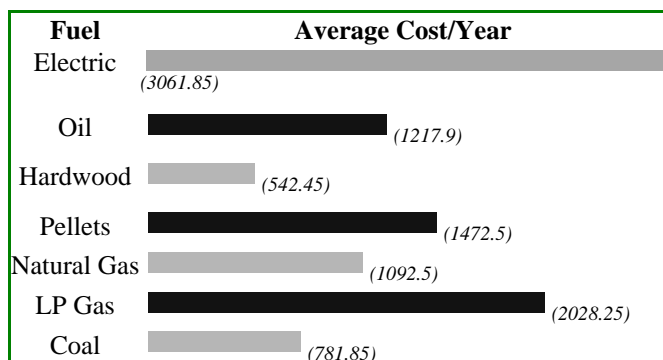
Local, trained volunteers will be available for further instruction and to help individuals achieve the land management goals they recorded in their workbook. If you are interested in attending a training to become a Woods in Your Backyard instructor so you can share this resource with others, contact Elli Hammond at (310)432-2767 x338 or email heh@umd.edu.

To order a copy of *The Woods in Your Backyard*, go to www.nraes.org. Single copies cost \$18, with discounts of up to 40% for bulk orders. For more information on this publication, or to find out about other forest stewardship programs and publications from Maryland Cooperative Extension go to: www.naturalresources.umd.edu. You can also write "Woods in Your Backyard," 18330 Keedysville Road, Keedysville MD 21756, or call (301) 432-2767.

Thinking of Heating Your Home with Wood this Winter?

It may surprise some, but burning firewood can be less expensive than many other heating alternatives. There are many heating options currently available, each with its own benefits and drawbacks. When considering your options, it is important to note that costs vary by region, and the efficiency of the heating appliance will greatly change the annual heating cost.

The following bar graph from hearth.com represents the average annual costs of home heating based on heat source. Notice that hardwood is the most cost-efficient choice.



There are several publications and websites which provide information on everything from gathering firewood to choosing and installing a wood-burning stove:

- If you would like to learn more about using wood for heating in your home, *Heating with Wood and Coal* describes how to choose a fuel and heating appliance

for your home. This book can be ordered from www.nraes.org.

- *Managing Oak Forests for Fuelwood* is a free publication from Connecticut Cooperative Extension which can be ordered from www.canr.uconn.edu/ces/forest/pub.htm.
- For general information on buying firewood, go to www.dnr.state.md.us/forests/forester/firewoodinfo.html.

Emerald Ash Borer Found in Maryland

Maryland officials confirmed the presence of the emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis*) in ash trees located in the Clinton/Brandywine area of southern Prince George's County. The effected trees were discovered during survey and eradication efforts began after the detection of the insect in Maryland in 2003, when a Michigan nurseryman shipped infested trees into a Prince George's County nursery. "While we are disappointed to find the emerald ash borer after nearly three years of no detections, we are pleased that our surveillance efforts have proven to be effective and that we found the insect before it could spread further," said Agriculture Secretary Lewis R. Riley. "Together with our federal, state, and local nursery partners, we are beginning aggressive measures to control and eradicate this destructive pest."

The Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) issued a quarantine order (#06-01) that prohibits anyone from moving ash trees or any hardwood firewood into or out of Prince Georges' County. Over the next two months, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and MDA will survey the area south of Rt. 4 to locate all ash trees. The results of the survey will determine the necessary course of action and scope of tree de-

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struction and pest surveillance. The accepted protocol used in Maryland and the other impacted states is the removal and destruction of all ash trees in defined areas followed by on-going surveillance.

The insect, an exotic pest from Asia, feeds on and kills ash trees in one to three years after infestation. The presence of the emerald ash borer typically goes undetected until the trees show symptoms of being infested - usually the upper third of a tree will thin and then die back. This is usually followed by a large number of shoots or branches arising below the dead portions of the trunk. Other symptoms of infestation include: D-shaped exit holes in the bark where adults emerge, vertical splits in the bark, and distinct serpentine-shaped tunnels beneath the bark in the cambium, where larvae effectively stop food and water movement in the tree, starving it to death.

For more information, contact Sue duPont, 410-841-5889 or Kate Wagner, 410-841-5888.

The Maryland Coverts Project Congratulates the Class of 2006

For more than a decade, woodland owners and managers have committed their time for one weekend to learn how to have healthy, abundant and diverse forestlands. Working together, the University of Maryland Cooperative Extension and the Ruffed Grouse Society (RGS), a nonprofit organization dedicated to forest wildlife conservation, have been bringing together woodland owners to teach sound forest wildlife management practices through this neighbor-helping-neighbor volunteer educational program: *The Coverts Project*. The name comes from “covert” (pronounced *kuv’-ert*), which is a thicket that provides sheltering habitat for wildlife.

Why not leave teaching to the experts?

Research has shown that landowners oftentimes implement wildlife or forest management practices, or con-



Class of 2006 Coverts Cooperators

tact a forestry professional only after being encouraged by a trusted friend or neighbor. The goal of Coverts is to develop a statewide network of trusted friends and neighbors, called “Coverts Cooperators,” who know how to manage woodlands for timber and wildlife, and become agents of change by sharing this information with others. Coverts cooperators educate other landowners about forest management planning and practices, including timber harvesting, improving wildlife habitat diversity, and other forest-benefiting activities.

To learn more about the Coverts Program or to sign up for next year’s training, visit www.naturalresources.umd.edu/Coverts.cfm.

Natural Resource Income Opportunities—Put Your Resources to Work for YOU!

Have you ever wanted to start your own business using the natural resources on your property? There are dozens of possibilities when it comes to creating a business using forest-based resources, and many don’t involve cutting down trees. Fee fishing, clay shooting, bed and breakfast, shiitake mushroom production, and wood-working are just a few of the options open to forest landowners.

Several publications that provide information on starting and running resource-based businesses are available through Maryland Cooperative Extension. These can be found at www.naturalresources.umd.edu/Income_Home.cfm. You can watch a Natural Resource Income Opportunities video online at www.naturalresources.umd.edu/Videos.cfm to find how some Maryland residents are earning income from their land.

Maryland’s Agriculture Leadership Development Program

The purpose of the LEAD Maryland Foundation is to provide men and women interested in the future of Maryland forests with opportunities to:

- Expand their leadership abilities
- Develop an active network of resourceful, diverse and highly motivated people
- Increase their understanding of critical public issues
- Enhance their knowledge of technological practices, marketing strategies and environmental concerns

The program works by awarding educational two-year fellowships to individuals. Successful candidates will

have demonstrated emerging leadership abilities as well as a genuine interest in forestry and societal issues. Fellows attend eight three-day seminars held at various locations around the state. Leading the seminars are industry leaders, state and national agency representatives, professional trainers and university faculty.

Fellows learn through lecture, discussion, self-assessment, group activities and by completing a leadership. Fellows also take part in study tours - domestic and international - designed to help leaders-in-training compare and contrast political, economic, social and cultural issues.

To learn more about LEAD Maryland and to apply for this program, go to www.leadmaryland.org, or contact Susan Harrison at leadmd@umd.edu.

Inside Agroforestry Newsletter

The USDA National Agroforestry Center publishes a quarterly newsletter called *Inside Agroforestry*. It covers the latest agroforestry news and information. Each issue presents a single theme applicable to agroforestry. Agroforestry is the intentional combining of agriculture and forestry to create integrated and sustainable land-use systems like alley cropping, forest farming, silvopasture, windbreaks, and other special applications. Read *Inside Agroforestry* and find out more about the National Agroforestry Center online at www.unl.edu/nac/insideagroforestry.htm.

Conservation Ethics Curriculum Training for Grades 6-12

The Carroll County Chapter #622 of Pheasants Forever is pleased to invite teachers, naturalists, homeschoolers, Scout leaders, and all other youth leaders to a Leopold Education Project (LEP) Educator Workshop at Bear Branch Nature Center in Westminster, Maryland, on Friday, October 20th. Deadline for registration is October 9th.

The LEP is an innovative, interdisciplinary conservation ethics curriculum targeted to students in grades 6 - 12. It is part of Pheasants Forever's education program to create an ecologically literate citizenry. The LEP increases students' awareness of the land and informs them of how to make responsible choices for our planet, while teaching social, collaborative, and critical thinking skills. Check out the national LEP website at www.lep.org for more details.

New Publications and Videos

- *The Complete Guide to Chain Saw Safety & Directional Felling* e-book. Order at www.forestapps.com.
- *Sensible Woodcutting* free video www.forestapps.com.
- *Natural Resource Income Opportunities* free video clips and more at www.naturalresources.umd.edu.
- *The Woods in Your Backyard* manual for small-acreage landowners. Order from www.nraes.org.

Upcoming Stewardship Events

- October 1** Lead Maryland applications due. www.leadmaryland.org
- October 15** Deadline for *Tree Farmer* and *Tree Farm Inspector of the Year* nominations.
- October 15** Biosolids Field Day, Clinton, MD. Contact Elli Hammond heh@umd.edu 301-432-2767 x338.
- October 19-22** National Tree Farm Convention in Mobile, AL. Register at www.treefarmssystem.org.
- November 2** GPS training for foresters and loggers. Contact Elli Hammond at 301-432-2767 x338.
- November 3-4** MFA Annual Meeting. Go to mdforests.org/AM2006.htm for information.
- November 9** Forest Landowner Workshop, Charles County MD. Contact Elli Hammond: heh@umd.edu.
- Look for the next issue of *Branching Out* Jan. 2007!**
- For more details on these and other events, click on the calendar of events link on www.naturalresources.umd.edu**

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