

Branching Out: Maryland's Forest Stewardship Educator

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Published four times a year and distributed to more than 5,000 forest landowners, resource professionals, and others interested in forest stewardship. For a free subscription or to send news items, dates, and comments, phone 301-432-2767 x301; fax 301-432-4089; e-mail jkays@umd.edu for questions regarding newsletter content and cmason@umd.edu for address changes, additions, or corrections; or mail to Branching Out, Maryland Cooperative Extension, 18330 Keedysville Road, Keedysville MD 21756-1104. The sponsoring agencies' programs are open to all citizens without regard to race, color, gender, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation, marital or parental status, or national origin.

Supported by the Maryland Tree Farm Committee.

Change is in the Wind: The Future of Private Forest Land

When it comes to our nation's forest land, private landowners are responsible for managing a significant amount. Nearly 50 percent of the United States' forest land is owned by private, non-industrial landowners. Furthermore, almost 60 percent of the productive timberland is privately owned. This is the same land which plays a key role towards protecting water quality and wildlife habitat, providing recreational opportunities and aesthetic enjoyment, wood production, and moderating climate change.

Why do people own forest land? Current forest landowners possess forests for aesthetic enjoyment, promoting environmental values, privacy, as an asset to pass on to their heirs, and, for some, timber production. But the winds of change are blowing. Today's forest landowners are aging and the next 20 years will witness a substantial amount of the nation's private forest lands transferred to their heirs. Although the present landowners are concerned about their forest, many have not discussed the future of their land with their children. They do not know if their children want to assume management of the forest land. With so much forest land in private hands, such an uncharted future could have a profound impact on this critical natural resource.

Does the next generation want their parent's legacy? Last year, the Pinchot Institute and the USDA Forest Service conducted a study to find out what the next generation thought about their forests and what they intend to do with it once inherited. Not surprisingly, the next generation has a different perspective towards forest land than their parents. Although they expected their parents will want to keep the land in the family, they had little involvement in management of the forest. Furthermore, they did not want to become involved in the management of the family forest.

Who are the heirs? The heirs are typically professionals with an average or higher income. They do not live near their family forest nor intend to in the future. Many heirs view the forest as a source of income in the future. However, next-generation women, more so than men, tend to place importance on the forest as a legacy to remain within the family. Men tend to view forest land as a source of income and for personal use. While recognizing the importance of undeveloped forest land and expressing a desire to keep the land as is, the heirs recognized that there could be emergencies or situations that might result in selling, converting, or subdividing the land if needed.

The picture painted of the next generation is one of becoming increasingly less connected to the land. They have limited understanding of the management of the family's forest, and having little interest in learning more about it. This lack of interest and knowledge about their inheritance raises concerns that the next generation is more likely to consider choices that could be detrimental to their forests.

What is the future of our nation's forests? Just as perspectives differ between generations, so do their wants and interests. Consequently, today's policies and programs designed to encourage stewardship, sustainable forest management practices, and the continuity of the family legacy, need to be examined relative to tomorrow's landscape. Current concerns focus primarily on estate planning and limiting the tax burden associated with transfer of assets to the heirs. And yet, if the heirs do not have an interest in forest stewardship or a desire to retain the land for themselves or their children, the legacy could be lost. It may be time to refocus from passing on the assets, to ensuring that objectives and practices persist indefinitely. This could be accomplished by establishing long term objectives which require continuity of forest management plans with practices that take decades to come to fruition. Better to address the changes now, than to lose this crucial and precious legacy forever. For more information on this topic, refer to www.pinchot.org, The Pinchot Letter, Vol. 10, No. 2, Winter 2005.

MFA's Forestry Breakfast Gets Strong Support

The Maryland Forests Association held their 2006 Continental Breakfast and Legislative Reception on February 22, 2006 in Annapolis. The theme, Working Together for Forests Forever, was aptly named as 17 organizations from across the state and across a variety of interests exhibited at the event. Exhibitors were represented by private forest landowners, outdoor enthusiasts, natural resource professionals and educators, and the forest products industry. Maryland Senators, Delegates and their staffers had the opportunity to speak directly with the organizations about Maryland's forests, forestry issues, and how these issues impact the community. Would you like your organization to be a sponsor or an exhibitor for next year? For more information, contact MFA at 310-895-5369 or email mdforests@hereintown.net.

Working Together for Forests Forever

Sponsors/exhibitors:

The Maryland Forests Association, American Forest and Paper Association, U MD Cooperative Extension, Association of Forest Industries, Center for Agro-Ecology, Forest Resources Association, Izaak Walton League, MD Association of Forest Conservancy District Boards, MD Christmas Tree Association, MD Forestry and Parks Centennial Committee, MD/DE Master Logger Program, MD/DE Society of American Foresters, Partnership for Sustainable Forestry, Rural Maryland Council, and Southern Maryland RC&D Council.

The Visual Guide to Timber Harvesting

Many forest landowners consider woodlot improvements or timber harvests for their woodlot. Unfortunately, unless they have had some prior experience with timber harvests, most have trouble understanding or visualizing how a silviculture practice will impact a site. Now, through the virtual world of computers, there is a tool to visually introduce landowners to forest harvest techniques.

Virginia Tech has created the Visual Guide to Timber Harvesting online. This website details techniques used for Appalachian hardwood and loblolly pine forests. It compares mid-rotation and regeneration harvests, identifies which trees were removed and why. Side by side panoramic views provide before

and after cuts, well-managed and poor harvests, plus discussions of the pros and cons of each type of technique. Viewers can rotate through the views and click on specific trees. Information is detailed for each species; tree diameter, height, quality, volume, and values. Additional species information is linked to Virginia Tech Forestry Department's Landowner Fact Sheets which describe each species range, soils, growth, regeneration methods, problems, and fun facts. The site is user friendly: silviculture terms are clearly defined by clicking on the highlighted word, photos are interactive allowing zooming and rotating 360 degrees, and the "Cut It" link shows the same site after the harvest.

This is a great tool to better understand timber harvest techniques and their potential impacts. So, if you are trying to decide which timber harvest technique is best for your woodlot and you want to see a harvest site but you don't have access to one or don't know where to start, this is the place to begin. With the click of a mouse you can cruise a virtual timber harvest right from your own computer, and you don't need any bug spray. To access this site, go to www.cnr.vt.edu/dendro/360/introduction/. Isn't technology great!

MD DNR Trees for Sale Now!

Spring is on our door step and, if you have not already done so, it is time to order trees. You can buy trees for conservation needs from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) John S. Ayton State Forest Tree Nursery. The nursery begins taking orders in the fall. Orders are filled on a first come first serve basis. Ten conifer species and 25 hardwood species are grown at the nursery. Many species are already sold out. However, there are still a number of hardwoods and softwoods in stock and ready for planting such as Bald Cypress, Bayberry, Pin Oak, Black Walnut, Loblolly Pine, Atlantic White Cedar, and more. Certified descendants of the historic Wye Oak are also available from the nursery. These seedlings sell for \$25.00 each. Place your order soon as the Wye seedlings are popular and sell quickly.

In past years, the State Forest Tree Nursery sold wetland, wildlife, and upland bundles. These bundles are no longer available. However, you can now purchase species in smaller quantities of 25, 75 or 100 each. You must order a minimum of 100 seedlings.

The DNR's nursery seedlings are earmarked for conservation purposes only. Conservation purposes are defined as watershed protection, wildlife habitat, Christmas trees, forest products, soil protection, buffer planting, and windbreak protection. For uses other than conservation, such as landscaping or ornamental needs, the State encourages the patronizing of private nurseries, garden centers, and landscape businesses. To aid in choosing the right trees for the right site, a key is provided in the catalog as a guide to species functions or conservation purposes. Not sure what to plant? Your State Forester can assist you with site conditions, species selection, and incentive programs.

The State Forest Tree Nursery, located in Preston, MD, hosts an annual open house, pending funding. This is a great opportunity for the public to tour the facilities, inspect the crop, and watch equipment demonstrations. Check the catalog for more information.

For a listing of what is available, how to order and other information, call the nursery at 1-800-TREESMD (873-3763) or log onto www.dnr.state.md.us/forests/nursery. Printed catalogs are available upon request by contacting the nursery or your local Forest Service office. Seedlings are shipped during March, April, and May. Quantities are limited and going fast, so order your trees now!

The Maryland Tree Farm System - Updates and Events

* 2006 Recertifications: Recertification forms will be distributed in March. Help insure recertification of your property. Contact your forester to make an appointment or call the MTFS office for information at 301-855-0927. Note: watch for changes to the recertification process in future Branching Out newsletters.

* **April 25-26, 2006** Legislative Days. Washington DC, MTFS partnership with the Society of American Foresters. A power-packed, 2-day training course providing hands-on, real-life instruction on how to make your voice heard on Capitol Hill. Open to anyone affiliated with the Tree Farm program including committee members, Tree Farmers, and Inspectors. For information: www.safnet.org/meetings/legislatedays.cfm.

* **April 4, 2006.** Prepare seedlings for distribution on Arbor Day. DNR John S. Ayton State Forest Tree Nursery, Preston, MD. 10:00 am.

* **April 5, 2006.** Planting and Tree Farm Awards. State capitol, main (west) entrance, 8:00 am. Seedling will be planted on Senate and House grounds. Congratulations to those below on the following awards:

- Billie R. Laws, Worcester County - Maryland Outstanding Tree Farmer of Year;
- Michael Kay, Frederick County - Maryland Outstanding Tree Farm Inspector of Year;
- The Harford 4-H Clubs, Inc in Harford County - Maryland Outstanding Institutional Tree Farmer of Year;
- Beth Sanders, the Carroll County Maryland Forester - Central Maryland Region Inspector of Year;
- Charles N. Mason, Jr. - Frederick County Tree Farmer of Year;
- Gibson Island Corporation - Prince Georges County Tree Farmer of Year.

* **May 18, 2006.** Tree Farm Meeting, LaVale, MD. 9:00 - 3:00.
The Maryland Tree Farm System is a sponsor of the Branching Out.

Calendar of Events

* **March 25** -5th Annual Rural Enterprise Conference: Its Not Just Farming, Its Business. Camp Dawson, Kingwood, WV. 9-3:30 pm. Adults \$15, youth \$5. For information - 301-334-6960 or www.morefarmmoney.org.

* **April 1** -Maryland Forests Association Regional Town Hall Meeting, Western Region - Share concerns about our forest landbase and resources, Ponderosa, La Vale, MD. Contact MFA Office at 301-895-5369 or mdforests@hereintown.net.

* **April 6** - May 25 -Non-traditional Farming Enterprise Lecture Series. Frederick County Extension Office, four Thursday evenings, 7-9 pm. \$15. Call 301-631-3576 or wholdway@umd.edu. Information online at www.naturalresources.umd.edu

* **April 18** -Woodland & Wildlife - The Maryland Woodland Owners Council is sponsoring a talk by Thomas Patrick of Windstar Wildlife Institute at the Frederick County Extension Office, Frederick, MD. For information, contact , Harry Ford, 301-854-4301 or the Extension Office.

* **April 21** -Maryland Forests Association Regional Town Hall Meeting, Central Region - Share concerns about our forest issues. Friendly Farm, Upperco, MD. Contact MFA Office at 301-895-5369 or mdforests@hereintown.net.

* **April 29, 2006.** Goods From The Woods: Keeping Forestland Profitable Through Generations. Allegany College, Cumberland, MD. 9-3 pm. \$15 registration and \$5 for additional family member. For information call 540-667-3606 or email mcdaniel@potomac.org.

Publications

Marketing Special Forest Products in New York State: A Practical Manual for Forest-Based Enterprises. Cornell University Cooperative Extension. Illustrates the handling, storing, and marketing facets of special forest products in NY but applies here as well. This publication and other excellent resources for the hobbyist or entrepreneur are found at: <http://scnyat.cce.cornell.edu/sfpmarketing/>. Resources on a the entire range of income opportunities can be found on the income opportunities link at: www.naturalresources.umd.edu, your one-stop location for forest & wildlife information. Calendar listings, publications, locating a forester, links to other organizations, income opportunities, stumpage price report, past BO newsletters, forest volunteer training (COVERTS Project), wildlife management, wildlife damage management, youth resources, current research, and more. Come check it out!

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