



BRANCHING OUT

Maryland's Forest Stewardship Educator

Vol. 14, No. 2

Summer 2006

Branching Out Goes From Hard Copy to Online

The *Branching Out* newsletter has been a mainstay of the natural resource Extension program since 1991. It is currently being sent out to 5,500 landowners and resource professionals four times a year without cost to its recipients. Unfortunately, funding of this service cannot be maintained while sustaining other important programs. We believe that *Branching Out* is such a valuable resource that while we can no longer send out free copies of the newsletter by mail, we will continue to offer each issue online, free of charge. There are three ways for you to continue enjoying the *Branching Out* newsletter:

1. **Sign up for the *Branching Out* listserv** to receive notices when a new issue has been posted online. Send an email message to listserv@listserv.umd.edu. In the body of the message, type

“SUB branchingout your name”

(without the quotation marks), replacing your first and last name in place of “*your name*.” The name you type in will be the name that appears on our list of members. Neither your email nor your name will be available to any other listserv member. Your personal information will be used solely for sending out reminders for the *Branching Out* newsletter and related educational programs, and will not be shared with others. The University has strict guidelines for confidentiality that protects your privacy. For more information about listservs, go to www.helpdesk.umd.edu/documentation/other/listserv.shtml#5.

2. **Go to our website** www.naturalresources.umd.edu/Branching_Out.cfm to access the current and past issues of the newsletter.
3. **Receive a hard copy.** If you would like to continue receiving the newsletter as a hard copy, we can send you copies by mail for an annual subscription fee of \$10 per year. Send a check payable to University of Maryland and your name and address to: *Branching Out* Newsletter, 18330 Keedysville Road, Keedysville, MD 21756-1104

We hope that this new method of communication will allow us to meet the needs of more forest landowners, giving you the information and service you need to reach your forest stewardship goals.

Maryland State Forestry Turns 100!

This year, Maryland Forests and Parks celebrates its centennial. In 1906, philanthropist brothers John and Robert Garrett challenged the state to establish a forestry program by donating nearly 2000 tree-stripped acres of land in Garrett County to the state on the condition that the state establish the governmental machinery to promote wise use of forest resources. At that time, Maryland's tree cover had been reduced from nearly 90 percent of its land surface when the first colonists arrived to a paltry 35 percent. Maryland was running out of wood, losing wildlife habitat, suffering the ravages of erosion and stream siltation, and being scourged by unchecked forest fires.

The state legislature responded with Maryland's first forestry law, making Maryland the third state to establish a statewide forestry program. The law established

a Board of Forestry, made up of influential Marylanders, to oversee the management of the Garrett bequest, to institute a statewide program of forest conservation, to accept additional land donations, and to hire a state forester. The governor appointed an able young forester working for the U.S. Forest Service, Fred W. Besley, who would serve as Maryland's first State Forester from 1906 until 1942. A Yale School of Forestry trained protégé of Gifford Pinchot, first U.S. Forester, Besley proved to be an able and energetic choice.

Besley realized that one good way to promote the forestry agenda was to encourage the public to use forest

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reserves for recreational purposes. When, in 1907, John Glenn, a resident of Catonsville, donated the beginnings of another forest reserve along the Patapsco River near Baltimore, Besley saw the opportunity to entice Baltimore area residents to come recreate in the great out-of-doors, and by 1910 was informally calling the Patapsco Forest Reserve “Patapsco Park.” By 1912, Besley had developed a small recreation area along the river, and by the middle of the decade, people were flocking out of Baltimore to picnic, swim, and camp at the “park.” Now a 14,000 acre, 32 mile long stretch of public land, Patapsco Valley State Park hosts over a half million visitors a year.



Fred W. Besley
MD’s first State Forester

Besides establishing additional forest reserves and parks, Fred W. Besley taught forestry practices at the University of Maryland and established the first state tree nursery there. He also traveled, in his words, “every cow path in Maryland” producing a comprehensive inventory of all tree stands in the state that exceeded 5 acres.

He and his small staff provided advice to wood lot owners on how best to manage their forest resources, and created a roadside tree program to beautify Maryland’s growing network of public highways. Most significantly, Besley created a staff of over 300 volunteer forest wardens, along with a network of more than 40 fire towers, across the state to reduce the incidence of forest fires. After the legislature started providing money for forest reserve acquisition, Besley purchased historic Fort Frederick, a relic of the French and Indian War (1756-1763), which, like Patapsco, was informally known as a park. He thus earned the gratitude of people who wanted the ruined fort preserved in the public interest.

The Great Depression of the 1930s, as devastating as it was to the nation as a whole, proved a boon to forest and park development. One of President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal programs was the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), which, in Maryland, put 30,000 young unemployed men to work reclaiming forest and other natural resources, building recreational facilities, and restoring historic structures on public lands. Most of the recreational facilities that the CCC built in Maryland forests and parks are in use today. Besley later stated that all the good works of the CCC set Mary-

land’s forests and parks ahead by 20 years.

Today, Maryland’s system of state forests and parks includes over 300,000 acres of public land. Eleven million visitors come to these areas each year, contributing over \$300 million dollars to the state’s economy. There is a state forest or park within 20 miles of every state resident. Both Marylanders and visitors to the “Old Line State” enjoy a precious outdoor resource thanks to the farsightedness of Fred Besley and the many other dedicated forest and park professionals over the past century.

Excerpts from www.dnr.state.md.us/centennial/forestry_and_parks.asp

CWD Update

From L. Douglas Hotton, Deer Project Leader, Maryland DNR, Wildlife Division

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a naturally occurring fatal disease of the brain and nervous system in deer, elk, and other cervids. CWD belongs to the family of transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSE) that attack the brain of deer and elk, producing small lesions that eventually result in death. CWD has not been found in Maryland and has not been shown to be transmissible to humans.

CWD, once thought to be a disease of deer and elk in the western states and provinces, is now found east of the Mississippi River in Wisconsin, Illinois, New York, and West Virginia. CWD is found in captive and free ranging deer in Wisconsin and New York. It is limited to free ranging deer in Illinois and West Virginia. Currently, CWD is confined to Hampshire County in West Virginia and Oneida and Madison Counties in New York.

Maryland hunters that take a deer in West Virginia (Hampshire County) or New York (Oneida County or

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Madison County) this coming hunting season will not be able to bring the entire deer carcass back into Maryland. Only the meat without the backbone, cleaned hide and cape, antlers, cleaned skull plate with attached antlers, tanned hide or taxidermy mount may be brought from these locations into Maryland. The restricted deer carcass parts (brain, spinal column, lymph glands, etc.) contain the highest risk for spreading CWD into Maryland.

Many states take brain and lymph gland samples of harvested deer in order to test for the presence of CWD in free ranging deer. Any Maryland resident that bags a deer or elk out-of-state and is later notified that the animal tested positive for CWD, must contact the Maryland Department of Natural Resources within 24 hours by phoning 410-713-3851, faxing 410-341-7952, or emailing dhotton@dnr.state.md.us

For additional information, visit the Maryland DNR website at www.dnr.state.md.us or the CWD Alliance website at www.cwd-info.org.

Retraction: A previous issue of *Branching Out* stated that CWD was found in Pennsylvania. This is not the case, and we apologize for the error.

University of Maryland Celebrates a Milestone

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the Maryland Agricultural College, which later expanded and, in 1920, became known as the University of Maryland.

University of Maryland College Park is one of two land grant universities, the other being UM Eastern Shore. Land grant schools are the result of the Morrill Act, which was passed by Congress in 1862. Congress soon realized that to be effective, the educational function of land-grant universities needed to be supplemented with research capabilities. The Hatch Act was passed in 1887 to provide for the establishment of research farms where universities could conduct research into agricultural, mechanical, and related problems faced by rural citizens.

In 1914, Congress passed the Smith Lever Act. This act provided for the establishment of the Cooperative Extension Service. As a result, there are now Extension offices in every Maryland county and Baltimore city that serve to "extend" information which has been developed on campus and research stations across the state. Your local Extension center is a branch office of the University of Maryland and Extension agents are

considered university faculty, since their role is educational.

From www.dnr.state.md.us/centennial/forestryeducation.asp.

Visit Your State Parks

Did you know that there are 50 state parks, forests, and natural areas in Maryland? Plan to visit at least one new park this summer! Visit the state park website for maps and locations: www.dnr.state.md.us/mdmap.html.

Maryland Covert Volunteer Training in September

The Maryland Coverts Project will hold its annual training seminar September 21-24 in Washington County for 30 individuals interested in forest wildlife management for large or small properties. A "covert" (*kuh vert*) is an old English word that refers to a thicket for wildlife habitat. It is an appropriate name for this program that has been reaching out to Maryland's individual woodland owners since 1990, teaching individuals about how forest stewardship can improve wildlife habitat and other forest benefits. Whether your interest is turkey, deer, songbirds or other wildlife and plants, learning how to create and manage "coverts" can bring great satisfaction.

The three and a half day training resembles a forest and wildlife short course, and includes classroom instruction on management practices for wildlife and forest health, as well as outdoor demonstrations. Using concepts of "neighbor helping neighbor" and "education through demonstration," participants use case studies and other materials to learn how to help other landowners reach their goals.

The cost for the training is only \$75, a bargain by any measure. In return for the training, participants, known as "Covert Cooperators," agree to spend 40 hours over the next year in ways they feel they can be effective, develop or improve a forest stewardship plan for their property, and make an active effort to advocate sound forest and wildlife management in their communities.

If you are interested in attending the Maryland Coverts Training workshop, or know someone you would like to nominate for the program, please contact Elli Hammond at heh@umd.edu, or (301)432-2767 ext. 338. All program information, applications and other materials are available online at: www.naturalresources.umd.edu. Applications are due by June 30 and those selected will be notified in July.

Tree Farm Inspections May Change

From Howard Anderson, President of Maryland Tree Farm System

The success of our Tree Farm program and farm reinspections in Maryland is largely the result of the dedication of our State Foresters with the help of many of our members. Nationally, every Tree Farm is inspected every 5 years - a 20% yearly inspection rate. By nationally stratifying properties into acreage categories, required reinspections would drop from approximately 8,000 in 2006 to 1,180, still resulting in 95% accuracy. This year, Maryland will continue the current 20% inspection program, in addition to the random statistical sampling, which will be the only required inspections in 2007. Future updates will be provided.

ATFS Eastern Region Meeting

The eastern regional meeting of the American Tree Farm System will be held in Pocomoke City at the Bonanza, 1621 Ocean Highway. The program includes greetings from our State Forester; the Stoltzfus Tree Farm presented by Senator Lowell Stoltzfus; a presentation by Dan Rider on alternative forestry as a source of renewable energy and alternative forestry products; "Ensuring the Future of Your Legacy Estate Planning" by Clint Bentz, CPA; and a tour of the Laws Tree Farm to see success with prescribed burns and enhanced growth with use of biosolids. Contact Billy Laws for details, (410) 632-0305.

New Site for ATFS Inspectors

There is a new page on the American Tree Farm System website for inspectors and anyone interested in becoming an inspector. Find it under the "Tree Farm in Your State" section of the website, www.treefarmssystem.org. In addition to inspector awards and nomination forms, the page contains links to the online refresher training, information on inspector qualifications, and the ATFS Standards.

Rural Enterprise Info and Budgets

Have you ever thought about starting your own business - maybe opening a Bed & Breakfast or allowing fee fishing in your pond? The Rural Enterprise Series published by Maryland Cooperative Extension provides facts and guidance about several possible businesses, as well as budgets in working Excel files that you can alter to figure out your own costs and profits. Check them out at www.naturalresources.umd.edu/Publications.cfm.

New Publication for Forest Owners

A new publication for owners of 1-10 acres of forestland will be coming out later this summer. The book includes a workbook which guides readers through creating and employing a plan for their land. Check www.naturalresources.umd.edu for details and the latest information.

Upcoming Stewardship Events

June 24 MD Christmas Tree Association Meeting in

Glenelg. www.marylandchristmastrees.org

September 21-24 Coverts volunteer training (see article)

September 27 Tree Farm System Eastern Region meeting (see article)

October 15 Deadline for *Tree Farmer* and *Tree Farm Inspector of the Year* nominations

October 19-22 National Tree Farm Convention in Mobile, AL. Register at www.treefarmssystem.org

November 3-4 MFA Annual Meeting. Go to mdforests.org/AM2006.htm for information.

For more details on these and other events, click on the calendar of events link on www.naturalresources.umd.edu

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Please send changes of address.