NRCS PROGRAMS FOR FOREST LANDOWNERS
FOREST LANDOWNER ASSOCIATIONS

Joining a local association dedicated to forest stewardship is an excellent way to become involved in sustaining Pennsylvania’s forest resources. Currently, nearly 1,000 people are members of the 27 local associations involved in forest stewardship in Pennsylvania. While a majority of members own forestland, most groups do not require land ownership.

The objective of most Forest Landowner Associations (FLAs) is to provide educational opportunities for members. Although each group is independent, and missions and membership policies differ, most use meetings, field demonstrations, tours, seminars and newsletters to provide information about forests and sound forest management to their members and people in the local communities.

If learning more about the stewardship of Pennsylvania’s forest resources interests you, consider joining one of the local organizations listed here. If there is no group in your area, consider starting one.

For more information, contact the Penn State Forest Resources Extension office at 1.800.235.WISE (toll free) or visit the FLA site at http://paforeststewards.cas.psu.edu/Associations.html.
MISSION STATEMENT

The Pennsylvania Forestry Association is a broad-based citizen’s organization that provides leadership and education in sound, science-based forest management and promotes stewardship to ensure the sustainability of all forest resources, resulting in benefits for all, today and into the future.

COVER

Photo courtesy of Frank Snyder, DCNR Service Forester

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Only a few weeks of autumn remain as I write this message. Once again, the seasons continue their pattern of change as we prepare for winter. The Pennsylvania Forestry Association is going through some changes too. We have several new members of the Board of Directors, along with two new officers. We are participating in a strategic planning process that will bring changes to the ways that we operate and present ourselves as an association. A new web site that will improve contact with our members and others is also in the works. A lot is happening at PFA right now. But in spite of all the change that is happening, so much more remains the same.

Much is said, and rightfully so, about PFA’s long history of promoting conservation of Penn’s woods. We are an association that was started in 1886 by Dr. Joseph T. Rothrock and a group of concerned citizens. Their goals then, if I may paraphrase, were to secure and maintain a proportion of forest area throughout the State; to disseminate information concerning growth, protection and utilization of the forests; and to educate about the problems that can result from poor forest management. Our goals now are very much the same. Although the first goal may be considered met as is evidenced by our spectacular network of State Forests, we still struggle every day to get the word out about wise forest management. Please consider helping to change that struggle to a success. Join a committee, write an article for Pennsylvania Forests, or volunteer to staff the PFA booth at the Sports Show or Ag Progress Days. The more we work together, the more we can accomplish.

PFA will have a display at the Pennsylvania Farm Show, January 7-14, 2012, and the Eastern Sports and Outdoor Show, February 4-12, 2012. Both shows are at the Farm Show Complex and Expo Center in Harrisburg. Please stop by our display and say hello if you attend.

On March 3, 2012 PFA will be hosting its Annual Conservation Dinner in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. The Conservation Dinner is always a very enjoyable event filled with opportunities to bid on outstanding goods in both the live and the silent auctions, and the excitement of the draw-down raffle, with a grand prize of $10,000! Tickets for the drawing are $100, which includes dinner, and there are only 350 tickets printed. If you have never attended this event, you owe it to yourself to put it on your calendar and plan to attend in 2012. To order tickets for the Conservation Dinner contact the PFA office at (717) 766-5371 or (800)-835-8065.

To those of you reading this that are members of PFA, thank you for supporting PFA and its mission. If you are reading this and you are not a member of PFA, please consider joining us. For more information on becoming a member please contact the PFA office at (717) 766-5371 or (800)-835-8065, via e-mail at thepfa@verizon.net or visit the website http://pfa.cas.psu.edu.

David J. Alerich
NEW MEMBERSHIP LIST

To come

ENDOWMENT FUND

To Come

PENNSYLVANIA FOREST LANDOWNER ASSOCIATIONS’ REPRESENTATIVE TO THE BOARD, TERM EXPIRES 2012

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IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

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OUTSTANDING TREE FARMER

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PA FOREST LANDOWNER ASSOCIATIONS’ REPRESENTATIVE TO THE BOARD, TERM EXPIRES 2012

Nancy Baker

NEW MEMBERSHIP LIST

To come

ENDOWMENT FUND

To Come
Ten miles from State Route 322 you will find two state parks, accessible only from unpaved state forest roads, nestled in the valleys of Seven Mountains in southern Centre County tucked away deep in Bald Eagle State Forest. Anglers fill the modern and rustic campgrounds each spring, shouts from tubers echo through the railroad tunnel, and birders are often spotted searching for the osprey. As primitive and rugged as Poe Valley State Park and Poe Paddy State Park are, many come to sun themselves on the beach at Poe Valley, hike the rail trail through the historic railroad tunnel near Poe Paddy, and just enjoy the solitude and serene atmosphere that the valley provides.

**WHAT’S IN A NAME?**
The name Poe is a common term here in the valley. There is Poe Paddy, Poe Valley Rd., Poe Mountain, Poe Creek, Little Poe Creek, Big Poe Creek, and of course Poe Valley State Park. The origin of the name brings up a lot of folklore. Depending on the local legend, the origin varies.

Some say that the very first settler in the area was a Poe and ever since the name has stuck. Still others say that a relative of General Potter of Potter’s Mills, a nearby town, was name Poe and owned land here in the valley. But the most definitive answer we can give those who ask about the origin of the name is that it is from
the water that runs through the valley, Poe Creek. Where that name came from isn’t as certain. For as long as records were kept, this area has been established Poe Valley.

There is one other local legend that has lived on. It says that the talented author, Edgar Allen Poe, stayed in the valley for some time. While he was staying in the valley he wrote his literary piece *The Raven* at a local restaurant, The Eutaw House, where he is rumored to have carved his name into a table. It also mentions that he had family that owned land in the valley. This is the more colored lore of the land. No one is certain if Mr. Poe stayed at The Eutaw House, Poe Valley, or even had family in the area. But what is certain is the name ‘Poe,’ with the same spelling as Mr. Poe, has lived on and splatters the valley.

Poe Paddy State Park receives its name from the mountains surrounding it. Nestled in a valley between Poe Mountain on its western flank and Paddy Mountain on its eastern flank, the park naturally was named Poe Paddy.

### THE FIRST SETTLERS

The Seven Mountains region of southern Centre County is rugged, primitive, and two hundred years ago was very inaccessible due to its rugged, mountainous terrain. There were very few settlers in the area of Poe Valley before the logging industry came in the 1880s. The logging industry sought out the virgin white pine and hemlock trees that covered the ridges and valleys. They attempted log drives down Penns Creek from Coburn to Selinsgrove but were not very successful due to the shoals and milldams that scattered the creek.

Someone had to take the initiative to start serious logging in Poe Valley and that man was David Musser, the landowner of Poe Valley since the Civil War. He started a small water powered sawmill at the confluence of Big Poe and Little Poe Creeks, which is situated between present-day Poe Paddy State Park and Poe Valley State Park. As his business grew he partnered with JP Gephart and replaced the water-powered mill with a steam-powered mill. He still brought the logs to the mill by horse; there wasn’t a railroad in the area, yet.

### THE RAILROAD

During this time the Lewisburg-Tyrone Railroad was being constructed and moving westward from Mifflinburg by 1879. The railroad traversed through Penns Creek Canyon and up to Forks, which we know now as Coburn, via three bridges and two tunnels. One bridge and one tunnel were built during the westward expansion from Mifflinburg in the vicinity of present day Poe Paddy State Park.

Musser’s logging industry was going strong and the railroad was coming; the next logical step was to build a place for the men to live, thus Poe Mills was established. Poe Mills was a small community founded at the confluence of Penns Creek and Big
Poe Creek, which in 1882 became an official town when a small post office was constructed. A small railroad track was built that connected the new track, which ran through the mountain and over Penns Creek, to the Musser-Gephart sawmill.

In 1888, Mr. Musser passed away and the land in and around Poe Valley was placed on the open market. A lumber broker named Adam Gotshall bought the land granting him the right to lease it to the Shamokin Lumber Company to cut timber. One of his first steps in improving the lumber industry of Poe Valley was constructing a steam-powered sawmill at the site of Poe Mills in 1889 by damming Big Poe Creek and creating a log pond.

Poe Mills thrived during Gotshall’s ownership of the land. By 1890 Poe Mills had a population of more than 300, larger than State College at the time. There were many homes, boarding homes, a general store, and even a schoolhouse that hosted pupils from Penn, Haines, and Mifflin Townships. Most students attended school during the winter months when there was little entertainment and very little work. During this time school became a form of entertainment. Through the next nine years Mr. Gotshall cut the majority of the available timber found in the Poe Valley area and depleted this valuable natural resource. Once the timber was gone there was no need for a mill and the town of Poe Mills began to slowly disappear. In 1902, the post office moved to Coburn.

**STRIPPED LAND**

After Mr. Gotshall stripped the land of timber, the land went up for sale and was bought by Frederick and Anthony Reichley in 1900, along with a few locomotives and tramroads. The brothers hoped to obtain the adjacent land pieces to Poe Valley and continue logging the remaining timber. They found themselves logging further and further from Poe Mills without adequate sawmill facilities.

By 1904, the Reichley brothers were forced to sell to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for $2.25 an acre. They had to sell their 27 tracts of land due to decline in the lumber business of the early 20th century. The Reichley brothers reserved their right to remove all available timber from the area, down to eight inches, before January 1910.

During the last years of the Reichley brother’s reign, 1904-1910, the brothers owned and ran a loop track that began at Milroy and traveled northeast to Poe Mills, westward to Thickhead Mountain, and then returned to Milroy. This was a fun excursion used by the local citizens of Milroy. The 39-mile loop, all day ride into the mountains gave everyone a get away from everyday lives. By January 1910, the agreement with the Commonwealth ended and the Reichley brothers moved their operations.

**THE CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS**

Poe Valley was shattered, weathered, worn, and bare in the beginning of the 20th century. The Commonwealth left it untouched for the next few decades allowing it to start regenerating on its own. The land was stripped of its valuables and left at the mercy of wind, water, and fire that ravaged it.

The Civilian Conservation Corps was a program established by former President Franklin D. Roosevelt during the Great Depression. This program was geared to provide employment to the young, unmarried, and unemployed men that were victim of the Great Depression. This program brought Americans back to work while nurturing one of the most prized possessions of America; its wild land. Morale increased, new forestry positions were introduced into the workforce, state and national parks
were founded, land was scientifically restored, and most importantly it introduced man back into the woods.

Camp S-63 was created in 1933 on Big Poe Road in Poe Valley about 1.5 miles from the present day state park boundary. It began as a tent city that soon grew to buildings that lived 200 men year round from six months to three years. The men stayed at the camps but were shipped out during the day to project areas. Poe Paddy State Park was one of them. The captain's headquarters is still standing on private land and serves as a private camp residence.

These men shaped the Poe Valley area into what we have today. The CCC boys dammed up Big Poe Creek with a 660-foot dam creating the 25-acre lake with a beach that we enjoy now. Roads surrounding Poe Valley were reconstructed and new fire roads were built. Picnic and parking areas were established. Tree inventories and other conservation projects were completed. By blazing trails, constructing and fixing roads, and building pavilions, the CCC boys helped Poe Valley become Poe Valley State Park.

Present day Poe Paddy State Park was a project developed by the CCC boys. During their time at Poe Valley Camp S-63, the CCC boys were sent down the road to present day Poe Paddy State Park (first known as Poe Paddy Picnic Area until 1984). While down at Poe Paddy the CCC built the two Adirondack shelters that still stand today and are rented out to campers, established the roads going to and from the park, and helped maintain the surrounding trail in Bald Eagle State Forest.

YESTERDAY’S DREAMS, TODAY’S TREASURE
Poe Paddy State Park and Poe Valley State Park are treasures of the past, present, and future. As land is becoming scarcer, as nature moves farther and farther from our children, state and national parks are the keys for the future. These little pieces of wilderness are exactly what the doctor ordered; various environmental education and recreation programs are available and mostly free to the public.

Cast a line out on Poe Lake for that monster trout. Walk through the old railroad tunnel at Poe Paddy and imagine how large the hemlocks and white pine were that traveled through there. Pop up a tent at Poe Valley campground and enjoy the new shower facilities. Lastly, sit around the campfire with family and friends swapping stories, melting marshmallows, and waiting for the park naturalist to visit your site and welcome you to the treasures of southern Centre County!

Rachael Bliley was the Environmental Interpretive Technician at the Reeds Gap Complex, which encompasses Reeds Gap State Park, Poe Valley State Park, and Poe Paddy State Park. If you are interested in attending a program or would a program designed for your group please call the Reeds Gap State Park office at (717) 667-3622 or email at reedsgapsp@state.pa.us.

TWO WELL-KEPT, PRIMITIVE SECRETS OF SOUTHERN CENTRE COUNTY
I am very pleased to have the chance to share with you the wealth of information about forestry conservation opportunities our agency offers and how we may be able to help you address resource concerns on your forest, woodland, or farm. For those of you who may not be familiar with us, let me begin by telling you a little bit about the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and what we do.

NRCS is one of many agencies under the U.S. Department of Agriculture. We originally began as the Soil Conservation Service during the Dust Bowl days of the 1930’s, with a primary mission of preventing soil erosion. Over the years, our mission has expanded to conserve and improve all natural resources on private lands. Our locally led and scientifically based conservation efforts help ensure clean water, productive soil, bountiful harvests, abundant wildlife, lush wetlands, clean air, and healthy plants and forests for all of us and our future generations to enjoy. We are able to help people help the land by providing both technical and financial assistance to landowners to apply various conservation practices that restore and protect our vast resources.

Through the 2008 Farm Bill and our partnership efforts with other conservation agencies and organizations, we are able to offer many opportunities for non-industrial private forest landowners to implement a wide range of conservation activities and practices. Such practices may include riparian forest buffers and tree planting, to forest stand improvement, wildlife habitat management, and conservation easements.

We are able to provide both technical and financial assistance.

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE** - NRCS has a long history of assisting private landowners to both develop and implement natural resource management plans. On forestland, NRCS usually provides assistance in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Forestry, and private sector Technical Service Providers, such as Consultant Foresters.

**FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE** - Through Farm Bill conservation programs, we offer practice payments, incentives, and easements to assist with the restoration, protection, and enhancement of private forestland. Some of our forestry programs include:

**Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)** - EQIP offers private landowners the opportunity to help cover costs for the establishment of forestry conservation practices. The most commonly funded practices are Tree/Shrub Establishment, Forest Stand Improvement, and Wildlife Habitat Management, but there are several other eligible practices as well.

In 2011, an EQIP funding option was added to help pay for the development of Forest Management Plans. NRCS worked closely with the Pennsylvania DCNR Bureau of Forestry to ensure that plans developed through this initiative meet both NRCS criteria and also criteria for the Bureau’s Forest Stewardship Program and the Tree Farm Program.

For more information on EQIP, see our article entitled, “EQIP Offers Forestry Stewardship Opportunities to Nature Preserve.”

**Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP)** - HFRP is a new program with a purpose of providing long-term protection for Threatened and Endangered species that require forestland for their habitat. In Pennsylvania, HFRP is being utilized to protect and improve critical habitat for the federally endangered Indiana Bat and is available in locations where this bat is known to exist--mainly in the central and west central parts of Pennsylvania.

For more information on HFRP and how it is helping to preserve and enhance bat habitat, see the article entitled, “Healthy Forests Reserve Program Helps Pennsylvania Bats.”

**Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)** - CSP has a forestry option for non-industrial private forestland that offers annual payments for five years to maintain and improve the level of conservation already in use on forestland. A number of different “enhancements” can be funded. In simple terms, enhancements are advanced management activities that go beyond what is achieved by the basic conservation practices that are offered through EQIP.

To learn more about CSP and how it can help Pennsylvania forestland owners, see the article, “Enhancing Penn’s Woods with the Conservation Stewardship Program.”

**Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)** - WHIP assists private landowners, including non-industrial forest landowners, with restoring both stream and upland habitats. Eligible practices are similar to those listed above for EQIP. Learn more about how WHIP is helping Pennsylvania conservation partners improve habitat management for the Golden-winged Warbler in the article, “Golden-winged Warbler- A Golden Opportunity for Cooperation.”

Because USDA is committed to providing equity for landowners to access its programs and services, beginning and limited resource farmers and socially disadvantaged farmers may be eligible for higher payment rates for all programs.

I hope you enjoy reading about the many opportunities that USDA NRCS can provide in partnership with Pennsylvania DCNR on the following pages. Additional valuable information about managing your forest can be found on the Forest*A*Syst Web site at www.forestasyst.org. For more information on the DCNR Bureau of Forestry, please visit www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/index.aspx. To learn more about NRCS programs and services, please contact your local USDA NRCS Service Center, or visit www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov.

Clarion NRCS 814-226-8160 x4 Lebanon NRCS 717-274-2597 x5
Somerset NRCS 814-445-8979 x6 Bloomsburg NRCS 570-784-4401 x6

Sincerely,

Denise Coleman
State Conservationist, Pennsylvania NRCS
Strawberry Hill Nature Preserve is a 609-acre property in southwestern Adams County, managed for public recreation, education, and wildlife habitat. In response to large populations of invasive and noxious plants across the property, the Preserve developed an invasive plant management plan as part of their earlier Forest Stewardship Plan in 2010. Invasive plants, particularly hay-scented fern and Japanese stiltgrass, were so prevalent that the forest community was changing, with little or no regeneration by common native trees like oaks, poplars, and maples. Prior to 2010, the Preserve lacked the funding and ability to make real progress toward controlling their invasive problems.

Through involvement with both the Pennsylvania DCNR and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Preserve learned of the technical and financial assistance for forestry management available through USDA’s Environmental Quality Incentives Program, or EQIP. Earlier this year, the Preserve received an EQIP contract to try to restore a more natural forest and native plant community within the Preserve through weed management, installation of exclusionary deer fence, and interplanting desirable native trees and shrubs.

The first phase of weed management consisted of treating 62 acres of invasive plants with herbicides, and was completed in June with great success. With this treatment, the hay-scented fern and stiltgrass were badly damaged, and in most situations killed completely, with little or no incidental damage to other plants in the area (See photos). Although many might consider the herbicide treatment (and subsequent die-off) of 62 acres of ferns to be very unappealing since it caused the previous “park-like” appearance to look like a dead patch, that park-like appearance was a disguise for what was really happening: invasive plants were thriving and not allowing any forest regeneration.

The dead ferns certainly don’t look park-like anymore, but what’s happening under those dead ferns is cause for hope—without the smothering blanket of invasive plants, there are many tiny native plant seedlings that are alive and well, and the forest is already trying to return to its natural plant community. In this case, all that brown vegetation doesn’t mean the forest is lifeless; instead, it signals the potential rebirth of the forest.

Strawberry Hill Nature Preserve, DCNR, and NRCS all have very high hopes that the forest will begin regenerating in the coming year, now that the competing, dense invasive plants have been removed.

"Before" view of Japanese stiltgrass covering the forest floor. (6/13/11)

"After" view, showing the effectiveness of herbicide treatment. (7/7/11) This area will be interplanted with trees and shrubs in 2012.

"Before" view, showing the total domination of the forest floor by hay-scented fern, totally excluding everything else. (6/13/11)

"After" view, with both dead ferns—and live natives—visible. (7/7/11) Current forest regeneration on this site is good, but promises to be even better in the coming year. The EQIP contract includes additional weed control, if needed, and interplanting with trees and shrubs in 2012 and 2013.
There are eight species of bats common to Pennsylvania and all use forests for food and shelter during the summer months:
- Big brown bat (Eptesicus fuscus)
- Little brown bat (Myotis lucifugus)
- Eastern small-footed bat (Myotis leibii), a state-listed Threatened bat
- Indiana bat (Myotis sodalis), a federally-listed Endangered bat
- Northern long-eared bat (Myotis septentrionalis)
- Eastern pipistrelle bat (Pipistrellus subflavus)
- Hoary bat (Lasiurus cinereus).
- Red bat (Lasiurus borealis)

During the winter, red and hoary bats migrate south, while the other bat species hibernate locally in caves and abandoned mines.

Contrary to the European perceptions brought to this continent in past centuries, bats are very beneficial to humans. Pennsylvania bats feed exclusively on insects, consuming hundreds of mosquito-sized insects an hour when feeding. Pregnant bats can consume their own weight in insects in a single summer night. They also help ensure the production of fruits by pollinating a variety of plants.

Populations of cave or mine hibernating bats in New England and the mid-Atlantic states have declined sharply since 2008 due to a disease known as white-nose syndrome. Originally identified near Albany, New York, white-nose syndrome has rapidly spread to several states, and has lead to the death of over one million bats in just the past four years. The amount of decline varies by bat species, from over ten percent to more than 95 percent.

Recently, a newly-discovered, cold-loving fungus – Geomyces destructans – has been identified as the cause of white-nose syndrome. Affected bats often have a characteristic fuzzy white muzzle and wings, and behave erratically, sometimes emerging from hibernation during the winter when there are no insects for food. Over time, this fungus invades and damages the bats’ wing tissues and depletes fat reserves, which may lead to their starvation, premature emergence from hibernation, and death.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, along with other federal and state agencies and private researchers, are actively involved in researching and monitoring white-nose syndrome. Scientists are also studying the fungus to determine just how it affects bats, and exploring ways to limit its transmission and damage to bats. As bats take an overwhelming strike from white-nose syndrome, it is even more important to protect their habitat so that survivors of the disease have high-quality foraging and roosting areas available to them.

One way the Federal government is assisting bats is through the preservation and/or enhancement of their habitat through the acquisition of conservation easements and cost-share agreements through the Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP). HFRP is a voluntary conservation program offered by USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to assist landowners in restoring, enhancing, and protecting private forestland through easements, 30-year contracts, and 10-year cost-share agreements. This program is helping bats in Pennsylvania, and in particular the federally endangered Indiana bat, by protecting habitat where this species is known to forage, roost, and mate.

Owners of private forest land are eligible to enroll in the HFRP in Pennsylvania. The land must be capable of supporting Indiana bat habitat, and must be located in a county where known Indiana bat hibernacula and maternity colonies exist: Adams, Armstrong, Beaver, Bedford, Berks, Blair, Cambria, Centre, Huntingdon, Mifflin, Snyder, and York Counties. Pennsylvania NRCS will be accepting applications for HFRP on a continuous basis year-round. HFRP contracts will be awarded to applicants with the highest rankings until funds are exhausted.

If you are interested in the HFRP program, contact your local USDA NRCS Service Center to apply, or visit www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov.
ENHANCING PENN’S WOODS WITH THE
CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

by Katrina Thompson, NRCS

When William Penn founded the colony of Pennsylvania in 1681, he directed that one acre of trees should be retained for every five acres developed. Ninety percent of the colony was wooded in the 17th century. Today, 59 percent of “Penn’s Woods” remains forested (more than 16 million acres) and 71 percent of that woodland is held by private forest landowners. An estimated one in eight Pennsylvania households owns at least one acre of forestland. Our forests provide all Pennsylvanians with multiple benefits; however, they also face multiple challenges.

Several federal programs provide forest landowners with the tools to keep their forests healthy and productive. Management practices like forest thinning, tree planting, integrated pest management and many more, have very real implications for the kinds of forests our children will inherit and whether the next generation will have healthy places to enjoy, hunt, fish, and grow timber. In many ways forestlands are the natural infrastructure of our communities and if we want our descendents to enjoy them, we will have to take care of them.

Many current owners of Penn’s Woods are already wonderful stewards of their lands; the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) is designed to reward them for the skillful tending of the woods and to encourage them to reach for even higher levels of conservation.

USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) offers CSP not only to farmers, but also to private forestland owners. CSP is a voluntary conservation program that offers annual payments for five years for maintaining and improving the level of conservation already practiced on private forestland. Conservation activities are offered to address resource concerns that will improve air quality, water quality, soil erosion and quality, wildlife habitat, and/or energy.

A forestland owner can sign up any size of woodland as long as it is a functional woodlot. It is important, but not mandatory, to have a forest management plan to manage the woodlot. Forest management plans will identify activities that are needed to improve your forest stand. Several of the activities normally scheduled in forestland management plans will be compatible with the activities offered in CSP. Common activities offered include pest management; wildlife habitat management; timber management; creating additional wildlife habitat, such as shallow water areas; wildlife-friendly fencing; and riparian forested buffer improvement. Typical payments for forestland CSP contracts in Pennsylvania average $8-12 per acre/per year for five years. A 40-acre contract will be about $400 per year for a total of $2,000. For an applicant who is a beginning forestland owner, or is socially disadvantaged, the minimum yearly payment is $1,000 per year for a total minimum five-year contract of $5,000.00. An applicant may be considered a beginning forest landowner if he/she has owned and managed the forestland for less than 10 years. A socially disadvantaged applicant is an individual or entity who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group, such as Hispanics, Asians, African American or Blacks, American Indians or Alaskan Natives, and Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders.

Applications are accepted in your local NRCS office year round. The typical ranking period cutoff date is January or February. All applications submitted from the last ranking period cut off will be ranked and may be offered a contract. Check the Pennsylvania NRCS website, www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov, for the most up-to-date information on all conservation programs, the signup process, and ranking dates for funding.

The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

A downed tree can be used for wildlife habitat when left alone to rot.

Several federal programs provide forest landowners with the tools to keep their forests healthy and productive. Management practices like forest thinning, tree planting, integrated pest management and many more, have very real implications for the kinds of forests our children will inherit and whether the next generation will have healthy places to enjoy, hunt, fish, and grow timber. In many ways forestlands are the natural infrastructure of our communities and if we want our descendents to enjoy them, we will have to take care of them.

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A forestland owner can sign up any size of woodland as long as it is a functional woodlot. It is important, but not mandatory, to have a forest management plan to manage the woodlot. Forest management plans will identify activities that are needed to improve your forest stand. Several of the activities normally scheduled in forestland management plans will be compatible with the activities offered in CSP. Common activities offered include pest management; wildlife habitat management; timber management; creating additional wildlife habitat, such as shallow water areas; wildlife-friendly fencing; and riparian forested buffer improvement. Typical payments for forestland CSP contracts in Pennsylvania average $8-12 per acre/per year for five years. A 40-acre contract will be about $400 per year for a total of $2,000. For an applicant who is a beginning forestland owner, or is socially disadvantaged, the minimum yearly payment is $1,000 per year for a total minimum five-year contract of $5,000.00. An applicant may be considered a beginning forest landowner if he/she has owned and managed the forestland for less than 10 years. A socially disadvantaged applicant is an individual or entity who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group, such as Hispanics, Asians, African American or Blacks, American Indians or Alaskan Natives, and Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders.

Applications are accepted in your local NRCS office year round. The typical ranking period cutoff date is January or February. All applications submitted from the last ranking period cut off will be ranked and may be offered a contract. Check the Pennsylvania NRCS website, www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov, for the most up-to-date information on all conservation programs, the signup process, and ranking dates for funding.

The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

A downed tree can be used for wildlife habitat when left alone to rot.

Several federal programs provide forest landowners with the tools to keep their forests healthy and productive. Management practices like forest thinning, tree planting, integrated pest management and many more, have very real implications for the kinds of forests our children will inherit and whether the next generation will have healthy places to enjoy, hunt, fish, and grow timber. In many ways forestlands are the natural infrastructure of our communities and if we want our descendents to enjoy them, we will have to take care of them.

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The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

A den tree can be used by small animals and birds for shelter in the forest.

Shallow areas can provide water for wildlife.
The Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) is a migratory songbird that is experiencing drastic population declines, largely due to the loss of early successional forest habitat used during their breeding season. Timber harvests are a practical way to increase young forest habitat and are an important tool to boost Golden-winged Warbler populations.

In continued efforts to improve habitat management for the Golden-winged Warbler in Pennsylvania, researchers at Indiana University of Pennsylvania teamed up with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Appalachian Mountain Joint Venture, American Bird Conservancy, Pennsylvania Game Commission, and Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) to develop science-based *Golden-winged Warbler Forestland Best Management Practices* (BMPs). These Forestland BMPs provide guidance to landowners and land managers interested in creating breeding habitat for Golden-winged Warblers through timber harvesting and other forest management practices. Namely, these guidelines emphasize landscapes with high percentages of forest cover and higher elevations. These forested landscapes need to include areas of young forests and edge habitats devoid of Blue-winged Warbler (*Vermivora cyanoptera*), which can cross with the Golden-winged Warbler. Within harvested areas and other disturbed areas, the guidelines emphasize the need for varying amounts of shrubs, saplings, herbaceous plants, and bare ground while retaining scattered trees and snags.

Creation of young forest habitat through these management efforts will not only benefit Golden-winged Warblers, but an array of early successional wildlife like the snowshoe hare, Appalachian cottontail, white-tailed deer, American Woodcock, and Ruffed Grouse. If you are a private landowner with an interest in creating young forest habitat on your land, please contact your local USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office, DCNR Service Forester, or Game Commission. IUP also has two field planners that are available to work with private landowners, Patrick Ciarrochi (724-816-0220) and Kim Van Fleet (717-213-6880).

Both NRCS and the Game Commission have programs to assist landowners with the expenses of implementing forest practices, which can result in early successional forest habitat that is critical to this species' survival. NRCS is targeting Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) funds for the Golden-winged Warbler in six south-central counties. However, WHIP and NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) forestry funds may also be available throughout the Golden-winged Warbler breeding range in Pennsylvania.

**Pennsylvania Forests 2011 Advertising Rates**

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<th>Size</th>
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<th>Non-Member</th>
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<td>½ Page - 7.5x5</td>
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<td>Back Cover - Full Page, B/W</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insert - 4 Pages</td>
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Advertisers are billed upon publication. Tear sheets are provided. A 5% discount is provided if four advertisements are ordered and paid in advance. Copy that is not camera-ready will be typeset at a minimum rate of $50/hour. All accounts not paid within 30 days are subject to a 1.5% per month late charge. The publisher reserves the right to reject any objectionable advertisement. In the event of an error for which the publisher is responsible, the publisher will re-run the advertisement without charge or refund the appropriate amount.

Materials may be sent to Lauren Jacobs, Editor, PA Forests Magazine, 1340 North 17th Street, Harrisburg, PA 17103.
BACKGROUND
Pennsylvania forest landowners have had the opportunity to benefit from federal cost-share/incentive programs for forest improvement for many decades. In the past, the U.S. Forest Service administered the federal Forestry Incentives Program (FIP), Stewardship Incentives Program (SIP), and Forest Land Enhancement Program (FLEP). These programs provided financial assistance to landowners for developing forest management plans and implementing non-commercial forestry practices on their lands. Both Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Service Foresters and U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) technicians combined efforts to put these programs on the ground.

Today, much of the financial assistance for forestry comes through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP). As in the past, NRCS and DCNR Service Foresters work together to implement these programs on the ground.

CURRENT FORESTRY INCENTIVE PROGRAM EFFORTS
The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) receives a large portion of Farm Bill funds. EQIP includes a component called “EQIP Forestry” which provides funding for implementing forestry practices on non-industrial private forest lands. Popular practices funded by EQIP Forestry to accomplish forest management goals include: Brush Management, Herbaceous Weed Control, Upland Wildlife Habitat Management, Tree/Shrub Establishment, Early Successional Wildlife Habitat Development, Forest Stand Improvement, and Forest Management Plan Development. Each one of these practices can be adapted to a wide range of forested sites and conditions. Some of the practices may also be used for reforestation/afforestation purposes on current non-forest lands.

In 2011, nearly $1.2 million was provided to private non-industrial forest landowners in Pennsylvania to implement these and other practices on their lands. Considering that past FLEP forestry programs rarely were authorized with more than $500,000 in Pennsylvania, forest landowners now have opportunities like never before to accomplish planned resource goals.

FOREST MANAGEMENT PLANNING
While the Forest Stewardship Program is still available in Pennsylvania, there is currently no incentive funding to develop plans. NRCS stepped up to the plate in 2010, recognizing the need for a funding source for forest management planning, and in 2011 allocated $50,000 towards the development of Conservation Activity Plans (CAPs) for forest management. Forest Management Plans (FMPs) developed through the CAP process are referred to as code “CAP 106 FMP” by NRCS and DCNR Bureau of Forestry. Funding for these Forest Management Plans comes from the EQIP Forestry portion of the Farm Bill.

The CAP 106 FMP is unique in that it combines both the standards of the Forest Stewardship Program along with those of the American Tree Farm Program, as well as meeting national criteria required by NRCS. Landowners have the option of participating in the Forest Stewardship and/or Tree Farm programs upon signing up for a CAP 106 FMP. The CAP 106 FMP provides a comprehensive picture of the current forest conditions on a forest property, along with the desired objectives for the landowner, and then provides management recommendations from a Technical Service Providers (TSP).

The TSP completes the plan for forest landowners, and the plan is then reviewed and approved by the local DCNR Service Forester and NRCS District Conservationist. Currently, forest landowners have approximately 40 TSP’s to choose from in Pennsylvania for developing CAP 106 plans. The majority of these TSP’s are private consulting foresters, all of whom have developed Forest Stewardship Plans in the past for Pennsylvania forest landowners.

For more information on a comparison between CAP 106 Forest Management Plans and Forest Stewardship Plans.

Table 1. A comparison of CAP 106 Forest Management Plans and Forest Stewardship Plans.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Automatic Tree Farm Certified</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNR Required</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goals outlined</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand Descriptions</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand Recommendations</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Property Summary</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Signature Page</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pledge w/ Stand Analysis Requirement prior to Timber Sale</td>
<td>Only if participation in Forest Stewardship Program is indicated by Landowner</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRCS Incentive (Practices) Funding Eligibility</td>
<td>Automatic where Appropriate</td>
<td>Yes, though only if provided in updated table to original plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incentive Funding Available to Develop Plan</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14
ELIGIBILITY AND SIGN UP

Non-industrial private forest landowners interested in implementing forestry practices through EQIP must have a Forest Stewardship, American Tree Farm, or CAP 106 FMP on their property in order to qualify for EQIP funding. Funding is designed to offset the cost of implementing non-commercial practices to reach goals identified in the plan.

In the past DCNR Service Foresters enrolled landowners in FLEP, SIP, FIP, and other programs for implementing practices. Now, Service Foresters do not actually enroll forest landowners in EQIP Forestry. Both NRCS technicians and Service Foresters provide information and advice to private forest landowners about the program opportunities, but NRCS as program administrator actually handles the sign-up process and documentation required for funding. Landowners interested in EQIP Forestry can contact their DCNR Service Forester, the person who wrote their plan, or local USDA NRCS Service Center for information on what types of practices are eligible. Landowners interested in pursuing funding will be directed to the local NRCS and Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices (usually in the same building) to fill out an application and answer some basic questions about the property and ownership. Each application will then go into a pool of applications in the given region (usually one pool per county).

Application in the same pool will be reviewed by NRCS staff in consultation with Service Foresters and points will be applied to each application through a ranking process. This ranking process involves evaluating the significance of conservation values on the property. The factors used in the ranking system vary from region to region in the state, depending on forest conservation priorities and activities. Not all applications will be approved for funding in any given year. EQIP Forestry has a continuous sign up for landowners interested in practices. Once a landowner is approved, they generally have 1-3 years to install the practice(s) on their land with assistance from DCNR Service Foresters, NRCS technicians, and private contractors. Upon approval of completion of the practice, landowners (not contractors) are provided the incentive payment for the work accomplished.

The process is also similar for obtaining a CAP 106 FMP. Upon approval for the plan from NRCS, after the ranking session, landowners are encouraged to select a TSP from the list provided by NRCS. Upon completion, the plan is reviewed and approved by the landowner, the DCNR Service Forester, and the NRCS District Conservationist. Then, the landowner is provided an incentive payment to reimburse part of the cost of having the plan prepared.

The EQIP Forestry program provides a valuable avenue for landowners to accomplish sustainable forestry practices on their lands for specific economic, ecologic, and social goals. This program continues to see new practices added and updates made to existing practices to conserve and protect forest resources. For more information on how EQIP Forestry can help you sustain your forests’ future, contact your local DCNR Service Forester or NRCS office today!
Combining woody and herbaceous plants into a single cropping system, referred to as agroforestry, can have multiple economic and ecological benefits, such as providing additional income and protecting soil and water quality. The agroforestry practice of growing or managing “non-timber crops” in an established forest is known as forest farming and follows two general approaches. The first is more intensive, often using raised beds, and is referred to as woods-cultivated. The second is less intensive, attempting to replicate “wild” growing conditions, and is referred to as wild-simulated.

The woods-cultivated approach involves greater investments of time, labor, and equipment since it generally involves manipulating the forest understory (e.g., thinning), soil tillage and amendments (e.g., fertilizer, crushed limestone), preparing and maintaining beds, and pest management. These modifications are intended to provide earlier and improved yields as well as more convenient management. The wild-simulated approach follows a less-intensive strategy that may involve nothing more than planting seeds or roots in existing forest habitat.

Potential forest farming non-timber crop candidates in the eastern United States include:

- Medicinal plants such as American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*) and goldenseal (*Hydrastis canadensis*)
- Edible plants such as wild leek/ramp (*Allium tricoccum*)
- Syrups such as maple (*Acer saccharum, A. rubrum*) and birch (*Betula lenta*)
- Mushrooms

Forest farming can also be a proactive approach for wild plant and mushroom stewardship and/or conservation by providing a more reliable and sustainable alternative to wild collection. As part of an integrated forest management strategy, forest-farmed crops can provide supplemental income, offsetting costs such as annual property taxes.
I am looking for land to start a tree farm anywhere in Pennsylvania. If you have or know of anyone who has land like I am seeking, I would appreciate hearing from you. Thank you.

Clarence Covert
108 Aspen Road
Butler, PA 16001
724-285-3512
ROLL OUT THE PAPER

A BUSINESSMAN NAMED JOSEPH GAYETTY MADE THE FIRST COMMERCIAL-LY PACKAGED TOILET PAPER IN 1857.

SALES WERE AWFUL BECAUSE THE PAPER WAS SOLD IN PACKS OF SINGLE SHEETS.

BESIDES, WHY BUY PAPER WHEN WE CAN USE LAST YEAR'S CATALOGS?

IN 1879 TWO BROTHERS, CLARENCE & EDWARD SCOTT STARTED A PAPER PRODUCTS BUSINESS IN PHILADELPHIA.

AT THE TIME, MANY HOME OWNERS WERE INSTALLING INDOOR PLUMBING.

LET'S MAKE SOMETHING THAT'S INDISPENSABLE, DISPOSABLE AND UNRE-USEABLE.

I'VE GOT AN IDEA!

THE SCOTTS PRODUCED THE FIRST BATHROOM TISSUE ON SMALL ROLLS.

IT WAS SOLD IN PLAIN BROWN WRAPPERS.

THE KIMBERLY CLARK COMPANY BOUGHT OUT SCOTT PAPER IN 1994 AND SHUT DOWN THE FACTORY IN CHESTER, PA, BUT KEPT THE "SCOTT" NAME ON ITS PRODUCTS.
REPORT FINDS NO EASY PATH TO EXPAND CERTIFICATION OF PRIVATE FORESTS IN PA

by Paul Lyscava

A recent study has found that while there is some interest by both landowners and industry in expanding the acres of certified land in Pennsylvania, efforts to do this would find limited success at this time. The study was conducted by the Pennsylvania Forest Products Association and Dr. Jim Grace, Maurice K. Goddard Chair in Forestry and Environmental Resource Conservation, Pennsylvania State University with the funding support of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

Once only a niche market, there is now established demand for paper and wood products from forests that have been third-party certified by groups such as the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and American Tree Farm System (ATFS). There is a general growing interest in certification by some Pennsylvania paper and wood products manufacturers as a way to maintain and perhaps grow market share. These companies have indicated that their efforts to further participate in the certified marketplace have been hampered due to limited availability of raw material from certified forests.

Pennsylvania was a leader in early years of certified forests and certified forest products. But the number of acres of certified forests in Pennsylvania remains essentially unchanged over the past decade, compared to the steady growth in certified forest acres across North America. One area of untapped potential is the state’s non-industrial private forest lands which make up a majority of the forest acres in the state.

PFPA asked Dr. Grace of Penn State to examine successful initiatives which expanded certification of the non-industrial private forest base in other states. Two programs stood out: the Wisconsin Managed Forest Land Certification Group (2.3 million acres of non-industrial private forests certified) and the Indiana Classified Forest Certified Group (560,000 acres of non-industrial private forests certified).

These two state initiatives share a number of characteristics:
- The enrolled lands are duel certified in FSC and ATFS.
- Group certification was available to landowners enrolled in a long-standing forest land property tax relief programs that already required a forest management plan in order to qualify for substantial tax relief. Plan requirements were amended by the state to comply with the requirements of the third-party certification programs.
- The group forest certification is held and administered by the state’s forestry agency that already had significant existing state forestry staff resources dedicated to supporting and monitoring private forestry activities.
- Enrollment in the original tax relief programs and the forest certification program is voluntary and free to landowners. Landowners agree to comply with certification standards.
- Landowners are required to notify the state prior to harvest. The state forest agency conducts pre- and post-harvest reviews to demonstrate control of the activities on group properties.
- Program costs are supported by the state general fund or specialty taxes. State officials indicate significant costs savings in administration and certification fees due to the economies of scale.
- State officials also report programs have helped to support their state’s forest product industry.

As part of its research effort, the investigators used a survey and focus group to gather feedback from forest landowners, industry and other stakeholders on the potential interests, benefits and challenges to replicating a state-sponsored private forest certification here in Pennsylvania. A number of key insights emerged:
- Non-industrial private forest landowners acreage will not become certify their acres without a new initiative.
- Because of the costs involved in certification, smaller private forest owners will require lower property taxes or other monetary compensation as an incentive to participate in a group forest certification. This compensation will have to exceed what is already available through Pennsylvania’s Clean and Green Program.
- Industry is still uncertain about the market value of forest certification.
- There was no consensus on state administration or funding support of a program. There is resistance of some stakeholders in the state expanding its role in private forestry activities.

While Wisconsin and Indiana offer a possible model for a successful and effective private forest certification effort, replication of a similar initiative in Pennsylvania would be possible only after a number of issues are addressed. PA’s Clean and Green Program has no forest plan requirement, so legislation would be required to authorize a new or expanded program. DCNR would need substantial additional staff and resources to take on the new program. Within the program, DCNR would take on a new role as a monitor and regulator of private forest management and timber harvesting activities. The impacts of additional lost property tax base on rural communities also need to be considered.

Most importantly, Pennsylvania currently lacks the consensus among impacted stakeholders on the need and benefits of a state-sponsored group certification of private forests. Until greater consensus can be reached and the funding and policy issues be addressed, the report suggests that attempts to create program similar to that in Wisconsin or Indiana would be premature.

A copy of the full study is available by contacting PFPA.
100 YEARS AGO: 1911 – A BUSY YEAR FOR PENNA FORESTRY

by Alex Day

Forestry practices were just beginning to appear in Pennsylvania shortly after professional forest education had begun with the opening of the State Forest Academy at Mont Alto in 1903. The earliest graduates of the Academy in 1906 were already at work on the commonwealth’s forest reserves, which at the time totaled a little under 1 million acres. The future of forestry in the Commonwealth was certainly looking promising.

Forest industries were in the news as well in 1911. Perhaps the biggest event of 1911 was the Austin Dam disaster in Potter county when the Bayless Paper Company dam failed and the resulting flood put the paper mill out of commission. A large inventory of sawn hardwood lumber, owned by the Emporium Lumber Company at Austin was washed away. A total of eighty people lost their lives due to drowning and unknown causes…This dam failure was reported around the world and prompted the Pennsylvania legislature to create a department to review dam designs and to do regular inspections.

The fledgling State Forest Academy at Mont Alto had produced 34 graduates by 1911. Most of these new foresters were assigned to duties on the state forest reserves, which were known using the seller’s name. This naming system remained in effect until Governor Pinchot’s era when he collaborated with Henry Shoemaker to designate all state forests with names of persons and places important in Pennsylvania’s past. This policy with few changes continues to the present.

Tree planting on the new forest reserves was frequently prescribed by the young foresters and also by the chief Forest Inspector, George Wirt. This created the need for the establishment of forest tree nurseries where the department could grow its own trees. Mont Alto Nursery was begun with this purpose in mind in 1902 and the Clearfield Nursery followed in 1911.

Forest Academy students frequently installed pine tree plantations on cut-over land during the course of their instruction. The accompanying photo shows a white pine plantation marked for thinning and being inspected by a well-known, department forester in 1951. The trees in the photo were planted in 1911 by Forest Academy students…Do you recognize the well-known person in the photo? The answer will appear in the next issue of Pennsylvania Forests.
IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Conservation is the choice to protect special places for present and future generations. It is the choice to safeguard our water, care for wildlife, preserve productive farmland and forest, and maintain natural beauty.

Everyday across this country, individuals and families make the conservation choice. This collection presents, in their own words, the experiences and reflections of some of these generous, inspired people.

Those who conserve their land create a profound legacy. Whether farm or forest, meadow or mountain, they make a gift that will resonate through time.

Here they offer a second gift – a gift of words. They share the considerations, motivations, and inspirations that shaped their conservation decisions.

May we each be inspired by their words and deeds to make our own personal contribution to a beautiful, prosperous tomorrow.

FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS TO ENJOY!

by Jo-Ellen and Michael Green

In December 2003, we donated a conservation easement on our 152-acre property in Thompson Township, Susquehanna County to the Countryside Conservancy. This beautiful property overlooks the Nature Conservancy’s Florence Shelly Preserve.

The farm was originally purchased by Michael’s parents in 1979 because the area around Audubon, PA was developing quickly and they wanted to retire to an area of farms and open space. When we decided to retire, we knew that we would take over their property. Growing up around New York City and Philadelphia, and, as Naval officers having lived in many different areas of the United States, we have seen firsthand the results of unplanned and unbridled sprawl. Although we have no heirs ourselves, we eventually decided that in order to preserve this beautiful land for future generations to enjoy forever, a conservation easement was the perfect solution.

Half of our property is in pasture and is currently being farmed. The rest is woodland, smaller areas of forested wetland and successional fields to encourage optimum wildlife. A Forest Management Plan is in place to ensure sustainable forestry in its woodlands. We plan to continue to farm the property using environmentally sustainable methods. At the same time, we are committed to maintaining the forest and other habitats on site in a healthy condition as well as protecting the land’s scenic value and those of its surroundings.

Working with the Countryside Conservancy was a delight! The members are absolutely committed to land preservation and donate so much of their free time to mesh the needs of the landowners with mission of the Conservancy.

As far as advice to landowners who may be considering conserving their land, we can only say this: Take the time to do it right. Think carefully about what you wish to accomplish and what your future needs and desires for the land might be. Work closely with your land trust organization because you will be amazed at what they have to offer in the way of knowledge and experience. Use them!
THE KNOTS OF TIMBER TAX:

#20 - NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

by Lloyd R. Casey

This issue is all about programs and services of the Natural Resources Conservation Service, a Federal Agency of the US Department of Agriculture. Although it is not a “forestry agency” it has programs that provide funding to Nonindustrial Private Forest Owners for forestry activities.

Although often seen as Federal “alphabet soup” the programs most often used by woodland owners are: Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP); Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP); Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) and Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP). The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) are USDA programs administered by the Farm Service Agency.

All funds received from the above mentioned program has Federal Income Tax consequences. The recipients will receive a 1099-G from the Federal agency that dispenses the funds. In other words, all of these funds must be reported on your return.

However, there is a provision within the IRS Tax code Section 126 that allows for an exclusion of all or part of the cost-share or grant. In order to take the exclusion the Program must have gone through an approval process by the US Department of Treasury and the US Department of Agriculture to determine that the programs are involve conservation on the land and that they do not add significantly to the income of the land upon which the practices are installed.

The programs mentioned previously have been approved by the Department of Agriculture. In order to ensure that the cost-share amount or the grant does not add significantly to the income from the property, the following calculations must be done.

**IF INCOME HAS BEEN RECEIVED IN ANY OF THE LAST 3 YEARS:**

(1) Average the income for 3 years
(2) Multiply by 10%
(3) Divide the answer from #2 by an approved interest rate (No guidelines have been issued since 1986). Suggested rates could be average mortgage rates, the prime rate or the rate that the IRS charges on payments of back taxes.
(4) Compare the answer from #3.
(5) If the answer from #4 is equal to or less than the payment all can be excluded. If it is larger, then only amount calculated can be excluded.
(6) Use form 3-P (a plain piece of paper) and explain why you used the interest rate and show the calculations.

**IF NO INCOME HAS BEEN RECEIVED:**

(1) Instead of the average income use $2.50 per acre.
(2) Divide by the interest rate.
(3) Do the comparison and follow the procedures outlined under the income explanation.

**FORMS TO USE**

(1) For those landowners in the “timber growing business” report on Schedule C 1040.
(2) For those landowners that report as investors report as “miscellaneous income” on the front of 1040
(3) For those who are true farms report on Schedule F 1040.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

(1) The smaller the interest rate the more income can be excluded.
(2) If you have also used the reforestation – amortization provision of the code, it might be better not to exclude the payments, but figure it both ways and use the method that is to the advantage of the tax payer.
(3) Cost-shares or grants may also be subject to self-employment tax if you are in the business.
(4) There are recapture provisions if the land is disposed of within a 20 year period.
   a. The recapture amount during the first 10 years is the lesser of the amount of the cost-share payment excluded or
   b. The amount of the gain from the disposal
(5) The recapture amount is reduced by 10% for each year, or portion of a year, if the disposal occurs between 10-19 years. It is recaptured as ordinary income.

Please refer to www.timbertax.org or www.caseysforestryconcepts.com for more information.
### MILL PRICES – FOREST SERVICE LOG GRADE F2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIES</th>
<th>NORTHEAST</th>
<th>SOUTHEAST</th>
<th>NORTHWEST</th>
<th>SOUTHWEST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NORTHERN RED OAK</td>
<td>420 (1)</td>
<td>216 (2)</td>
<td>348 (3)</td>
<td>324 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHITE OAK</td>
<td>430 (1)</td>
<td>216 (2)</td>
<td>309 (3)</td>
<td>324 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIXED OAK</td>
<td>400 (2)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>269 (2)</td>
<td>259 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLACK CHERRY</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>345 (2)</td>
<td>487 (3)</td>
<td>345 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHITE ASH</td>
<td>340 (1)</td>
<td>259 (2)</td>
<td>314 (3)</td>
<td>259 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HARD MAPLE</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>259 (2)</td>
<td>382 (3)</td>
<td>345 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOFT MAPLE</td>
<td>500 (1)</td>
<td>216 (2)</td>
<td>260 (3)</td>
<td>216 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YELLOW – POPLAR</td>
<td>300 (1)</td>
<td>173 (2)</td>
<td>189 (3)</td>
<td>129 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MISC. HARDWOODS</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>122 (2)</td>
<td>129 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHITE PINE</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>166 (2)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEMLOCK</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>152 (2)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All sawtimber prices shown are averages for 1000 board feet (MBF) based on the International 1/4” log rule. The conversion factors used to determine prices in Doyle and Scribner rule can be found at [http://www.sfr.cas.psu.edu/TMR/tmr.htm](http://www.sfr.cas.psu.edu/TMR/tmr.htm) along with more data and information about interpreting this report. This report provided courtesy of Penn State School of Forest Resources, Cooperative Extension.
TREE FARM OF THE YEAR
TO COME
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TREE PLANTING RAMBLE
April 28

ELK WATCH RAMBLE
September 22 & 23

CANOE RAMBLE
May 18, 19, and 20

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- Hardwood Doors

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Pennsylvania Partners for Sustainable Forests

Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts (PACD)
The PACD works to enhance locally led efforts that support the wise use of the state’s natural resources and serves as the collective voice for Pennsylvania’s 66 county conservation districts. Conservation districts provide assistance for a range of issues unique to their county such as abandoned mines, environmental education, erosion and sedimentation pollution control, forest management, and water quality protection.
Phone: 717-238-7223
pacd.org

Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry
Organized within the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry offers a range of information and technical assistance to woodland owners. Service foresters meet with private forest landowners, examine their forestland, make management recommendations, and review forest stewardship plans prepared by other professionals. The bureau also provides technical assistance on activities that qualify for federal Farm Bill programs.
Phone: 717-787-2106
www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/pacdforestry.aspx

Pennsylvania Forestry Association
The nation’s oldest grassroots state organization devoted to forest conservation promotes the proper management of Pennsylvania’s forests. Membership is open to all interested in the stewardship of Pennsylvania’s forest resources. The primary role of the association is providing education through their quarterly magazine, newsletter articles, special nature trips, and other for-sale publications.
Phone: 717-766-5371
pfa.cas.psu.edu

Pennsylvania Forest Stewards
This program, organized by Penn State Natural Resources Extension, trains volunteers in the principles of forest stewardship so they can share what they learn with other forest landowners. Pennsylvania Forest Stewards initially receive 40 hours of classroom and field training. In exchange, Pa. Forest Stewards agree to invest a like amount of their time relaying what they learned to motivate forest landowners in their communities. Stewards are selected through a nomination process.
Phone: 800-235-9473
extension.psu.edu/paforeststewards

Pennsylvania Sustainable Forestry Initiative®
This voluntary program works to ensure that future generations have abundant, healthy, and productive forest resources. Through the program, landowners receive information to make proper forest-management decisions while loggers learn safer, more productive skills and proper environmental practices. Logger training lies at the core of the initiative in Pennsylvania.
Phone: 888-734-9366
sfiopfa.org

Pennsylvania Game Commission
Wildlife diversity biologists are available to provide free technical advice to landowners about how they can manage their property for wildlife through the Private Landowner Assistance Program (PLAP). This program focuses on providing critical habitat for species of greatest conservation need and overall wildlife diversity. After an initial telephone contact, the biologist will determine if there is reasonable habitat potential for these species and may conduct a site visit to further evaluate the property. Specific habitat improvement opportunities for the property are discussed and later detailed in a management plan. Tree and shrub seedlings, publications, and nesting structures are available for purchase from the Pa. Game Commission.
Northwest Region (814) 432-3188
Southwest Region (724) 238-9523
Northeast Region (570) 398-4744
Southcentral Region (814) 643-1831
Northeast Region (570) 675-1143
Southeast Region (610) 926-3136
E-mail: PGCLAP@state.pa.us
www.pgc.state.pa.us

Pennsylvania Land Trust Association (PALTA)
PALTA serves as the umbrella organization for land trusts and conservancies in the state. These organizations strive to protect lands of significant conservation value by working with landowners. PALTA provides in-depth guidance and resources on conservation topics and tools, including model conservation easements.
Phone: 717-290-8560
ConserveLand.org
ConservationTools.org

Pennsylvania Tree Farm Program
This is a national program operated under the guidance of the American Tree Farm System, a branch of the American Forest Foundation. Tree Farm inspectors voluntarily examine private woodlands, providing management advice and recommendations. Landowners meeting the minimum standards can have their land “certified” as a sustainably managed forest—a forest producing continuous crops of trees while providing habitat for wildlife, clean water, and recreational opportunities. Certification by the program is recognized internationally and may provide access to improved timber markets.
Phone: 201-463-2462
patreefarm.cas.psu.edu

Penn State Natural Resources Extension
Forestry and wildlife information and educational programs for forest landowners are provided through personal letters, publications, articles, radio and television programs, meetings, exhibits, tours, and short courses. Extension foresters partner with specialists from other agencies to conduct forest stewardship educational activities for landowners and natural resource professionals and educate youth about ecology and the environment.
Phone: 800-235-9473
sfr.psu.edu/extension-outreach

USDA, Farm Services Agency (FSA) and Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
These agencies work together on the administration of various USDA Farm Bill incentive programs. The Farm Bill has opportunities for forest landowners interested in technical and financial assistance for applying conservation practices to their properties. NRCS administers USDA Farm Bill Incentive Programs for forest management plans and forestry and wildlife conservation practices. NRCS also provides technical assistance to landowners on a wide array of practices, including tree planting, riparian zone management, forest stand improvement, fish and wildlife habitat improvement, and soil erosion control. FSA handles eligibility requirements for USDA Farm Bill Programs and also administers conservation cost-share programs.
Farm Services Agency
Phone: 717-237-2117
fsa.usda.gov

NRCS
Phone: 717-237-2100 or 1-888-300-8379
www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov

Woodland Owner Associations
More than 25 independent woodland owner associations exist across Pennsylvania. Providing educational opportunities for members and the general public about a diverse array of forest-related topics is an important objective of most associations. This goal is accomplished through the use of meetings, field demonstrations, tours, seminars, and newsletters. Most groups do not require land ownership to become a member.
Phone: 800-235-9473
extension.psu.edu/private-forests/woodland-owners-associations
Do you own forestland?

More than 70 percent of Pennsylvania’s forests are privately owned. That equals twelve million acres of land owned by more than 600,000 Pennsylvanians.

For this reason, it is very important for Pennsylvania’s forest landowners to learn how to sustainably manage their forests. Forests are a renewable resource that must be managed wisely to provide wood products, wildlife habitat, clean water, and recreational opportunities in a sustainable fashion. Learning to manage your forestland today can help ensure it will be there as a viable resource in the future.

Partners for Sustainable Forests can help you become a better steward of your forest resource. Our partner agencies can help provide you with the information you need to plan, take action, and make smart decisions about your forestland.

Learn how to make the right decisions about:
- Harvesting timber
- Managing wildlife habitat
- Protecting water quality
- Planning for financial and estate issues
- Marketing forest products
- Constructing forest roads
- Controlling competing and invasive species
- Minimizing insect and disease pests

Growing healthy and sustainable forests begins with you. Become a responsible steward of your forestland today.