



Minnesota Woodlands

MFA: an organization of, by and for Minnesota's private woodland owners and friends.

www.MinnesotaForestry.org

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MFA's Spring Field Days was a HIT!

Members who attended this year's Spring Field Days at the Forest History Center in Grand Rapids on Friday and Saturday, May 21 & 22 proclaimed it to be the best ever!

The Friday afternoon excursion to the Lost 40 was enjoyed by two busloads of people. The Lost 40 is actually 144 acres that were missed by loggers because of an error in the original survey that was completed in the 1850s.

Friday evening's Annual Meeting was followed by a scrumptious Italian buffet. The Forest History Center was the perfect place for woodland owners to gather on Saturday. The day began with a full breakfast that was served in the authentic 1900-era Cook Shack, sponsored by the Minnesota Women's Woodland Network.

Events outdoors were guided Woodland and Wildflower Walks plus tree felling and horse logging demonstrations. Inside the History Center there are dozens of interesting exhibits including a functional log processing simulator.

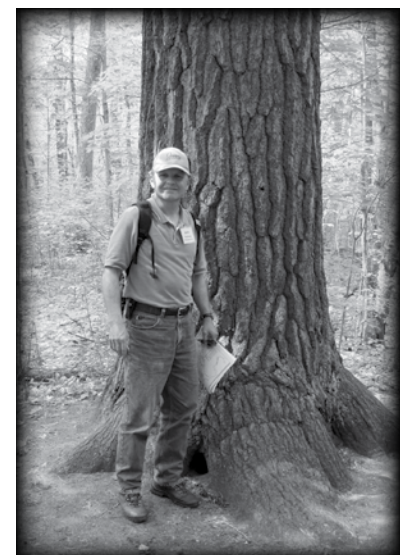
The Saturday evening banquet included Tree Farm Awards and Ed Nelson who discussed logging history in Minnesota with dozens of photos. Some interesting facts we learned are:

- The peak year for logging in Minnesota was 1900. Census records for this year show there were over 300 logging camps in the state staffed by over 20,000 loggers!
- Loggers were paid only at the end of the winter logging season. Depending on the skill required and danger involved with their job, they made \$20 to \$40 per month.
- Each logging camp had a contract with a mill for a certain number of board feet. If for any reason, such as illness of the loggers or bad weather, the camp fell short of the contracted number of board feet, the loggers received no pay for their winter's work!
- Oxen were used to skid logs for up to one mile. Horses could go up to 7½ miles, for a 15-mile daily round trip. Anything longer than 7½ miles required building a temporary railroad.

We extend our thanks to chair Dennis Thompson and all the presenters and helpers who made the event such a success! We also want to thank Blandin Foundation for the major support they provided.

By the way, next year's event is scheduled for Friday and Saturday, May 20 & 21 in Anoka County at Bunker Hills Regional Park. Co-chairs of the event are Jim Hunder (JJHund@aol.com) and Barb Spears (BJSpears@q.com).

See more photos on pages 4 and 5, and many more on MFA's web site, www.MinnesotaForestry.org. (At the bottom of the home page, find "Click here to see more photos!")



John Saxhaug, Minneapolis, at the Lost 40. Walking among pines that are 350 years old was inspiring!



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MFA Board Actions

Those who were able to attend our Annual Meeting held in Grand Rapids on Friday, May 21 in conjunction with Spring Field Days heard reports on:

Our treasury from MFA treasurer Dennis Thompson. Dennis' main message was that MFA is in good shape financially. If you would like a copy of his report, contact Dennis via email at: Treasurer@MinnesotaForestry.org.

Government Affairs from long-time Government Affairs Committee chair and past president, Bruce ZumBahlen. Much of what Bruce said is included in his report elsewhere in this newsletter.

Two Conservation Easements that are monitored by MFA. Land Committee chair John Saxhaug discussed how MFA agreed to terminate one of the easements because it is located in the Twin Cities near I-694 and Lexington and because it has no apparent conservation value. Saxhaug said the owner of the land has had to reimburse the government for all tax savings that had been realized as a result of the easement.

MFA's effort to establish a Call Before You Cut program, which may have been the biggest news of the day. The MFA board would like to make it easy for landowners to get information, including what professional help is available, before they agree to have timber harvested from their land. Recently, six states worked together to provide the same type of information to landowners in their states. Check their web site at www.CallB4UCut.org. Minnesota will become the seventh state in this group.

In all six of the currently participating states, the DNR is the lead agency. In Minnesota, thanks to agreement with our DNR, MFA will be the lead agency. When the system is up and running, Minnesota landowners who are thinking of having timber harvested will be able to call our MFA office and be referred to all sorts of information that will help them ensure they are getting the best deal.

The MFA board is excited about the agreement with the DNR as it marks the beginning of a new partnership which promises to benefit all Minnesota woodland owners as well as consulting foresters and loggers.

Watch for more information on Minnesota's Call Before You Cut effort in future issues of this newsletter and on our web site at www.MinnesotaForestry.org.



Minnesota is set to become the seventh state to have a Call Before You Cut system in place for landowners.

What an End to the Session!

By Bruce ZumBahlen

To me, the end of the 2010 legislative session felt more like looking at my yard following a strong thunderstorm. Though there is some debris scattered about and a few broken tree limbs, the air feels refreshingly cool. And, I think to myself – it could have been worse, much worse.



Bruce ZumBahlen, chair of MFA's Government Affairs Committee.

With just days remaining before the legislature's adjournment, what had seemed a little rain shower to close a \$500 million gap in the state's budget suddenly became a \$3 billion deficit of a thunderstorm. The Minnesota Supreme Court had just ruled that Governor Pawlenty had exceeded his authority to un-allot \$2.7 billion to balance the budget after the end of 2009's legislative session.

Earlier in the session, the Legislature had resolved much of the biennial budget deficit by cutting funding for a number of programs. At the time of the Court's ruling, cuts to DNR Forestry's budget were really not that unfair. DNR Forestry's budget was cut \$499,000 in fiscal year 2010, \$1,163,000 in 2011, and \$1,163,000 each year of biennium 2012-2013. Other forestry related programs were also cut; a Forest Information Systems by \$11,000 in 2010 and \$17,000 in 2011 and the Forest Resources Council's 2011 budget was reduced by \$20,000.

In what could have been a real disaster, a House Committee's proposal to reduce the Department of Agriculture's Plant Protection Division's tree programs by \$1.3 million was averted. The tree programs deal with invasive forest pests like Gypsy Moth and Emerald Ash Borer. Fortunately, strong lobbying by the Nursery and Landscape Association limited the cuts to \$19,000 in 2010, \$280,000 in 2011, and \$280,000 each year of the 2012-2013 biennium.

Thankfully, the Legislature and Governor were able to resolve their differences in eliminating the \$3 billion deficit without revisiting the above programs with more cuts. As part of that resolution, the legislature ratified a cap on Sustainable Forest Incentive Act annual payments imposed by the Governor's un-allotment process. SFIA payments were capped at no more than \$100,000 per enrollee. The cap was not extended for fiscal years 2012 and 2013, at least for now.

All in all, we can be thankful that the storm wasn't worse. But, don't relax too much. The next biennial budget will have to deal with an estimated \$5 - 8 billion deficit.



Meet a Tree

Red Maple

Red maple, also known as scarlet maple, swamp maple, soft maple, Carolina red maple, Drummond red maple, and water maple, is a short to medium-lived tree. Reaching maturity in 70 to 80 years, red maple seldom lives longer than 150 years. Mature trees, on average, are between 60 and 90 feet tall and range from 18 to 30 inches in diameter. The largest living red maple is growing in Michigan and is a staggering 125 feet tall with a circumference of over 16 feet.

While red maple can thrive on a wider range of soil types and elevations than any other tree species in North America, it develops best on moderately well-drained, moist sites. On good sites, it grows fast with good form and quality for sawlogs.

Known in the lumber industry as soft maple, the wood is close grained and resembles sugar maple but is softer in texture. In the better grade logs, red maple is substituted for hard maple, particularly for furniture. Trees flower and bear seed at a very early age, sometimes as young as 4 years old, and produce good seed crops almost every year.

Red maple also ranks very high as a shade tree for landscapes.

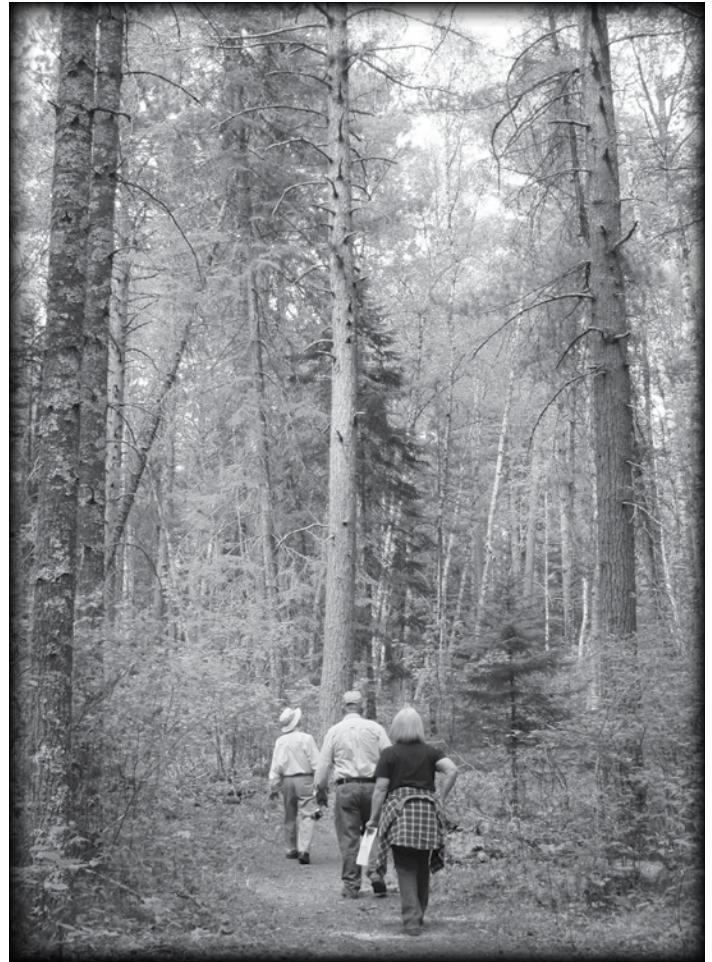
What you may not know about red maple:

- Forest tent caterpillars (army worms) avoid red maples
- Is one of the first trees to flower in the spring, generally several weeks before bud break
- Can be tapped for syrup.



MFA's Annual Meeting, Tree Farm Awards and Spring Field Days

Forest History Center, Grand Rapids MN
Friday & Saturday, May 21 – 22, 2010



Tour of the Lost 40

Above: Walking among the huge pines.

Above left: Jim Olsen, South Haven, and Jim Hunder, Plymouth, with a 350-year-old white pine.



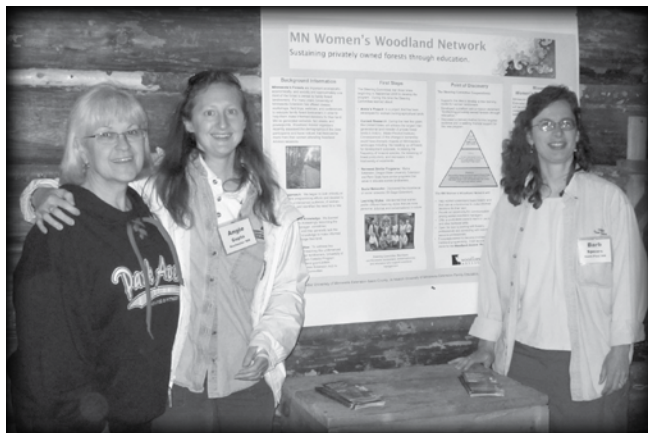
MFA's Annual Meeting

Above: Find a report on the Annual Meeting under Board Actions, in this newsletter.

Breakfast at the Cook Shack

Middle left: Saturday morning breakfast was sponsored by the Minnesota Women's Woodland Network and served in the authentic 1900 Cook Shack.

Left: Members of the Minnesota Women's Woodland Network include Judi Carlson, Holyoke, Angie Gupta, Rochester and Barb Spears, St. Paul. For more information on the organization, contact Angie at AGupta@UMN.edu.





Tree ID and Wildflower Walk

Top: Barb Spears, a consulting forester from St. Paul, and Angie Gupta, U of M Extension in Rochester, teamed up to lead a Wild Flower/Tree ID Walk. Here Angie describes the ID characteristics of white pine.

Above: This Jack in the Pulpit is one of the prettiest flowers Barb pointed out.

See many more photos on MFA's web site, www.MinnesotaForestry.org. (At the bottom of the home page find "Click here to see more photos!")

Tree Felling Demonstration

Top: Timberrrrrr!

Above: Alex Bildeaux discussing chainsaw safety in his colorful way.



Woodland Walk

Above: Keith Matson and Cheryl Adams led two Woodland Walks. David Lindroth, Apple Valley, enjoyed the first one so much he went along on the second one over the same trail.

Horse Logging

Left: Ed Nelson demonstrates horse logging.

Member Profile

A Century Farm - And Woodlot

In 1888 Tom Schulz' grandfather established a homestead on what is today the Schulz family farm in Wadena County near Sebeka (north of Highway 10 between Wadena and Park Rapids). Tom said, "Since I'm only the third generation here in over 100 years, I guess you could say we are slow at succeeding each other!"

Before he could plant crops, Tom's grandfather had to clear the land that was completely covered with trees. Eventually, he cleared everything but 40 acres which the family has used ever since as a source of firewood and lumber for building.

Tom and his wife Kyle bought the farm in 1978. "It was a dairy farm at the time," Tom said. "We continued to milk cows until 1991 when we sold them and I went to work teaching Farm Business Management at the technical college in Staples. Now we have 15 registered black angus that we raise and sell for breeding stock."

Kyle also has her horses, two adult quarter horses, three miniature horses and one burro. She said, "The burro is very smart and thinks it is the watchdog for the miniature horses. If a person, a bird or any other animal comes into the corral, the burro will check it out to make sure it's not a threat to the miniature horses."

Tom has a Stewardship Plan for the 40-acre woodlot. Dated November, 1978, it must be one of the first done in Minnesota. Twenty-two of the 40 acres are being harvested this year. The area contains many 100-year-old pines that are being cut because Tom fears they would be susceptible to wind after nearby trees are removed.

Hybrid Poplar

Tom was also one of the first in Minnesota to try planting hybrid poplar. "Back in 1996 Blandin Paper offered to plant hybrid poplar on 68 acres," Tom said. "I liked the idea because it was a chance to plant trees and live long enough to see them harvested!"

The trees were harvested in 2008, producing 25.3 cords per acre. That sounds pretty good but Blandin was hoping for 40 cords. Part of the reason for lower production was the 8 x 8 spacing of the trees. It appears that with this spacing, the trees crowd each other out sufficiently after 10 years so that the growth rate slows to almost nothing. When the area is replanted this year, spacing will be 10 x 10 which should allow the trees to maintain a high growth rate for 13 years.

One of the problems with hybrid poplar is that weeds have to be controlled when the trees are young. Tom said, "The first year, I cultivated the trees seven times. It paid off because they grew six to seven feet that first year, which was tall enough to shade out the weeds the second year so I didn't have to cultivate at all after that."

Tom noticed something unusual about the poplar. "During dry periods, the trees drop leaves which I imagine is a mechanism to conserve moisture. What is remarkable, though, is that as soon as the rains come, the trees will begin producing new leaves. Under good conditions, they continue producing leaves right up to freeze up."

Public Service

Tom is active in public service. He's been an elected member of the Wadena County Soil and Water Conservation District board since 1978. He says, "If you want to be doing good things for the land, it's a position where you can have some impact." In 2007 he was one of the Minnesota people admitted to the Wisconsin Woodland Leadership Institute. "I appreciated that John DuPlissis, the Institute leader, was up front about the expectation that we take and apply what we learn to public service in our local area."



Tom & Kyle Schulz



In the background are Tom and Kyle's miniature horses and, in the foreground, is the burro that watches over them.



When it comes to conservation, Tom and Kyle "walk the talk". They heat with this new, efficient wood furnace, all lights in their home are fluorescent to save energy and Tom's winter exercise is with cross country skis over a 3-1/2-mile trail.

Selling Timber – The Mistakes We Make.

Many of us woodland owners are experts in our chosen professional field but “babes in the woods” when it comes to selling timber off our land. From a professional SWCD forester, here are some mistakes landowners make when selling timber:

- 1. Going with the first logger that knocks on the door.** Usually, the better loggers get their work through recommendations or word of mouth and do not need to go ‘cold-calling’. It is best to talk with several loggers and take the one that best fits your needs. Do not be afraid to contact the big mills directly as they may be able to pay the best. Also, be prepared to wait a year or two before the logger starts. Remember, the best loggers have work lined up far in advance.
- 2. Going with a handshake.** What was said during a handshake agreement can change over time. A written contract spells out exactly what is to be cut, when it will be cut, and what the price will be.
- 3. Selling timber based on an “estimate” of what is out there.** Most private woodland owners have no way of judging whether an estimate is accurate or not. It shouldn’t be a surprise that most such estimates are on the low side. A better approach is called consumer scaling and is usually done by the mill. With consumer scaling, the landowner has a record of every load that is brought to the mill. Since it accurately accounts for the timber harvested, it is beneficial to both the logger and the landowner.
- 4. Waiting for the “top of the market”.** Sure, we all want to get top dollar for our timber and some stands can wait longer than others before they need to get cut. But, if your goals include wildlife management and habitat improvement, waiting for the markets to improve before you sell your timber does not accomplish your goals. Be flexible and understand that top dollar for the timber may not be the primary goal.
- 5. Refusing to pay a professional forester.** For a fee, a consulting forester will plan and manage the sale for you. They know:
 - which of your goals are realistic and which are not;
 - the markets for various species of timber and which mills are currently paying the best price;
 - which local loggers have a good reputation, the right equipment for your job and the time available to do the work;
 - the acceptable standards for logging operations such as rutting, proper care of oils and lubricants, which trees should be left, protection of riparian areas, etc.

- 6. Ignoring MLEP.** Whether you use a consulting forester or not, the logger working on your land should be trained through the Minnesota Logger Education Program (MLEP). Check the current copy of the Minnesota Forest Resource Management Directory you receive each year through MFA or the MLEP web site at www.MLEP.org.



Photo courtesy of Minnesota Logger Education Program



Julie Hufnagle, Big Falls MN, was the lucky winner of a drawing for early registrants, those who registered before May 1st. Julie’s prize was a Leatherman Genus Pruning Tool, a \$90 value.

Tree Farm Awards



Pictured, from right to left: Ross Korpela, Sappi Fine Paper and chair of the Minnesota Tree Farm Committee.

Region 3 winner, Richard Nigon, representative of his family's North Shore Pine Trust. Their land is located on the north shore of Upper Whitefish Lake in central Crow Wing County.

Region 4 winner, Don & Nordis Estrem, Dennison MN.

Region 2 winner, John Rinne, Brimson MN. This is the second time John has won this award, the first being 25 years ago, in the mid-1980s.

Tree Farm Inspector of the Year, Bruce ZumBahlen, Cottage Grove. Bruce is past president of MFA, chair of MFA's Government Affairs Committee and a member of the State Tree Farm Board.

Region 1 winner, Bob and Ingrid Sonnenberg, New York Mills. The Sonnenbergs are also one of four finalists for the National Tree Farm of the Year Award. The winner will be announced at the Tree Farm annual convention to be held in Burlington, Vermont in July. Good Luck to the Sonnenbergs!

Upcoming Events

Saturday, April 10

Tuesday, June 15

- Last day to apply for the Wisconsin Coverts Project, A Wildlife Management Program for Landowners. MFA members received a postcard with information on this no-cost project!

Saturday, September 25

- 2pm – 8pm Natural Resources Field Day (Kellogg MN)

For more information on these or other events, go to www.MinnesotaForestry.org or call MFA at 218-326-6486

For MFA members, www.MyMinnesotaWoods.org is the best online source of woodland information. Here's what's new this month.



- What's eating your woods? Minnesota DNR releases new Forest Insect & Disease Newsletter
- Garlic mustard: One Minnesota landowner's story
- Northern Minnesota phenology report
- Spring webinar series: Recap and how to access complete recordings anytime
- And the usual: Woodland Stewardship book winner, Poem of the month, Upcoming events, News links

Have a question about your woodland? Post it on the Discussion Board. You may be surprised at how many good responses you get!

For the live version, with much more info on each topic, visit MyMinnesotaWoods.org

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