



Minnesota Woodlands

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

www.MinnesotaForestry.org

Minnesota Forestry Association (MFA)

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MFA Newsletter Vol. 12 No. 5

October/November 2010
The Minnesota Woodlands Newsletter is published by the Minnesota Forestry Association.

MFA Regular Board Meetings

DNR Office
Cambridge
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

- October 19, 2010
- January 18, 2011
- April 19, 2011
- July 19, 2011
- October 18, 2011

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Woodlands and Wildlife

Ten Minnesotans applied for and were admitted to one of the two Wisconsin Coverts Project sessions held last August. Each session consisted of three days of indoor sessions and outdoor experiences for landowners who want to enhance their woodlands for wildlife. The sessions were held in a gorgeous setting, at the old log lodge of Kemp Natural Resources Station located in the heart of Wisconsin's north woods, near the town of Woodruff.

Minnesotans who participated are as follows:

Doug Appelgren, Moose Lake
Robert Asproth, Mahtowa
Chuck Erickson, Battle Lake
Steve Schwartz, Winona
Jason Spaeth, Greenwood
Craig Stomberg, Shafer
Dave Davis, St. Paul
Chad Lampi, Esko
Dennis Lampi, Cloquet
Mark Nammacher, Minneapolis



Participants in the first session, held August 12 to 15. With a sharp eye, you might be able to pick out Minnesotans Doug Appelgren, Bob Asproth, Chuck Erickson, Steve Schwartz, Jason Spaeth and Craig Stomberg.

Doug Appelgren said, "The event was terrific! The staff is very dedicated to what they do. The accommodations were wonderful and the food was excellent."

Mark Nammacher said he enjoyed getting to know the other participants and how conditions on their land differ from his. He also enjoyed the camaraderie that came as a result of everyone pitching in to wash dishes and clean up after meals. Mark said the participants were encouraged to use the knowledge they gained to help educate young people in their area on the wonders of their woodland and wildlife.

Chuck Erickson said that, of all the woodland-related training sessions he's attended, "This was the best!"

Craig Stomberg said the three days were packed with sessions and experiences, going until eight each evening. He is looking forward to finding time to go through the 10-inch thick manual each participant received.

All of the participants were amazed and grateful that there was no cost for the program, for the lodging or the food. Doug Appelgren exclaimed, "What a gift!"

At least one more session is planned for 2011. As word gets out about the great experience at no cost, competition for the 25 positions is likely to increase. If you would like to be considered for admission next year and have not sent in an application yet, do it now! Google "Wisconsin Coverts Project." Find the application, print it and send it in.

Thanks to Jamie Nack, project coordinator, and the sponsors for this great experience!



2010
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MFA Board Actions

The MFA board meets every month. During January, April, July and October, the meeting is face-to-face at the Cambridge DNR Forestry office. During all other months, the meeting is held via conference call. All MFA members are welcome to sit in on the face-to-face meetings. See a list of meeting dates and board members elsewhere in this newsletter.

Recent board actions include:

Meeting with a representative of the owner of land we monitor under a conservation easement. The land is 35 acres in the White Bear area. The owner would like to amend the easement to allow for construction of one home on one of seven parcels included in the easement. The Board members take our responsibilities under this easement very seriously and have spent the last two months researching the questions involved before a decision is to be made.

Contributing \$1,000 to Dovetail Partners, a local organization whose mission is to be "A Trusted Source of Environmental Information." Our contribution is toward costs associated with creation of a comprehensive report on carbon sequestration in Minnesota. MFA, like so many volunteer organizations today, has a very tight budget picture. This contribution was made to support Katie Fernholz, who is doing a fine job as executive director of Dovetail and is a great friend of MFA.

Agreeing to write a letter to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council in support of the state's soil and water conservation districts' efforts to restore wild rice lakes. On the subject of Lessard-Sams, the board has discussed the fact that private woodlands are not considered in the Outdoor Heritage Council's long-term plans. This is a shame since private woodlands make a great contribution to Minnesota's wildlife habitat and water quality. The Board is watching for an opportunity to present MFA's case to the Council.

Hearing the report of the nominating committee. Committee members Bruce ZumBahlen and Al Schacht discussed more than a dozen MFA members as possible candidates for future openings on the MFA Board.

Transfer on Death Deeds

By Bruce ZumBahlen

What will happen to our land when we are gone? One of the benefits of MFA membership is learning from other members' knowledge or experience, even a subject like "when that day of judgment comes"

A few weeks ago, MFA member Eric Hofstad and I chatted about how to keep our respective woodlands in our families. During our chat, I mentioned that Wisconsin enacted a law a few years ago that allows landowners to transfer land upon their death to their heirs without needing to have it probated. This is something that benefited my family. Our little Wisconsin tree farm is now set up to transfer to our adult children after my wife and I have gone to that "big tree farm in the sky" - without having to be probated.

I wondered if MFA shouldn't promote something like that for Minnesota, particularly to help woodland owners who are not Minnesota residents.

Surprise! Eric said his family's attorney had recently informed him that MN does have a law similar to Wisconsin's. This is something that slipped under my radar screen! The law was passed during the 2008 legislative session and amended in the 2009 session to take care of a few technicalities.

Called "Transfer on Death Deeds" (TODD), MN Statute 507.071 stipulates its provisions. A TODD is valid if the deed is recorded in a county in which at least part of the real property described in the deed is located and is recorded before the death of the grantor owner upon whose death the conveyance or transfer is effective. It is a revocable deed and can be changed at any time by the grantor.

MN Statute 507.071 shows an example of the form for the TODD. The statute also includes the form for revoking the deed. To get full details, go to the MN Legislature's website: www.leg.state.mn.us. Under "Statutes, Laws, and Rules" on the site's home page, select "statutes" and enter 507.071 in the search box to retrieve the statute's full text.

Southeast Minnesota Field Day

Well over 100 people attended the field day event held on Mike and Pete Greenheck's Gorman Creek Farm located in southeastern Minnesota near Kellogg.

The event was titled "Natural Resources Field Day" and included five educational stations: Buckthorn Control, Direct Seeding of Hardwoods, Prairie Restoration, Woodland Economics and Stream Restoration.

Lunch of hot dogs, chips, apple and beverage was provided by the Greenhecks.

Event sponsors were the Aldo Leopold Foundation, American Forest Foundation (Tree Farm), Minnesota DNR and the Minnesota Forestry Association.



Left: DNR non-game specialist Jamie Edwards discussing restoring prairie on the hill in the background.



Above: Angie Gupta, U of M Extension in Rochester, and Kathy Kromroy, Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

Left: DNR forester Mike Wachholz discussing buckthorn control.



Top left: Mike Greenheck discussing the economics of black walnut logs, a major product of southeast Minnesota woodlands.

Middle left: Lunch and door prizes!

Lower Left: Event co-hosts Mike and Pete Greenheck sitting on a Leopold bench that was presented to them by the Aldo Leopold Foundation. The bench is made of wood from a tree that Aldo Leopold himself planted.



Buckthorn, the Scourge of Woodland Owners!

By Anne Petry

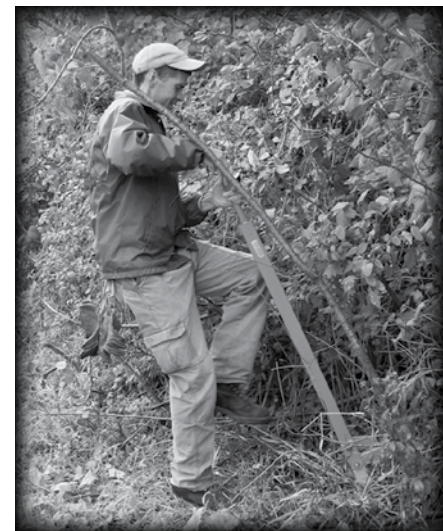
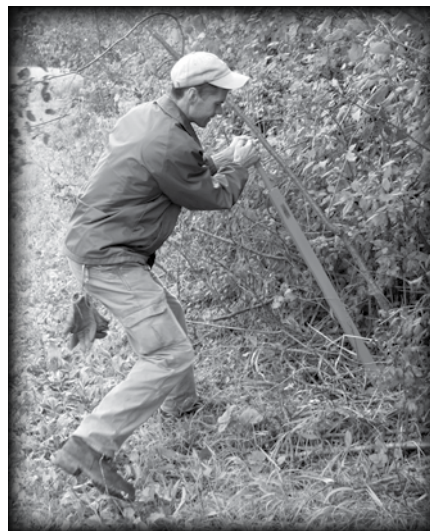
In almost any gathering of woodland owners, complaints about buckthorn come up. It's not surprising since buckthorn is one of the most difficult invasive species that landowners battle.

The DNR pamphlet, *Buckthorn: What You Should Know. What You Should Do* provides good basic information. For further help on the What You Should Do part, I asked two experts, Dale Sutherland, Territory Manager of the Timberland Division of Crop Production Service (CPS), and Shawn Fritcher, DNR Parks and Trails Resource Specialist working in southeast Minnesota, this question: "Suppose you have 20 acres of woodland with buckthorn problems. What would you do?"



Shawn Fritcher, right, surveying a buckthorn infestation.

Dale said the answer depends on the density of the buckthorn. Sometimes the buckthorn is so thick you can't even walk through it. In such a case, the first step is to mow it or mulch it. This would require a big machine, such as a big Bobcat with a very heavy duty brush hog or mulcher attachment. Most of us would have to either rent a machine like this – great fun! – or hire a contractor.



To prevent sprouting from the stumps, Shawn has had good success by having a crew of five follow behind the mulcher at a safe distance treating every stump with Garlon 4. Whether the stumps are treated or not, Dale recommends letting the area sit for one full growing season before beginning the follow-up described below.

If the initial stand of buckthorn is less dense, other control measures become practical:

Pulling is one option. Stems of less than $\frac{3}{8}$ inch can be pulled by hand while stems up to $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches can be pulled with a Weed Wrench tool, if you are really, really strong! Shawn has several Weed Wrenches on hand. He uses them when volunteers are available but the process of pulling with Weed Wrenches is slow and therefore too costly when paid crews are used.

Another option is to cut the larger stems with a chainsaw and then treat the stump with Garlon. (Round-Up could also be used but doesn't work nearly as well.) The trick here is to get the stumps treated within two hours after cutting and to remember which stumps have been treated and which have not (a dye is useful for marking which stumps have been treated). Smaller stems would have to be pulled or sprayed. A brushsaw works well for areas where small diameter (up to 2 inches) buckthorn forms dense stands.

The final option is basal stem treatment which is a process of spraying the bark from the root collar up 18 inches with Garlon diluted with oil. This can be done at any time of year, including all winter. If you do not mind seeing standing dead stems in your woods, they can be left until they fall over naturally.

Shawn did a study comparing total costs of the various buckthorn control approaches. The study area was a large, heavily infested oak woodland that was divided into four parcels. The chart below shows the control approach used and the cost per acre:

Parcel #	Control Method	Cost Per Acre	Comment
1	Basal Stem Treatment using Garlon diluted in Bark Oil Blue.	\$900 - \$1,700	High chemical cost/ low labor cost
2	Cut Stem (cutting with chainsaw or brush cutter and treating the stumps with Garlon.)	\$650 - \$1,300	High labor cost/ lower chemical cost
3	Cutting with a Bobcat and brush cutter or larger machine.	\$200	Surprisingly low. This has to be supplemented with hand cutting in areas the machine can't reach.
4	Cutting with a Bobcat and brush cutter or larger machine plus immediate chemical treatment of the stumps.	\$350	Chemical treatment reduced the number of re-sprouting stems.

Follow-up

Any buckthorn control project needs well planned follow-up or the initial effort will be wasted.

An annual campaign of pulling new stems, either by hand or with a Weed Wrench, is one option.

Shawn said that if the area is a fire dependent oak woodland, fire is the best follow-up approach. With several burns over a 10-year period, the chances of significantly reducing buckthorn in the woods are good. Of course, any fire has to be carefully planned with the help of a professional, such as the forester who wrote your Stewardship Plan.

For maple/basswood and other types of woods in which fire cannot be used as readily, spot treatment of foliage with a water-based Garlon solution may be the best follow-up approach. Since buckthorn retains its leaves longer than most other plants, this should be done in the fall when the buckthorn is easy to spot and other plants have dropped their leaves making them less susceptible to any overspray. The buckthorn leaves should be sprayed to wet but not run off.

The Mixing Mystery

The standard rule before using any pesticide is to read and follow label directions. But, directions for many herbicides talk about rates per acre which is hard to translate into the amount that should be used in a backpack sprayer.

Pathfinder II is a ready-to-use mixture of Garlon 4 and Bark Oil Blue. With no mixing needed, this may be a good choice if five gallons or less of finished spray will be needed.

For basal bark or stump treatment, mix one gallon of Garlon 4 with three gallons of Bark Oil Blue (not stinky) or diesel fuel (stinky!).

For foliage spray, dilute the Garlon 3a with water at the rate of 1-2% by volume (1.25 to 2.5 ounces per gallon) and add Liberate surfactant at the rate of one quart per 100 gallons of water (1/4 ounce per gallon).

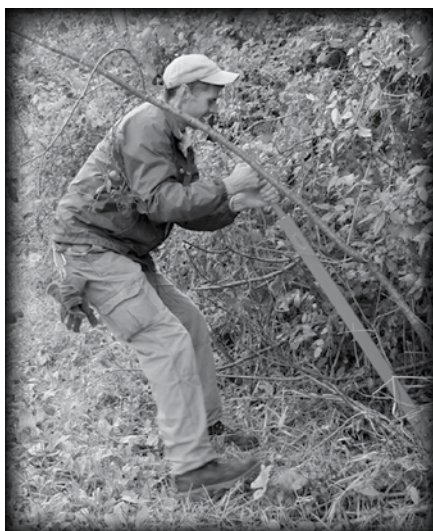
Where to Get It

Purchase Pathfinder II, Garlon, Bark Oil Blue and Liberate surfactant from a local farm chemical supplier or directly through Dale Sutherland at CPS. Contact him at 218-245-1903.

Purchase a Weed Wrench online at www.WeedWrench.com.

The Root Talon mentioned in the DNR pamphlet is currently not available.

For a list of local contractors who have the heavy equipment needed to cut large stems of buckthorn, contact your local DNR office (www.MinnesotaForestry.org/Professional-Foresters).



DNR Forester Mike Wachholz demonstrates the Weed Wrench on a buckthorn plant with a one-inch stem. He pulls and pulls and pulls but without success. The buckthorn won!

Northwoods Forestry Coop Field Day

Members and friends of Northwoods Forestry Coop enjoyed perfect weather on their Field Day, Saturday, September 11, 2010. The event was held near Brainerd, on the land of coop president, Pat Lannin. The program featured Jeff Jepson, Longville, MN, who is a professional arborist and author. Jepson demonstrated safe tree felling techniques. The coop's Peterson Sawmill, which is available for use by members, was put to work sawing lumber by member Jim Chamberlin.

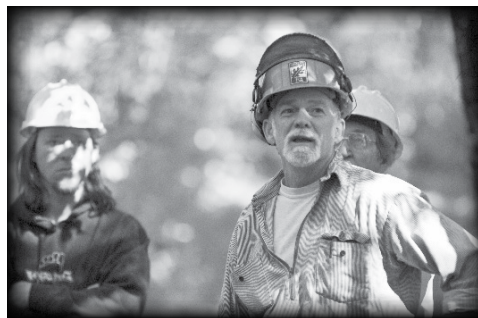
See many more photos of this event on MFA's website, www.MinnesotaForestry.org.



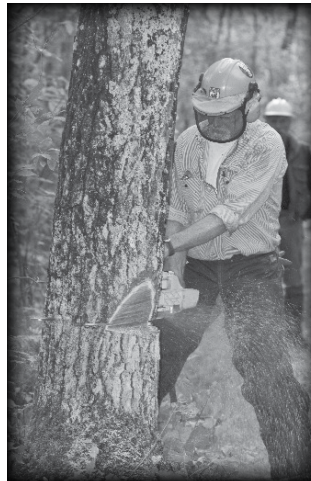
Above: Roger Geoschel, Garrison, with his amazing fish carvings.



Coop president, Pat Lanin, Brainerd



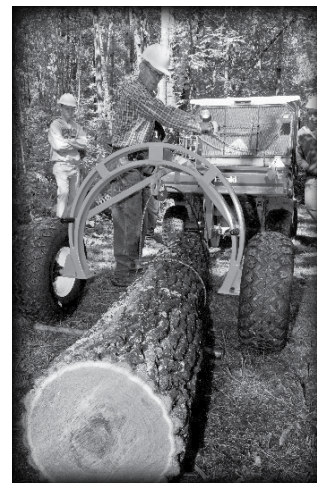
Left: Jeff Jepson, Longville, demonstrated safe tree felling techniques.



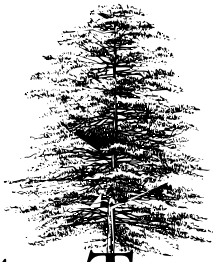
Above: Oh, Oh! No safety chaps being worn!



Right: Demonstrating a Logrite ATV Arch.



Plan now to attend
**MFA's Annual Meeting,
 Spring Field Day and
 Tree Farm Awards**
 Friday and Saturday
 May 20 & 21, 2011
 Bunker Hills Regional Park
 near Anoka MN



Meet a Tree

Balsam Fir

Balsam fir is a small to medium-sized tree that is one of the most important conifers in the northern United States and Canada. Besides being a popular Christmas tree, balsam fir is used extensively for pulp and light frame construction. It is also an important tree for many species of wildlife. Balsam fir has a strong ability to become established and grow under the shade of larger trees. It is classified as very tolerant to shade.

At maturity, balsam will typically reach heights of 40 to 60 feet with 12 to 18 inch tree diameters. The reported record diameter is 34 inches and some may reach 200 years of age. Trees start producing viable seeds at age 20 to 30 with good seed crops occurring every 2 to 4 years. Seeds will begin to fall in August, peak in September and October, and continue into November. Some seeds may even fall throughout the winter and into early spring. Most germination occurs from late May to early July.

Balsam fir is a shallow-rooted tree species, which makes it very susceptible to windthrow. Insects and diseases can also be devastating. Various species of mice, voles, and birds consume balsam fir seed, birds and squirrels nip the buds, and black bears will girdle mature trees. Despite its name,



Photo credit: Dave Hanson, University of Minnesota

spruce budworms prefer balsam over spruce and can cause heavy damage and mortality in pure and mixed stands.

Balsam fir provides food and cover for many species of wildlife. Moose rely on balsam fir in the winter when it is a major source of food. Deer will also use balsam fir for cover and shelter. During severe winter weather, especially in northern areas of the white-tailed deer range, lowland balsam fir stands and spruce-balsam fir swamps are used extensively as winter yarding areas.

The fir tree has been a favorite Christmas tree for more than 400 years. It remains among the top three species. Wreath-making is another holiday business that rivals that of Christmas tree sales in some areas. Prolonged needle retention after harvest, color, and pleasant fragrance are characteristics of balsam fir that make it attractive for these uses. Fragrance alone accounts for use of the needles as stuffing for souvenir pillows commonly sold in gift shops.

The Answer: A Journal of Activities on Your Land!

By Mike Reichenbach, U of M Extension

As a family woodland owner you should keep records. Here's why: As tax laws change, there is often a requirement that the owner show documentation of forest management activity. For example, the proposed Family Farm Estate Tax Deferral Act of 2010, Senate Bill 3664, will allow the value of the land to be excluded from the decedent's gross estate, but only if it can be shown there was material participation in the forestry activity during five of the eight years prior to the owner's death. Further, a State Forester approved Stewardship Plan may be used as evidence of activity allowing the sale of timber to be excluded from the estate tax.

The answer? Keep a simple journal of all forestry activity on your land. **Record:**

- what was done,*
- who did it,*
- when was it done,*
- why was it done,*
- how long it took and,*
- how much it cost.*

A sample entry in your journal might be, "On May 15, 2010 I checked the boundary of the property to ensure that the fences were up and the fire breaks were clear. This was conducted as part of the protection of the forest as noted in my Forest Stewardship Plan. I spent 4 hours walking the boundary and firebreaks." Additional information such as pictures and anecdotal information may be added to provide a document that supports material participation in forest management.

A side benefit to all this is that your journal will contribute to your family's heritage of managing the woodland.

For more information on record keeping contact Mike Reichenbach, reich027@umn.edu.

Upcoming Events

Find more events, and more information on these events, at your MFA website, www.MinnesotaForestry.org. or by calling MFA at 218-326-6486.

October

Tuesday, October 19

- **1pm. Native Tree ID at Beaver Creek Valley State Park near Caledonia in SE Minnesota.** The most important thing you can do in forest stewardship is to know your forest well.
- **6:30pm. Identifying and Controlling Buckthorn. Grand Rapids.** Buckthorn is a nonnative shrub that crowds out native plants and creates an impenetrable thicket. During this class you will learn to identify buckthorn, learn about the biology of the plant and recommendations for control for both the homeowner and landowner.

Wednesday, October 20

- **1pm. Your Land Your Legacy: Deciding the Future of Your Land.** Presented Online at <http://www.ForestConnect.info>. This webinar will discuss the role of estate planning as it pertains to land and its conservation, provide tips on family communication towards goal setting for the land, outline the professionals that woodland owners should seek for assistance, and learn from the stories of other woodland owners.

Friday, October 29

- **1pm. Managing habitat for birds of brushland and young forest. Grand Rapids.** Populations of many species of resident and migratory birds depend on shrubland and young forest habitats in Minnesota. Learn about partnership efforts to enhance and restore habitat on your land for these unique, native birds, including ruffed grouse, one of Minnesota's favorite upland game birds.

November

Monday-Wednesday, November 8-10

- **Minnesota Wisconsin Invasive Species Conference. St. Paul.** Find details at: http://www.minnesotaswcs.org/2010_mn_wi_invasive_species_conference.htm

December

Tuesday, December 14

- **1pm. Measuring Trees. Preston** Learn to see your forest through the eyes of a professional forester. You'll learn about some of the tools and techniques that foresters use to evaluate a forest stand, individual trees, and cut products. We'll also decode some forester-speak to help you understand the basics of wood volume, quality, and value.

Plan now to attend **MFA's Annual Meeting, Spring Field Day and Tree Farm Awards Friday and Saturday, May 20 & 21, 2011 at Bunker Hills Regional Park** near Anoka MN. Events will include a Friday afternoon guided tour of sites interesting to woodland owners followed by MFA's Annual Meeting, Social Hour, Banquet and Tree Farm Awards. Saturday will be filled with educational events at the Park.

For MFA members, the two best online sources of woodland information are our MFA web site, www.MinnesotaForestry.org and www.MyMinnesotaWoods.UMN.edu.

Here's what's new at MyMinnesotaWoods:



- Stingless wasps released for possible emerald ash borer control
- Another unwelcome arrival: Bur oak blight (BOB) in Minnesota
- Northern Minnesota phenology report
- Intermediate stand treatments: Three short videos
- Woodland Advisor releases fall workshop schedule
- Minnesota Forestry Association member profile
- Woodland Stewardship book winner, poem of the month, upcoming events, news headlines, and more.

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

Thank You to Our Supporting Members!

Boise White Paper, LLC
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