



# 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. 13 No. 2

April/May 2011  
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## MFA Regular Board Meetings

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

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

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## Troubling Times for Forestry at the Capitol

By Bruce ZumBahlen, chair, MFA Government Affairs Committee



Bruce ZumBahlen

In their zeal to solve Minnesota's \$5 billion biennial deficit without raising taxes, the legislature's new Republican majority is proposing drastic cuts to a number of programs, forestry included. Cuts to the DNR's Forestry Division are so severe that the DNR Commissioner has informed the legislature that it would mean the end of the DNR's highly recognized private forest management program and the demise of its Project Learning Tree and School Forest programs.

Adding to the misery, the House and Senate have also passed Omnibus Tax Bills that would repeal the Sustainable Forest Incentive Act (SFIA) ending the enrollment of 2,100 small woodland owners having 394,000 acres under the program. The Senate's Environment and Natural Resources Omnibus Bill also includes a provision to shut down the DNR's two tree nurseries effective July 1, 2011 and sell the buildings, equipment, seed inventory and land.

MFA has testified in opposition to these proposals at hearings and has met with the Governor's staff to express our concerns. At the same time, MFA is backing a bill with bi-partisan support to remedy some issues with the current SFIA program. MFA's bill will likely not be considered until the SFIA repeal issue is put to rest.

Since the Senate and House Omnibus Bills differ, conference committees have been appointed to reconcile the differences. Once the conferee's bills have been re-passed by both legislative bodies, they will be sent to the Governor for his signature. The Governor is on record to veto the Omnibus Bills if they still contain policy provisions.

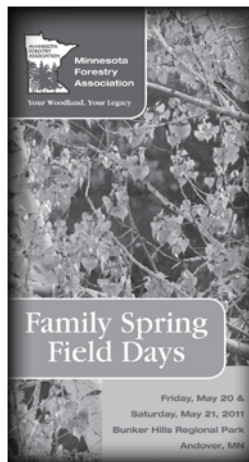
The legislature is supposed to adjourn by May 23rd. Given the vast difference between the Governor's recommendations and the legislature's proposals, it's a good bet that a special session will be needed to finalize the budget. The SFIA and other forestry issues could still be in play by the time you read this. If you want to weigh in on these issues, **contact now** the Senator and Representative for the district where you live.

One issue is on track to be signed into law before that date. The legislature has repealed the Rural Preserve Property Tax Program that required a conservation management plan and an eight-year covenant on the woodland property in order to receive the same benefits as had been available under the Green Acres program. The bill also allows acres that had been removed from Green Acres to be reinstated. The request for reinstatement must be made by the landowner before September 1st.

## Family Spring Field Days

The brochure for our 2011 Family Spring Field Days is enclosed. Use it to register today! If you need lodging, remember to call the motel or campground.

Have something to sell like a log splitter, chainsaw or trailer? Bring it along and display it in our outdoor exhibit area.





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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:

**Hearing a report on preparations for our Annual Meeting / Family Spring Field Day** from co-chair Barb Spears. See the brochure enclosed with this newsletter.

**Following along with proceedings at the legislature.** MFA's Government Affairs Committee chair, Bruce ZumBahlen, says this is the toughest legislative session he has experienced. See his report on page 1.

**Reviewing the liability insurance** available through the National Woodland Owners Association. The board recommends that every MFA member consider obtaining this insurance. See more information below.

**Discussing the Life Membership category.** MFA has not offered life membership since the 1980s. The board agreed to begin offering it again soon after working out details about what the dues would be and how MFA would handle the proceeds.

## Special Insurance for Woodland Owners

Our woodlands are filled with "widow makers" and other unique hazards. We use chainsaws and other equipment that can cause serious injury. Should an accident occur to a family member, a friend, or even a trespasser, you want to have adequate insurance coverage. Your homeowners insurance may be all the protection you need, but maybe not. Other coverage might be especially important if your land is owned by two or more families.

Now, the National Woodland Owners Association (NWOA) has worked with Outdoor Underwriters, Inc. to develop a liability policy especially for woodland owners. The cost is \$185 per year for up to 535 acres which includes a required \$35 membership in NWOA.

Your MFA board recommends that every MFA member seriously consider purchasing this insurance. By the way, neither MFA nor any of our board members gets anything out of this except the satisfaction of knowing we told members about what we believe is the best woodland insurance coverage available.

Find the insurance brochure enclosed with this newsletter. If you have questions after reading it, talk with your insurance agent or call:

Keith Argow, president  
**National Woodland Owners Assn.**  
703-255-2700  
Argow@cs.net

Tom Skaggs  
**Outdoor Underwriters, Inc.**  
865-809-1588  
TSkaggs@outdoorund.com





# State to protect black walnut trees

By Paul Walsh, Star Tribune

Minnesota is acting to protect millions of black walnut trees from a pest that has already caused trouble in several other states.

The state Agriculture Department placed a quarantine recently on the import into Minnesota of walnut trees and certain related products from areas known to be infested with the potentially deadly thousand cankers disease (TCD).

The black walnut tree is a natural part of the southeastern Minnesota landscape, and it is highly valued for its wood. Up to 2 million board feet of black walnut is harvested in Minnesota annually for making furniture, musical instruments and other products.

“By taking this action, we will help protect a valuable part of our economy and our environment from needless damage,” said Agriculture Commissioner Dave Frederickson.

“This targeted quarantine will help prevent the loss of millions of trees and avoid damage to a valuable segment of our state’s forestry industry.”

The University of Minnesota Extension Service characterizes the tree as one of the Midwest’s most valuable based on price per board foot. Demand is high worldwide, the service adds on its website, because of “its beautiful color, strength, durability, dimensional stability after drying, and excellent machining qualities.”

TCD is caused by a fungus carried by the walnut twig beetle. The beetle attacks the tree, introducing the fungus while it tunnels under the bark. This results in small cankers, or dead areas, under the bark.

As more beetles attack the tree, these cankers grow together and cut off the tree’s circulation, ultimately killing the tree.

TCD has been found in Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, New Mexico, Oregon, Tennessee, Washington and Utah.

Walnut products covered by the quarantine include live trees, logs, lumber, firewood, nursery stock, wood chips, mulch and walnut-based packing materials.



Above: Dave & Jan Wambeke, Clear Lake MN

Bottom: Rodney & Diana Hanson, Lino Lakes MN



## Cambridge Landowners Meeting

The meeting room at the Cambridge DNR office was jammed with 40 local woodland owners on Thursday evening, March 31. This was the 11th annual meeting of landowners, organized this year by DNR forester Greg Wuerflein.

The evening began with a delicious dinner prepared by office supervisor Don Mueller, his wife Nancy and the rest of the Cambridge office staff. Featured speakers were Mel Baughman, U of M Extension, on taxes and Larry Hegstad, retired DNR forester on the 100th anniversary of the Division of Forestry.



Above: Greg Wuerflein and Art Widerstom

Right: Jim Olson, South Haven



# Seasons of Grouse – Spring

By Gary Zimmer, Senior Regional Biologist  
Ruffed Grouse Society



Gary Zimmer

The morning dawns as a faint warm southerly breeze melts the remnant snow left following nearly five months of winter's wrath in the woodlot near an old Midwestern farmstead. No longer farmed, the property is owned by folks from the big city who visit several times a year. Former hayfields are slowly turning into woods as patches of aspen and alder saplings encroach. The oak/hickory woods, once grazed by cattle, have filled in with an understory of various young trees and shrubs.

Near the north end of the property lies a three-acre patch of aspen and oak saplings. It is here that a male ruffed grouse has remained safe and secure since he moved into the area the previous fall.

Instinctively the male grouse seeks out a pocket of large aspen trees not 200 feet west of his winter home for a morning meal. The buds of these trees have provided a staple food source through the winter. With the recent warm winds and sunny days, the male aspen trees have produced an array of silky catkins, a choice and nutritious food source for grouse throughout the upcoming breeding season. With a wary eye out for predators, the male grouse feasts on the catkins, filling his bulging crop in just 15 minutes.

When satisfied, the male grouse flies back to the dense cover of the patch of young aspen and oak. He anxiously surveys the area for predators and is drawn to a large aspen log that fell to the ground years ago. He climbs on top of the log, turns to the side and flaps his wings rapidly to emit his first drum of the spring, a deep, low-frequency “thump, thump, thumping” sound. While many people think the drumming sound is made when a grouse beats his wings against his breast feathers, it is really a miniature sonic boom. By cupping and sharply snapping both wings forward, a small, low-pressure vacuum is created in the airspace around the grouse. When surrounding air rushes in to fill that vacuum, the deep “thumping” sound occurs. Each drumming sequence may include as many as 50 wing beats resulting in a “drum roll” that is often described as an old diesel tractor springing to life. In addition to attracting females, the drumming sound is important for defense of the male's territory from other male grouse.

Following each drumming cycle, the male scans the area intently for intruders or a female grouse attracted by the sound. He displays little movement until he is ready to drum again, usually within two to three minutes. For the next 6 to 8 weeks, he will forego his morning feed and start



Find more information on Ruffed Grouse in the enclosed booklet which was obtained for you from the DNR.



announcing his presence as the dawn begins to break signaling a new day. This pattern will continue for several hours each morning and starts up again in the late afternoon with two peak drumming periods associated with the full moons of April and May.

The male's chosen haunt has all the components needed in a quality drumming site. The regenerated aspen and oak saplings are 15 to 20 feet tall and provide a dense canopy of tree tops protecting the area from avian predators such as red-tailed hawks and great horned owls. The dense saplings also are thick enough to prevent predators like red fox from moving quickly through it but with an otherwise open understory to allow the drummer to see an approaching intruder. The drumming log is also important in providing the elevated platform necessary to distribute the “thumping” sound throughout the neighborhood. While downed logs are favored for drumming sites, any natural elevation will do, such as a large stone, dirt mound or berm. If available, several different drumming platforms are used by drummers within their territories.

After days of drumming, a hen grouse cautiously approaches the drummer. His drumming intensity picks up, sending out his message at 45 to 60 second intervals. The hen remains nearby and the drumming continues at a high intensity for nearly 15 minutes, when the male stops his symphony, leaves his log, and mating occurs. The pair spends only about 30 minutes together with the male in full courtship display for much of the time. Then the female flies away and the male returns to the log to continue his drumming ritual for other interested hens. There is no additional bonding between the pair. Following mating, the hen departs to locate a suitable nest site and will tend to the nest and raising chicks on her own.



# MFA Members Recognized

The Minnesota Chapter of the Society of American Foresters recently recognized two MFA members.

**Eli Sagor**, extension educator at U of M Extension and webmaster of MyMinnesotaWoods, was named the Young Forester of the Year.

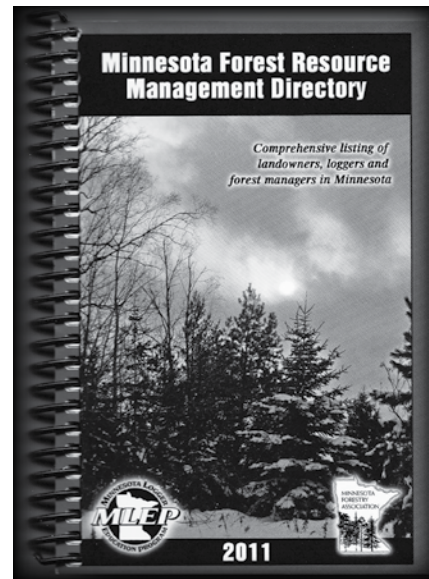
**Al Schacht**, Zumbro Falls, who is retired from the National Forest Service and a member of the MFA board, was recognized for his 53 years of membership in SAF.



Al Schacht

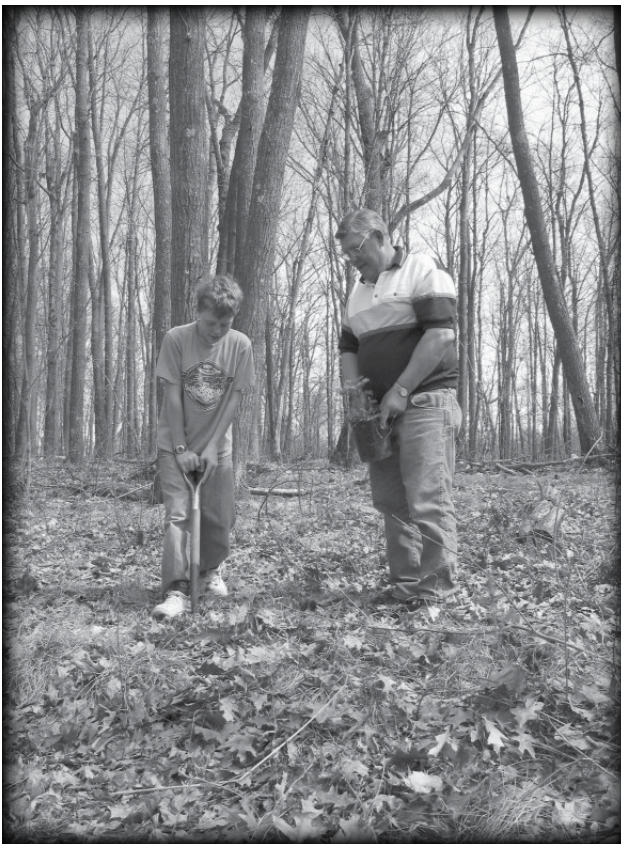


Eli Sagor



*It is very likely you received your copy of the 2011 directory recently. It has been produced annually for the last dozen years by Chris DeRosier and Dave Chura with the Minnesota Logger Education Program (MLEP). The front part of the directory lists MLEP members while you and other MFA members are listed in the back.*

*We extend a hearty MFA thanks to MLEP and the advertisers who make the directory possible.*



## Arbor Day is Friday, April 29th.

It is a great time to teach a young person about tree planting and the value of woodlands. For more ideas on celebrating trees and woodlands year around, see the Arbor Day web site at [www.ArborDay.org](http://www.ArborDay.org).

## Classified Ads

### NEW!

We have Classified Ads on our MFA web site. Placing an ad for any woodland-related item or service is FREE for members. Right now some of the items listed are:

- WANTED: 100 straight poles, 10-12' long and 3-4" in diameter.
- 80 wooded acres bordering Wild River State Park, 45 minutes north of St. Paul.
- Homelite chainsaw - \$59
- Shop-built logging arch - \$75
- Cherry, spalted birch & spalted white ash bowl turning blanks
- Fire Splitter, tractor-mounted log splitter - \$495

See these and more ads at [www.MinnesotaForestry.org](http://www.MinnesotaForestry.org).

Find instructions on how to place your ad today!

*In the MFA Classifieds you can even purchase a share in the Northwoods Forestry Enterprises Peterson Sawmill.*





## Member Profile: The Greenhecks

“We were hoping to cut a million board feet of timber this winter but, because of the weather, we probably won’t make it,” said Mike Greenheck. After a little more discussion, it became clear there is a lot of land involved in two states and a lot of people, not just Mike.

“Our grandfather began woodland work in the 1930’s and 40’s on land he owned in Richland County, Wisconsin,” said Mike. “One of his neighbors at the time was Aldo Leopold.” (Aldo Leopold authored *A Sand County Almanac* and is recognized by many today as the father of modern conservation. Learn more about him on the Leopold Foundation web site, [www.AldoLeopold.org](http://www.AldoLeopold.org).)

Mike went on to say, “After our parents married in 1951, they moved to Wabasha County, Minnesota where our father continued in the dairy business as our family had done for 100 years. Whenever dad got a few extra dollars together, he’d buy an abandoned farm. For some, he paid as little as \$1.25 per acre yet people still thought he was wasting his money. Dad saw it as taking unproductive farms and turning them into something beautiful.”

Over the years, farms totaling some 2,500 acres were purchased.

The young Greenhecks, Mike, his brother Pete and five sisters, were introduced to woodland work at an early age. Riding on the back of a tree planter, Mike estimates they planted over two million trees. From that early start, Mike learned to love working in the woods, calling it “my golf.”

Today the Greenhecks are heavily involved in tree stand improvement in a process Mike calls “reverse high grading.” A couple of winters ago, Mike, Pete and brother-in-law Steve got into a Monday routine. “We’d start out from St. Paul at 4:30 in the morning and have a 90-minute business meeting while driving to the farm. Once there, we’d spend the day on TSI work and drive back home in the evening. Between September and March, we covered 118 acres.”

Mike’s views seem to be consistent with Aldo Leopold’s. Mike sees forestry as socially valuable because it helps promote clean water and air and prevent soil erosion. He is concerned that, with corn up to \$7 per bushel, many farmers will be tempted to go back to plowing erodible lands.

“While dad was focused on trees,” Mike said, “we are interested in a diverse landscape. As a result, we’re also working to restore prairie and wetlands wherever appropriate.”

Having woodland in both Minnesota and Wisconsin, Mike has worked under both our Sustainable Forestry Incentive Act (SFIA) and Wisconsin’s Managed Forest Law (MFL). He actually prefers the Wisconsin law because it requires people to actively manage their land, in addition to



Mike Greenheck behind the counter at his Nelson Cheese & Deli in St. Paul. Brother Pete operates a location in Spring Lake Park.



Mike Greenheck with the plastic party tray in the foreground that will be replaced by the recyclable one behind.

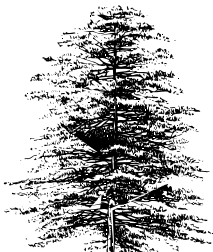
forgoing development. "The MFL plans are very specific," he says. "For example, it might identify a several acre parcel of oak and specify it be clearcut by a certain date." Of course, such a practice is required only if it contributes to the long-term health of the woodland.

Mike is also conservation-minded in his business, Nelson Cheese Delicatessens. He believes in finding locally grown, natural foods but not necessarily organic. He found a new party tray that is made of cardboard and is recyclable which will replace the plastic trays currently in use.

For an inspiring story about Mike and Pete's father, Francis Greenheck, and the Tree Farmers of the Year award he won nearly 40 years ago, check MFA's web site, [www.MinnesotaForestry.org](http://www.MinnesotaForestry.org).



Mike Greenheck, left, with Pete and Pete's boys Johnny, left, and Mike.



## Meet a Tree

### Bigtooth Aspen

Bigtooth aspen, also called largetooth aspen, poplar, popple, or yellow popple, is a medium-sized deciduous hardwood tree that spans a range of climatic conditions from the marine climate along the Atlantic coast to the continental climate of Minnesota. While it can grow on a wide range of sites and soils, it is far less adaptable than quaking aspen. Bigtooth aspen grows best on moist, fertile sandy uplands.

In Minnesota, mature bigtooth aspen trees reach 70 to 90 feet tall and 12 to 16 inches in diameter. On the best sites, they can attain a height of 100 feet or more at age 50. While both quaking and bigtooth aspen are relatively short-lived, bigtooth aspen will generally live 10 to 20 years longer than quaking aspen and is more resistant to disease.

Flowers appear in early May on trees as young as 10. Light seed crops are usually produced every year, with really good crops produced every two to three years. Seeds are very light and can be dispersed over long distances by the wind. A single tree is capable of producing over a million seeds per year. Following a disturbance such as fire or logging, bigtooth aspen will reproduce from both seeds and suckers. Young stands can contain as many as 20,000 stems per acre.

Bigtooth aspen does not tolerate shade. It cannot successfully reproduce under its own shade and seedlings must be kept



Leaves of bigtooth aspen (left) are easy to distinguish from quaking aspen leaves.

free of brush and grasses. Because of this, clearcutting is the best method for harvesting aspen stands. On better sites, harvesting should occur when trees are 50 to 60 years old. With proper harvesting and site preparation, bigtooth aspen can continually occupy a site. If left completely undisturbed, it will be succeeded by shade-tolerant hardwood and coniferous species.

Aspen is a very important tree for wildlife. It is no accident that the range of ruffed grouse coincides with the native range of aspen. Aspen leaves and buds provide ruffed grouse with their most important year-long food source. Many times, forest management does not distinguish between quaking and bigtooth aspen. Both species are used extensively for pulp, but bigtooth, because of its larger size at maturity, is capable of producing sawtimber and veneer.



# Upcoming Events

Find more events, and more information on these events, at the MFA website, [www.MinnesotaForestry.org](http://www.MinnesotaForestry.org). or by calling MFA at 218-326-6486.

## Tuesday, April 19, 2011

- **6 - 9pm. Non-Timber Forest Products** (Heintz Center, Rochester).

## Thursday, April 21

- **8:30am - 3:45pm. Loggers Workshop** (Long Lake Conservation Center, Palisade MN). Registration \$15 which includes lunch, snacks and meeting materials.
- **3 - 6pm. Buckthorn & Garlic Mustard: A Hands-On Approach to Control** (Delano) Gordon & Lorraine Peterson Farm, 8910 Hwy 12. Delano.

## Tuesday, April 26

- **6:30pm. Intergenerational Land Transfer, Part 2** (Grand Rapids).

## Friday, April 29

- **10am. Woody Biomass in Minnesota** (Online). Get more detail on the content at <http://z.umn.edu/2011webinars>. Register at <http://z.umn.edu/2011webinarreg>. There's no charge to attend.

## Thursday, May 5

- **1 - 4pm. Invasive Species Workshop** (Winona - Holzinger Lodge). For more information contact Emily.Hutchins@state.mn.us.

## Friday, May 13

- **12 noon. Managing Woodland Ash in the EAB Era** (Online). Get more detail on the content at <http://z.umn.edu/2011webinars>. Register at <http://z.umn.edu/2011webinarreg> and we'll send you connection instructions. There's no charge to attend.

## Friday afternoon, May 20 &

## Saturday, May 21

- MFA's Family Spring Field Days (Bunker Hills Regional Park, Andover). See the brochure here or at [www.MinnesotaForestry.org](http://www.MinnesotaForestry.org) or call 218-326-6486.

## Wednesday, May 25

- **1 - 5pm. Growing & Tending Your Forest and Growing Bioenergy Feedstock** (Community Center, Milota MN). Event fee: \$20. For workshop content questions contact Diomy Zamora, 612-626-9272. To register contact Sue Crotty, 218-828-2275 or [crott012@umn.edu](mailto:crott012@umn.edu).

## Thursday, May 26

- **4 - 6pm. Wildlife Management & Biodiversity** (St. Cloud). At Stearns County Extension, 3400 1st St. N. Event fee: \$20. For workshop content questions contact Diomy Zamora, 612-626-9272. To register contact Sue Crotty, 218-828-2275 or [crott012@umn.edu](mailto:crott012@umn.edu).

## Friday, May 27

- **1pm. Tree & Shrub ID** (St. John's University, Collegeville). Event fee: \$20 For workshop content questions contact Diomy Zamora, 612-626-9272. To register contact Sue Crotty, 218-828-2275 or [crott012@umn.edu](mailto:crott012@umn.edu).

## Thursday, June 2

- **6:30pm. Ash Management in the Era of EAB.** (Toner Center, St. Mary's Univ., Winona). For information contact Angie Gupta at 507-280-2869 or [AGupta@Umn.edu](mailto:AGupta@Umn.edu). To register call Mary Jane Stearns 507-536-6310 or [mstearns@umn.edu](mailto:mstearns@umn.edu).

## Saturday, June 4

- **9am - noon. Field Day at Beaufeaux'** (Hinckley). Tour the old Beaufeaux family farm with Mike Beaufeaux, retired WI DNR forester. Registration: \$5. For more information contact Kelly Smith at 218-384-3891 or [Kelly.Smith@carltonswcd.org](mailto:Kelly.Smith@carltonswcd.org) or Mike Beaufeaux at 320-384-7419 or [mdbeaufaux@hughes.net](mailto:mdbeaufaux@hughes.net).

## Tuesday, June 14

- **Harvesting Birch Bark** (Grand Rapids). Event sponsored by the Minnesota Women's Woodland Network. For more information or to register, contact Julie Miedtke at [miedt001@umn.edu](mailto:miedt001@umn.edu) or (218) 327-7365.

**REGISTER TODAY!**  
**MFA's Family Spring**  
**Field Days.**

For MFA members, the two best online sources of woodland information are the MFA web site, [www.MinnesotaForestry.org](http://www.MinnesotaForestry.org) and [www.MyMinnesotaWoods.UMN.edu](http://www.MyMinnesotaWoods.UMN.edu).

Here's what's new at MyMinnesotaWoods:



- Extension's 2011 woodland webinar series
- Minnesota maple blog series: Fuel systems and Updates
- Minnesota maple blog series: Charlie Nahgahnub and Updates
- Input needed: Help identify priority forest resources research needs in Minnesota
- Minnesota maple blog series: Spirit Lake Native Products
- Poem of the month: Maple Syrup

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](http://MyMinnesotaWoods.org)

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