



Minnesota Woodlands

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

www.MinnesotaForestry.org

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MFA Newsletter Vol. 14 No. 4

August/September 2012
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MFA Board Meetings

Cambridge DNR Office, 10 am – 3 pm
• October 19, 2012

Conference Calls
8 – 9 am

- August 21
- September 18
- November 20
- December 18

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Win a Pickaroon ... continued

Since no one correctly answered the mystery question published with our last newsletter, the pickaroon contest continues. Here's how to win a pickaroon:

1. Go to our web site, www.MinnesotaForestry.org
2. Right at the top of the page, click on **here** to see lots more photos from our Spring Field Days event.
3. Identify by name and hometown the person who is shown blowing Gabriel's Horn.
4. Send your answer in an email to: Information@MinnesotaForestry.org.

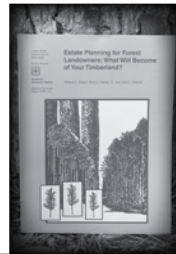
The winner of the pickaroon will be determined by a drawing of those who correctly answer the question. If you can't wait and want to buy a pickaroon, call MFA member Pat Lanin at 218-764-3315.



Pat Lanin, Brainerd, who distributes pickaroons and other tools for private woodland owners, says no one over 50 years of age should go to work in the woods without a pickaroon. Once you try one, you'll see what he means!

Estate Planning Book

The 180-page book, *Estate Planning for Forest Landowners: What Will Become of Your Timberland?*, has been popular. We have a few copies left and hope to obtain more. You can have a copy by sending a check for \$5 to cover postage to: MFA, P.O. Box 496, Grand Rapids MN 55744.



Leasing to Hunters

More woodland owners are considering leasing some or all their land to hunters who are willing to pay \$10 to \$15 per acre for the exclusive right to hunt on a parcel of land. They can do early season scouting, set up trail cameras to monitor the wildlife and, with the permission of the landowner, plant food plots. Besides the extra income, advantages to landowners include having someone watch over their land to keep trespassers off.

If you are thinking of leasing your land to hunters, there are important things to consider, like a contract and liability insurance. This is all covered on MFA's website, www.MinnesotaForestry.org where you will find a link right at the top of the home page.

Thanks to our new Life Members!

The MFA board suspended the Life Membership category back in the 1980s and reinstated it recently. Of the \$1,000 Life Membership dues, \$800 goes into a permanent endowment account which will help fund educational programs for private woodland owners far into the future.

We extend our thanks to the first two families who have opted for the new Life Membership category:

Anne & Jason Spaeth
Greenwood MN

Glenda & Jon Tollefson
Mantorville MN

Photo background by Eli Sagor (Flickr: esagor).

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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 starting at 10 a.m. During all other months, the meeting is held via conference call. Any MFA member is welcome to sit in on the face-to-face meetings and listen in on the conference calls. See a list of board members and meeting dates elsewhere in this newsletter. Contact any board member for further information.

For a copy of minutes from any recent meeting, contact Carol Cartie at Information@MinnesotaForestry.org or 218-326-6486.

Meeting with Forrest Boe, our new State Forester. See a report on page 6 in this newsletter.

Meeting with the Minnesota Forest Resources Council to provide input for a report on private woodlands they are preparing for the legislature. See a report on page 6 in this newsletter.

Planning to create public service announcements for radio under a grant from the Blandin Foundation. We hope to create two announcements, one focusing on pine and aspen in the northern part of the state and the other on hardwoods in the south.

Passing an official resolution in support of consulting foresters as they strive to serve private woodland owners.

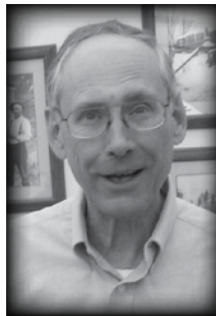
Selecting Cabela's in Owatonna as the site of our 2013 Annual Meeting and Spring Field Day event. The dates will be Friday, May 17, and Saturday, May 18, 2013. Chair of the event is Gary Michael, Gary.Michael@state.mn.us. Committee member is Lyle Keller, Peterson, MN, 507-875-2215

Adopting a policy by which board members can submit a request for reimbursement for travel expense for attending board meetings or other official MFA functions. Under current MFA policy, reimbursement is at 25 cents per mile.

Discussing ways in which board members could participate in meetings from home, thereby saving travel time and expense. Mike Reichenbach has recommended Skype for this purpose.

David Lindroth,

woodland owner and MFA board member, died unexpectedly on July 22nd. David, 71 of Apple Valley, is survived by his wife of 48 years, Judy, children Liz (Steve) Odegard, David (Deb) Lindroth Jr., and seven grandchildren. He retired in 1996 from the U.S. Bureau of Mines in Minneapolis.



David owned 80 acres of woodland in Ottertail County with his family. He considered it a playground and loved to tick off the daily wonders that reveal themselves on the land. Strawberries invade open ground. Turkeys and pheasants routinely hunt and peck their way across fields. Sandhill cranes fly overhead announcing their presence with a rolling bugle.

David was serving his third year on the MFA board of directors where he consistently added to the discussion and took responsibility for meeting and food arrangements.



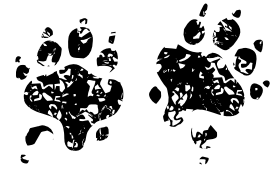
Spring Field Day

Top: Ruth & Rod Searle, Waseca

Bottom: Pat Lanin, Brainerd, Farmi Winch



Creature Feature



By Jodie Provost, DNR Private Land Wildlife Habitat Specialist

Fisher (Martes Pennanti)

Fisher are skilled tree-climbers of the weasel family, Mustelidae. They are forest specialists, being dependent upon large contiguous areas of deciduous or coniferous forests. About the size of a fox, they have tube-like, dark brown bodies with small white spots and streaks on their underside. Like other mustelids, they are quick, flexible, and have two large scent glands under their tail that produce a very strong liquid scent, or musk, to mark territories and food caches, attract mates and deter predators.

Solitary creatures except during the breeding season, home ranges of fisher can be seven to ten square miles with daily movements over three miles. In late March or April, females den inside trees or logs to give birth and raise their litter of one to four "kits." "Delayed implantation" of fertilized eggs allows embryos to remain undeveloped for many months until food is plentiful. By one year of age, young are on their own. Few fisher live longer than four years. Hollow logs and tree cavities, brush or rock piles, burrows of other species, snow dens, and even body cavities of big game carcasses provide important cover for fisher.

A variety of plant and animal matter is consumed by fisher, including insects and berries, but primarily snowshoe hare, squirrels, mice, voles, raccoons, birds, carrion, occasionally young deer and even porcupine. The latter are repeatedly attacked in the face until subdued, then flipped over and attacked on their unprotected throat or belly. Fisher do not eat fish as their name misleadingly implies.

Fisher are strictly a North American species and have declined in much of their southern range due to over-trapping and loss of forest habitat. They were nearly extirpated in Minnesota by trapping until protected in the late 1970s. Although now relatively common in Minnesota's forests, concern over a recent decline in the population led to a shortened trapping season beginning in 2007 (from 16 to nine days) and a smaller possession limit beginning in 2010 (from five to two). The trapping season occurs in late November to early December in approximately the northern 60% of the state.

Overharvest during the mid 2000's, reduction of old forest den sites on public forest land, and competition with bobcats are possible causes of the population decline. Bobcat populations are currently high and these wild cats occasionally kill young and adult fisher, besides competing



Photo by John Erb, DNR Furbearer Research Biologist

for the same prey. Fisher research is currently underway in Minnesota to answer management questions and concerns.

How can we benefit fisher? As usual, it's all about providing habitat (food, cover, water and space) that meets the needs of the species. Forest landowners can benefit fisher most by providing and maintaining:

- Large, unbroken tracts of coniferous and deciduous forest that lack large openings and edge and have a diversity of age classes and tree species.
- Older forest that provides large, live and dead cavity trees (15-20 inches in diameter), especially of aspen and oak.
- Intermixed young forest patches as habitat for prey such as snowshoe hare.
- Downed hollow logs, brush piles, and standing cavity trees for dens and cover.

Fun Forestry Fact:

To grow a pound of wood, a tree uses 1.47 pounds of carbon dioxide and gives off 1.07 pounds of oxygen. An acre of trees might grow 4,000 pounds of wood in a year, using 5,880 pounds of carbon dioxide and giving off 4,280 pounds of oxygen in the process!

St. Croix State Park – The Way It Was

By Anne Petry

Have you ever wondered what the forest was like before the loggers and settlers arrived?

Well, a graduate student wondered just that about St. Croix State Park and wrote his thesis on what the area was like in the 1850s.

The student, named Allen Fedkenheur, studied notes made by the original surveyors who covered the St. Croix State Park area between 1849 and 1853. The surveyors were required to make notes on four trees closest to each section corner. They recorded the species of each tree and its direction and distance from the corner.

Using the distance data, Fedkenheur estimated the density of the forest at each corner. If the four trees were just a few feet from the corner, he concluded the forest was very dense in that area and, if they were further away, that the forest was less dense.

Fedkenheur used the species data to estimate the nature of the landscape between the section corners. That is, if the trees near two adjacent section corners described by the surveyors were of one species, then Fedkenheur speculated the area between the two corners was also covered by that species. He then adjusted his estimates based on topography. If the two adjacent corners are on high ground but the area between is swampy, then he knew the tree species in the swamp would be different than those recorded near the corners.

What did Fedkenheur find the landscape was like in the 1850s? Was it covered by the huge white pines we all imagine?

Not exactly.

Of the 34,000 acres in St. Croix State Park, about 1,000 acres were covered with the magnificent white pines of lore. They were growing in two parcels: one, of about 750 acres, was in the far northeast corner of the park and the other, of about 250 acres, was in the southeastern corner.

But the 1,000 acres of white pine account for only 3% of the park's land. What was growing on the rest?

There were two big parcels of Norway pine totaling about 3,700 acres. These trees were undoubtedly nearly as big and impressive as the white pines.

In addition, there were five parcels of mixed pine and hardwoods, covering a total of 7,500 acres. These parcels must have contained some huge pines as well as big oaks, maples and basswoods.

Jack pine, the pine that thrives on the poorest, sandy



An area in St. Croix State Park that had been used as a cow pasture is being restored to a jack pine savannah.

soil, covered a huge area around what is now the Park Headquarters. Fedkenheur estimated there was a total of 6,500 acres of jack pine. Interestingly, these trees were not all growing in a dense forest. Some of the jack pines were scattered, growing in what Fedkenheur called a woodland, and others were even more scattered and growing in what he called a savannah or barren.

DNR ecologist Ruth Thornton thinks the jack pine savannahs were some of the most interesting areas in the park because growing under and between the scattered jack pines were native prairie grasses. She says it is very unusual to find this combination.

Surprisingly, the most common tree in the St. Croix State Park of the 1850s was the tamarack. This tree, which is the only conifer that drops its needles in the fall, covered over 7,500 acres of the park land in nearly a dozen parcels. Notes made by the surveyors indicate the tamaracks, for unknown reasons, were in decline.

Forest Community	Acres		
	1853	2001	Change
Conifers (Pines, etc.)			
White Pine	1,000	0	-100%
Red Pine	3,700	125	-97%
Jack Pine Woodland & Forest	5,000	2,600	-47%
Jack Pine Barrens (Savannahs)	1,600	67	-96%
Pine-Hardwood mixed	7,500	1,000	-87%
Tamarack	9,000	500	-94%
Spruce	600	300	-49%
Deciduous (leaf-dropping)			
Aspen-Birch	1,200	9,500	+675%
Bottomland Hardwoods	2,500	2,300	-6%
Deciduous Forest / Woodland	0	4,500	
Forested / Shrub Swamp	0	7,000	
Emergent Marsh	0	1,500	
Developed Land	0	3,800	

Three other species the surveyors recorded in the 1850s were 2,500 acres of bottomland hardwoods, 600 acres of spruce and just 1,200 acres of aspen-birch.

Fast forward 150 years. How is the park different from what it was in the 1850s?

Today, the 1,000 acres of white pine are gone as is 97% of the red pine and 87% of the mixed pine and hardwood. The original 9,000 acres of tamarack is down to 500. There is some jack pine left, 2,700 acres of the original 6,500, but only 67 of those acres contain the rare jack pine barrens.

The table (below left) shows the big winners today are aspen, birch and other hardwoods – oak, maple and basswood. These deciduous species are now growing on much of the land that used to contain pines. The 7,000 acres of forested / shrub swamp bears woody plants that, in presettlement days, would have been burned off from fires started either naturally with lightning or by the Native Americans.

St. Croix State Park managers would like to restore the landscape to what it was in the 1850s. Depending on how aggressive they are, particularly with the use of fire as a management tool, this project could take from a few decades to a hundred years or more. If the project is successful, however, our great-grandchildren will be able to enjoy the landscape of St. Croix State Park as it was in the 1850s.



Black Walnuts Save the Brewery!

In the early 1970s most small breweries in the U.S. were facing hard times, mainly because of competition from the brewing giants, Anheuser Busch and Miller. Most went out of business.

In New Ulm, Schell's Brewery was facing the same difficulties. Fourth generation owner Warren Marti was struggling to find the money to make payroll. His solution: Harvest and sell the mature black walnut trees growing on the property!

Thanks to those trees, the employees were paid, the brewery survived and is flourishing today under fifth generation owner, Ted Marti.

Meet a Tree **White Oak**

White oak is an outstanding tree among all trees and is widespread across eastern North America and native to southeast Minnesota. Though rare, individual trees can be found as far north as Mille Lacs Lake. True white oak, not to be confused with bur oak, is a large, long-lived tree that can grow on a wide range of soils and sites. Trees can reach heights of 100 feet and up to 4 feet in diameter. The oldest tree on record lived a whopping 600 years! White oak generally has the reputation of being a slow-growing tree and with good reason. Among non-oak species, only hickory and beech have slower growth rates.

White oak flowers in the spring during leaf-out with acorns germinating almost immediately after falling to the ground in September or October. An individual tree will, on average, produce 10,000 acorns. Good acorn crops are irregular and occur only every 4 to 10 years, and some trees may go several years without producing any acorns. Good seed production occurs between the ages of 50 and 200 years.

Acorns are a valuable source of food for many species of wildlife including squirrels, blue jays, crows, red-headed woodpeckers, deer, turkey, quail, mice, chipmunks, ducks, and raccoons.

Oak wilt, a vascular fungus disease, is potentially the most destructive disease of both the red and white oaks. It is widely distributed throughout the Central States. White oak is less susceptible to oak wilt than the red oak species, and may lose only a limb at a time, or may sustain infection by the pathogen without ever showing symptoms.

Did you know? - More than 180 different kinds of birds and mammals use oak acorns as food!



MFA Meets with Minnesota's New State Forester

On a rainy June 14, 2012 morning, President John O'Reilly, Board members Gary Michael and Bruce ZumBahlen met with the new MN DNR's Forestry Director, Forrest Boe. The meeting's purpose was to inform the Director on MFA's mission and historical role in cooperating with the Division of Forestry's programs in support of private forest management (PFM) as well as to express concern on the future of the PFM program.

The Director clearly supports private forest management, but inherited a tough budget situation that resulted in a reduction to the PFM program by 75%. He showed interest in the role that the Sustainable Forest Incentive program plays in PFM. He announced that the Division of Forestry is now working on budget scenarios for the next biennium within the parameters given by the Governor's administration to the DNR. The Director wants to retain essential services during this tough budget climate so that the DNR's involvement in PFM can continue to play a significant role in the future. From MFA's viewpoint, there needs to be continuity in support of the PFM program if it is to be effective.

The Director said that some of the scenarios are draconian. He added that there may be a short window of time in August to view the draft budget scenarios for MFA's input before the DNR has to finalize its recommendations to the



Pictured left to right are Gary Michael, John O'Reilly, Forrest Boe and Bruce ZumBahlen.

Governor's administration. Forrest has made it a point to visit with the field organizations and forest industries. A discussion followed regarding the necessity of MFA being kept in the loop. After all, the Director and key Forestry Division staff meets with MN Forest Industry representatives on a quarterly basis; it would be nice to have a more frequent and higher level of communications with organizations involved in private forest management as well.

During the meeting, it was also announced that Lillian Baker, current PFM program supervisor, will be retiring on August 1, 2012 after 32 years with the Division of Forestry. We wish her well.

Another Major Timberland Owner Sells Out

By Bruce ZumBahlen, chair MFA Government Affairs Committee

Forest Capital Partners (FCP) sold their 1.88 million acres of timberlands. FCP acquired the lands in Minnesota from Boise Paper, International Falls. Most of the lands are in Koochiching and Itasca counties, with some in St. Louis County.

FCP has sold their lands in Oregon, Louisiana, Washington, and Idaho to the Hancock Timber Resources Group. FCP's 286,000 acres of timberlands in Minnesota was sold to the Molpus Woodlands Group along with some of FCP's remaining lands in Louisiana and Idaho.

What this means for the SFIA, I am not sure. You may recall that FCP (along with Potlatch and UPM-Blandin) were denied a total of \$8 million in SFIA payments under former Governor Pawlenty's un-allotment actions a couple years ago. His action capped their respective payments at \$100,000 each. Bolstered by the State Supreme Court finding that the Governor had exceeded his authority in doing that, the three companies sued the State. Based on the law in effect at the time of the Governor's action, a district court found in favor of the companies and were owed the \$8 million. The State appealed that decision.

The Minnesota Legislature ultimately ratified the Governor's action so the \$100,000 cap per claimant is now in statute. As part of that law change, that same law allowed the companies to withdraw their SFIA lands without penalty. FCP and Potlatch did just that.

Recently, the Court of Appeals has now found in favor of the State. The companies won't get that \$8 million.

Thus, along with the sour forest product economy, it really makes ownership of timberlands by forest industries problematic. It puts pressure on them to sell or develop their remaining lands not covered by conservation easements. That wouldn't be good for maintaining a viable forestry sector. We need a healthy forest industry if family forest owners are to have a market for their timber.

One of the legislative session's outcomes was that the Minnesota Forest Resources Council (MFRC) was directed to study and recommend policies and incentives to help

Continued on page 8



Photos from our Annual Banquet and Spring Field Day

See many more at www.MinnesotaForestry.org



Top left: Logging Camp Company Store
 Above: Logging Camp Mess Hall
 Far left: Carol & George Anderson, Wrenshall
 Left: Master of Ceremonies, Chuck Erickson, Battle Lake



Right: Fayeth Witkowski, Brainerd, with Mickey Smith, Emily

MFA meets with Minnesota Forest Resources Council

The same morning that John O'Reilly, Gary Michael and Bruce ZumBahlen met with State Forester Forrest Boe, the group also met with Calder Hibbard, Policy Analyst with the Minnesota Forest Resources Council (MFRC). Calder set up the meeting to seek MFA's input on a study to recommend policies and incentives for private woodlands that would provide for healthy and robust forests. The study is an unfunded legislative mandate that was initiated by the Minnesota Forest Industries during the last legislative session.

While no new funding was provided to do the study, the MFRC does have some leftover funds from other projects that it can use. Too, some work from other MFRC studies done earlier, such as the one that addressed parcelization of private lands, will help in completing the study by the due date of January 15, 2013. The MFRC will be seeking the input from other stakeholders as well, and the MFRC staff expects to present their recommendations to the full Council at their November 2012 meeting. Prior to that time, MFA will have an opportunity to review the draft recommendations. One of the points that John, Gary, and Bruce raised with Calder was that it is important to provide a continuity of the assistance programs to landowners if any program for them is to succeed. Stay tuned as we learn more.



Above: Bruce ZumBahlen, Cottage Grove, Senator Tom Saxhaug, Grand Rapids, Darrell Lauber, Grand Rapids and Jim Ballenthin, Backus



Right: Bob Asproth, Mahtowa

New Formula for Calculating DNR Stewardship Plan Writing Fees

\$50 registration fee and then \$300 plus \$7 per acre.

Number of Acres	Gross Fee	Cost per Acre	With SFIA at \$7/acre/year, number of years to recover fee
20	\$490	\$24.50	3.5
40	630	15.75	2.2
80	910	11.37	1.6
160	1,470	9.18	1.3
320	2,590	8.09	1.1
640	4,830	7.55	1

This schedule applies to both new plans and plans being updated by a DNR forester. Private consulting foresters, who are currently writing 80% of the plans, are not bound by this formula and are free to charge more or less.

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



Here's what's new at MyMinnesotaWoods:

- Extension's 2012 woodland webinar series
- Dealing with storm-damaged trees and woods
- KAXE Radio's Watch Your Ash campaign
- Expiring Conservation Reserve Program Options
- Know thy woods: On the value of monitoring

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.



Upcoming Events

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

August Biomass Utilization for Energy Workshop and Field Tour

- Thursday, August 30, 2012, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- The workshop is intended for private woodland landowners, natural resource professionals, loggers, energy intensive businesses, and the general public. The event will be held at the University of Minnesota's Clouet Forestry Center.
- Learn about a local, renewable and clean alternative energy source that may affect you and your community. Woody biomass has the potential to become a very viable energy source. See what you potentially have for woody biomass and what you can do to help establish a market in your community. This workshop will provide participants the avenues to understand recent developments in bioenergy from production, utilization, marketing, and conversion technologies.
- This is a Woodland Advisor Program with two elective credits. Continuing Education credits will also be available for Certified Foresters and Forest Stewardship Plan Preparers.
- The cost is \$30 to be paid at the door and includes lunch, snacks and workshop materials. To register contact Sue Crotty at 218-828-2275, or via email at crott012@umn.edu. For workshop content questions contact Diomy Zamora, U of M Extension, 612-626-9272, zamor015@umn.edu.

Another Major Timberland continued from page 6

Minnesota's private forest lands remain healthy and support a robust economy. From my perspective, it is important that Minnesota's forest industries are able to have the same breaks on property taxes and be covered by incentive programs as family owned woodlands.

The MFA Government Affairs Committee will watch as things develop to ensure the interests of private woodland owners, and the Minnesota forest economy, are considered.