



Minnesota Woodlands

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

www.MinnesotaForestry.org

Minnesota Forestry Association (MFA)

Information@

MinnesotaForestry.org

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MFA Board Meetings

Cambridge DNR

Office, 10 am – 3 pm

• April 14, 2015

Conference Calls

8 – 9 am

• May 12, 2015

Annual Meeting:

May 15, 2015, 4:30 pm

Sawmill Inn,

Grand Rapids

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Untapped Potential

Ah, tapping time. Loading up the spiles, bags and buckets. Sharpening the 7/16th inch drill bit. Trudging through the woods, looking for the telltale white bark of the birch tree.

Birch tree? Minnesotans may be very familiar with tapping sugar maple trees to collect the sweet sap used to make maple syrup, but the birch tree remains virtually untapped...both literally and economically.

A recent internet article in *Good News from Finland* predicted "birch sap, or birch water, to be the coconut water of 2015; a world wide drinking trend." The Finnish company Nordic Koivu has a jump on the trend, exporting its first bottled birch sap in 2001. Owners Arto and Susanna Maaranen sell certified organic, preservative free, non-pasteurized sap all over the world. While there is no scientific research on its health benefits, there are some who see potential in the naturally occurring nutrients present in the sap.

According to retired U.S. forester, birch expert and MFA member John Zasada, "It's not that the value of birch sap is totally unknown here. I've run in to people in Grand Rapids who have collected birch sap for years and make ice cubes to add to their drinks, or use it topically to sooth the skin. But the practice isn't very wide spread." More often than not in the U.S., if someone is tapping birch trees, it's to produce birch syrup as they do in Alaska. Still, birch sap products are a far distant second to maple.

Currently, most bottled birch sap is produced and consumed in Europe, Russia and Asia, but there are efforts afoot to change that. This summer, Paul Smith College in New York State will hold the First International Birch Sap & Syrup Conference in June, bringing together experts and interested people to exchange information, ideas, and discuss forming an international birch sap and syrup organization. Is there potential for birch sap production in Minnesota?

"Certainly there are areas in Minnesota with large stands of birch that could have economic potential. But even if not developed on a large scale, I think there's still great value in tapping just one or two birch trees. Anytime the private landowner can find another way to connect to the trees in his or her woods, they enhance their experience and relationship to the land," said Zasada.

Birch has been a very poorly managed species in most Minnesota forests, and Zasada would encourage any interest in this beautiful tree. "You'll find that birch produce an enormous amount of sap at 1% sugar content compared to the sweeter sugar maple. They start their run right after the maple trees are done when temperatures stay above freezing. Once they start, they run 24/7. Go ahead and tap that birch tree this year; just be prepared for a lot of sap!"



Minnesota Forestry
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Finally – a SFIA Bill

Like the children's story of the little train engine struggling to climb a steep hill saying "I think I can, I think I can" and then getting to the top finding itself suddenly racing down the other side of the hill, such is the legislative ride of seeking reform to the Sustainable Forest Incentive Act (SFIA).

A short history. It goes back to the 2011 legislative session when MFA backed a bill to reform the SFIA but having the bill die when another proposal was introduced to repeal the program. That was followed in 2013 by the Office of the Legislative Auditor's (OLA) evaluation of the SFIA that addressed many of the same issues that our 2011 bill attempted to address. Then in late December 2013, Sen. Saxhaug and Rep. Dill requested the Dept. of Revenue (DOR), the Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR), and MN Forest Resources Council (MFRC) to convene a stakeholder group to address the OLA's evaluation and recommend changes to the SFIA.

The MFRC stakeholder group started their work during the previous legislative session, finally finishing their work early in the current legislative session - leaving it up to the DOR and the DNR to draft a bill that would address the group's recommendations. When the agencies balked and the DNR's State Forester suggested someone else needed to take the lead, MFA jumped at the chance.

With the hard work of Kevin Walli, MFA's lobbyist and others, Senate File 1414 and House File 1410 were introduced the first week of March, 2015. The bill incorporates elements of MFA's 2011 session's bill, many of the OLA's recommendations, and most of the MFRC work group's recommendations.

And, following the bill's introduction just the week before, it received its first hearing in the Senate Environment and Energy Committee on March 10th with Bruce ZumBahlen, MFA's Government Relations Chair, testifying in support of the bill along with others. At the start of the hearing, a 'delete all' amendment (i.e. a replacement) was passed to incorporate a number of positive changes (e.g. an incentive system for longer term duration covenants, and a waiver of penalties when enrolled properties need to withdraw to allow a permanent conservation easement placed on the property.)

Because a flurry of amendments caused some confusion in the committee, at this point we are concerned key provisions may have to be revisited. The amended bill was unanimously passed and will now go to the Senate Tax Committee where we will be prepared to address any needed changes. Stay tuned. You can follow the progress of the legislation by accessing the bill's status at the Legislature's website: www.leg.state.mn.us and clicking on either SF 1414 or HF 1410 under the bills introduced during the 2015 session.

Some other bills of interest that you might want to follow are SF 903 that would absolve property owners from having to post "No Trespassing" signs, thus requiring users of a private woodlands to obtain permission of a property owner in all cases; and, the Governor's riparian buffer bill (HF 1534) that would require a 50-foot buffer of perennial vegetation to be established along public waters by Sept. 1, 2016.



Bruce ZumBahlen

It's Time to Prepare for Tick Season

With warmer weather upon us, the ticks will be out and about. Lyme disease is a serious threat to both humans and their pets. Minnesota is a high-risk state, ranking in the top 10 for number of reported cases annually. Please read the enclosed brochure from MN Lyme Association for information about this disease. Don't forget to treat your pet as well.



Boots on Your Ground

Stanley Musielewicz is the latest MFA member to take advantage of the Boots on Your Ground program. He and forester Dean Makey recently spent time on his 80 acres near Little Falls.

After a brief discussion, they headed to the woods, first looking at a marsh area where the US Fish and Wildlife will help in the construction of a water impoundment across a drainage. It's hoped that the structure will control the level of water without flooding adjacent trees.

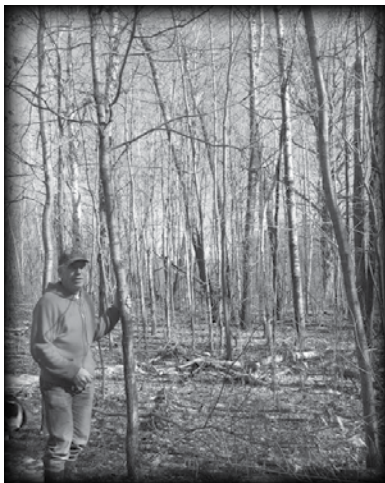
They also looked at a 10-year-old Norway and white pine stand with tremendous height growth and excellent survival due to Stanley's efforts at controlling grass competition with chemical release as well as bud capping to prevent deer damage.

Dean observed a pocket of mortality in a 30-year-old red pine plantation caused by pine bark beetles, and suggested Stanley work to control the beetles with funnel traps. He also advised taking samples from dead branches on live trees to test for a possible Diplodia infection and recommended a tree health expert to Stanley.

He also encouraged Stanley to document the work he's done to improve the quality of the wood.

They finished the day in an area that Stanley is working to release natural white pine seedlings and natural oak seedlings and saplings by cutting and overtopping adjacent aspen and birch to allow more sunlight.

If you are considering taking advantage of this popular program, send in an application soon before funds run out! A copy of the application can be downloaded from our website: www.MinnesotaForestry.org.



Above: Stanley Musielewicz with released oak sapling.

Right: Stanley with 30-year-old red pine plantation.

Photos by Dean Makey.



Thinking of getting a BOYG visit? Go to www.MinnesotaForestry.org or call MFA's office at 218-326-6486 for more information and to obtain an application.

Counties Covered by BOYG

Aitkin
Anoka
Becker
Beltrami
Benton
Big Stone
Brown
Carlton
Carver
Cass
Chisago
Clay
Clearwater
Cook
Crow Wing
Dakota
Douglas
Fillmore
Grant
Goodhue
Hennepin
Houston
Hubbard
Isanti
Itasca
Kanabec
Kittson
Koochiching
Lake
Lake of the Woods
Mahnommen
Marshall
McLeod
Meeker
Mille Lacs
Morrison
Nicollet
Norman
Olmsted
Ottertail
Pennington
Pine
Pope
Ramsey
Red Lake
Redwood
Renville
Roseau
Scott
Sherburne
Sibley
St. Louis
Stearns
Stevens
Todd
Traverse
Wabasha
Wadena
Washington
Wilkin
Winona
Wright

Wabasha County Forestry Day

One particular thought kept coming back to a young, DNR forester in 1977, "I want people to plant more trees." Simple enough, but exactly how is that idea transmitted to the private land owners to result in actual trees in the ground?

That young forester was Terry Helbig, and he answered that question by starting the Wabasha County Forestry Day which just concluded its 39th annual gathering. "Back in 1977, I was just beginning to work with private land owners, and I knew there was valuable information that needed to get to them to encourage more tree planting and better forestry management. I started Forestry Day as a vehicle to do that."

The first few years' programs reflected that initial inspiration with presentations on tree planting, wind breaks and planting black walnut trees. The program has expanded over the years to cover all things forest-related, with this year's main topic being "Birds of Backyards and Forests." Whatever the topic, the main focus continues to be putting good information in the hands of private land owners.

Helbig and other organizers of the event have learned a lot about what makes a gathering of this sort work and what doesn't, and they encourage other MFA members to start or join a local chapter and sponsor a forestry day of their own. "Attendance comes and goes, but we've leveled off at about 50 people each year. When we first started, we had a changing date and location. It didn't take us long to figure out that the date needed to stay the same. Now people know that Wabasha Forestry Day will be the second Friday in February and they set aside the date." Helbig explained that they rotate the location to different facilities throughout the county to attract the person who might not want to drive far, but will give it a try in their own area.

In addition to the speakers and an hour lunch break with lively discussions, every year the event recognizes a Woodland Manager of the Year. This award goes to a woodland owner with property in Wabasha County who has done an outstanding job managing their land. This year's award went to Harold and Judith Sheahan.

The success of the event doesn't rest with Helbig alone. Through the years, the DNR, Wabasha Soil Conservations District, Wabasha Forestry Committee and MFA have all had a hand in organizing, supporting and presenting at the event. "I can also say, without reservation, that free coffee and donuts in the morning doesn't hurt attendance," said Helbig. While the event used to be free, the cost is now \$15, which includes lunch, four speakers on various topics, and handouts and door prizes.

Having retired in 2012, Helbig remains actively involved in the event but is also working with other interested organizers so the event will continue. "Next year will mark our 40th straight year of Wabasha County Forestry Day. That's "XL" in Roman numerals. I'm excited to see what we come up with to celebrate an extra-large milestone!"



Terry Helbig, founder of the event and Wabasha SWCD board member.



Roland Wood presents Wabasha Woodland Manager of the Year award to Harold and Judith Sheahan.



Tim Schlagenhaft discussed how to restore bottom-land forests.

MNWWN Timber Harvest Tour

By Jan Bernu, MNWWN Northeast

On February 28th, the MN Women's Woodland Network (MNWWN)-NE local network sponsored a tour of an active timber harvest at the Maki Family LLC property near Esko, MN. Peggy Meseroll, MFA Board member and member of the WWN-NE local network, and her sister Mary are members of the Maki family and hosted this tour. Jan Bernu, Two By Forestry consulting forester and contracted forester for the Maki family led the tour and discussion on "Private Timber Sale Nuts & Bolts Basics." Jan is also leading the WWN-NE group and arranged this tour. There were 12 participants, including three from the Metro Area MNWWN, who braved the cold temperatures to learn about timber sales, timber harvesting and woodland management.

Bell Timber bought the Maki timber sale, which is currently being harvested by No Sweat Logging. The participants were actually able to observe an active cut-to-length harvesting operation and received on-site information regarding the active timber harvest. The Makis are thinning their pine stands to enhance the health and growth of the pine. The pine wood products include pulpwood, sawbolts/logs and telephone poles. They are also cutting some of the aspen to further enhance wildlife habitat for early successional wildlife species. This harvest will not only provide income from various timber products but enhances forest health and wildlife habitat.



MFA Board member Peggy Meseroll and sister Mary Maslowski. Photo by Ginger Kopp.

Photo below by Barb Spears.



Photo by Ginger Kopp.



Cambridge Woodland Owner Meeting

Three dozen private woodland owners participated in the 17th Annual Woodland Owner Meeting conducted by the Cambridge DNR Forestry Office on Thursday, February 26th. Subjects covered included The Fisher and Forest Management, Everything You Wanted to Know about Conservation Officers (Game Wardens), and a Landowner's Viewpoint presented by John Peterson, Delano.



DNR forester Art Widerstrom (above) put the meeting together with Greg Wuerflein.



Dr. Brett Butler, U.S. Forest Service, discussed his research on private woodland owners, who we are and what interests us.



DNR wildlife specialist Melissa Boehmer offered a wood duck house to anyone who could distinguish between an otter and a fisher pelt.





John Saxhaug, Minneapolis, is a former MFA board member and current chair of the Land Committee.

Forestry Grad School Journal

By John Saxhaug

Dear MFA Friends,

Spring Semester began toward the end of January, although with -30 degree wind chills it felt much closer to what used to be called "Winter Quarter." I made a change to my class plan, and instead of taking Science and Policy of Global Environmental Change, I decided to take Lee Frelich's Forest Fire and Disturbance

Ecology. In preparation for my graduate research project, I am considering doing some initial forest ecology study this summer on my 40-acre tree farm, 10 miles west of Hinckley. Lee's course should provide a framework for that. Observing the possible impacts of climate change on the interface between the Hardwood and Boreal Forest Biomes is a possible area of inquiry.

A fascinating map of Minnesota's pre-European vegetative cover created by Francis J. Marschner in 1930 from U.S. General Land Office Survey notes indicates Oak Openings and Barrens, and Big Woods in Kanabec County, not far from my property. Could changing temperatures and moisture conditions be moving these landscape types to the northeast?

One of the requirements for graduate students in Lee's classes is to give a 25-minute presentation to the class on material relevant to the course curriculum. He feels that a graduate student should have the ability to make a classroom presentation, and I agree. Utilizing a Power Point program makes presentations much easier than it was last century (20th Century) when overhead projectors and chalkboards were the norm. It is amazing how much material is available online, and how easily it can be inserted into a Power Point presentation. During the Landscape Ecology class last semester, I drew on my experience in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, giving a presentation on the Prairie Pothole Region of Minnesota. I surprised myself with the ease and effectiveness of the process. This semester, utilizing my work last year as Firewise Coordinator for Cook County, I will discuss the Firewise Program and the Wildland/Urban Interface.

Forestry Students are being offered qualification training for wildland firefighters by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources over Spring Break at Green Hall. Accepting the fact that I am past the prime for fire-fighting, my wife and I will instead be taking Amtrak to New Orleans. Life has its multiple trade-offs!

Take care,
John

You recently received the registration information for the **Gathering Partners in Natural Resources** Spring North Woods Conference. This is the MFA Annual Meeting and Spring Field Day event. Plan to attend this conference in Grand Rapids, Minnesota, May 15-17! For additional details, see www.MinnesotaForestry.org.

Friday, 8:30 am - 8:30 pm

- Friday's daytime events include pre-conference, workshops and field trips
- 4:30pm - MFA Annual Meeting
- 5:30pm Banquet, Awards Program with Keynote Speaker Mark Seeley

Saturday, 6 am - 11 pm

- Numerous educational sessions and field trips followed by a keynote address by John Latimer
- Social and music by Sam Miltich

Sunday, 8 am - 12:15 pm

- Educational sessions



Membership Application

For New and Renewing Members

Name _____

Name _____
(second person for Family membership)

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Please make any address changes above

Membership Categories

Renewing members, your membership will be extended by 12 or 36 months as you choose.

Category	One Year	3 years
Individual	<input type="checkbox"/> \$40	<input type="checkbox"/> \$120
Family	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$225
Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500 - \$1,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,500 - \$3,000
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> One-time payment of \$1,000**	
Perpetual*	<input type="checkbox"/> One-time payment of \$3,000**	

*Perpetual Membership is for any estate, corporation, limited liability company, limited liability partnership or similarly structured entity. A Perpetual Membership is entitled to one vote. Call MFA for more information.

**80% of dues from Life and Perpetual Memberships go into MFA's Endowment Fund.

Mail this application with your check to:

Minnesota Forestry Association
P.O. Box 496, Grand Rapids MN 55744

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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.

Friday, May 15, 2015

MFA's Annual Meeting, Banquet and Tree Farm Awards

- 4:30pm - Annual Meeting, 5:30pm Banquet, Awards Program
- Sawmill Inn, Grand Rapids

Friday-Sunday, May 15-17, 2015

Gathering Partners in Natural Resources

- 8:30am-8:30pm Friday
6am-11pm Saturday; 8am-12:15 Sunday
- Sawmill Inn, Grand Rapids
- MFA has teamed up with three other organizations to produce Gathering Partners of Natural Resources. Saturday is education day with over two dozen sessions scheduled at the Sawmill Inn and the Forest History Center.
- Register online at www.MinnesotaForestry.org.

Thursday, May 21, 2015

Woodland Restoration: Successful buckthorn, garlic mustard and other invasive species removal

- 2pm - 5pm
- Peterson Farm, 8910 Hwy 12, Delano MN
- Buckthorn and garlic mustard had heavily infested the woods of the Peterson Farm. Learn from the actions that John & Mary Peterson took to rescue, restore and protect their woods.
- RSVP Barb Spears at 651-328-0463 or barb@twflc.com

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Fillmore SWCD Annual Forestry Field Day

- 5:30pm, Chatfield Fish and Game Club, 22143 County Road 102, Chatfield, MN 55923.
- For more details visit www.fillmoreswcd.org or contact the SWCD at 507-765-3878 ext. 3.

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

MyMinnesotaWoods.org
Your source for woodland stewardship advice



Thinking of harvesting timber from your land?

Call Before You Cut

You will be sent a packet of information with no cost or obligation to you.

218-326-6486

MFA's Forester Phone Line

A free service for MFA members only!
Call for an appointment with the forester:
218-326-6486