



Minnesota Forestry Association

www.MinnesotaForestry.org

Spring 2024

MINNESOTA Woodlands

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

Minnesota Forestry Association (MFA)

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MFA Newsletter Vol. 26 No. 2 Spring 2024

The Minnesota Woodlands newsletter is published by the Minnesota Forestry Association.

For more information, check us out on facebook and our website.

Cost share?
Carbon dashboards?
What tree is that?
Events and much more!

 MinnesotaForestry
MinnesotaForestry.org

Away from home for a time? Please contact the MFA office if you'll be away from home for an extended time and let us know when you'll be back. We'll hold onto the newsletter until you return so you won't miss a single issue! Email info@minnesotaforestry.org or call 218-879-5100.

SAF

If you head to your browser and do a search for the acronym "SAF" you will likely find a familiar definition "Society of American Foresters . . . *the national organization of accredited and admired forestry professionals committed to excellence in sustainable forestry and natural resource management.*

In recent months, however, that SAF search is going to bring up another definition of the acronym: **Sustainable Aviation Fuel**. It is now a buzzword among those very professionals who manage the forested lands of Minnesota and the nation.

For purposes of this article, "SAF" will be referring to sustainable aviation fuel – an alternative fuel that reduces emissions from air transportation. It is made from non-petroleum feedstocks . . . in other words, from raw material that supplies or fuels an engine or an industrial process. *SAF can reduce the lifecycle carbon emissions of flying by more than 80 percent—making SAF the best decarbonization lever the aviation industry has to reach net zero. Yet, it is said that current SAF global production is inadequate to power the world's commercial airlines for even a single day.*

Commercial flights are currently permitted to fly with a blend of SAF and conventional fossil-based kerosene of up to 50%, to ensure compatibility with aircraft, engines and fuelling systems. The industry is working towards commercial aircraft being permitted to fly on 100% SAF in the near future. This is an important goal in regards to the reduction of emissions and climate mitigation. Foresters and land managers are particularly tuned into the attention paid to SAF because wood serves as a potential ideal feedstock for producing fuels. Woody biomass based aviation fuels have the potential to increase the rate of forest management, while offsetting fossil carbon emissions, and sequestering and storing more carbon in trees and harvested wood products.

Wood contains a rich source of carbon (a major feedstock for petrochemicals) and has the potential to replace petrochemicals produced from fossil fuels.

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Minnesota Forestry Association

2024 Board of Directors

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president@minnesotaforestry.org

Vice President
vacant

John Bathke, Treasurer
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Secretary
vacant

**Stan Grossman,
Sergeant-at-arms**
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Dave Roerick, Past President
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droerick@gmail.com

For the following Board members' contact information, see www.MinnesotaForestry.org or call MFA at 218-879-5100.

Ryan Rothstein

Jennifer Wahls

Greg Wuerflein

Ex-Officio Board Members:

Jim Lemmerman

John Carlson

Bruce ZumBahlen

**MFA Board Meetings
Conference Calls, 8 – 9 am**

- April 9, 2024
- May 14, 2024
- June 11, 2024
- July 9, 2024
- August 13, 2024

Primary Affiliate Representatives

Kathleen Preece: Minnesota Forest Resources Partnership

Dennis McDougal: U.S. Forest Service

Anna Stockstad: University of Minnesota

Jaime Thibodeaux: Minnesota Forest Resources Council

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Board Updates

The Ballots Are In!

By Past President Dave Roerick

Congratulations to MFA Board incumbents Stan Grossman, Brian Huberty, Ryan Rothstein and Greg Wuerflein, and new board member Jennifer Wahls for being elected to a three-year term effective immediately.

In addition, we had a couple of folks who were nominated without being on the ballot. I will follow up with the individuals to see if there is interest for them to serve on the board of directors in the future.

Also, thanks to the members who left a comment on the backside of your ballot to let us know what you are thinking. A few comments included:

I appreciate the newsletter. I always learn from it!

I would like to see more conferences or field days with MFA.

I completed a stewardship plan and timber harvest as a result of MFA.

Love being a member of this wonderful association. I've done some CBYC visits. Keep up the good work.

Love the newsletter and am very interested in plot-based inventory for my property.

Thanks to the newly elected and existing board members for serving the landowners of Minnesota.

The Infrastructure Project - CBYC 3.0

Past President Dave Roerick provides an update on the Infrastructure Project. As you recall, the Minnesota Forestry Association received a legislatively approved grant in the amount of \$150,000 to develop and implement a project focused on YOU – the private landowner.

The 'floating of ideas' and 'meetings' have begun to create a Geospatial database to be used by private landowners. The database will be built using the open-sourced platform called FuzionView. It will begin with a pilot project in North Central Minnesota that will look to enhance and expand on MFA's existing Call Before You Cut program. The goal is to provide a repeatable framework to increase sustainable forest management on family forestlands statewide.

A few of the identified tasks to start with, include:

- Strategically targeting and offering a Call Before You Cut visit in areas of existing timber sales on public or industry lands.
- Follow up with existing Call Before You Cut recipients in targeted areas to see if they pursued any follow up activities. A variety

of assistance options may be offered for landowners to move forward if they are interested.

- Develop methods to increase chances of low volume timber sales to be sold on the market. An example would be to lump low volume timber sales from multiple landowners in the same geographic area.
- An online market place for landowners will be developed to increase awareness of private land timber sales available for purchase. It will allow landowners to more easily connect with loggers and timber buyers. It may also include a want ads section of special timber products and non-timber forest products and related forestry equipment.

We are also looking forward to connecting with landowners who have expressed interest in the (PBI) Plot Based Inventory program and the research project going on in the Upper Mississippi Watershed.

If you have thoughts to share or interest in engaging, please feel free to connect with us at info@minnesotaforestry.org or by calling MFA at 218 879-5100.

Bylaw Changes... Dear Members

We would like to inform you that our 2017 MFA Bylaws have undergone comprehensive updates and revisions to align with current organizational and functional requirements. To facilitate your review and voting process, a draft of the updated bylaws has been made available on the MFA website.

Access the document at
www.minnesotaforestry.org/bylaws

Please note that this is a 'blind' website not directly linked from our main site. On the bylaws website, you will find four essential button links:

- Current MFA Bylaws
- Proposed MFA Bylaws with Edits
- Proposed MFA Bylaws 'clean' (with all edits accepted for an easier read)
- Voting

If you prefer a hard copy of the bylaws mailed to you, kindly send an email to president@minnesotaforestry.org, including your name and mailing address

To cast your vote, you have two convenient options:

- Mail-in Vote: You can mail your completed voting form to the address provided on the form.
- Email Vote: Alternatively, you can email your completed voting form to vote@minnesotaforestry.org.



Please ensure that your vote is submitted by May 1, 2024

Your active participation in this voting process is crucial, and we appreciate your dedication to shaping the future of our organization. If you have any questions or require further assistance, feel free to reach out to us.

Thank you for your commitment to the Minnesota Forestry Association.

Sincerely,
MFA Board

Bylaws Ballot

_____ I accept the proposed changes to the Minnesota Forestry Association Bylaws.

_____ I do not accept the proposed changes to the Minnesota Forestry Association Bylaws.

Please return this page:
Fold along dashed lines on mailing panel and tape shut.

Or scan and email to
vote@minnesotaforestry.org.

Thank you for your participation!



CALL 218-879-5100

Tape Here

Tape Here

Tape Here

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

Return Address (Optional)

Affix a
1st Class
Stamp
Here

TO:

MINNESOTA FORESTRY ASSOCIATION
ATTN: BYLAWS CHANGE
PO BOX 6060
GRAND RAPIDS, MN 55744-6060

Any comments you'd like to add? Put them here and then fold this side in first.



Photo courtesy of Geospatial Insurance Consortium (gic.org)

Although it may seem a ‘long time ago,’ the drastic wildfires in Lahaina, on the island of Maui, was less than a year ago. The inferno comes to mind as we face our own ‘wildfire season’ in Minnesota.

If you recall, the Maui fire reduced the historic town of Lahaina into ash. But did you hear about the ‘red-roofed house’ that was seemingly untouched by the devastation around it? Photos of the wooden house went viral as the homeowner reported his own incredulous wonder at his house being spared.

Professional fire gurus found it difficult to explain the survival of the home in a fire that obliterated hundreds of structures around it. A National Public Radio interview with the homeowners has the family’s ‘take’ on why their home may have been spared:

The house has roots dating to 1925. After Millikin and his wife bought it in 2021, they finished a restoration project in 2022.

“We removed five layers of asphalt that were on the roof,” Millikin said. When the new metal roof was installed, he added, it included an air pocket to allow heat to dissipate. At the ground level, they removed all vegetation along the house’s dripline and added a stone buffer; they had removed foliage around the house because they wanted to take preventative action against termites spreading to the house’s wood frame. The changes, while minor, ended up being critical to keeping the home from catching ablaze.

Whether fire prevention was the goal or not, the Colorado State Forest Service stressed the importance of steps, like removing foliage near your home, to reduce your home’s ability to ignite.

Minnesota is very fortunate (and progressive) when it comes to considering the potential impact of wild fire on structures and forested lands.

According to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, as more homes are built in the woods and fields of Minnesota, the existing firefighting resources are less able to protect everyone’s property while trying to control a wildfire. The wildland-urban interface (WUI) is a zone where homes, structures, or other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or areas with vegetative fuels (grasses, shrubs, etc.). In Minnesota, approximately 15-30% of homes are in a WUI.

Homes close to evergreens and the tall grasses of prairies or marshes are most at risk. Making your home able to survive an approaching wildfire is the goal of the Firewise program.

Minnesota has adopted the National Firewise USA Program. The Minnesota Firewise Program works with homeowners and communities to help prepare for and prevent catastrophic wildfires. The program offers help for: homeowners, communities, and landscapers/contractors.

Check it out:
www.dnr.state.mn.us/firewise/index

University of Minnesota Cloquet Forestry Center Transfer Update

By MFA President Brian Huberty

On February 13, 2024, the University of Minnesota held a listening session at the Cloquet Forestry Center as to a planned transfer to the Fond du Lac Band. University of Minnesota past President Joan Gabel proposed over a year ago the return of the 3,400-acre Cloquet Forestry Center to the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa. The university has held the land since 1909.

Discussions with the Fond du Lac Band began in 2019. Gabel emphasized the need to address complex issues, including state-owned portions and ongoing research. The university continues to explore alternative locations for research, education and outreach but there currently are not any firm plans on how to replace these functions. The university is also seeking a memorandum of understanding with the Fond du Lac Band to continue

some research on the land. The Fond du Lac Band sees the return as reclaiming their homeland. The move aligns with the university's efforts to address historical injustices and improve relationships with tribal nations. The timeline for the transfer remains uncertain, but the university views it as a historic step in building stronger connections with indigenous communities.

Following is a link to a notice of the February 13 listening session that was held. It contains some facts about this ongoing story.

twin-cities.umn.edu/news-events/public-listening-session-about-future-land-cloquet-forestry-center

SAF continued from page 1

So how does this work?

SAF can be blended at different levels with limits of 10% to 50%, depending on the feedstock and production methods. SAF production is in its early stages, with two known commercial producers. More producers are expected to begin production in coming years; many airlines have signed agreements with existing and future SAF producers to utilize hundreds of millions of gallons of these fuels.

The international aviation industry has set an aspirational goal to reach **net zero carbon by 2050**. It has been suggested that SAF presents the best near-term opportunity to meet these goals. A Sustainable Aviation Fuel Grant Challenge was announced in 2021 brings together multiple federal agencies for the purpose of expanding domestic consumption to 3 billion gallons in 2030 and 35 billion gallons in 2050 with a goal of achieving at least a 50% reduction in lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions.

A first-of-its-kind coalition is launching in Minnesota to scale SAF with the urgency commercial aviation needs to reach net zero by 2050. Through the GREAT MSP Partnership, Bank of America, Delta Air Lines, Ecolab and Xcel Energy have established the Minnesota SAF Hub – the first large-scale SAF Hub in the U.S. with key players committed to scaling SAF production to replace conventional jet fuel.

The company, Comstock Fuels, is working to produce both renewable diesel and sustainable aviation fuel from woody biomass. Comstock has a research and development lab in Wausau, Wisconsin and is starting a plant in Sweden. Comstock wants to produce SAF in Minnesota (and probably Wisconsin) for the proposed SAF hub in MSP. Here is their website <https://comstockfuels.com/>

The Lake States (Minnesota, Michigan, Wisconsin) region holds 54.8 million acres of forest and offers the potential to meet the increasing demand for sustainable energy through forest biomass, according to the *Journal of Forestry*.

According to a position paper by the 'other SAF' (The Society of American Foresters), *SAF encourages the creation and enhancement of local and national policies that support the development of markets for fuel, heat, and power from sustainably sourced woody biomass. SAF also supports continued investment in forest products research and development to support more resilient supplies and markets. Properly designed policies, including equitable treatment to other net carbon neutral renewable energy sources (e.g., solar and wind power), that incentivize the use of wood for energy can increase energy independence and contribute to a thriving US forest industry.*

Data for this article was derived from the following sources:

- Alternative Fuels Data Center
- Greater MSP
- *Journal of Forestry*, July 2023

The 'not so good' that lies ahead!

You have heard this before, but it is worth repeating: Prune oaks now to avoid oak wilt infection.

The unusually warm winter might leave more than a mark on the record books – it could hasten invasive oak wilt infection risk.

Oak wilt, a non-native fungal disease, is spread when sap-feeding beetles become active in warm weather and carry oak wilt spores from one tree to the next. These beetles are attracted to the sap from fresh wounds, such as those made by pruning. Once beetles introduce the fungus, it frequently spreads to neighboring oaks underground through connected roots.

“Don’t wait until after February to trim oak trees – it might be too late,” said Brian Schwingle, DNR forest health coordinator. “Oak wilt is widespread in parts of southeastern Minnesota, and pockets of disease extend to north and west of Brainerd. We can slow this northern progression by pruning oaks now, when the risk of oak wilt transmission is zero.”

Typically, April through July is the period of highest risk for oak wilt to spread. However, this winter is anything but typical. If late February and early March bring high temperatures approaching 60 F for a few consecutive days, sap-feeding beetles will become active much earlier than usual and oak wilt risk will increase.

If people must prune or cut oaks during a riskier period, they can greatly reduce infection risk by immediately applying a pruning paint to the fresh cut or stump. Check the status of oak wilt risk at the University of Minnesota’s oak wilt in Minnesota website: <https://extension.umn.edu/plant-diseases/oak-wilt-minnesota> before working on oak trees.

DNR also cautions homeowners, campers, cabin owners, visitors, and hunters against moving oak firewood, which can spread oak wilt over long distances. Use firewood sourced onsite or certified by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

And then there’s EAB!

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) has confirmed EAB in Crow Wing County (January 2024). There are now 48 counties in the state with known EAB infestations. The MDA has enacted a quarantine to limit the movement of firewood and ash material into Minnesota and out of infested counties. The MDA issues quarantines for all counties known to have EAB to reduce the risk of further spreading the tree-killing insect.

Virtual informational meetings for residents and tree care professionals have recently been held. If you listen in on YouTube, you will find some great information:

Previously Recorded Informational Meetings

- Emerald Ash Borer Virtual Informational Meeting - Crow Wing County (*Recorded webinar coming soon)
- Emerald Ash Borer Virtual Informational Meeting - Cass, Isanti, and Kanabec Counties Recorded Webinar
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7V1NI-h1b5U>
- Emerald Ash Borer Virtual Informational Meeting - Morrison County Recorded Webinar
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EVFrOf-6-Ms>

Quick facts

- **Oak wilt is a fatal tree disease** caused by a fungus that affects all species of oak trees.
- **Oak wilt spreads** from diseased to healthy trees either below ground via connected roots or above ground by insects.
- **DO NOT prune oaks** from April through July to prevent infection by sap beetles. Immediately cover unavoidable wounds with a latex-based paint or shellac.
- **DO NOT move logs or firewood** from recently wilted oaks, and don’t move fresh oak firewood from oak wilt-infected areas.

Common myths about EAB

MYTH: We can’t do anything about EAB anyway, we might as well let it spread.

Emerald ash borer is a devastating pest; our choices now for ash trees near an outbreak are either treat or remove.

MYTH: EAB has no impact on human health; it just kills trees.

Ash trees killed by EAB dry out quickly and become hazard trees in less time than after a normal tree death. Hazard trees are trees that can be dangerous because of the possibility of them falling over or large branches breaking off, with a potential to cause personal injury to people. In addition, a recent study by the U.S. Forest Service found that the decrease in tree numbers due to EAB in the Detroit, Michigan area (where EAB started) caused an increase in human mortality related to cardiovascular and respiratory systems.

Creature Feature

Long time MFA member/forester Bruce Zumbahlen sent an interesting article on porcupines, published in our neighboring state publication: Wisconsin Woodlands. This was a good prompt to include a "Creature Feature" in this issue of MFA Woodland News. Thanks for the suggestion, Bruce!

Instead of repeating what Wisconsin had to say about porcupines, we include a feature about the porcupine's fellow rodent: the groundhog!

Both creatures belong to the Order Rodentia which contains mammals with a single pair of continuously growing incisors in each of the upper and lower jaws. Included in this group with porcupines and groundhogs are beavers, rats, mice, guinea pigs, and squirrels. (By the way, "woodchuck" is just another name for the groundhog.)

KAXE Northern Community Public Radio recently shared some fun facts about groundhogs. According to Phenologist John Latimer, the groundhog is a true hibernator and is no closer to consciousness than most high school students during the first hour of a classroom day! John suggested that we are more likely to see a skunk out wandering on Groundhog's Day (February 2), than to see a groundhog!

Since the groundhog cannot store its main food source during the winter (green plant material – it would rot underground), they eat prodigious amounts of food while they are awake and prior to hibernation. During the winter, they reduce all bodily functions to a minimum (when they are awake and active, their hearts beat 80 to 90 beats a minute; when they are hibernating, their heartbeat slows to four beats and their body temperature drops from 98 degrees to around 40 degrees.)

The groundhog's blood contains a special substance called HIT or 'hibernating inducement trigger.' Blood removed from a hibernating groundhog and injected back into a groundhog in the spring would return it immediately into hibernation.

They can swim, they can climb trees and, they have quite sophisticated living quarters with burrows so complex that each has its own 'bathroom' chamber!



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MFA's Forester Phone Line

A free service for MFA members only!

Call for an appointment with
the forester: 218-879-5100



**MINNESOTA
WOODS**

For MFA members, the two best online sources of woodland information are the MFA website at minnesotaforestry.org, and the University of Minnesota Extension Forestry website at myminnesotawoods.umn.edu.