



Minnesota forests

www.mnforest.com

The MFA works on behalf of family forest owners, through education and advocacy, to promote stewardship of woodlands.

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MFA Newsletter Vol. 10 No. 5

The Minnesota Forests Newsletter is published by the Minnesota Forestry Association.

MFA Meetings Regular Board Meetings

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

- October 22

MN Invasive Species Conference,

October 26-29 in
Duluth at DECC. Go to
www.minnesotaswcs.
org for more
information.

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Everyone Wins: Minnesota's Newest Landowner Tax Law

Do you have a forest stewardship plan in place for your woodlands? If so, your commitment may pay off in hard cash. As reported in our last newsletter, the property tax reduction for family forest owners passed this year. MFA lobbied hard for this legislation.

What: Minnesota Woodland Owners Property Tax Break (the new Class 2c Managed Forest Land).

Why: To preserve Minnesota's family-owned forest base and its ecological benefits using property tax incentives.

Who Qualifies: This classification is available to unplatted property (20 to 1,920 acres) that is rural in character, not used for agricultural purposes, and not improved with a structure (see below). At least half of the acreage must be forest; the rest can be wetland or prairie. Land cannot be Class 2c if it is already in the Sustainable Forest Incentive Act (SFIA) annual payment program (but SFIA payments were raised from \$1.50/acre to \$7.00/acre under the new law). Property already enrolled in CRP, CREP, RIM, or the Green Acres program also is ineligible.

How Much: Eligible forest land will receive a tax class rate of 0.65 percent versus the previous 1.0 percent, or a 35 percent reduction in taxes!

Factors to Consider: To enroll in Class 2c, you MUST have a current forest stewardship plan that has been written or updated in the past 10 years. Then consider your goals.

- If you forested land is part of a farm and taxed as agricultural, leave it that way because it is a better deal.
- You can split classify the property if you have a cabin or house. Such structures will have 10 acres assigned to them and continue to be taxed as homesites; the remainder of the property is eligible for Class 2c.

Deadline: For taxes payable in 2009, you must sign up at your County Assessor's Office by September 1, 2008.

For More Information: See the "Application for 2c Managed Forest Land classification" enclosed.



Minnesota's new Class 2c provides incentives to landowners to keep Minnesota's nearly six million acres of family forest lands intact.



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MFA Member Profile Reforesting the Other Place

Curt Kreklau remembers a good, busy childhood on his parent's farm north of Wadena, Minnesota—a life devoid of today's *de rigueur* video games but rich in sticks and stones and other building blocks of the imagination.

As an adult, Kreklau is charged with stewarding the tract that spreads across 240 acres and straddles a county road. Standing among oaks, he recalls "We used to call this 'the other place' since these woods are across the road from the main house. If we weren't at home, we'd always be at 'the other place.'" Who wouldn't have chosen to spend their childhood playing among trees that drew deep into the sky?

Many family forest owners, like Kreklau, start out by inheriting or purchasing the family farm. They soon face the same dilemma—how to maximize the value of a farm when, as absentee owners, they don't have time to plant and harvest annual crops. Kreklau decided to experiment with crops that didn't need so much attention—hybrid poplar.

About 25 acres of the family farm will soon become a hybrid poplar plantation. Willow and alder also will be planted under a USDA pilot program for biomass production that Kreklau discovered through WESMIN Resource Conservation and Development. While Kreklau is not completely sure what the future holds for hybrid trees, he's confident that there will be a market for the product once it matures.

Meanwhile, he'll continue to manage the other acreage as a mixed hardwood forest, complete with sawlog-size red oak and healthy maple and basswood. Kreklau regularly thins and reforests the woodlands.

A large gas pipeline runs through his property, and Kreklau even plans to naturalize this large swipe of a scar by seeding it to prairie. He is deeply committed to stewarding "the other place."



Hybrid poplar planted this spring in test plots in Kreklau's farm fields.



Top: Curt Kreklau poses in front of a large red oak. He manages the woodlands for timber production and wildlife including white-tailed deer, bald eagles, and the occasional snowy owl. Bottom: Some of the red oak logs harvested from Kreklau's woodlands.

Is there something about you or your land that other MFA members would find interesting?

Contact Mary Kroll at krollcom@twecwb.com or 320.732.7090 if you would like to be considered for a MFA Member Profile.

Forest Pest Highlight

Oak Anthracnose

Do your oaks look unhealthy with brown, blotchy, or dead leaves? Despite dry, hot days recently, the wet spring weather across Minnesota created conditions ripe for the fungi that cause anthracnose, a leaf blight of hardwoods including oaks.

If the infection in a tree is severe enough, the tree may lose all of its leaves and try to regrow new ones in the waning days of summer. The good news about anthracnose in oaks is that it's not oak wilt, a devastating fungal disease that readily kills trees.

What do you do to treat your trees if you suspect anthracnose? Not too much, actually. Anthracnose may look awful but doesn't permanently harm vigorous, well-established trees. To help prevent future infections, rake leaves away from trees in the fall and prune dead or dying branches during dry weather (although don't prune oaks in April, May, or June because of the risk of oak wilt).



Oak anthracnose.



Anthracnose is a common fungal disease in other trees, too, including ash, maple, and other hardwoods.

Oak Anthracnose Vs. Oak Wilt

Oak Anthracnose	Oak Wilt
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affects trees in white oak (white, bur) family primarily, although it will infect the red oak family. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is most severe on trees in the red oak family.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Irregular spots and blotches randomly on the leaf. Leaves may look "scorched." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Browning along the margins of leaves.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Symptoms most severe on the lower inside branches where the tree is least exposed to drying effects of the sun. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Symptoms most severe on outer parts of branches, usually in upper parts of tree.

Your Woodland To-do List in August/September

Regeneration Checks

Many landowners take great relish in planting trees but grimace at the thought of actually assessing what deer, drought, and other disasters have done to their efforts. A healthy forest starts with a good stocking of trees, though. You've got to get out and count those seedlings!

Simple Calculations

To figure out how many seedlings survived, establish circular plots and count the viable seedlings. Plots should be uniformly distributed; the more plots, the better the data. Plot centers should be random.

- To establish a 1/1000-acre plot, cut a stick 3' 8" in length and use this as a plot center. Stretch it out and sweep in a circle, counting how many seedlings are alive. An average of 1 seedling per plot equals a stocking of 1,000 trees per acre.
- Another common plot size is 1/100-acre. Use a rope that is 11' 10" in length and tie to a stick, again sweeping in a circular motion and counting seedlings. Finding 8 surviving seedlings equals a stocking of 800 trees per acre.
- Be sure to establish more than one plot! Add data from all plots and divide by number of plots to find out the average seedlings per acre. More than 75 percent survival (of your original planting) is optimal; less than this may mean you need to replant.



You worked so hard getting them into the ground. Now make sure they're still alive. Do your regen checks!

More Photos from the MFA 2008 Spring Field Days



Top left: Dennis J. and Dennis F. Thompson join the group touring a walnut plantation on a warm southern Minnesota day.

Above: Dale Enerson, Lyle Keller, and Jon Tollefson tour the Big Woods Heritage Forest.

Left: Elmer and Marlene Rohloff view wetlands and woods near Owatonna.

The next MFA Spring Field Days and Annual Meeting is set for May, 2009 in Ottertail County.

Plan to bring the kids and grandkids to this family event.

Look for more information in upcoming newsletters about this fishing and forestry extravaganza!

For MFA members, www.MyMinnesotaWoods.org is the best online source of woodland information. Here's what's new this month.



- Minnesota's new 2c Managed Forest Land reduced tax class rate. APPLICATION DEADLINE SEPTEMBER 1.
- Featured forest type: The Tallgrass Aspen Parklands Province
- Featured link: Forest Management 101
- Upcoming events: Up North & Living Green | Goods from the Woods

Have a question about your woodland? Post it on the Discussion Board. You may be surprised at how many good answers you get!

For the live version, with much more info on each topic, visit MyMinnesotaWoods.org

Thank You to Our Supporting Members!

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