

Woodland Leaders News

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Getting Woodland Owners Involved...

Article by John DuPlissis

I had the opportunity this summer to participate in a discussion via e-mail on how to get more woodland owners interested in becoming better,

more informed managers of their woodlands.

As interested landowners and concerned neighbors we look at those in our communities and ask ourselves why they don't seem interested in managing their woodlands. Why aren't they interested in coming to a field day or workshop? Why don't they join our woodland owner organization? As a good friend once put it "this is the million dollar question." If we knew the answer to this we could solve the problem.

We struggle with this question all the time. Perhaps it is human nature or perhaps it is just the pace of life, but it is my observation that most people seek help when they need it most. As with other areas of life many woodland owners simply enjoy their property. They only seek assistance when they have a question or need immediate help to solve a problem. It is as true for their woodlands as it is for the plumbing in their homes.

So we wait for the "teachable moment." As educators we live for

that moment. The opportunity to use a real life experience as an object lesson to drive the point home.

So what can you do to be prepared for that teachable moment when it comes? First, be an outspoken advocate for wise stewardship and sustainable forest management. Don't be afraid to let people know where you stand. Second, be involved. Be involved in your

community. Be an active participant in a woodland owner organization. Be a resource for others who need help. Finally, be proactive. Look at your community and see what needs to be done. Gather like minded people together and work to build partnerships and develop

creative solutions.

Remember, you are not alone. There are men and women in Extension, the DNR and your County Land Conservation Department who will be glad to help you.



FORESTRY OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Inside this Edition

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Program Graduates Host a Field Day at the Seno Woodland Education Center

Article by Kendra Johncock



Marsha Kray talks to woodland owners about soil properties

The Seno Woodland Education Center in Burlington, Wisconsin was pleased to host the fall class of The Master Woodland Steward Program. The class was a great mix of retired teachers, private landowners, and landscapers. The diversity of the class added a great deal to the weekly presentations. The small class size allowed group discussions on the topics presented, where each student could share information about their land and experiences.

The highlight of the class was the class project field day hosted at the Seno Center, on Saturday, October 18th. Local landowners and members of the Kettle Moraine Chapter of the Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association attended the field day. During the field day the graduates demonstrated concepts learned in the 30-hour class.

Demonstrations included soil pH testing, basal area measurements, tree identification, alternative forest products, managing for wildlife, why leaves change color, and advantages of open versus forest grown trees. Their enthusiasm and willingness to share among themselves and with

the public will help to further sustainable forestry practices in southeastern Wisconsin.

State Representative Thomas Lothian and Chris Goebel, Executive Director of the Geneva Lake Conservancy attended the graduation ceremony. Chris Goebel spoke briefly on his organization and their part in holding conservation easements.

Conservation easements as explained by Goebel are a way to preserve the land for the next generation. This topic was of special interest to the students, as they all felt strongly about using sustainable forest practices and continuing those practices for generations to come.

The Seno Woodland Education Center was proud to be a part of this class and their efforts to educate the public about sustainable forestry practices. Each member of the class goes back to their community with valuable information on forestry practices and the means to gain expert help from the Department of Natural Resources and University of Wisconsin Extension Educators.



John Taylor explains why leaves change color in the fall

Sharing New Experiences and Bringing Them Close to Home

Article by Mary Frear

This past year I found myself face to face with the challenge of handling the timber harvesting on our farm. Finding this overwhelming, I attended the Master Woodland Steward (MWS) Program at Trego, WI this past June. Prior to the Program, though I had read as much information as I could get my hands on, I still did not have the confidence to go ahead with a sale.

I had invited 10 loggers from the surrounding area, all of which gave me a different quote and all with, what seemed at the time, logical reasoning as to why I should work with them versus their competitor. The only thing I became certain of was that most loggers are charismatic and believable, that is until the next one comes along. It was overwhelming and confusing. I didn't want to take the chance of regretting the loss of trees that were already cut.

While attending the MWS program I developed an understanding of the various systems for timber harvest, regeneration and their effects on forest ecology. I am in the process of hiring a Forester and the knowledge I acquired from MWS has helped me communicate my interests and objectives and to understand what to expect from a harvest. I will be working closely with the Forester in every aspect of the timber operation.

MWS roused my interest in related areas of woodland ownership and since then I've attended several local workshops. When I converse with other woodland owners I am able to use what I've learned at these programs and MWS along with my own woodland experience. The Program provided a mountain of resource

information that I can share with other woodland owners. Armed with this knowledge I feel qualified to discuss their individual forestry issues and direct them to literature or woodland professionals for further information.

The workshop I attended was in a pine forest in the NW corner of the state. It was during a field trip to a logging operation that I realized what I was seeing had little to do with the type of harvesting we do in our area. It also made me realize that the hardwoods I took for granted were, in Wisconsin, unique to this small corner of the state. I contacted John DuPlissis, Program Manager for the MWS, with the idea of hosting a session in southwest WI. This is an often forgotten corner of the state so I was pleased that he already had his eye on the Spring Green area and agreed to let me fulfill my class project obligation by helping him as the local host for the Program.

The MWS Program will give the people in this 'neck of the woods' an opportunity to learn how we can use timber harvests to protect the hardwoods while maintaining or improving the wildlife habitat, aesthetic, recreational and timber values of the land. The 4 day program was challenging and a lot of fun. The participants were educated in the fundamental elements of the many aspects of sustainable timber harvesting.

It was an opportunity to meet other woodland owners and to gain an understanding and respect for various individual objectives. In the program setting it's easy to appreciate that while there are individual differences in objectives there is still the deep love of the woodlands common to all who attend.

Smart Growth and Sustainable Forestry

Article by Teague Prichard

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning law also known as "Smart Growth," and sustainable forestry share important core principles. These include ensuring the health of our forests and the species that depend on forest habitat, the vitality of our forest products industries, and the scenic and recreational values of our forestlands. Therefore, it is important that the forestry community become more actively involved in the planning process and shape the discussion rather than react to the proposals of others.

One of the most important components of comprehensive planning is the vision of the community. Private forest landowners know how important forests are and can take action when local land use decisions are being made. Most of Wisconsin's forestland is owned by private landowners. 57 percent of the 16 million acres of forested land in the state is owned by about 260,000 private individuals. As one of the 260,000 non industrial private forest landowners, you have the opportunity to play a significant role in the management and protection of Wisconsin's forest resources.

A quick review of some of the most pressing issues facing forests and forestry in coming years illuminates the fact that the comprehensive planning process could be used with great affect to protect the vitality of forests and the forest products industry in Wisconsin. Low density suburban development, or sprawl, which is the primary enemy of the Smart Growth movement, is also the single most important cause of forest fragmentation; threatening both forest

ecosystems and the long term viability of the forest products industry. Smart Growth's focus on maintaining healthy rural communities by supporting opportunities for local employment could also mean greater support for Wisconsin's widely distributed network of primary and secondary forest products manufacturers. At their cores, both sustainable forestry and comprehensive planning are concerned with providing for the ecological, economic, and social needs of the present, while assuring the preservation of adequate resources for the use of future generations. Given this shared focus on sustainability, we would argue that it is time for the forestry community to become involved in Comprehensive Planning and policy-making at multiple levels.

Comprehensive Planning and sustainable forestry share a commitment to the long-term sustainability of our environmental, economic, and social resources. Because the two share key principles and because comprehensive planning has had, and will probably continue to have, success changing the shape of land use and land use planning in Wisconsin in coming years, it is imperative that the forestry community work proactively to make a place for itself at the table.

Wisconsin's comprehensive planning law offers an opportunity for forest landowners and local communities to incorporate forestry into their plans to sustain their health and livelihood of forestry in Wisconsin for current and future generations. Lets get to it.

How can Woodland Owners Take an Active Role?

- ⌘ *Start to finish. Participate in meetings and hearings to develop & adopt the plan.*
- ⌘ *Respond to surveys. (Think of this as voting! Survey responses can carry a lot of weight.)*
- ⌘ *Invite your local DNR forester to speak at your planning committee meetings to help people understand the value of forests at the local level.*
- ⌘ *Become an insider – seek appointment to planning committee or develop relationships with key people inside the planning process – the community planner, plan commission members, elected officials, and consultants.*
- ⌘ *Ensure that the planners know about the DNR Smart Forestry for Smart Growth Web site, where we provide information on forestry trends and issues, data and analysis, and model plan language.*
- ⌘ *Remember that all the elements can affect you and your woodlands – not just the natural resources element.*
- ⌘ *Monitor the plan's implementation – make sure the actions are being taken to implement the plan.*

Firewise: Protecting homes in Fire Prone areas

Article by Jolene Ackerman

A lone house in the middle of a forest, a subdivision on the edge of a pine plantation, homes surrounded by a grassland. While they may seem like very different settings, they are all examples of a condition called the Wildland-Urban Interface... when structures (urban fuels) are built in areas of highly flammable vegetation (wildland fuels). Every year in Wisconsin, an average of 1,600 wildfires occur, destroying dozens of structures and threatening to burn hundreds more. Whether started by humans or by lightning, fire is a necessary and inevitable occurrence that helps to maintain the beauty and health of our forests. The possibility of excluding fire from the wildlands is simply not possible. Today, more and more people are moving into these wildland areas without adapting to the dangers that exist around them. The addition of structures in areas that have been historically known to burn, interrupts the natural cycle of wildfires and creates a situation where structures can potentially become just another piece of burnable fuel in the event of a wildfire.

As woodland stewards, we manage our land for wildlife, aesthetics, recreation, forest products, and water quality. Often times, we don't consider managing for the risk of wildfire. Maybe its because wildfire is viewed as a sinister force that cannot be planned for. Maybe its because we believe that fire fighters will be waiting around the corner to save us helpless victims. Maybe its time for a cultural change!

We can start by working together. As homeowners, we can partner with others in our community as well as local firefighting agencies to develop a plan that increases safety in the Wildland-Urban Interface. By planning how home sites are designed, built, and maintained in wildland areas, we can work together towards becoming "Firewise." Becoming Firewise is a process, not an endpoint. The process includes paying attention to the features on your property and in your community that may start or support the spread of a wildfire. The main three categories of features are structures, vegetation, and access.

When beginning the Firewise process, start with the structures themselves. How flammable are the buildings on your property



Chrystal Lake Fire (Spring 2003)

Photograph courtesy of Buzz Vahradian, WDNR

and in your neighborhood? Do you regularly clean fallen leaves and needles off the roof, out of the gutters, and from underneath the deck? Do your neighbors do the same? Accumulated dead vegetation supplies the fuel for a flying ember to smolder and ignite a fire.

Next, look at the vegetation in the zone that extends 100 feet on all sides of the structures on your property as well as around your neighborhood. What is the most common type of vegetation around structures? If you said "evergreens," you may want to consider creating a wider space between them and the structures. As a general rule, evergreens are highly flammable... much more flammable than deciduous vegetation. How close are plants, shrubs, and trees spaced to each other? Closely-spaced vegetation creates an efficient means for fire to move from one plant to another.

Finally, put yourself in the firefighter's shoes. Could you drive a fire truck through your neighborhood? How about down your driveway? If you were able to get the truck to your home, could you turn around once you got there? Remember - a firefighter cannot help save your home if they cannot get to it.

These are just a few things you can do to protect your home from wildfire. For more information on becoming Firewise, please visit: www.firewise.com

Locally, you can contact your local DNR Service Center or Ranger Station or contact Jolene Ackerman, WDNR Wildland-Urban Interface Coordinator at: jolene.ackerman@dnr.state.wi.us or (608) 267-7677

Something to think about...

On lands protected by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, approximately 1,500 fires burn over 5,000 acres annually. Over 90% of these fires are human-caused. These figures do not include areas of the state where the local fire department has primary responsibility for fire.

Annual number of wildfires in Wisconsin by cause

609 debris burning
422 Equipment
218 arson
129 campfires
88 powerlines
70 smoking
67 playing with matches
62 fireworks

Summer Reading Program Volunteers Needed

In celebration of the 100th year of forestry in Wisconsin, the theme for the 2004 public library summer reading program is “Discover New Forest trails@Your Library.” The libraries will plan activities, read books, and host guests to educate children about Wisconsin’s forests. Approximately 100,000 children are expected to participate in the program.

To assist libraries with their programs, volunteers are being sought to read a new forestry picture book and to share information about Wisconsin’s forests. Volunteers will be added to a list by county, which librarians will use to schedule guest speakers. Being on the list doesn’t obligate volunteers to specific dates or events. Librarians will contact volunteers on the list to schedule a date and time based on volunteers’ availability.

Volunteers will receive a free copy of the picture book and the satisfaction of helping children understand the amazing resources that our forests provide.

If you are interested in volunteering or have any questions, please contact Jeremy Solin, the statewide school forest coordinator at UW-Stevens Point, at 715-346-4907 or jsolin@uwsp.edu.



Nominations for the WLI Class of 2004

We are currently in the process of seeking nominations for the Woodland Leadership Institute’s Class of 2004. The Institute seeks candidates through nominations because this program is not for everyone. Likewise, many people tend to underestimate their own abilities and are often shy about putting their name forward.

I am asking for your help because your own experiences with these programs are the strongest recommendation that anyone could receive. The nomination process is simple. All you need to do is send me the person’s name and contact information and I will send them an application. They are also welcome to contact me directly to receive an application package or download it from our website.

However, I would ask that you take some time to talk with potential candidates about the program and their ability to participate in the institute. I think that you will find that most people will be flattered that you thought of them as candidates for the Institute.

The timeline for the Nomination and application process is as follows: Nominations are due by January 16, 2004. Applications are due by February 27, 2004. Candidate selections will be announced by March 19, 2004.



Organization Management Workshop January 24th, 2004

University of Wisconsin Extension in partnership with Wisconsin Woodland Owner's Association and Wisconsin Family Forests, Inc. is offering a workshop on Organization Management. This program is for anyone who has recently been elected to serve in a position of leadership in a woodland owner organization.

The purpose of the workshop is to help those who have just been elected to understand their role and provide them with skills and techniques to help them fulfill their responsibilities.

Some of the topics that will be covered include understanding the rules that govern your organization, learning how to manage a meeting, learning how to build effective teams, strategic planning skills, ideas to promote and sustain your organization, and learning how to get your message out.

The workshop will be held on Saturday, January 24th at the College of Natural Resources on the Campus of the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point. This workshop is open to anyone who is interested. However, you must be registered prior to the day of the program to attend. For more information about this program contact John DuPlissis at (715) 346-4128 or by e-mail at john.duplissis@uwsp.edu



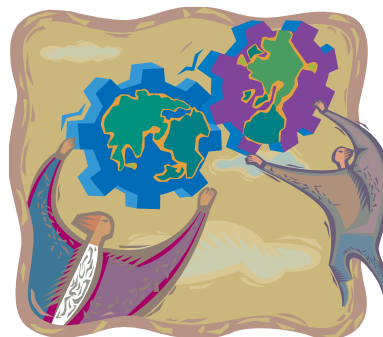
Woodland Leaders Reunion March 19th and 20th, 2004

Come one... Come all... to a reunion of the Woodland Leadership Institute Graduates.

I have had many requests by Institute Graduates that we hold a reunion so that they can meet each other and learn about what each other are doing in their community. So please plan to come and join us as we celebrate the work that is being done by Institute Graduates across the state of Wisconsin.

The reunion will be held at the Mead Hotel and Conference Center in Wisconsin Rapids. The reunion is scheduled for March 19th and 20th. We will kickoff the reunion with a dinner and stories from Graduates on the work that they have been involved in since Graduating from the Institute. The program on Saturday will consist of updates from the Division of Forestry, the Governor's Council on Forestry, and the Legislature as well as discussions on issues of regional significance and those important to woodland owner organizations. The program will close with a discussion on building community networks and partnerships.

There will be no cost for program graduates to attend. This is an early alert so you can set these dates aside on your calendar. Be sure to look for the registration brochure in the mail at the start of the new year.



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