

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

- July 11, 2017

- October 10, 2017

Conference Calls

8 - 9 am

- June 13, 2017

- August 8, 2017

- September 12, 2017

- November 14, 2017

- December 12, 2017

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Master Woodland Owner Program

By Matt Russell

The Master Woodland Owner program began in 2016 as a comprehensive landowner education program for woodland owners. Offered through the University of Minnesota Extension, the program teaches private woodland owners the ins and outs of forest health, monetizing woodlands, managing woods for recreation and wildlife, estate planning and taxes, and more.

At the Gathering Partners of Natural Resources conference held in St. Paul in May, a new class focusing on landowners in the Twin Cities Metro region began. These landowners also had the opportunity to meet participants from the first Master Woodland Owner course that took place in southeastern Minnesota. After an introductory session to the program, a panel comprised of foresters in the Metro area helped to answer questions. In the afternoon, the heavy rains didn't keep Master Woodland Owners from heading outside for a tree identification session on the University of Minnesota's St. Paul Campus.

To date, 25 landowners have enrolled in the Master Woodland Owner program that own and manage over 1,000 acres of private woodlands in Minnesota. Between face-to-face meetings, Master Woodland Owners are engaging with fellow landowners and instructors through watching videos online, responding to discussion forums, and uploading photos of their activities. Two additional courses are being planned to begin in summer 2017 for landowners in the Iron Range and North Shore regions of Minnesota. For more information on the Master Woodland Owner program, visit mwop.umn.edu or contact Matt Russell at RussellM@UMN.edu.



Top right: Woodland owner Dan Martin showcases his 35-year-old black walnut trees to a group of Master Woodland Owners near Fountain, MN. (photo: Matt Russell)

Right: MN DNR foresters teach woodland owners about tree planting and restoring native woodlands near Stillwater, MN. (photo: Eli Sagor)

Minnesota Forestry Association

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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!

Information@MinnesotaForestry.org
or call 218-879-5100.

Changes to SFIA?

By Gina Hugo and Bruce ZumBahlen

Earlier this year, the language of the Sustainable Forest Incentive Act (SFIA) was whipped into shape by a cooperative effort of stakeholders including MFA, Minnesota Forest Industries, Minnesota Forest Resources Council, U of M, DNR, and the Minnesota Department of Revenue. This came after a 2015 critical review of SFIA by the Legislative Auditor.

During this session, the SFIA language got beaten up with most of the good changes made by the stakeholders removed ... until the last day of the special session when they were restored.

The Omnibus Tax Bill that finally passed includes the following key changes:

- Forest land owners that are enrolling land with a permanent conservation easement through the Minnesota Outdoor Heritage Fund must allow year-round, non-motorized access to fish and wildlife resources or motorized access on maintained roads and trails.
- A minimum of three acres must be excluded on land improved with a structure that is not minor, ancillary or nonresidential.
- A parcel is not eligible if it is subject to Minnesota agricultural property tax or subject to agricultural land preservation controls or restrictions.
- Acres that are receiving RIM (Reinvest in Minnesota) or WRP (Wetlands Reserve Program) dollars are not eligible.
- Acres that are enrolled in 2c Managed Forest Tax Classification are not eligible.
- The DNR must provide a certification form to be completed by enrollee by July 1 of each year.
- The DNR will be performing annual monitoring on 10 percent of enrolled acres each year.
- There is now an option to enroll for 8, 20 or 50 years with greater annual payments for the longer covenants. Payment for an eight-year covenant is 65 percent of property tax that would be paid on the land, 90 percent for 20-year covenant and 115 percent for a 50-year covenant.
- Withdrawal procedures specify that land may be taken out of SFIA after one-half the length of the covenant.
- Provisions for transfer of ownership are outlined.
- Penalties for violation of the terms of the covenant are repayment for the number of years the land has been bound by the covenant or one-half the covenant length (whichever is less), plus interest and 25 percent of the estimated market value of the property as classified after the violation – for example: a residential structure. *Ouch! Word to the wise, look into withdrawal before violating the covenant.*



Do you know it is possible to raise your own colonies of bumble bees? **"Befriending Bumble Bees"** contains a step by step guide with all the information you need to find, capture, house, and feed the next generation of bumble bees. Bumble bees are formidable pollinators, pollinating crops such as tomatoes, cranberries, blueberries, and squash, in addition to native wildflowers. Enjoy the benefits these bees can provide to your gardens and crops while helping to support native ecosystems by encouraging populations of these amazing bees.

To download a full color copy, Google Befriending Bumble Bees or purchase a copy at U of M Bookstores. For more information call 612-301-3989 or email webbooks@umn.edu.

See info on Befriending Bumble Bees at <https://www.bookstores.umn.edu/viewProduct.cgi?productID=65243#.WQdFSfnyu71>

The Wissingers' Story

When Tom and Julie Wissinger bought 16 acres near Marine on St. Croix in 2003, they quickly learned they had two problems: deer and buckthorn.

Julie said, "There were so many deer, they ate absolutely everything. Any flowers or plants we wanted to protect had to be enclosed in a cage." After seven years of battling the deer, Tom and Julie decided the answer was a fence. They hired a contractor to install an eight-foot high fence around their entire property. Fencing it in was a huge project requiring almost 3,400 feet of fence. In addition, the job was difficult because of the hills and ravines on the property as well as the fact that each post was to be set in concrete.

Tom said, "At the time the fence was installed, we were each driving 13-year old cars. For what that fence cost, we could have bought a very nice brand new car."

Solving their second problem, the buckthorn, was a do-it-yourself project. Tom said, "I admire buckthorn because it is a warrior plant. To defeat it, you have to think like a warrior. I would often awaken at night and find myself thinking about the buckthorn and how I would attack it in the morning."

Tom's approach to the buckthorn was cutting. He cut the bigger stems with a chainsaw and the smaller ones with a DR Mower. Tom said, "I do not know how many hours I invested. I do recall that one winter I used up two gallons of bar oil."

Today, the buckthorn is mostly under control, although Tom doesn't believe it can be eliminated completely. And the fence is working. Newly planted flowers and shrubs are growing nicely and trees such as white cedar and white pine are thriving inside the fence.



Left: Tom & Julie Wissinger

Top: This eight-foot fence surrounds all 16 acres.

Center: The driveway is protected by an automatic gate.

Bottom: White cedar and white pine are thriving today.

Tour of Hardly Able Acres

One of the forestry-related field tours held in conjunction with the Gathering Partners event was to Elden Lamprecht's Hardly Able Acres reforestation project.

When Elden Lamprecht retired from 3M in 2011, he was interested in finding a project. A friend suggested that the DNR was scheduled to auction off a surplus parcel of 30 acres in Washington County. Because of the DNR's very high minimum bid and one other bidder, Elden bought the land for well over \$100,000.

The land had been neglected for years. Buckthorn was everywhere and the trees were generally of low value. Elden's vague vision was to clean up the land and make it ready for building lots.

Elden contracted with a logger to harvest the marketable aspen and cottonwood plus to remove diseased and dead hardwood trees. Elden then began working on the buckthorn himself. "I wanted to plow the open areas as soon as possible in preparation for new planting so I didn't want to take the time for chemical treatment to work." Instead, he pulled the larger buckthorn stems with his tractor and D3 Cat and grubbed out the smaller ones by hand. He also ground out over 800 tree stumps left by the logger.

When the initial clearing was completed, much of the land was ready for plowing and planting grasses which were important to prevent erosion on the hills. After applying the lime recommended by a soil test, Elden planted a combination consisting primarily of fescue and orchard grass. He also planted a wildflower mix containing 20 species which he obtained from Albert Lea Seed House, which he recommends.

DNR forester Art Wiederstrom worked with Elden to plan which trees should be planted where.

7,000 seedlings were planted in 2015 by a machine pulled by Elden's tractor. A total of 10 species were planted including Swamp White Oak, Black Cherry, Black Walnut, White Oak and White Pine. In addition, Four-Season Wildlife and Fruiting Shrub packets were planted by hand.

In 2016, 500 seedlings were planted in gaps including Swamp White Oak, Black Walnut and White Pine.

In 2017, 1,300 seedlings were planted because of damage by Elden's #1 pest: voles. It seems the grasses planted earlier offered perfect habitat for voles that traveled in the unmowed tree rows from one seedling to another.

All of the work and expense Elden invested in this land was well beyond the minimum that would have been required to prepare for subdivision. Elden said, "Part of my motivation was altruistic."

A Buyer Appears

Last year, The Goodman Group, a developer of senior



While working on his land, Elden spoke with many friends and professionals about how to account for his expenses in taxes. He finally spoke with an accountant who said, "That's easy. Up to \$10,000 per year Reforestation Expense can be deducted on IRS form 1040, line 36." Check with your accountant. If this is true, the savings could pay your MFA dues for years to come!

Elden Lamprecht with tools he used for hand grubbing buckthorn.

housing based in Chaska, approached Elden with an offer to buy. Goodman had purchased a 57 acre parcel next door and needed Elden's land, which would be left undeveloped, to compensate for the high density housing they planned for their parcel. Elden said, "I might have made more by subdividing for housing lots but with this deal, the land and the trees will remain as-is. We haven't discussed it yet but I am open to an arrangement by which I maintain the land and the trees for Goodman."

To help protect the seedlings from voles and deer, 3,500 tree tubes were installed this spring. The tubes, obtained from Tree Pro in West Lafayette, Indiana, cost \$1.70 each. They are supported by half inch plastic stakes that Elden bought and cut at a cost of 65¢ each. The labor to install the tubes was supplied by the buyer, Goodman. A total of 40 people, including the firm's CEO, pitched in. In the process, the buyers learned about what was done to get the land to this point and better understand what will be required to maintain it in the future.

Have some land for sale? Elden might be looking for another project.



Top: A few of the 3,500 tree tubes that were installed this spring.

Buckthorn Strategies

Elden Lambrecht invested huge amounts of time and effort pulling buckthorn by hand and machine because he wanted to immediately plow the area in preparation for new planting. If you can leave the stumps in place, John and Mary Peterson's system is very effective and, while it still involves lots of work, it is much less than Elden invested. See the Petersons' story, *Buckthorn Can Be Beaten*, in the October/November 2012 issue of our newsletter. To find it, go to our web site, www.MinnesotaForestry.org, click on Newsletters and search for *Buckthorn Can Be Beaten*.

Taking the Idea of Stewardship Higher

Adopted from a piece by Ann Wessel published in the Star Tribune

Tom Kroll spent his forestry career helping private woodland owners coax the most out of their property – sometimes in a timber harvest, sometimes in a habitat restoration, often in 40-acre increments.

As St. John's Abbey forester for the past 15 years, he's focused on the abbey's 2,600 acres in the Avon Hills just west of St. Cloud.

To the Benedictine monks, the land is home. To the surrounding property owners, it's a stewardship model. To nearby city dwellers, an escape.

"As a landowner we have an obligation, all of us do. We're just temporary holders of the right to use the land. That's part of that whole idea that we should be good stewards," Kroll said.

Some thoughts from Kroll:

Why does my 40 acres really matter? It turns out that in Minnesota, 40 percent of all the forest lands are privately owned. Each of those 40s is just a part of that whole puzzle. In the end the whole puzzle is extraordinarily meaningful, from migrating birds to bears to deer – everything.

On working with private woodland owners. My experience is that almost everybody that owns land owns it because they love it, even if they inherited it. As a result, it is not hard to convince people to do the right thing with their land.

On the Arboretum's place within the larger landscape. The Benedictines are really attached to the land. They're very interested in seeing this landscape preserved. They want the habitat, water quality – all those ecosystem benefits – to be broader than this place. But certainly this place is a model and an anchor.

On the Arboretum's forestry goals. It is that they continue this long Benedictine stewardship. I think the thing they're

working on now – the thing we've all been working on – is regenerating the oaks and becoming experts at regenerating oak in the face of high deer numbers.

On the monks' early reforestation efforts. You have the oldest documented planted trees in Minnesota right on the Chapel Trail. The seeds in part came over by sailing ship from Germany. They planted these trees out here in 1896, which is four years before Teddy Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot started the U.S. Forest Service. They planted white pine but the ones they imported were Norway spruce and Scots pine.



Tom Kroll

Congratulations to Tom Kroll as he winds up a great career!



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA EXTENSION

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

A Good Idea from – Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association

Our neighbor association of woodland owners, known as WWOA, has come up with a good idea – scholarships for forestry students.

Our U of M is training students who will help us, our children and grandchildren manage our woods. What better way to ensure future help than to support the young people studying forestry right now with scholarships?

In Wisconsin, a very special and charitable anonymous member created a WWOA Forestry Scholarship with an initial donation of \$20,000. Further, the donor has agreed to match other members' contribution up to an additional \$20,000.

If you have an interest in creating a MFA Forestry Scholarship, contact president Dennis Thompson at President@MinnesotaForestry.org.



19th Annual Landowner/Tree Farmer Meeting

In March, approximately 75 woodland owners attended a meeting hosted by the Cambridge Area Forestry office. Topics covered included:

- cost sharing programs from both state and federal entities,
- area forest market update,
- Chronic Wasting Disease,
- a local craftsman displaying his handmade wooden bows,
- an energetic presentation on chainsaw safety by Alex Bildeaux.



Alex Bildeaux's chainsaw safety presentation.

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Meet a Tree Eastern Hemlock



Dennis Thompson

By Dennis J. Thompson

Eastern hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) is one of Minnesota's rarest and most imperiled trees. It was rare even before the era of unrestrained logging and slash fires changed the composition of Minnesota's forests, and it has fared poorly since. The largest reported stand of hemlock in Minnesota was situated on 280 acres in St. Louis County near the town of Paupore. At one time, this stand had nearly 5,000 hemlock trees of all sizes. In 1912, about 8,000 railroad ties were cut from this stand, and in an effort to protect the remaining trees, a state park was proposed for the site. Tragically, the Moose Lake-Cloquet fire of 1918 intervened, destroying all but a few individual trees; eventually they all died.

Currently, the number of known sites containing hemlock is around 10, with a total of perhaps 50 mature trees. The largest population consists of just 12 mature trees. Other sites may have only a single tree, rarely more than four or five, with little if any reproduction.

Hemlock currently receives no legal protection in Minnesota, having only been listed as special concern in 1984, and its future is not bright. Elevating its status to endangered is currently being considered.

Hemlock is a large forest tree, reaching a maximum height of about 100 feet and a diameter of about two feet. It has horizontal or somewhat drooping branches and soft evergreen leaves. The shape of the tree is roughly conical, similar to other conifers, but the leader often has a peculiar leaning or drooping aspect and it may look curiously bare. The bark is gray or brownish, scaly when young but developing ridges and furrows with age. The leaves are linear or tapered and persist for about three years. In Minnesota, hemlock is usually scattered in mixed hardwood-conifer forests with yellow birch, white cedar, white pine, or white spruce typically on moist, well-drained soils in cool, sheltered valleys and ravines.

Eastern hemlock is a long-lived forest tree characteristic of late-successional plant communities. It is wind-pollinated and the seeds are dispersed by wind and gravity. It is very tolerant of shade but vulnerable to drought, windthrow, and especially browsing by deer. The continental climate of Minnesota, especially the cold, dry autumns, could be a limiting factor.

Hemlock has always been relatively rare in Minnesota, which represents the northwestern edge of its range, but has suffered a population decline during the last century and a half. Logging, poor reproduction and recruitment, and significant deer browse have all contributed to the decline. The major conservation need for hemlock is to protect all surviving stands from logging and other land clearing operations.

Did you know? –

Hemlock bark was once the source of tannin for the leather industry!



Right: Eastern Hemlock. Photo by Paul Wray, Iowa State University.

Above: Photo by Steven Katovich, USDA Forest Service.



Upcoming Events

Find more events, and more information on these events, at the MFA website, www.MinnesotaForestry.org or by calling MFA at 218-879-5100.

SILVOPASTURE WORKSHOP

Friday & Saturday, June 16 & 17, Brainerd, MN.

For complete information, Google Silvopasture Workshop.

LIVING WITH FIRE WORKSHOP

Saturday, July 8, 8 am, Ely, MN.

FREE one-day informational workshop. Understand why we should care about wildfire and what steps we can take to live safely in a fire dependent environment. Lunch provided with kids activities. For more information and to register visit tinyurl.com/elylivingwithfire or contact Gloria Erickson at gjerickson@frontiernet.net or 218-365-0878.

FILLMORE COUNTY SWCD FORESTRY FIELD DAY

Wednesday, July 26, 5:30 pm, Forestville State Park.

For information go to www.FillmoreSWCD.org.

WEBINARS:

HABITAT FOR MINNESOTA'S FOREST-DEPENDENT WILDLIFE

Tuesday, July 18, 12:00 noon.

ECOLOGICAL FORESTRY TO PROMOTE HEALTHY FORESTS.

Tuesday, August 15, 12:00 noon.

For information on these and other webinars, and to register, Google 2017 Forestry Webinar Series.



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Change Service Requested

Goodhue County Placed Under Emergency EAB Quarantine

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture has placed Goodhue County under an emergency quarantine after emerald ash borer was found in the city of Red Wing. During a hike at Barn Bluff, an MDA employee noticed an ash tree with significant woodpecker damage, a tell-tale sign of possible emerald ash borer infestation. She took photos of the tree and noted the location. After further investigation, the MDA found EAB larvae in the tree. The USDA on Friday officially confirmed the insect to be

emerald ash borer. Because this is the first time EAB has been identified in Goodhue County, the MDA is enacting an emergency quarantine to limit the movement of firewood and ash material out of the county to help reduce the risk of further spreading the tree-killing insect. Fourteen other Minnesota counties are under quarantine to prevent the spread of the emerald ash borer.

Thinking of harvesting
timber from your land?

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Anti-Tick Gaiters

At a recent woodland event, the U of M's Eli Sagor, center, and DNR foresters Jeff Wilder, left, and Mike Reinkeinen were wearing gaiters. Each man had treated his gaiters with a permethrin spray. In addition, Wilder had treated his pants and Reinkeinen was wearing pre-treated state-issued pants. If permethrin-treated gaiters are good enough for the pros, maybe we should wear them too!