



ECOFA Newsletter

Officers

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The ECOFA meeting will be on Jan. 3rd at 7:00 PM, board meeting at 6:00 PM

ECOFA was founded to provide information to the members and the public about multiple use management of forestland.

Board Meeting

The December 6, 2023 ECOFA board meeting was attended by Jeremy, Rob, Art, Jay, Alan, Kathy, Colton and Guernsey County's new Wildlife and Forestry Specialist Levi Mercer. We briefly discussed the April banquet. The July 3rd meeting will be cancelled due to being the evening before the 4th of July. Please make a note on your 2024 calendar. Jeremy said everything is all set for the Chainsaw Safety Program. There will be some hardhats available for people who do not have one. In place of a single speaker, January's meeting will have a panel of 4 wildlife specialists to answer any questions you may have.

General Meeting

Kathy started the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. She reminded us to think about any homemade items we may want to make for the Thursday, April 4th benefit auction. It is time to start collecting dues for 2024. Please see Alan Walter. This was the night for electing new officers. Jeremy addressed the group stating which officer's positions were up for reelection. We did not have any volunteers so everyone will retain their positions for 2024. The Chainsaw Safety Training Program at Camp Muskingum is coming up soon on Jan. 20th. Registrations need to be in by Jan. 4th. There will be lunch provided along with door prizes by Bird Dog Forestry Consulting, Mike and Patsy Schmuki and Dave and Kathy Myers. Just a reminder, as stated at the bottom of

last month's newsletter, 54 certified tree farmers can receive 50 tree tubes each from the Ohio Tree Farm Committee. There is no charge! See the sign up form in the previous newsletter.

Kevin Swope from NRCS spoke next about EQUIP. He stated that if you have been interested in EQUIP, which helps landowners fix problems on their land, this would be the year to sign up for the program. The deadline is Feb. 14. The period from sign up to receiving payment has been simplified from past years. He also mentioned that the Conservation Stewardship program which rewards good land stewardship, has a minimum annual payment of \$4,000. Basically if you have just one enhancement that you want to do on your property such as a pollinator plot this is the way to make it happen. See the Ohio NRCS website for all of the details and deadlines.

The evening's speaker was Ryan Zeisler who is based at Fernwood State Forest and is an ODNR forest manager for 5 state forests. The topic was Creating Wildlife Habitat through Oak and Hickory Management. He mentioned that Ohio has 24 state forests ranging from 500 acres to 64,000 acres. They are managed for various purposes such as ATV trails, public camping, horseback riding, wildlife, hunting, and timber production. 90% of Ohio's forest land is privately owned. These

state forests offer recreation and a free place to hunt for people who don't have their own land. Ryan mentioned that with the large parcels of land that make up the state forests there can be a lot of diversity in the timber / forest management. There can be a 20 acre clear cut here, a 30 acre shelter wood harvest elsewhere, a large thinning and a planting in another area.

Ryan feels that due to many reasons, oak and hickory trees are not as plentiful as they once were. He stated that when there is a prescribed fire, oak and hickory seedlings have a very good chance of survival due to their large taproots whereas maples most often die. Oak seedlings need a canopy disturbance to get light to the forest floor so they can start to grow. Maples can grow in as little as 2% sunlight where oaks are very picky needing a broken canopy, but not full sun. Oak and hickory seedlings can be suppressed up to 25 to 40 years when they don't get enough light. A video was played with Dave Apsley and Jamie Dahl explaining how Ohio's oaks are in jeopardy and why it matters. Timber production is a \$26 billion annual industry in the state and that is 20% of the entire agricultural production. Oaks are a large part of this. White oak demand has increased in part to the need for bourbon barrels. One cooperage company in Ohio makes 1,300 white oak barrels per day. This production really puts the pressure on private land owners to regenerate white oak more quickly. Dave mentioned that there are 90 species of animals that rely on oaks and acorns and that these trees can live up to 600 years creating a stabilizing effect in the forest.

Another video by Jarred Brooke explained a shelter wood harvest. This is a great way to

open up the canopy to get light to the forest floor. He mentioned leaving hard mast producing trees such as oaks and hickories. After the harvest, many plants quickly grow producing berries, making seeds for songbirds and plants for pollinators along with lots of cover for all wildlife.

Guernsey, while also is district supervisor.

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*John Jolliff
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Carroll, Columbiana, and Stark

*Ryan Clester
3601 New Garden Road
Salem, OH 44460-9571
330-222-1486*

Belmont, Noble and Monroe Counties

*Page Rice
36320 W. Captina hwy.
Barnesville, OH 43713
740-919-7580*

Coshocton, Tuscarawas, and Harrison Counties

*Luke Walters
2205 Reiser Ave. SE New
Philadelphia, Oh. 44663
216-215-6564*

Jefferson County

Currently vacant. Please contact John Kehn if you have a need of a service forester.

Guernsey County Soil and Water

*Matthew Pollock
740- 489-5276 Ext. 6890*

Harrison County Soil and Water

*Caitlin Harris 740-942-8837 or
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Carroll County Soil and Water

*Joe Mayle 330-627-9852 or
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ECOFA
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January 3rd we will have an open panel discussion about the issues you encounter. The panel will be Luke Walters (State Forester), Colton Frink (Consulting Forester), Mike Hamilton (NRCS District Conservationist), and Vern Snyder (ONDR Wildlife Consultant).

February 7th Jake Peer from Peer Forestry Consulting on the Ohio Tree Farm System

March 6th Colton Frink from Bird Dog Forestry on managing invasive plants

April 4th Thursday- ECOFA annual banquet (Reservations will be accepted next month.)

The Dover Library is located at 525 N Walnut St, Dover, OH 44622. If we decide to cancel a meeting due to weather we will notify the Dover Library and radio station WTUZ 99.9 FM í .also we will try and post a notice on the Facebook page and send an email to those who are in the email list.