

10 THINGS AFA has done for its members lately...



- 1 Voice of Forestry** – The Arkansas Forestry is the Voice of Forestry in the state and opportunities have been plentiful to have our voice heard. Recently, AFA has provided comments to the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality and the Arkansas Agriculture Department on suggestions to improve the pending Waters of the U.S. rule. In addition, AFA traveled to Oklahoma City to provide feedback to the U.S. Forest Service on ways the agency can improve its partnership and service to its constituents, including private landowners.
- 2 Tackling Tough Issues** – AFA is closely following the work of the Governor’s Legislative Tax Reform & Relief Task Force. The association is working with a coalition of agriculture interests to ensure forestry and the greater ag community remains positioned for success as the state evaluates all aspects of the Arkansas tax structure. The coalition has reached out to the Task Group in a letter outlining our priorities and provided testimony at Task Group meetings to justify the current tax treatment for forestry and agriculture, with excellent success. So far, there have been no policy changes that negatively impact the forestry and greater agriculture community.
- 3 Recognizing Achievement in Forestry** – Long-time AFA member and leader Peggy Clark was recently inducted in the Arkansas Agriculture Hall of Fame. AFA nominated Clark, who was honored for her distinguished career in the timber industry that spans well over 40 years. As the manager of Clark Timberlands since 1987, Peggy has grown the family business to include timberland in eight south-central Arkansas counties and includes other real estate investments, a livestock auction, and a working farm and cattle ranch. She was AFA’s first female president (2002-2003), the first woman appointed to the Arkansas Forestry Commission, and the first woman to serve as the president of the national Forest Landowners Association. Peggy served on the AFA Executive Committee for many years and won the AFA President’s Award in 1999 for distinguished service to the association and forestry community.
- 4 Women in Forestry** – Speaking of woman in forestry, AFA works with a number of partners to encourage more women to become involved in actively managing timberland. AFA’s Jennifer Johnson, Tree Farm Program coordinator, recently presented at the Women Owning Woodlands Conference on the value of certification and the unique elements of three different schemes – the Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Forest Stewardship Council and American Tree Farm certification. AFA was also an exhibitor at the Woman in Agriculture Conference. Having a presence at this conference heightens the profile of forestry to an audience that may not think of managing trees as a career and opens new opportunities to build relationships.
- 5 Branching Out** – The association continues to groom the next generation of leaders in our state and within the timber and forest products community. Last year AFA implemented its first Emerging Leaders Program (ELP), comprised of over 20 young forestry professionals. The ELP helps grow the forestry community’s leaders of tomorrow through education and involvement in AFA, forestry and facility tours, special events and other activities. In April, the group toured the West Fraser sawmill at Russellville to learn more about southern yellow pine lumber production. West Fraser owns four mills in Arkansas and is north America’s larger lumber producer. In May, ELP members toured Central Arkansas Water’s Forest Legacy property and learned about its Watershed Management program.
- 6 Building Relationships** – The Arkansas Forest Express Political Action Committee provides support to candidates running for political office. During the Primary Election season, AFA supported six Arkansas Senate candidate and six House candidates. The PAC also provided support to Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson and Attorney General Leslie Rutledge in their reelection campaigns. The PAC is a non-partisan, state PAC. All contributions from the PAC are evaluated and approved by the AFA Government Affairs and Executive Committees. AFA will provide support to additional candidates as the November General Election approaches.
- 7 Growing Forward** – Plans are nearly complete to host representatives from all sectors of the timber and forest products community at the 73rd AFA Annual meeting October 2-4, 2018 at the Hotel Hot Springs and Hot Springs Convention Center. The meeting will include recreational and social events, a forest management workshop and a day-long general session featuring topics on forest policy, forest certification and the history of forestry in Arkansas. As important, the annual meeting is THE premier opportunity in the state to network with forestry friends and colleagues. We hope to see you at the 73rd AFA Annual Meeting, October 2-4, 2018 at the Hotel Hot Springs/Hot Springs Convention Center.
- 8 Public Outreach Leadership** – AFA’s chance to educate the public on the positive impact the forestry community makes to the Arkansas economy continues to grow. Recently, AFA Executive Vice President Max Braswell sat down with members of the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension’s LEADAR program, made presentations to the Little Rock Metro and Morrilton Rotary Clubs, and hosted the Little River County Chamber of Commerce Leadership Group for a discussion about AFA and the forestry community in Arkansas.
- 9 Family Forests** – AFA is proud to administer the Tree Farm Program in Arkansas. Currently, there are 2,272 Tree Farms in the state representing 355,061 acres of certified timberland. The ATFF recently selected regional finalists for the Arkansas Tree Farmer of the Year Award. Each District award winner is then nominated for the state-level Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year Award. The winner of the state award is nominated for the National Tree Farmer of the Year award, selected by the American Tree Farm System. The district winners are: Miles Goggans, Star City, AR - District 1; Charles Vickers, Salado, TX - District 3; McCollum Land Company, Prescott, AR - District 4; Steve Moore, Lonoke, AR - District 5; Michael & Tamera Rossi, Guy, AR - District 7; and Ron Bell, Batesville, AR - District 8. District awards will be presented at the 2018 Tree Farmer Conference on Friday, June 8, at the Clark County Fairgrounds. The state award will be presented at the AFA Annual Meeting in October.
- 10 Forestry Education** – The AFA Education Foundation continues to provide informational and educational meetings on a variety of topics and issues to forest landowners and managers across the state. So far in 2018, AFAEF has reached 669 participants representing over 170,000 forested acres across the region. AFAEF is in its 39th year of hosting Project Learning Tree in Arkansas and has conducted 12 Project Learning Tree workshops certifying 226 formal and non-formal educators in this award-winning environmental education curriculum. The Foundation has also presented at and/or participated in 12 classroom programs, camp programs, forestry contests, civic meetings, and community events reaching 1,274 students, 525 citizens, and 77 schools throughout Arkansas.

