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Ohio Tree Farmers Survey
Northeastern OFA Marks 40th
ERIN
Fall 2012

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Ohio Woodland Journal

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COVER: Sassafras is ablaze along Ohio’s roadsides, fence rows, and woods in the fall. Read about this unique tree in the Leafing Out article on page 20. Photo courtesy of ODNR.

The Ohio Woodland Journal

To learn more about being an Ohio Tree Farmer, visit http://ohiotreefarm.org/ or call 888-388-7337.
Richard “Dick” Sorg was unexpectedly taken from us in July. Educator, friend, and devoted conservationist would best describe Dick. His knowledge about anything, natural resource related was profound. I guess you tend to gather that vast amount of information over 40 years of conservation service. He retired in July of 2011, and continued his conservation efforts through a personal business.

Dick started out as a district technician with the Muskingum Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). As a technician, he was responsible for the layout, design, and supervision of installation of the Best Management Practices in Muskingum County. It is truly amazing that late in his career he could walk into a field he was in 30 years previously and remember almost exactly the location of a piece of tile line! As Dick continued his service, he would eventually become District Administrator of the SWCD.

Dick was adamant about educating as many people as he could, from children to landowners, community members, and just about anyone who was willing to listen to his message. He made conservation fun and interesting. He was instrumental in bringing the Envirothon competition for high schools to Ohio, as well as organizing local National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) JAKES (Juniors Acquiring Ethics and Sportsmanship) events. He also played a huge role in organizing the NWTF Wheelin’ Sportsmen program, pairing handicapped hunters with local guides for a day-long turkey hunt at Blue Rock State Forest. Dick always encouraged his staff to be education oriented, and he required us to regularly do newspaper articles and live news appearances.

Dick’s conservation efforts did not go unnoticed, even though he would not take credit for anything he did! Dick led the Muskingum SWCD to become nationally recognized, including 2002 State and National District of the Year from the National Association of Conservation Districts, the 2004 Ohio Conservation Award from the Ohio Federation of SWCD’s, and the 2007 National Excellence in Communication Award. He was awarded the Ohio Department of Natural Resources distinguished Cardinal Award in 2009, demonstrating exceptional awareness and concern for the wise use and protection of our natural resources. In 2012, he was recognized as the Zane State College Alumnus of the Year.

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Vinton Furnace State Forest: A Day in the Woods

It has been a very enjoyable summer spending time at "A Day in the Woods – 2nd Friday Series" for landowners held at the Vinton Furnace State Forest near McArthur, Ohio. September’s program dealt with woodland wildlife game species such as white-tailed deer, wild turkey, woodcock, ruffed-grouse, squirrel, and other woodland game. Speakers from ODNR’s Division of Forestry and Division of Wildlife, USDA Forest Service, The Ohio State University Extension, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Hocking College, Garfielder, Vinton County Soil and Water Conservation District, and the National Wild Turkey Federation laid the groundwork in the morning in the beautiful education center building constructed from native Ohio hardwoods and softwoods. After a delicious catered lunch, we headed out on hay wagons via the scenic roads of the 15,000-acre state forest and state wildlife area.

We viewed this wonderful purchase the State of Ohio made for our enjoyment, where long-term research has been conducted and frequent educational programs are held by different natural resource interest groups.

In the field, we had the opportunity to view and understand different wildlife habitats in varying stages of forest succession and how these affect wildlife populations. We interacted with wildlife biologists and foresters, and learned from them how to improve and enhance wildlife habitats, with the added benefit of providing habitat and food for endangered songbird populations. I have enjoyed the sessions held from April through November 2012. learning more with each 2nd Friday program. Hopefully we can enjoy the benefits of the Vinton Furnace State Forest for years to come. Thank you to the many professionals dedicated to this project.

For more about the 2nd Friday series programs, visit seohiowoods.wordpress.com.

Ohio’s Forest of Honor

In 1987, the ODNR Division of Forestry established the Forest of Honor to recognize those who have made significant contributions to forestry in Ohio. This special wooded area is located near the site of an Adena Indian burial mound at Zaleski State Forest. Over the years, the woodland has grown to include the Forest of Honor, the Chiefs’ Grove, and the Employee Grove.

2012 Induction Ceremony

Induction into the Forest of Honor occurs in the fall, when a tree is planted for inductees.

On October 10th, Randy and Koral Clum of Clum Forestry Consultants were inducted into the Forest of Honor for their leadership in the professional forestry community as well as for high standards of woodland stewardship they share with their clients. Both Randy and Koral began their forestry careers with the ODNR Division of Forestry where they worked for many years. Randy left the division to form Clum Forestry Consultants in 1997, and Koral joined him in 2000. The Clums excel at educating landowners on the importance, and the techniques, of applying proper management. They promote and provide science-based forest management for 50 to 75 landowners annually in east-central Ohio. They also use their well-managed home property as an example for others to see.

Also this year, Jeff Reutinger and Cloyce Riddle were inducted into the Division of Forestry Employee Grove.

Jeff was a talented maintenance repair worker for the ODNR Division of Forestry. He also excelled at teamwork and communications, especially in fighting wildland fires throughout south-central Ohio and with the annual effort to collect seed throughout Ross County for the state seedling nurseries. Although an unfortunate logging accident brought an early end to his career with the division, Jeff still enjoys the outdoors and the woods. And, as a result of Jeff’s logging accident, his co-workers look at safety in an entirely different way. It reminds them what could happen, and the log yard is now a much safer operation.

Cloyce worked for the ODNR Division of Forestry for 32 years. He says “I became a forester to get away from people. I stayed in forestry because of people.” Much of his career was spent as a farm forester, as service foresters were called then, in the northeastern Ohio area. Cloyce approached his career as a calling, and he considered it a privilege to serve the landowners in his service forestry project. He decided that he would learn something new every day, that his forestry degree didn’t make him smarter than anyone else, and that to gain the interest and trust of landowners, he had to be interested in them first. He embraced the Tree Farm System and used it as a tool to engage the interest of landowners.

On behalf of the ODNR Division of Forestry, I extend my thanks and admiration to Jeff, Cloyce, Randy, and Koral for their outstanding contributions to forestry in Ohio.

Forest of Honor nominations are accepted throughout the year. If you know of someone who meets or exceeds the induction criteria, then please let us know at the Division of Forestry.

Induction Criteria

To be included in the Forest of Honor, an individual, group, or organization must be nominated based on meeting at least one of the following criteria, which are important to furthering the division’s mission and/or the advancement of forestry within Ohio.

• Significantly advanced Ohio's commercial, private, public, or urban forestry.
  Instrumental in developing and/or implementing a successful improvement to proper forestry practices that can be used at all levels of forest management in Ohio.

• Through written or electronic media, appreciatively raised public awareness about the benefits of well-managed forest resources.
  Instrumental in developing and/or implementing a successful informational campaign related to proper forestry practices.

• Legislatively championed one or multiple aspects of Ohio forestry.
  Instrumental in developing and/or implementing a successful change in policy related to proper forestry practices.

• Through demonstration, instruction, or other educational methods, went above and beyond to instill in students knowledge, appreciation, and problem solving skills related to trees and forests.
  Instrumental in developing and/or implementing a successful educational program related to proper forestry practices.
Forty Years of Forestry

Over the past six years of being the ODNR Division of Forestry Service Forester in Salem, Ohio, I have gotten to know the diverse group of people who call themselves the Northeastern Ohio Forestry Association (NEOFA). Officially formed in 1972, this woodland owner organization was created for the “development and promotion of a realistic forestry program through education, information and contact with forestry officials...” This however was not the first attempt at forming a woodland owner group in northeastern Ohio. Two meetings were held in 1967, but personal interests of some of the attendees caused the ultimate breakup of the group before it got off the ground. There was still a lot of interest in forestry, but no cohesive group.

The first meeting of what was to become NEOFA was held March 17, 1971 with six attendees. By April of 1972, nine dues-paying members elected Harold L. Smith of North Jackson, Ohio to be their first president. Later Timothy J. Hunley, a former Youngstown University (YSU) student, became president of NEOFA. Mr. Hunley had taken introductory forestry classes at YSU under Dwight V. Beede, the father of NEOFA member Susan Stephens. In 1975, the membership reached 60 strong with many of the current features of the organization starting to take shape. This included sponsoring young people to attend the Ohio Forestry Association Camp, setting up a forestry display at the Canfield Fair, doing twilight tours on members’ properties, and presenting awards to members who made outstanding contributions to forestry and the organization.

NEOFA received the Governor’s Arbor Day Award for education in 1986, and in 1989 was inducted into the Ohio Division of Forestry’s Forest of Honor. A green ash tree was planted at the Forest of Honor grove in Zaleski State Forest to commemorate NEOFA’s significant contributions to the accomplishment of the Division of Forestry’s mission and the advancement of forestry in Ohio.

Other main elements of NEOFA’s purpose are training and education. In 1994, John and Susan Stephens invited the renowned Soren Ericksson from the Game of Logging to give a safe tree felling training. There was an overwhelming response, and soon John and Susan became chainsaw safety training instructors themselves. Chainsaw training became one of NEOFA’s biggest draws to new members.

NEOFA Today

NEOFA is made up of 195 dues-paying members throughout northeastern Ohio. Members own from one tree to thousands and are from all walks of life. There is a wonderful mix of ages represented from school children to grandparents.

With a few modern updates, NEOFA has held true to its foundations. Devoted members staff the extensive forestry display at the Canfield Fair daily from 9 a.m. until 9 p.m. They make sure someone is at the booth actively engaging passersby to get the message of woodland management and conservation out to everyone. If there is someone who owns woodland, volunteers make sure that they receive all the best information to get moving with management or harvesting.

One of the most heartily supported elements of the group’s purpose is sponsoring young people to the Ohio Forestry and Wildlife Conservation Camp. Each year the group sponsors 9-12 young people. They hold a benefit auction at the annual banquet meeting to raise the money for this endeavor. The auction items have included handmade wooden...
objects, tools, baked goods, gift certificates, maple syrup, and unique items. There is a chainsaw raffle as well, but we pretty much know who will win. The same man has won for the last three years, much to the chagrin of the rest of the group.

The main staple of NEOFA is the monthly meetings or twilight tours. The meetings are based on woodland education but can include other pertinent natural resource issues. During the twilight tours, members show off their accomplishments and continuing projects on their properties. Twilight tours are a great time to exchange ideas and experiences for the benefit of all. Past meeting topics have included conservation easements, Ohio Forest Tax Law, The Buckeye Wood Turners Club, and raptor rehabilitation.

Since its introduction in 1994, the landowner chainsaw trainings offered by NEOFA have been a great success. After the passing of John Stephens, the torch of training was passed to Brock Couture, the 2011 Ohio Forestry Association Outstanding Logger of the Year. Brock is assisted by Jim Elze, Dave Hively, and Susan Stephens in scheduling and conducting trainings. Participants may take up to four levels of training from chainsaw maintenance to safely felling large, difficult trees.

Future Forestry

The future looks bright for NEOFA. There is a committed base of caring people who feel strongly about good forest management. They have diverse backgrounds that give strength to and offer new possibilities and ideas for the group. The one thing they all have in common is a love for the land and a willingness to learn from it.

Thank you to all the NEOFA members who helped me dig into the past for this article. A special thank you to Jim Elze and Susan Stephens for putting up with my many questions. I need to give credit as well to the late service forester Jim Ball who kept meticulous notes on the formative years of NEOFA.

NEOFA’s Charter Members

Harold Smith
Timothy Hanley
William Bartricks
Dwight Beede
James Ball
Eldon Sauser
James Lapham
Raymond Silvis
George Ketchum

Two awards are given every year: the Distinguished Service Award and the Outstanding Woodland Landowner award. The awardees are usually surprised at the banquet meeting and given engraved wooden plaques. Most members are very humble about receiving their awards. Their basic sentiment after receiving their award is “I don’t deserve this; I was just doing what was right.”

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Dan Bartlett helps woodland owners with long-term goals for the development and care of their renewable forest resource in Mahoning, Columbiana, Stark, Carroll, and Tuscarawas counties. Dan can be reached on Wednesdays at (330) 222-1486 or at daniel.bartlett@dnr.state.oh.us.
Now on you know
ERIN
Division of Soil and Water Resources
Aaron Lantz, ODNR

Land information data has been collected and compiled for decades by federal, state, and nonprofit organizations. Although this data has always been public information, in the past it was nearly impossible to know what all was available. Furthermore, knowing how and where to obtain land information was a huge hurdle. Once obtained, it took a long period of training and familiarizing in order to process it into a useable format.

Soil and Water Conservation Districts decided it would be helpful to make land data information quickly and readily available for public and agency use. In response, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) has created the Earth Resources Information Network (ERIN). This public system is now available on the ODNR website at OhioERIN.com.

ERIN includes three reports that are easily generated with just a few clicks of the computer mouse. These reports were designed to quickly summarize information from federal, state, and nonprofit organizations. The site includes “how to” videos that demonstrate the use of each report. Users simply zoom in to a location via a map, or type in an address, and then click the map in order to generate a report.

The first available report is the Dig Report. This report displays what may be found if you start digging in any location on your property, even after you hit bedrock. The Dig Report highlights various properties at different depths and provides useful statistics including percent clay and average rainfall for that location (Figure 1). Secondly, the Survey Report produces information for any area such as a woodlot or municipality. The report generates valuable statistics such as percent of highly erodible land, number of permits issued to discharge pollutants, and much more (Figure 2). Lastly, the Watershed Report is the largest report and provides many of the same statistics as the others, but within small watershed areas. The Watershed Report also includes several useful maps displaying land use, floodplains, and water quality sample points.

ERIN has several tools that were created to help perform specific tasks quickly. The Spreadable Acreage Calculator was developed to help livestock producers determine where they should or should not apply manure. The Water Well Log locator was created to help well drillers and the public access Ohio’s more than 400,000 water well logs. Although these tools are targeted for specific users, they have already inspired development of many additional tools.

The heart of ERIN is the Mapping and GIS section, constructed with most of the data needed for land use analysis and planning. This is also the most complex component. It is highly recommended that new users view the introduction video and the many tutorial videos provided. ERIN was designed for any land use decision in our diverse state. To accomplish this, functionality was developed for use in many different ways to address a wide variety of land issues. This application allows for creating, analyzing, saving, exporting, and uploading information. In addition, a user can interact and display information from over 170 layers of geospatial data. Users can identify lowest areas in a landscape, determine slope and elevation, and select information in relation to other data. Soon you will be able to show micro watersheds, including where water is collecting and flowing on a property. A new feature allows soil and water conservation districts to upload local data, giving ERIN even more diverse application.

ERIN provides easy to use data and tools to help landowners, property managers, and resource professionals make well-informed decisions about the stewardship of their natural resources.

Aaron Lantz has a BS degree in soil science from Ohio State University and GIS certification from Columbus State Community College. Aaron began working with the ODNR Division of Soil and Water Resources in 2001 as a soil scientist, and is currently the Earth Resources Information Network (ERIN) administrator.
Family owned and operated, Brenneman Lumber Company has been in business for over 65 years. The company operates its main office and concentration yard in Mt. Vernon, Ohio. Brenneman Lumber takes pride in being a major buyer of green northern Appalachian Red Oak, White Oak, Hard Maple, Soft Maple, Cherry, Ash, Poplar, Beech, and many other species ranging in thickness from 4/4 to 16/4. Brenneman Lumber brokers in excess of 40 million board feet of green and kiln dried lumber annually and we are continually looking to establish relationships with new suppliers.

Call Charlie Brenneman or Mark Bennett today for prices!
The question “what is a conservation easement” usually gets a variety of answers, ranging from “preservation” to “vagan forest” and “cannot cut trees.” In fact, it is a valuable tool that can be used by most working tree farmers to provide immediate tax savings and make it easier to preserve the farm for future generations. Our conservation easement was drafted so we can manage our tree farm pursuant to three objectives: timber production, wildlife habitat enhancement, and nature education. It helped us gain significant tax benefits, and helped us in our desire to preserve the farm for future generations. The purpose of this article is to provide fellow Ohio tree farmers with general information on how a conservation easement can apply to a working tree farm.

**What exactly is a conservation easement?**

A conservation easement places permanent restrictions on the use of a parcel of real estate. An easement is granted to a special type of non-profit entity called a land trust, which has the right to enforce the restrictions.

It can give you significant tax benefits without restricting your ability to manage your tree farm, as well as establishing a mechanism for preserving a family tree farm. However, it should not be undertaken lightly because a conservation easement is forever, and forever is a very long time.

The document is recorded in the real estate records in the county where the land is located, and is binding upon the current owner and all future owners. Although the use of the land is restricted by the terms of the easement, title to the land remains with the owner, and he or she can sell it to anyone at any time for any reason, subject to the restrictions that are stated in the easement.

**What are the “restrictions” on the use of the land?**

The restrictions must reflect well-recognized, legitimate conservation values. The ones that we identified in our easement are no different than those already furthered through most working tree farms: (a) protection of open space from development; (b) preservation of private working forest; (c) maintenance and creation of wildlife habitat; and (d) protection of the watershed.

We limited the right to develop our tree farm lots for development, but we preserved the right, for our children and grandchildren, to subdivide parcels of no more than five acres for construction of up to three additional homes. As a practical matter, none of our land is suitable for multi-family development, much of it is too hilly to be suitable for development into estate lots. We also had to agree not to place an oil or gas well on the property, but we preserved the right to lease oil or gas rights pursuant to a “pooling-agreement” in the event that a neighbor had an oil or gas well on their property. The remaining “restrictions” are our agreement to do the same sound management practices that we were already using on our farm.

The conservation easement impact your ability to manage your Farm as you wished, including the cutting and selling of trees.

The original easement proposed by the land trust was not designed for a working tree farm, and was, frankly, confusing. I drafted our conservation easement from the perspective of someone who actively managed their tree farm, and included language that gave us the right to alter the property as necessary to perform one or more of seven identified objectives. Here are those objectives, as they actually appear in our conservation easement:

1. To improve the productivity of the woodlands, and shorten the time period necessary to produce salable timber through grapevine control, cull tree removal, crop tree release, selective (use of) clear-cutting, and other well-recognized silvicultural techniques.

2. To develop favorable habitat and food for animals, birds, and other wildlife.

3. To create interest and appreciation in the many intangible values of the property through nature education.

4. To conserve the soil from wind and water erosion.

5. To create a road system for easier access to portions of the woodland.

6. To maintain appropriate riparian zones along the Goose Creek drainage to Salt Creek and along the frontage of Salt Creek and to expand the wetland in that area; and

7. To improve the fishery in the lake.

This means that we can harvest and sell trees as long as an Ohio Forestry Association Master Logger is used and contractually require that the harvest be done in accordance with sound management practices -- what we would have done anyway. It means that we can cut sections of the farm, if necessary, to create successional habitat for wildlife. It means that we can build roads to improve access, create brush piles, build vernal pools, or do virtually anything else, so long as it is in furtherance of one or more of these broadly-worded objectives. At the same time, we did not want to be obligated to continue active management practices if bad health or other circumstances intervened. For that reason, I included language which specified that the owner could, but was not obligated to, actively manage the farm.

**What are the advantages of a conservation easement?**

Once the terms of an easement are negotiated and signed, it is given to the land trust, and stays in force as long as the property remains owned and managed in a manner consistent with the terms of the easement. If, for example, you received $40,000 in income from farming (and that is your total income), and the value of your easement is $40,000, you can reduce your taxable income to zero. On the other hand, if you are not realizing more than 50 percent of your income from farming, you could deduct a small amount equal to 50 percent of the adjusted gross income on your tax return, even if the income was received from employment or some other source.

You have six tax years to use the deduction. Before this year, the size of the deduction depended on whether you receive more than 50 percent of your income from the “business of farming.” In that event, there was no limitation on the amount of the deduction. For example, if you received $40,000 in income from farming (and that is your total income), and the value of your easement is $40,000, you can reduce your taxable income to zero. On the other hand, if you are not realizing more than 50 percent of your income from farming, you could deduct a small amount equal to 50 percent of the adjusted gross income on your tax return, even if the income was received from employment or some other source.

These enhanced benefits became effective in 2006, but expired effective January 1, 2012. However, Congress is now considering a proposal to extend them. In the meantime, the deduction for everyone is limited to 30 percent of adjusted gross income.

A second tax advantage depends on the continued existence of the estate tax. If there is an estate tax, the value of the working tree farm, at the date of death, that forms the “basis” for the tax, will be reduced by the value of the easement. For example, if the tree farm, before the easement, was valued at $1 million and, after the easement, is valued at $750,000, then upon the death of owner, the estate taxes would be calculated on $750,000. Second, the IRS Code allows 40 percent of the easement-restricted value of the land to be excluded from the estate, further reducing the value of the estate that is taxable. The combination of these benefits can significantly ease the financial burden on heirs and may eliminate the need to sell the family farm to pay the estate taxes.

The final benefit depends on whether you and your family want to preserve the farm as a tree farm. The restrictions in the easement on development, as a practical matter, limit the use of the land to a tree farm or for outdoor recreation. Entering into a conservation easement can further that objective.

I hope that this article provided useful information on how a conservation easement can apply to a working tree farm. It can give you significant tax benefits without restricting your ability to manage your tree farm, as well as establishing a mechanism for preserving a family tree farm. However, it should not be undertaken lightly because a conservation easement is forever, and forever is a very long time.

Jim Savage grew up in Chillicothe, Ohio, and graduated from Chillicothe High School in 1974. He graduated from Duke University and received his law degree from Washington University, Saint Louis. He has practiced as a trial lawyer in Columbus, Ohio since 1981. Jim has been actively managing his family tree farm since 2003.

**Advantages of Conservation Easements**

James S. Savage, Esq.

The Savage Family Tree Farm has a 2.5-acre lake that was constructed in the late 1940s prior to their ownership. It features natural reproduction of bluegill and bass. It can give you significant tax benefits without restricting your ability to manage your tree farm, as well as establishing a mechanism for preserving a family tree farm. However, it should not be undertaken lightly because a conservation easement is forever, and forever is a very long time.

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Bats and the Threat of White-Nose Syndrome

Ohio has 11 species of bats, all dependent on forested habitats during their active time of year, which ranges from late March through early October. They get caught in your hair. They are scary and odd looking. They give you rashes. They have black, leathery wings that “give me the creeps.” Having studied bats for several years and now teaching about them whenever I can (they are my favorite subject), I’ve heard it all when it comes to bats. Unfortunately, there are a lot of misconceptions surrounding these furry flyers – most of which just aren’t true.

Bats have a highly sophisticated sensory system called echolocation that allows them to detect items as miniscule as a single human hair – with that kind of ability it is doubtful that a bat will ever get caught in someone’s hair. Concerning rashes, the chance of contracting rabies from a bat is very rare; nonetheless, never handle a bat and if you must, wear gloves. Okay, they may be odd looking and creepy to some, but having light-weight leathery wings comes with its advantages – bats are the only mammals capable of flight. If you can wade through the mucky reputation of bats, you will find that not only are bats a species with extraordinary talents and a true wild wonder, but also an animal you WANT around your woodland.

Here is the truth about bats: worldwide there are over 1200 species, making them an incredibly diverse group of animals in their numbers and species, but also in their abilities of flight, echolocation, and ecological relationships. Around the world, bats that feast on pollen and nectar are responsible for the pollination of over 360 different plants, some of which provide us favored foods such as bananas, avocados, mangos, and figs to name a few. Bats that prefer to dine on fruit have been nicknamed “the farmers of the tropics” for their ability to disperse wide fruit seeds over the landscape. Even vampire bats that lap up blood for dinner are contributing in their own way. Draculin has been nicknamed “the farmers of the tropics” for their ability to disperse fruit seeds over the landscape.

Bats are a vital component of many different ecosystems, each of which depends on a diversity of species in order to function sustainably. In addition, the loss of insect control services provided by bats could have significant repercussions. The more we do to provide habitat for bats, the better chance they will have at survival. The smallest of things, such as spreading the word about their importance or taking it a step further and putting up a bat house, can make the biggest of differences to these wild wonders.

Bats are aerial insectivores, taking flight during the night hours from the anticoagulant from vampire bat saliva. Vampire bats that are blood-suckers are not overwinter in these trees or human-made structures. When the summer ends and fall begins, the pups are able to fly on their own and little brown bat females, males, and young migrate to caves or abandoned mines where they will spend the winter hibernating.

Due to the deadly nature of this disease, bat biologists are focused on the protection of cave hibernating bats, such as the little brown bat. In the US, over half of the 45 bat species hibernate in caves and are therefore threatened by WNS. No evidence exists that suggests WNS is dangerous to humans, but humans are able to carry the spores of the fungus on clothing and shoes to other areas. To date, no cure for white-nose syndrome has been found, save for limiting access into caves and mines to prevent human spread of the fungus. Cave closures on public lands have been enacted in much of the northeast and even further west as states are taking proactive measures.

WNS signs to look for

Biologists in Ohio are working to locate caves or mines where bats are hibernating in order to identify and prevent further spread of WNS. If you know of a bat hibernaculum on your property, you can help monitor for WNS by looking for the following signs during the winter. Remember, fungal spores could be picked up on shoes, clothing, and equipment, so do not enter the cave or mine. If you see any of the following signs, please contact the ODNR Division of Wildlife at 1-800-WILDLIFE.

- White fungus on the nose, ears, feet, or wings of bats
- Bats flying outside during cold winter temperatures
- Dead or dying bats on the ground, buildings, trees, or other structures during the winter
- Bats clustered near entrances of a cave or abandoned mine

Please do not enter caves or mines in order to prevent the spread of WNS.

Wrapping it up

What can you do to help bats battle WNS? Keep your eyes open for signs of WNS and report suspected sightings, respect cave closures, and stay out of possible hibernacula. You can also put up a bat house so bats have a safe place to reproduce over the summer. Finally, if you happen to live near a bat colony in a building does not pose a health threat, consider allowing the colony to stay. If exclusion must take place, use safe, one-way exclusion devices at the recommended time of year. For more information on bat houses and bat exclusion, visit www.batcon.org.

* Bats are the only mammals capable of flight.
* Vampire bats are blood-suckers.

For more information on WNS

OSU Extension Fact Sheet on WNS: ohioline.osu.edu/w-fact/pdf/W_22_12.pdf
Ohio Division of Wildlife WNS page: bit.ly/WhiteNose Syndrome
US Fish and Wildlife Service WNS page: whitenosesyndrome.org

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Sassafras
*Sassafras albidum*

Sassafras is found native throughout all of Ohio and is most commonly found in old fields and fence rows. Sassafras is a member of the Laurel family (*Lauraceae*). Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*) is the only other native member of the Laurel family commonly found in Ohio woodlands. The Laurel family also includes the genus *Cinnamomum* that contains the Asian cinnamon and camphor trees.

Sassafras is generally a small to medium sized tree. At maturity it can attain a height of 70-90 feet and a diameter of 24-36 inches on good sites near the center of its range. It can be found on well-drained loams to dry sands and prefers soils that are slightly acidic. On poor sites or at the northern and southern extremes of its range, sassafras is generally a small shrub seldom reaching more than 25 feet in height.

Sassafras is a pioneer species and is very intolerant of shade. It is most often found on abandoned agricultural land or in disturbed areas when associated with mature forests. Sassafras has even been found to grow on old charcoal hearths, areas of poor soil once used for making charcoal. Most thicken of sassafras are actually root-sprouts from underground runners from a few single parent trees. The lateral root spread of sassafras has been measured at 2.5 feet per year. Sassafras can be damaged or killed easily by fire but the roots will sprout rapidly in response.

Sassafras has an alternate branching pattern. Leaves are generally 3-6 inches long and polymorphic, having three very distinct shapes often on the same tree. Sassafras leaves have a smooth margin and are either singly-lobed, mitten-shaped, or tri-lobed. The twigs of sassafras are conspicuously green and stout with large whitish terminal buds. The bark is furrowed dark brown or grayish with interlacing ridges. The interior bark has a very distinct reddish orange color. Like the other members of the Laurel family, the sassafras is very aromatic and exudes a spicy scent from the leaves, twigs, bark, and roots.

Sassafras is a dioecious tree, and either male or female yellowish-green flowers appear in April. Small dark blue drupes ripen in early fall. Each seed is about 1/3 to 1/2 inch long and is borne on a thick bright red pedicel. The seed is consumed by a number of birds and small mammals. It is of minor importance to bobwhites, kingbirds, woodpeckers, flycatchers, cardinals, phoebes, vireos, flickers, thrushes, and wild turkey. Seeds can remain dormant in the soil for up to six years. The twigs of sassafras are eaten by deer and rabbits and the leaves are occasionally browsed by deer, woodchuck, and black bear.

The wood of sassafras is known well for its aromatic properties. The wood is not the best for nailing but is rated good for machining, gluing, and finishing. The sapwood is usually yellowish-white while the heartwood is pale brown. It is generally used for cooperage, buckets, posts, rails, cabinets, interior finishes, and some furniture. Sassafras dries fairly fair relative to denner hardwoods and does not shrink or move much. It is rated as a fair firewood species but with lower heat value than most hardwoods. Native Americans were reported to occasionally utilize sassafras for dugout canoes.

An oil can be extracted from the wood and used to produce perfumes and soaps. Early pioneers used the bark extract for dye purposes. The leaves of sassafras have been used for various cooking purposes and the roots for making sassafras tea and root beer. It was first brought back to England in 1603 to make a tonic that had a taste similar to root beer. The unique flavor is attributed to the chemical safrole which is most concentrated in the roots. The FDA banned the use of safrole in food additives because animal tests have shown carcinogenic effects on the liver. Drinking small amounts of sassafras tea on rare occasions poses little risk but prolonged use is cautioned against. Nervousness and sweating are short term symptoms of overuse.

Sassafras can make for a spectacular ornamental tree due to the characteristic bark and excellent red fall foliage. Poor form, wind and ice damage, and root suckering are all potential insect problems to consider. The species is relatively free of major insect problems although it is reported to be preferred by Japanese beetles. Sassafras can suffer from leaf discoloration (chlorosis) on alkaline soils.

The current national champion sassafras is located in Daviess County, Kentucky. It is 58 feet tall and measures 278 inches in circumference. The current co-state champion trees are located in Lucas and Portage counties. The Lucas county tree is 47 inches in diameter and 92 feet tall while the Portage County tree is 59 inches in diameter and 55 feet tall.

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**Literature:**


*The National Register of Big Trees:*
www.americanforests.org/our-programs/bigtree/

*Ohio Big Trees Website:*
ohiodnr.com/tabid/4806/Default.aspx


Photos courtesy of Ohio Department of Natural Resources (fall leaves and trunk) and Virginia Tech (fruit).
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websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/HomePage.htm
USDA-NRCS Web Soil Survey

www.woodworkingnetwork.com/articles/archives/WWP-wood-products-magazine
Woodworking Network

www.deeproot.com/blog/blog-entries/how-deep-do-tree-roots-really-grow
DeepRoot—root depth article

www.timbertax.org/
National Timber Tax website
extension.missouri.edu/explorepdf/agguides/agroforestry/af1013.pdf
Estate Planning

www.dictionaryofforestry.org/
The Dictionary of Forestry, SAF

Looking for a Forester?
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www.osafdirectory.com

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• Forests must be sustained through simultaneously meeting environmental, economic, and community aspirations and needs
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Fall 2012 The Ohio Woodland Journal
Focus on Forest Health

2012 has been an interesting year in the forest health realm. The weather seems to have gone from one extreme to the other from last year until now, and the impacts of this can be seen across the state in both woodlands and landscapes.

With a warm winter and early spring, common forest pests were seen earlier than normal this year, including emerald ash borer, eastern tent caterpillars, locust leaf miner, and others. Many landscape trees, especially conifers, are suffering from the heat and drought, and in some cases are dying due to the extremes after the last few years’ abundance of rain.

This year also saw several widespread pests that have gotten a lot of attention from woodland owners. Tuliptree scale, an insect that attaches itself to the stems of yellow-poplar, was especially bad in southern and central Ohio. This insect secretes a sweet sap called honeydew that falls onto anything below where the insects are attached to the tree. This honeydew is then colonized by black sooty mold fungus. Between the fungus and damage to the poplars themselves, many people have been concerned about the health of these trees. In general, one year of scale infestations will not cause significant damage to them, but it is something to keep an eye out for next year.

Another widespread pest seen this year was jumping oak gall. The insect responsible for the small, brown, circular galls on the leaves of white oaks is a wasp which lays its eggs on the newly developing leaves in the spring. This pest has been prevalent throughout southern Ohio, and combined with the drought and several other insects that defoliate white oaks, has really hit the white oaks hard. For the second summer in a row, scarlet oak sawfly has also been reported on pin oaks in northeastern Ohio.

Ohio’s forests and woodlands are some of the greatest natural resources we have in the state. Frequent inspection of your woods and proper forest management will help keep your woodland healthy.

In addition to the normal forest pests we have been seeing this year—even if they have been abnormal in timing or severity—another important note was the discovery of the hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA) in southeastern Ohio. More information on this insect can be found in the summer 2012 edition of The Ohio Woodland Journal. So far, HWA has been found in two counties—Meigs and Washington, but all landowners with hemlock on their property are encouraged to inspect their trees regularly for adelgids.

On the Asian longhorned beetle (ALB) front in Ohio, a new satellite infestation was discovered in July. This infestation is still within Clermont County, but is located in Stonelick Township, two townships north of the main infestation discovered in 2011 in Tate Township. The property where this infestation was found...
had received infested firewood in 2010, prior to the
discovery of ALB in Ohio last year. Survey efforts continue
both in the main area of infestation as well as in Stonelick
Township. As of the writing of this article, a total of 8,860
infested trees have been detected, and of these, 8,489 have
been removed. The Environmental Assessment released to
address further plans for ALB eradication in Ohio was open
to the public for comments this spring, and at this time, that
comment period has ended and the comments received are
being reviewed. The results of this comment period should
be released sometime this fall.

Ohio’s forests and woodlands are some of the greatest natural
resources we have in the state. Frequent inspection of your
woods and proper forest management will help keep your
woodland healthy. Invasive insects are more easily controlled
if caught early on, and most native pests primarily attack
stressed trees, making good forest management important
for more than timber production and wildlife habitat.

More information on forest health issues can be found on the ODNR
Division of Forestry web site at www.ohiodnr.com/forestry or the
Ohio Department of Agriculture web site at www.agri.ohio.gov.

Activity 41: How Plants Grow
A plant is a living system. It needs sunlight, water, air, nutrients, and space to function
and grow. In this activity, children design an experiment to test these requirements.

Doing the Activity
While exploring a park, farm, or other green space, challenge children to find signs
of new plant growth. While examining samples, ask what factors are necessary for
plants to grow (sunlight, water, soil, space). Ask children how they might design an
experiment to test the necessity of these requirements. Help them write and illustrate
the steps to their experimental design.

Ask children to look at the drawings below. Of the four options (A, B, C and D), which
two should be used to test how sunlight affects plant growth? Use this example to
explain the importance of experimental control.

If possible, obtain two plants of the same size and species to give the experiment YOU
designed a try. Allow one plant access to a single requirement, while denying the same
requirement to the other. At set intervals, let children measure the seedlings. After a
period of time, measure and compare the two plants. Ask whether they look different,
and if so, why?

Try the following:
• Take digital photos every few days, and use presentation software to create a
visual timeline of plant growth.
• Compare children’s growth to that of the experimental plants by measuring child
height at the beginning and end of the experiment.
• Create a “flip-book” that shows plant growth in animation. Index cards work great!

Adapted from Activity 41: How Plants Grow of Project Learning Tree’s PreK-8 Environmental Education Activity Guide

Try this activity in a forest—a natural place to learn!
For over 35 years, Project Learning Tree® has used the forest as a “window” to help young people
gain an awareness of the world around them and their place within it. Blending a walk in the
forest with a fun and engaging PLT activity creates a powerful learning experience for children
of all ages. Here’s one idea in a series from PLT that introduces the concept of systems.

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of all ages. Here’s one idea in a series from PLT that introduces the concept of systems.
Critical to meeting both Ohio's and our nation's wood demands is a commercially viable logging sector.

The logger's dollars turn over as much or more than the landowner's or mill's dollars in many rural economies through daily business activities. However, the logging industry by and large is inadequately capitalized and bears an inordinate amount of financial risk. This is unfortunate since harvesting and delivering timber are the first steps in its utilization, impacting the overall health of the wood supply system as well as the communities in which it resides.

An ever-increasing limitation in the wood supply system has been the viability of Ohio's logging community. Commercial logging's total economic impacts in 2009 amounted to 3,785 people directly employed and a total of 2,325 in output. However, industrial output has continued to lag, with a direct output of $209 million and a total output of $394 million. Earlier research has suggested the logging industry does not operate as an economy of scale like more traditional farm-related enterprises. This means larger equipment harvesting and delivering more timber on larger tracts does not necessarily equate to a reduction in overall costs. In other words, logging costs increase with production. In fact, studies done in the Southeast and Lake States have found logging costs were outpacing inflation, and the gap between cost and payment for services was widening. Therefore, a critical need exists to determine the structure and performance of Ohio's logging industry and the role Ohio State University Extension can play in providing information to meet business needs.

The Forest Products Extension program's long-term goal is to develop wood utilization strategies in response to changing resource and market conditions. Critical to meeting both Ohio's and our nation's wood demands is a commercially viable logging sector. We are currently addressing this issue by surveying logging firms at Ohio Forestry Association regional logger chapter meetings across the state to find out information about the structure and performance of their businesses. Each completed survey will earn that firm one hour of continuing education credit through the Ohio Master Logger Program.

We expect to learn the makeup and capabilities of the logging industry and will communicate this to the chapters. Firms are motivated to participate in the marketplace and make informed business decisions, but may be constrained by internal and/or external factors. Moreover, discovering this sector's needs will establish a strong framework for programming development to advance employment and income opportunities.

We plan to have our surveys completed by the end of the year and will discuss the results in future issues of The Ohio Woodland Journal.

**Ashtabula County – One of Ohio’s 88 Greats**

By Greg Smith

Ashtabula County is nestled in the very northeastern corner of the state next to Lake Erie and Pennsylvania, and is Ohio’s largest county geographically. It features the Grand River Watershed, part of the Ohio Watershed Network, which has several acres of land set aside through programs of the many partnering government and private agencies encouraging protection of the watershed. The designated woodland easements specify protection through woodland stewardship by using management plans written by professional foresters with sound forest management practices applied by OFA Certified Master Loggers.

There are two OFA Master Logging Companies based in Ashtabula County. Smokey and Son, Geneva, and Valley Veneer and Lumber Company, Williamsfield, both have logging and mills as part of their operations.

Nate Paskey is District Manager of the Ashtabula County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). Nate is active in the OFA Northeastern Ohio Loggers Chapter, serving as secretary as well as a BMP inspector for the Master Logger Program. Nate can be reached at the Jefferson office at (440) 576-4946.

Mark Popichak is the ODNR Division of Forestry service forester for Ashtabula County. Landowners can contact Mark for information, technical assistance, and long-term woodland stewardship planning by calling (440) 632-5299 on Thursdays, or by e-mailing him at mark.popichak@dnr.state.oh.us.

By Eric McConnell

Ashtabula County contains 217,000 acres of forestland, which are 98.2 percent privately owned. Responsible managing these woodlands provides community support by producing economic activity in eight forest industrial sectors. These Ashtabula County businesses employed 995 people while directly generating $229 million in output and $12.8 million in taxes in 2010. Sources: United States Forest Service Forest Inventory and Analysis.2012. Ashtabula County 2010 forest survey database; and Minnesota IMPLAN Group. 2012. 2010 Ohio state and national package database. MIG, Inc., Hudson, WI.
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ODNR Division of Forestry
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Ohio Tree Farmers: A Changing Population?

Sarah Starr and Eric McConnell, OSU School of Environment and Natural Resources

Introduction
Ohio's forests cover 31 percent of the state. Seventy percent of the forest coverage is owned by non-industrial private forest owners (NIPIFs) (Widmann et al. 2009). Therefore, these owners play a large role in what products are offered in the market place as well as environmental quality and ecosystem services. Ohio certified tree farmers are a group of private landowners who actively and sustainably manage their land, often practicing multiple uses. These stewards can provide valuable information concerning sustainable forest management strategies.

A decision making framework for forest land management was developed by Kurtz and Lewis (1981) to describe the motivations, objectives, and constraints of Missouri NIPFs (Figure 1). Motivations are the "guiding forces" behind land management, objectives represent "the end sought," and constraints "modify an owner's dispositions between objectives and the strategy which is adopted" (Kurtz & Lewis 1981). Studies have found that NIPIFs are a diverse group of landowners, ranging from passive up to intensive managers. They often strategize for multiple objectives, such as aesthetics, biodiversity, recreation, and monetary gain.

Using Kurtz and Lewis's framework, Schmidt (1990) assessed the educational needs of Ohio's tree farmers based upon their motivations, objectives, and constraints. Schmidt's study was performed 22 years ago and much has happened since that time. There have been fluctuations in the economy (Dot Com Bubble, Housing Bubble, etc.), a boom in personal computer and internet usage (expansion in knowledge access and reduction in paper use), and a rise in the number of invasive species. Furthermore, between 1979 and 2008, Ohio NIPIFs have grown by 38.9 miles. The typical Ohio Certified Tree Farmer was a 63-year-old resident male and had been in the American Tree Farm System for 19.5 years. They were ranked on a scale of 1-7 for both surveys.

Table 1. Comparison of 1989 and 2009 tree farmers. Motivations, objectives, and constraints were ranked on a scale of 1-7 for both surveys.

<table>
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<th>Motivation/Objective</th>
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<tr>
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