

THE WOODLAND SCOOP

Illinois Tree Farm System's Forestry Newsletter
Fall/Winter 2007



Illinois Outstanding Tree Farmer Field Day September 8, 2007



Beth and Jack Riley in a forty year old plantation of short needle pines

where TSI has been undertaken. Thinning and pruning can also provide wood for woodworking projects, which they enjoy. Planting trees, caring for their timber, and taking every opportunity to share their forested land while teaching about the value of well-managed timber has become a way of life for the Rileys. Don't miss the opportunity to visit this Tree Farm family that believes in forest protection, enjoyment of the forest, reforestation, and proper harvesting practices.

Everyone is invited to Dix, Illinois in Jefferson County for the annual Outstanding Tree Farm Field Day, where you will meet Jack and Beth Riley, 2006 Tree Farmers of the Year. The Riley's 80-acre tract is a model of grassroots forestry at its best. They promote good forestry practices through encouraging the use of their Tree Farm by educational groups like the Girl Scouts, taking every opportunity to teach the value of properly managing forested acres. Each year, the Rileys share their annual maple sugar processing project with others from their community who are interested in learning the process or just avid bystanders. Jack and Beth have no shortage of firewood, which they collect from areas

REGISTRATION: 8:30 - 9:00 a.m.

FIVE SEPARATE TOURS will leave from the main reception area starting at 9:00. One will visit a fifty year old jack pine plantation with hardwood succession. One will tour a 15-year old white pine plantation. Another will visit a recent hardwood planting which is currently enrolled in the Carbon Credit exchange. One group will view the natural regeneration of upland riparian fields. And a fifth group can see an upland hardwood stand harvested about nine years ago, followed by TSI. These tours can all be viewed by walking and wagon ride.

Afternoon events include a prescribed burn, a band saw mill demonstration, and a demonstration of tree felling procedures.

Lunch will be provided or you may bring a sack lunch if you like.

DIRECTIONS:

Take the DIX exit on I-57 north of Mt. Vernon. Travel West less than 1/2 mile to County Road 1000E. Turn right and travel 1 1/2 miles to the second curve, which turns West. Keep going West (don't take the turn to the North) for 1/4 mile to the Tree Farm sign. There will be Tree Farm signs along the route.



Southern Region Tree Farm Committee

Southern Region held its Quarterly Meeting on Saturday, March 17th, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Forbes State Park in Kinmundy, Illinois. Attending were Mr. and Mrs. David Johnson, the Krekes, the Rileys, the Pagels, Linvilles, Mary Grapperhaus, Harold Hartke, Roy Bailey, Ron Patridge, Joe Patterson, Brian Miller, Richard Krutsinger, Pattersons and kids plus friends. In total, 26 people attended. You can see we are fortunate in that many members attend as couples. The Treasurer reported that the SRTF currently has just under \$1000 in the bank. Officers were elected: Joe Patterson, Chair. Tony Kreke, V. Chair. Approved unanimously. David Johnson went over proposed events for Rileys' field day. Our next meeting will be at Rileys' to facilitate getting ready for the field day. Mary Grapperhaus suggested that SRTF make wood cookies for the State Fair. Approved. We will do that the day that we meet at Rileys'. Clint Patterson led a tour of a TSI/prescribed burn at the park. Roy Bailey, the contractor who did the TSI, contributed to the presentation, as did David Johnson. Mary Grapperhaus delivered sub sandwiches from Salem after the tour, and since we were all pretty cold by then, we eagerly ate them at the site office before disbursing.

!!!VISIT YOUR WEBSITE!!! www.illinoistreefarm.org to find out more about the September 8, 2007 field day at Jack and Beth Riley's 2006 Outstanding Tree Farm near Mt. Vernon.



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TOP 10 REASONS TO HUG A TREE

by Bernard Voss

Trees absorb carbon dioxide which can contribute to global warming.

Trees give us oxygen. Before green plants existed, the amount of oxygen in the atmosphere was almost nothing!

This page! Wood pulp makes this paper.

Modern and traditional medicines come from trees. Malaria, cancer and headaches are all treated with medicines from trees.

Firewood. Most people around the world still cook and heat with wood.

Trees shelter us and our homes from harsh weather.

Trees provide musical instruments. Enjoy a violin, guitar, clarinet, or oboe? They're wood, too.

Lumber, furniture, ships, boats: Wood Apples, Cherries, Oranges, Peaches, Plums, Cashews, Walnuts, Pecans, Hazelnuts, Chocolate. Mmmm. wood

And for a woodturner? Wood on the lathe becomes an object of utility and art. Its entire life is revealed in its rings.



Illinois Tree Farm System

From the President's Desk by Jack Wohlstadter, President, IL TFC

Gold and Silver



This year, Illinois Tree Farm turns 54 years old. With that in mind, we now have 12 Tree Farms that are fifty plus years old as well. That's quite an accomplishment, folks.

Just think: 50 years ago, some of these folks started planting their first trees after becoming a certified Tree Farm. Some were already heavily involved in forestry before joining the Tree Farm program. Those newly planted trees, for the most part, haven't hit their economic maturity yet. For some, it will be another 20 or 30 years before they may be ready for harvest. That is a lot of dedication and love for the farm. Some of these forests may have already been passed down to the next generation.

Speaking for my family, this will be the case for our Tree Farm. Hopefully when the time comes, our children will have come to love the farm as much as we do and will want to carry on the work and care we have started. All the trees we have planted will be ready for harvest long after the farm has been handed down. It'll be a great legacy.

Then, there are all those Silver Tree Farms: those that have been in the Tree Farm System for more than 25 years. There are 165 of them altogether. Now, admittedly, we have not been doing a good job of recognizing these tree farms and we are going to correct this oversight this year.

On Tuesday, August 14, at the Illinois State Fair after the awards program for the 2007 Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year, we will have another awards program on the main stage in IDNR's Conservation World at 3 PM. Several of our Gold Tree Farmers will be present to receive their Gold signs and certificates. If you are at the fair, please come by Conservation World and show your support to these 12 dedicated Tree Farmers.

All Silver Tree Farms will have a new Silver Tree Farm Sign available for their farm soon. The state committee would like to be able to recognize, publicly, all those dedicated families, individuals, and organizations that have hit the silver level. Plans are underway to have our Silver Tree Farmers recognized for their dedication and hard work at various meetings across the state.

Congratulations to all our Tree Farmers for your hard work, dedication and devotion to your farm and the Tree Farm Program.



Illinois Forestry Association

Our Mission: To act on issues that impact rural and community forests and to promote forestry in Illinois.

www.ilforestry.org



Calling all TREE FARMERS!

Blackhawk Hills RC&D along with the Illinois Forestry Association and six other contributing councils presents a **FORESTRY MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP** on September 28 + 29, 2007 at Chestnut Mountain Resort in Galena, Illinois. Sessions will include Tree Identification, Species Selection, Tree Planting, Forest Management Plans, Erosion control, Wildlife Habitat, Mock Tree Sale, Forestry Development Act and Forest Taxes, as well as Carbon Credits, Loggers Perspective, Forest Health, Invasive Species and Getting More Out of Your Trees.

Registration fees are \$25 for one day, \$40 for both days. Extra fees are required for Special sessions in Chain Saw Safety (\$25) and Directional Felling (\$40) which includes general registration fees for 9/29. If you would like to attend both sessions, the fee will be \$60. Limited registration is allowed for these sessions. All registration fees must be received by 9/21/07. Please contact Blackhawk Hills RC+D at 815-625-3854 for registration materials and further information.

REMINDER

The American Tree Farm system invites you to attend the

2007 National Tree Farm Convention

in Madison, Wisconsin, October 11-14.

Check www.treefarmsystem.org for more information and registration materials

Mark Your Calendars

Illinois Forestry Association 2nd Annual Meeting

October 19-20, 2007

Rend Lake Resort and Conference Center

www.ilforestry.org

Contact the editors: the_scoop@jcwifi.com

The University of Illinois Extension


presents

Citizen Big Tree Inspector Workshop Allerton Park in Piatt County September 22, 2007.

Registration will be held from 8:15 to 8:45 a.m. The training session will last from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Participants will learn how to measure and score trees in order to identify them for the Illinois Big Tree Registry as well as the new "Notable Tree Registry," which will include trees of historic significance, hybrids, exceptional non-native species, as well as exceptional native species which nevertheless do not have enough points to qualify as the largest of their kind in Illinois. For more information check www.continuinged.uiuc.edu/allerton.

"Better Woodlands Through Education"

Northwest Illinois
Forestry Association



is made up of interested individuals and Tree Farmers from across Illinois, who share a common interest in forestry, whether they own forest land or not.

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Update on Senate Bill 0017 (SB0017) - Amend Property Tax Code by Jay Hayek, University of Illinois Extension Forester

The Illinois General Assembly recently passed and forwarded to the Governor (08/02/2007), SB0017, which amends the Illinois Property Tax Code. Although this legislation will probably have little effect regarding property tax assessments for current Illinois Tree Farmers or landowners enrolled in the Forestry Development Act (FDA), it may provide significant property tax relief for those landowners seeking a more passive approach to land stewardship - affecting not only those who own forest land, but also affecting those landowners who own grasslands and wetlands. Please note this legislation does not change, alter, or amend FDA in any way, shape, or form. After riffling through 10-pages of legal and legislative jargon, here is a summary regarding this proposed legislation:

According to the Illinois General Assembly website, SB0017 amends the Property Tax Code by adding Divisions 16 and 17 to Article 10 as follows:

Division 16. Conservation Stewardship Law

Synopsis: Special property tax valuation to landowners who own five acres of contiguous, "unimproved" land. Unimproved land means woodlands, prairie, wetlands, or vacant and undeveloped land that is not used for any residential or commercial purpose that materially disturbs the land.

Rationale: The "General Assembly declares that it is in the best public interest to prevent the forced conversion of unimproved land to more intensive uses as a result of economic pressures caused by the property tax system at values incompatible with their preservation and management as unimproved land, and that a program should be designed to permit the continued availability of this land for these purposes."

Requirements: Landowners must submit a "Conservation Management Plan" for the unimproved land to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for review. A conservation management plan means a plan approved by DNR that specifies conservation and management practices, including uses that will be conducted to preserve and restore unimproved land.

Outcome: "Managed land" for which an application has been approved that contains 5 or more contiguous acres is valued at 5% of its fair cash value. Managed land means unimproved land of 5

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contiguous acres or more that is subject to a conservation management plan.

Stipulations: Approved conservation management plan on file with DNR; this special valuation excludes land in Cook County; and recapture of property taxes for noncompliance.

Division 17. Wooded Acreage Assessment Transition Law

Synopsis: Sets forth preferential assessment procedures for wooded acreage that was classified as farmland during the 2006 assessment year. Provides that the preferential assessment continue until the property is transferred or no longer qualifies as "wooded acreage". Wooded acreage means any parcel of unimproved real property that (1) can be defined as "wooded" acreage...; (2) is at least 5 contiguous acres; (3) does not qualify as cropland, permanent pasture, other farmland, or wasteland; (4) is not managed under a forestry [sic] management plan and considered to be other farmland...; (5) does not qualify for another preferential assessment under this Code; and (6) is owned by a taxpayer on October 1, 2007.

Outcome: (a) If wooded acreage was classified as farmland during the 2006 assessment year, then the property shall be assessed by multiplying the current fair cash value of the property by the transition percentage. The chief count assessment officer shall determine the transition percentage for the property by dividing (i) the property's 2006 equalized assessed value as farmland by (ii) the 2006 fair cash value of the property.

(b) The wooded acreage shall continue to be assessed under the provisions of this Section through any assessment year in which the property is transferred or no longer qualifies as wooded acreage under Sec.10-505...

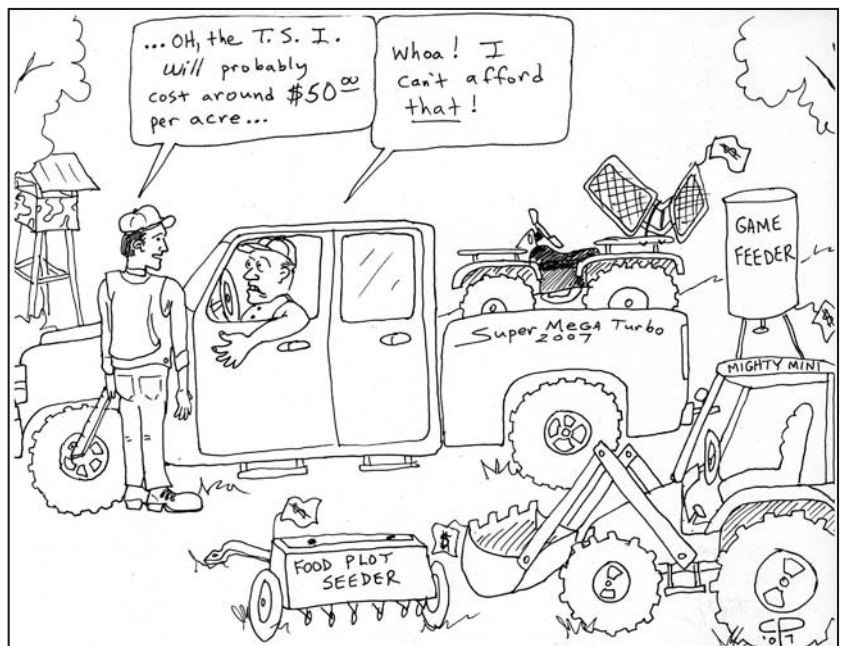
Exceptions: Division 17 does not apply to any property located within Cook County.

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WEST-CENTRAL REGION SHIITAKE WORKSHOP

On April 1, the West-Central Tree Farm region hosted a shiitake mushroom inoculation workshop. About 15 people attended the event, which was held at the Tree Farm of Jack Wohlstadter and Barrie McVey. Fulton County Tree Farmer Mike Russell assisted with the day's events.

For a modest fee, each participant inoculated 1 log with either warm or cool season shiitake mushroom spawn. The spawn plug was then covered with beeswax. They took the log home and should be growing shiitake mushrooms within a year.





The Patterson Perspective

by Clint Patterson, District Forester



The times, they are a' changin'. Those who keep up with forestry related issues know that forest land ownership in the United States is changing rapidly and dramatically. Most of the big timber companies have sold off their millions of acres of forest to large investment companies, The Nature Conservancy, and developers. Timber companies which still remain large forest owners are rearranging their structure to concentrate more on the real estate end rather than the timber resource. And then there is certification, carbon credits, and... well, it's enough to make a landowner's head spin.

In the June 14th New York Times business section, there was an article which focused on the difficulties private landowners have in passing down their forested acreage. Forest owners related that high real estate taxes and estate taxes were forcing them to sell off part or all of their

land. Also, since most heirs have had to move away to larger cities to find employment, they are removed physically and emotionally from the land; making them more willing to sell.

I am normally not one to "join the bandwagon". However, after ten years of owning my Tree Farm (which I bought rather than inherited), these issues have caused me to "see the writing on the wall". The 25 acres of mostly marginal, eroding farm ground that I and my family have planted to trees, implemented timber stand improvement on, harvested trees with horses on, and supplied my wood stove and freezer (deer meat) with, is FOR SALE.

WHY? When I bought the property, I signed up 17 acres into CRP. The payments made two-thirds of the land payment each year, and made it affordable. Since then, when not working on the tree farm, we've been working on our old 1860's farm house across the road. Subsequently, for fixing up the place, we've been rewarded by having our real estate taxes tripled. Now the CRP payment from the Tree Farm goes to paying the taxes on the house! Not to mention that our electric bill has doubled, gas is over \$3.00/gal now, and every time you turn around there's another fee to pay. I about fell over a couple weeks ago when both vehicle registration renewal notices (\$85/each) came in the mail the same day. "I could have used that money to repair my truck", I thought as I put the expensive little sticker on my rusted out '88 pickup that's barely worth five of those little stickers.

Yes, I see the writing on the wall. It doesn't just say "You're broke!" either. It also says: "Taxes, fees and regulation will just get worse. Instead of providing relief from their heavy yoke, the Government will instead offer Farm Bill programs that come with regulation and subsidies which are seemingly designed not to help the little guy, but to funnel resources to big business."

Yes, I'm sad. However, it occurred to me after making the decision to sell, that, like other heirs, my children too would likely have to move away from here to be successful. I don't wish it on them to spend their lives working at Wal-Mart or the State Prison ... about the only employment in the area... just to stay near their "home place". I'd like to think maybe they could operate their own business, but then an area where everyone is barely getting by isn't very conducive to that either.

Selling the land, I've decided, is like marrying off a daughter. We care for them and love them for a time... and then we entrust them to another. We hope that the groom will take good care of them too.

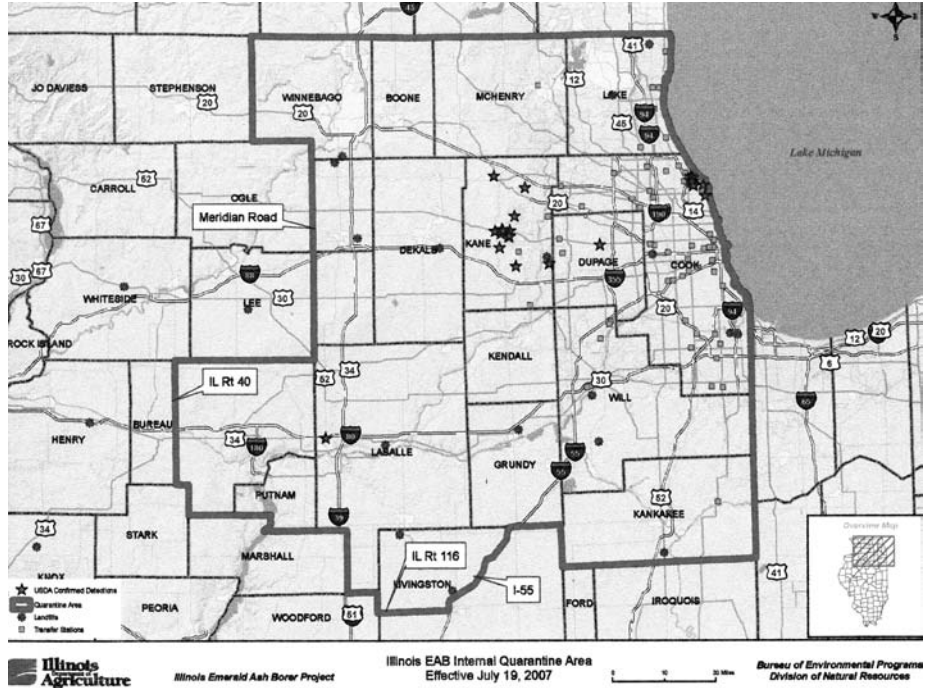
By the time I pass on, whether or not I am able to leave any land to my heirs, I hope that this is the legacy that I will be able to leave to them: "Leave things in better shape than how you got them." This is a legacy that we can still pass on without it being taxed away.

Illinois Tree Farm System



Emerald Ash Borer Quarantine Boundary Expanded Due to Newly Discovered Infestations!!

The Illinois Department of Agriculture has expanded its emerald ash borer (EAB) quarantine to include all or portions of the 18 northeastern-most counties of Illinois. Any yard waste, firewood, or item made from green ash wood which might contain larvae or beetles may not be removed from the area shown bordered by a dark line in the adjacent map. The department encourages Illinoisans to purchase only locally-grown nursery stock and locally-cut firewood. Anyone who suspects that a tree has been infested is urged to contact his county Extension officer or village forester for a consultation. Anyone convicted of moving prohibited items from the quarantine area without prior approval may be fined up to \$500.



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