

SWPWO FIELD TRIP
September 18, 2021
1:00 – 4:00

Rebecca Trigger and son, Mark Foley, are recipients of the 2020 Tree Farmer of the Year Award. Please join them for a guided tour to view their forestry work on their tree farm. The tree farm is 140 acres with about 100 acres of woodland and 25 acres of pollinator fields in various stages of growth. The tour includes hands on demonstration of tools, techniques and resources to establish and maintain a healthy forest. Tour Stops include:

1. Invasive Plant Identification and Control: Learn to identify Tree of Heaven and learn control using hack and squirt technique. Also includes other invasive plants, such as mile-a-minute vine, along with results of recent study done with West Virginia University using biological control of mile-a-minute. A demonstration on "invasive plant survey and management with drones" will be provided.
2. 2. Hardwood Tree Planting: This stop will show areas planted with hardwood tree seedlings. Includes how to use a dibble to plant seedlings, the use of Plantra tree tubes to protect from deer browse and enhance growth, weed control, tips on funding programs and assistance with planting from local high school youth.
3. 3. Grapevine Control: Demonstration of how to use a light weight battery pole saw to cut and control grape vines and system to track work. Shade keeps vine growth in check and the deer do the rest by browsing the re-sprouts.
4. 4. Crop Tree Management: Tour the forestry work of the woodlands from areas worked on compared with areas not yet worked on. Includes areas that have been thinned, crop tree release, and vine control.
5. 5. Pollinator Plots: View plots and discover how they are established and what the recovery plan is for monarch butterfly habitat establishment.
6. 6. Family Forest Carbon Program: Discussion and information on new American Forest Foundation carbon program.

Serving as tour guides and speakers is an extremely knowledgeable group of forestry professionals including:

- Russell Gibbs, Service Forester, PA Bureau of Forestry
- Tony Quadro, Private Consulting Forester
- Sarah Hall-Bagdonas, Landowner Assistance Manager, Family Forest Carbon Program, American Forest Foundation
- Richard Reardon, Entomologist, USDA Forest Service (retired)
- Yong-Lak Park, Professor of Entomology, West Virginia University
- Jose Taracido, Wildlife Conservation Specialist, California University.

The farm was established in the 1880's when Benjamin Craft was given a land grant for fighting in the Civil War. The barn, cookhouse and main house were built between 1882 and 1891. During that time much of the land had been cleared for pastures and apple orchards. In 1950's the buildings, fencing, and land began to fall into disrepair, the farm was eventually abandoned. The forest regrew into a tangled mass of vines and invasive plants. The canopy of vines was so thick it was difficult to see and identify desirable trees struggling to grow.

Rebecca purchased the farm in 1994 and has been renovating the buildings and working to re-establish a healthy forest. The “educated” forestry work began in 2014 when Rebecca met the DCNR Service Forester. In partnership with her son Mark, they have attended the Penn State Forest Stewards Program, Game of Logging, joined the local land-owners association, and attend numerous Conferences to learn all they can.

As a result, they have developed miles of access roads, hired a forester to write a plan, planted nearly 500 trees, developed a pollinator field, participated in studies with WVU on bio-controls and mason bees. Work continues with ongoing thinning, crop tree release, and overall maintenance of roads and trails. Rebecca and her son have learned ways to “work smarter, not harder.”

The results have yielded an explosion of forest growth and an abundant return of wildlife in a short period of time. They appreciate all those who have taught them so very much and most of all sharing with others who love the forest and nature as they do.

Although pre-registration for SWPWO Field Trips is not required, as a courtesy to Rebecca, please let her know if you plan to attend by sending an email to the address listed below.

Rebecca Trigger
127 Valley View Rd
Jefferson, PA 15344
email: rtrigger@windstream.net
cell# [724-986-8334](tel:724-986-8334)