

Trinity-Neches Forest Landowner

Association Newsletter Fourth Quarter, 2012

Next Meeting

There will not be a fall meeting this year, however there will be a spring meeting in early 2013.

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Southern Pine Beetle Lays Low While

Prevention Project Reaches 100,000-acre Milestone –

Dr. Ronald F. Billings, Manager Forest Health, Texas A&M Forest Service, College Station, TX



Pest specialists with the Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS, formerly Texas Forest Service) became concerned in early summer when an unexpected outbreak of the notorious southern pine beetle (SPB) occurred in southwest Mississippi. Like in East Texas, it had been over fifteen years since Mississippi had suffered a major outbreak of SPB – historically the most destructive pest of southern pine forests. By early June, however, over 500 infestations had been detected from aerial surveys on the Homochitto National Forest. Additional spots began showing up on adjacent private lands. Many of the infestations were large and required direct control to halt their expansion in both natural stands and unthinned plantations.

With no markets for beetle-killed trees, U.S. Forest Service (U.S.F.S.) officials opted to treat rapidly expanding infestations with “cut-and-leave,” using both chainsaw crews and mechanical tree fellers. This control method, developed in East Texas in the late 1960s, consists of felling all currently-infested trees plus an adjacent buffer of unattacked pines. The treatment, if correctly applied during summer months, prevents additional loss of trees by disrupting the beetle’s ability to expand infestations. The detection and control effort is still going on in Mississippi.

To be sure a similar SPB outbreak was not developing in East Texas, TFS District crews conducted reconnaissance flights over some 5.9 million acres of beetle-prone pine stands in 33 counties in July and August. Even though trees killed by last year’s drought, engraver beetles, and frequent wildfires were evident, no SPB infestations were detected. This lack of SPB activity confirmed earlier predictions of very low SPB populations using pheromone traps.

TFS continues to take advantage of the lull in SPB activity by promoting prevention practices through the SPB Prevention Project, now in its 11th year. Funding from the U.S. F. S. Forest Health Protection was reduced substantially across the South in 2012, including in East Texas. Nevertheless, federal cost-shares amounting to \$150,000 were offered in FY 2012 and all funds were obligated by last May.

As of September 1, the Project has approved over 100,000 acres of first thinning of beetle-prone pine stands in East Texas involving more than \$6 million in cost shares. Of this total, 1,353 cases involving 87,000 acres have been completed and participating landowners paid in excess of \$5 million in cost shares. The remaining cases are scheduled to be thinned within 18 months of approval. Due to the demand for federal cost shares and reduction in federal funding, cost share rates were reduced in mid-February 2011 to a flat \$50/acre for first thinning of high-hazard pine stands, plus up to \$5/acre for consulting forester fees, in 30 beetle-prone counties. Precommercial thinning is no longer cost shared. No new applications are being accepted until additional federal funding is received in the next federal fiscal year. Although there are no promises, TFS expects the SPB Prevention Project to continue at some funding level in FY2013.

Water Resources/BMP Information from TFS Now Available via Blog

Current information about water resources and the use of forestry Best Management Practices is now available in a new user friendly format – a blog. The Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS) Water Resources Program's discussion and information site will interest landowners wanting to access up-to-date information on what the program is doing, learn about upcoming educational events and read articles on Best Management Practices and other water related issues. "We feel this new approach will engage a wide audience, helping us to reach more Texas landowners," said Hughes Simpson, Program Coordinator.

Join us at <http://tfswater.blogspot.com> to find a wealth of information all in one spot!

Lumberjack Legacy Forests – Stephen F. Austin State University: Ensuring Forests Remain Forests

You can now ensure that your timberland remains forested for future generations while supporting education at Stephen F. Austin State University (SFA). This can be done through their Lumberjack Legacy Forest program.

In addition to maintaining your forested land for future generations, you can ensure that your land is used for the purpose(s) that you intend, eliminate property tax burdens, qualify for tax deductions, and choose among options for maintaining timber revenue, occupancy, and other personal or family or business values.

Lumberjack Legacy Forests are used for laboratory and research sites, and to provide students with hands-on forest and environmental management opportunities. Revenue generated from Legacy Forests may be specified to benefit SFA scholarships or any university research effort or academic program you choose.

The faculty and professional staff of SFA's Arthur Temple College of Forestry and Agriculture manage Legacy Forests' properties, using sustainable forest management principles. SFA is a member of the American Tree Farm System. Deed restrictions can be used to prevent future land sales or land conversion to help prevent forest fragmentation and deforestation.

To discuss donation options or inquire about the program, please contact Jason Grogan, Lumberjack Legacy Forest Program, at (936) 468-5588 or jgrogan@sfasu.edu or Dr. Steve Bullard, Dean of the Arthur Temple College of Forestry and Agriculture at (936) 468-3304 or bullardsh@sfasu.edu. More information, including the example of a Legacy donation from STMicroelectronics, is available at <http://forestry.sfasu.edu/legacy>.

2013 Timber Tax Workshop



A Timber Tax Workshop, focusing on tax laws for 2012 will be held Tuesday, February 12, 2013, from 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. at the Lottie and Arthur Temple Civic Center, 601 Dennis St., Diboll, Texas.

This workshop will provide an understanding of timber tax including basics about timber taxation and the latest changes to tax laws and rules for 2012 tax return preparations. Topics will focus on federal timber income tax issues for private forest owners with a refresher on local timberland property tax incentives. Participants will gain a clear understanding of commonly misunderstood timber tax issues.

For individuals who have had timber losses due to the recent drought, wildfire or other casualties, this course can explain determination of allowable loss deduction and how to claim the loss.

Forest landowners, consulting foresters, accountants, attorneys, and others who work with forest landowners in matters pertaining to timber taxes will benefit from this workshop.

Dr. Harry L. Haney, Jr., nationally recognized expert with over 40 years of experience in timber taxation, estate planning and financial analysis and Dr. Yanshu Li, forest Economist, Texas A&M Forest Service, College Station, TX will be the presenters.

Cost: \$70.00 for workshop and workbook, catered lunch and refreshments. CEU's available – CFE (7 hours); CLE (6 hours), CPE (8 hours).

Call (979) 458-6630 to register by telephone or download a registration form at <http://texasforests.tamu.edu/taxworkshop>.

For more information, contact Monica Jadowski at (979) 458-6630 or mjadowski@tfs.tamu.edu.



Forestry Terminology 101 –



Texas A&M Forest Service:

<http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/main/popup.aspx?id=187>

This list is the fourteenth in a series of forestry definitions that will be useful to forest landowners and others interested in better understanding forestry.

Sawlog- a log large enough to produce a sawn product, usually at least 10 to 12 inches DBH and 8 inches or larger at the small end

Sawtimber Stand- a group of trees with many or most of the trees large enough to be sawn into lumber

Scarify- to break up the forest floor and top soil preparatory to natural or direct seeding (or the planting of seedlings)

Secondary Road- a road constructed for a specific use or single operation and normally abandoned upon completion of the operation

Sediment- solid material in suspension, being transported or moved from its original site



Section- a land measurement term for a square land area containing 640 acres with each side measuring one mile

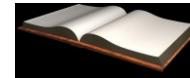
Seed Tree Method- a natural regeneration method where all but a few trees are removed from the harvest area at one time. The remaining trees are carefully selected high quality trees uniformly distributed to provide seed to establish a new forest stand

Seedbed- the soil prepared by natural or artificial means to promote the germination of seed and the growth of seedlings

Seedling- usually defined as a tree less than 1 inch DBH, which has grown from seed, either naturally or in a nursery

Selection Method- a natural regeneration method where individual trees or small groups of trees are harvested at periodic intervals based on their physical condition or degree of maturity

Set- a place where logs are assembled for temporary storage, loading, and subsequent transportation



Market Report July – August, 2012

Product	Statewide Ave. Price		Previous Ave. Price		Price/Ton Difference
	Weight	Volume	Weight	Volume	
Pine-Sawlogs	\$25.78/ton	\$194.59/mbf	\$24.61/ton	\$192.68/mbf	+5%
Pine-Pulpwood	\$6.42/ton	\$17.32/cord	\$6.55/ton	\$17.63/cord	-2%
Pine-Chip'n'Saw	\$9.85/ton	\$26.59/cord	\$13.49/ton	\$36.41/cord	-27%
Mixed Hardwood-Sawlogs	\$26.82/ton	\$251.63/mbf	\$22.48/ton	\$206.76/mbf	+19%
Hardwood-Pulpwood	\$9.36/ton	\$26.32/cord	\$11.32/ton	\$32.38/cord	-17%

** Indicates insufficient sales to report price statistics (fewer than three sales).

Texas Timber Price Trends is a bimonthly publication reporting average prices paid for standing timber in Texas. *This report is intended only as a guide to general price levels.* It should not be used to judge the fair market value of a specific timber sale, which may vary considerably due to many factors. It is recommended that you use the services of a professional consulting forester in managing any timber sale. Important factors affecting timber prices include the type, quality and volume of timber for sale, accessibility, distance to mills/markets, weather conditions, economy/market conditions, who is handling the sale or is buying the timber, and contract requirements by the landowner. Hard copies of this publication can be purchased by contacting Monica Jadowski at (979)458-6630. The complete Texas Timber Price Trends can be viewed at <http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/main/article.aspx?id=145>.

Conversion factors between volume and weight vary from sale to sale, so the differences in volume prices above may not equal differences in weight prices.

Stumpage price statistics include gateway sales (estimated by subtracting cut-and-haul costs, other expenses and profits provided by reporter).

Statewide data excludes U.S. Forest Service sales.

Price calculated from specific conversion factor reported for each sale if available; otherwise, average conversion factors listed on page 4 of *Texas Timber Price Trends* (<http://texasforests.tamu.edu/main/article.aspx?id=145>) are used. MBF = thousand board feet. Doyle Scale used for board foot measurements.

*Field Notes –
personal reflections about our forests and trees*

Texas Bluebonnets – One Land’s Treasure, Another Land’s Invasive Species? – Michael Murphrey, Staff Forester II, Forest Health, Texas A&M Forest Service, Lufkin, TX

For many years now I’ve given a variety of programs and presentations, but recently I talked to an audience of people who are interested in “invasive species.” The presentation focuses on exotic invasive pests and problems they cause throughout the world. It costs us here in the United States approximately \$146 million dollars every year to control these invasive species. And when I say control, I don’t mean eradicate; the problem will be there again next year, if not later this year.

The invasive species presentation includes a series of slides identifying the numerous exotic invasive plants, helping my audience understand the problems we have with them. Some introductions of them were accidental and some a direct import into the country without any form of consideration on what the ramifications would be from transplanting this exotic plant or animal. I show slides of kudzu (the vine that ate the south) to Chinese tallowtree or Japanese honeysuckle.

The last presentation slide I use is of a huge live oak tree in the background with a sea of Texas bluebonnets, indian paintbrush and indian blanket flowers in the foreground. I end my presentation by saying “and with this slide let’s keep Texas native.” Everybody loves that slide of the beautiful landscape of the Texas wildflowers.

But, I learned...there’s another side to this story. What may be a Texas treasure may be another land’s invasive species.....

In one of my invasive species presentations, I was told by a friend of mine, from New Zealand, living here in Texas, about the problems New Zealand was encountering with the rapid takeover of the Texas bluebonnet (*Lupinus texensis*) on the hills of New Zealand. Texas bluebonnets are a nitrogen fixing flower, which for us is good because it improves the soil. However, in New Zealand, their grasses find the increased nitrogen unnecessary. Consequently the bluebonnets are out-competing the native grasses that are eaten by the sheep & goats. Sheep meat & wool are number three & four on the New Zealand Agricultural Commodities list. Also sheep & goat milk and their cheese products are in the top 20 on the commodities list.

I now relay this information to help my audience understand that Texas is also a provider of exotic invasives as well as a recipient of them. Should we say the moment becomes an “epiphany” for all to recognize?

Another chapter to this story presented itself at another invasive species presentation when a “Mr. Jones” (name changed to protect the guilty) came up to me after the program. He was clearly a New Zealander. He has been coming back and forth to Texas for several years, he said. The first time Mr. Jones came to Texas he fell in love with those Texas bluebonnets and he put a couple of packs in his pocket to take home. For 20 plus years, Mr. Jones has carried them home to his native country to spread them all through the hills. Our New Zealander friend thought the bluebonnets were just beautiful here and thought they would look even better over there in New Zealand. He said he really didn’t care what the sheep or goats thought about the Texas bluebonnet; he thought they were beautiful. My story came full circle to my disbelief. I thought I was relaying a funny story on to my audience, who laughed over the deed of smuggling Texas bluebonnets in to New Zealand. Imagine my surprise to have my story confirmed by one of the many culprits.

And he (Mr. Jones) is no different than the rest of us. We live in a global society and for centuries we have been spreading exotics (some invasive, some not) all over the world. Some have been beneficial (cows, horses, etc.) and we couldn’t live without them; others that are detrimental, we will never get rid of regardless of how hard we try or how much money we spend on eradication efforts.

One positive step forward we can make, though, to a better future for us is to “Grow Native.” Only purchase native Texas species, trees included, for your native Texas land.

NOTE: If you would like to submit a story to be considered for inclusion in *Field Notes*, please send it to Susie Shockley at sshockley@tfs.tamu.edu or c/o Texas A&M Forest Service, P.O. Box 310, Lufkin, TX 75902-0310.

***Southern Pine Beetle Lays Low While
Prevention Project Reaches 100,000-acre Milestone –
continued from Page 1***

Has the SPB Prevention Project eliminated the potential for SPB outbreaks in East Texas? Frankly, no. To review the current situation and discuss future needs, the SPB Task Force met recently in Lufkin. This group consists of representatives from Texas A&M Forest Service, Texas Forestry Association, U. S. Forest Service, National Park Service, Forest Landowner Council, forest industry, investment organizations, Stephen F. Austin State University, consulting foresters, Texas Logging Council, and others with a vested interest in the protection of forest resources in Texas. As chairman of this group, I reviewed some sobering statistics at the Task Force meeting.

Although some 100,000 acres of high-hazard pine stands on small private landholdings have been or will soon be treated to reduce the hazard, data from Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) provides perspective to the problem. According to FIA data, the acreage of loblolly and shortleaf pine (considered SPB host type) in East Texas has increased by more than one million acres since 1992. About half of these pine forests are of large diameter (more than 9 inches in diameter). Larger trees are more attractive to SPB. Also, little harvesting of timber has occurred on federal forest lands in recent decades. These factors suggest that the potential for another SPB outbreak may be greater than it was prior to the last outbreak in the early 1990s.

Responding to the next SPB outbreak also will be a challenge. East Texas has suffered a loss of chainsaw crews as well as foresters and field technicians with SPB experience. There are fewer mills to process beetle-killed trees. Forest industry in the past typically conducted their own ground evaluation and control of beetle infestations, and some did their own aerial detection. Will the new owners of these lands have the same capabilities? Clearly, training on SPB management for TFS personnel and others with large land holdings will be a necessity.

On the positive side, the federal wilderness areas in East Texas are much less prone to SPB outbreaks now because much of the pine host type was killed by SPB in the 1990s. Affected forests have been replaced largely by hardwoods or mixed pine-hardwood stands. Also, most Timber Investment Management Organizations (TIMOs) and Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs), who now own the 26% of the forest lands in East Texas previously held by forest industries, have continued to intensively manage their pine stands. The periodic thinning and short rotations prescribed for these pine plantations render them less susceptible to SPB outbreaks.

Taking advantage of the recent SPB outbreak in Mississippi, TFS entomologists took a group of 12 new foresters and resource specialists to the Homochitto National Forest in

July and provided “on-the-spot” training in SPB aerial detection, ground evaluation, and control procedures. These out-of-state training sessions will be repeated when opportunities occur until SPB returns to East Texas.

TFS and the National Forests in Texas have developed strategic plans for suppression of the next SPB outbreak which members of the SPB Task Force have reviewed. These strategic plans describe how these agencies will respond to the next beetle outbreak and will be updated periodically as new information becomes available. Hopefully, we will be prepared when the SPB decides to again make an appearance in the great state of Texas.

***Websites of
Interest***



Wildfire prevention website for communities and homes (Ready, Set, Go and Firewise programs) -
<http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/main/article.aspx?id=12298>

Texas Transparency, “Texas, It’s Your Money”, report series on issues that impact Texas taxpayers, Texas State Comptroller’s Office –
<http://www.texastransparency.org/yourmoney/>

Find Local Tax Data, Texas State Comptroller’s Office -
<http://www.texastransparency.org/yourmoney/localtax/rates.php>

My Land Plan – tool for woodland owners by woodland owners - <http://mylandplan.org>

The rains have returned, so why are my trees dying? -
<http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/main/article.aspx?id=16442>

New Pine Planting Strategies for the Western Gulf States –
http://www.sref.info/resources/publications/print_pubs/new-pine-planting-strategies-for-the-western-gulf-states

Economic Dynamics of Forests and Forest Industries in the Southern United States -
http://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/pubs/gtr/gtr_srs152.pdf

How to protect my woods from timber theft -
<http://www.eforester.org/lp/landowners.cfm>

Calendar of Events

- Current – Nov. 30, 2012 “Texas in Flames” exhibit, highlighting the devastating effects of wildfires presented in the context of the history of prevention, detection and suppression of wildfires in Texas. Focus is on the Bearing fire and the Bastrop/Lost Pines fire. Also, “ART from the Ashes” exhibit - artwork incorporating reclaimed materials from fire sites in Bastrop and an exhibit that highlights the devastating effect of wildfires. **This exhibit was funded through a contribution from the Trinity-Neches Forest Landowners Association.** Texas Forestry Museum, 1905 Atkinson Drive, Lufkin, TX. For more information call (936) 632-9535, e-mail info@treetexas.com or see <http://www.treetexas.com>.
- February 12, 2013 Timber Tax Workshop, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Lottie & Arthur Temple Civic Center, 601 Dennis St., Diboll, TX. Timber tax basics, latest changes to tax laws and rules for 2012 tax return preparations, information regarding timber losses. Registration is \$70.00 and includes a workbook, catered lunch and refreshments. \$30.00 for additional family members. CEU’s available for foresters, loggers and accountants. See <http://texasforestservicetamu.edu/taxworkshop> for more information or contact Monica Jadowski at mjadowski@tfs.tamu.edu or (979) 458-6630.
- March 23, 2013 Texas Wildlife & Woodland EXPO 2013, Conroe/The Woodlands, Texas. For more information please see <http://expo.tamu.edu>.

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