

SWPWO



Southwest PA Woodland Owners

Nov 2018

Wed. Nov. 7 – New Tools for Planning your Woodlot – My Land Plan - Washington’s Citizens Public Library – Ryan Egidi and John Burnham, SWPWO members. This workshop will show landowners how to use MyLandPlan.org which is a free online tool used to map your land, establish goals and objectives, and plan for the future. MyLandPlan.org is a user friendly web site provided by the American Forest Foundation (AFF). This workshop will help landowners learn a new tool to explore different conservation and management opportunities. During the first class, we will meet in a computer lab where we will work with all attendees to set up accounts, map your land and explore stewardship opportunities. Note different location and time: At the Washington’s Citizens Public Library (55 S. College St, Washington, PA). **This Program begins at 6:00 PM.**

~~Sat. Nov. 10 – Using GPS as a Planning Tool on your Woodlot – THIS FIELD DAY HAS BEEN CANCELLED~~

Please visit our website, <http://www.swpwopa.com/> for more information and links to resources for woodland owners

Managing and Conserving PA’s Forested Waters: Review of PA Forestry Assoc (PFA) Annual Meeting

The PA Forestry Association held its annual meeting on Saturday, October 6th at the Toftrees Resort and Conference Center in State College, PA. The meeting was entitled “Managing and Conserving Pennsylvania’s Forested Waters.” It was a one day conference with some very interesting speakers. The first was Bryan Swistock, a Water Resources Specialist from Penn State Extension. He showed a map documenting the record rainfall in Pennsylvania this year. For many areas, this year will go down as the wettest year on record. Managing all this water has resulted in some new thinking about stormwater management that involves more than building bigger culverts and aqueducts. Bioretention has become the new buzzword (and also a new term for me). Bioretention of stormwater entails retaining more water by utilizing forested buffers along the headwater streams. Forested riparian buffers act as a sponge which collects and holds excess water. As the forests soak up the water, they let it out into the

environment more slowly. Forest buffers have the ability to retain much of the stormwater along streams so the flow is regulated naturally during a high water event. Swistock stressed the importance of establishing and maintaining the forest riparian buffers and mentioned that anyone who wants to implement this management practice on their land can get it done without cost to them. Consult with your Service Forester about the programs available.

Next on the podium was Ryan Davis, the Chesapeake Forests Program Manager for Alliance for the Bay. Ryan installs and manages forested riparian buffers along the streams that feed the Chesapeake Bay. His topic was how forested riparian buffers encourage pollinators and wildlife. Davis made a few important points regarding the importance of pollinators and forested riparian buffers that stuck with me. He stated that 85% of the plants in PA require insect pollination to produce fruit/seed. Also, forested riparian buffers supply the diversity in plants and the habitat (which includes water) for pollinators to survive. One strategy to support pollinators on your property is to have blooms (or food) for the pollinators throughout the growing season. It is important for these plants to be native so that the pollinators have the ability to harvest the nectar or pollen (the plant and animal have evolved in parallel). Davis has developed a spreadsheet of native plants listed by bloom time. He offered to share it with us so I will share it when it is available.

The next speaker was David Wise, a watershed restoration manager with the Stroud Water Research Center. Wise primarily talked about the role that forest riparian buffers play in stabilizing sediment to prevent erosion. Sediment build-up in streams degrades the environment for many of the micro and macro organisms of a stream. Many insects cling to rocks as part of a lifecycle- and when the rock is coated with sediment they cannot cling and thus do not survive. Fish will not spawn in sediment encrusted gravel. Controlling stream sediment is important for the food chain of the stream and disrupting this food chain ends up killing much of the life in streams. Wise also showed slides discussing his studies on the most effective tree tubes and planting strategies.

All in all this conference was interesting and the speakers helped validate all the work we all do to maintain forestland. Mingling with fellow landowners and professionals is an additional benefit of attending. Next year's date is already set- so mark your calendars-Sept 28, 2019 for the PFA Annual Meeting at the Toftrees Resort and Conference Center in State College, PA

Forest Management Grants for Greene County Landowners

The Greene County Conservation District is putting its oil and gas funds (Act 13 Funds) into the hands of the people by offering grants to assist woodland owners in the costs for managing their forests. The program is called GRACE (**G**reene County's **R**einvestment in **A**gricultural **C**ost-Share **E**nhancement), and it makes funds available to woodland owners that have a management plan in place. (GRACE does not fund management plans. Call your Service Forester, Russ Gibbs 724-222-1929, for how to

get help with developing a management plan). Some more common projects that this grant money is intended for is to manage invasive species, establish trees, develop riparian buffers, and forest stand improvement. For more information or to apply visit Greene County Conservation District website:

<http://www.co.greene.pa.us/secured/gc2/depts/gccd/agricultural.htm> or call the office at 724-852-5278.

Chestnut Leaf Samples Needed!

The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF) is working with its many volunteers and citizen scientists to collect leaf samples of American chestnuts from its range. The samples are sent to Virginia Tech for whole genome sequencing. The study needs to collect diverse samples. They are especially looking for samples from the SW and W of PA. So if you have a wild, not planted, American chestnut tree or sprout that has been identified by TACF as an American chestnut, please consider sending in a leaf. Contact Sara Fitzsimmons (mail@patacf.org) with the location of your tree(s) – city, state, GPS coordinates and she will send you a kit and pay for the shipping.

Final Newsletter of 2018- Planning for the New Year

The November meeting listed above will be the last SWPWO meeting of 2018. Our meetings will resume in April 2018. A calendar of events is being developed for next year and will be sent out in late winter. Make sure to pay your dues for 2019. The price has not changed - \$10 for an individual and \$15 for a household.

Just because SWPWO stops meeting doesn't mean your land management work and learning has to end. Fortunately, Pennsylvania is offering great opportunities to continue your education. The 2019 Forest Landowners Conference (<https://ecosystems.psu.edu/research/centers/private-forests/outreach/conferences>) is being held in State College this year on March 22-23, 2019. This conference is very useful and brings together experts on many topics from attracting birds to invasive management strategies, as well as the comraderie of many woodland owners from around the state.

Penn State Extension offers many quality online resources also. As we go into a new year, we might be thinking about how we can better record forestland management tasks. I found this article on "Keeping Records of Forest Management Activities" (<https://extension.psu.edu/forest-finance-3-keeping-record-of-forest-management-activities>) to be useful.

Enjoy the holidays and the hunting season. Remember shooting helps manage the deer population (they taste better anyway).

SWPWO Purpose

Southwestern Pennsylvania Woodland Owners (SWPWO), a not for profit association, is an organization of individuals interested in sound woodland management practices to encourage the diverse use of forests for timber production, wildlife habitat, watershed protection and recreation, and to promote this multiple-use philosophy through education and technical assistance for the benefit of the membership and general public.

<p><u>Membership Information</u> Membership dues will be collected at meetings or can be sent to: SWPWO 2506 Hollywood Dr. Pittsburgh, PA 15235</p> <p>If sending in dues, please include name, address, phone number and an e-mail address.</p> <p>Membership to the Southwestern Pennsylvania Woodland Owners Association is \$10 per year for an individual and \$15 per year for a household. Keep your membership up to date to continue to receive the newsletter and yearly calendar.</p>	<p><u>SWPWO Officers (year elected))</u> President – Mark Fajerski (2018) Vice President – John Gregor (2018) Secretary – Ryan Egidi (2018) Treasurer – Maria Piantanida (at large position) Director – Melissa Gregor (2018) Director – Tony Knaus (2015) Director – Wayne Kraeer (2018) Advisor-Bill Wentzel Advisor- Arlyn Perkey</p>
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Editors: Gay Thistle and Bobbi Cressey-Ideas for this newsletter are always welcome Please send it to gaythistle@gmail.com