

SWPWO



Virginia Creeper

Southwest PENNA Woodland Owners Assoc.

Nov 2013

busybeaver.cs.pitt.edu/swpwo/

SEE YOU THERE

November 13 Meeting

WED, 7 PM

NRCS Cost Share Programs

Suzy Funka-Petery, a District Conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), will discuss federally funded programs of interest to landowners. These include the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP). Suzy was on the organizing committee for SWPWO back in the Fall of 1999.

Also, Mike Greiner, the new Greene County Wildlife Conservation Officer, will provide us with an update on deer management and hunting regulations.

Greene County: Waynesburg Fairgrounds, Building #10

November 16 Field Trip

SAT, 1 to 4

Visit to a Cost Share Site

Tour a local Tree Farm that utilizes NRCS funding as part of a resource management plan that stresses sound conservation practices. The Perkey Farm plants warm season grasses in the creek bottoms as part of the EQIP initiative. More than this, Arlyn's Place is a model of the "working" tree farm, utilizing a mix of private, public, and cooperative arrangements to good effect. Always a nice spot to visit, and there is something about November that shows it especially well.

Perkey Tree Farm, near Rutan, Greene County

Forest Carbon: Landowner Opportunities under California's New Offset Program

Recently we attended a workshop in WV on the role of forest carbon sequestration in California's new mandatory Greenhouse Gas Offset Program. The organizer, ecoPartners Carbon of Berkeley, CA, presented an overview on how landowners with forest carbon projects can participate in the Compliance Offset Program administered by the California EPA's Air Resources Board. Only a few landowners were present at this event, which was dominated by consulting foresters, with some representation from state and federal agencies. Until this workshop, we have had little exposure to carbon trading and the opportunities available to a small landowner like us (110 acres), so the information we share here is through the eyes of the newly informed.

Participation in the program requires a very strictly monitored Compliance Offset Protocol which includes management practices common to Stewardship and ATF plans but requires extended rotation age, promotion of uneven-aged forests of native species, and selective logging. The practice of not cutting timber is an option if that suits your

long term goals. While forest properties of all sizes can participate, smaller landowners such as ourselves must be aggregated to share program costs. To be financially feasible a property or aggregate should consist of about 3,000 acres located in one region but not necessarily bordering.

Participating costs are very high due to the expensive procedures for forest carbon quantification and monitoring. There is an upfront set-up cost largely due to the initial detailed inventory, followed by substantial periodic follow-up costs due primarily to audits and additional verification inventories. There are also broker costs associated with carbon credits sales, aggregation costs, and registration fees. However, properties with already above average carbon stock, appropriate tree species mix in a good productivity site generate enough carbon credits and command substantial initial payments that can usually cover program set-up and follow-up costs and create an additional stream of future revenue. This revenue may be most helpful in those years when the timber market is down.

A major limitation is the program requirement of a 100-year commitment, although there are some early exit options with reduced financial penalty. Important risks include forest damage by fire or pests and unforeseen changes in California policies and laws that could adversely impact the program.

The California program is the third program of its nature, after the failed Chicago Climate Exchange and the apparently in trouble European Climate Exchange, and is therefore expected to incorporate their learned lessons and experiences. As other states and countries mandate carbon cap and trade, the markets will grow and foster the development of more efficient and less expensive quantitative forest carbon technologies bringing down landowner costs and ensuring the program's continuity into the future.

As landowners practicing ecosystem based forest management we welcome new opportunities to develop value and revenue from forest services other than timber and wildlife, particularly when these could sustain our conservation efforts. A forest carbon program is an opportunity for us to consider, and therefore we will be monitoring closely the future development of this industry.

---Raul Chiesa & Janet Sredy

The Importance of Lifelong Learning-[even] for Tree Farmers

The Walnut Council visited the Burnham's farm, the Perkey's Greene County farm and our farm, the Thistle farm, this July as part of their annual meeting, held this year in Morgantown, WV. A few things I learned about growing walnuts:

1. There is a difference in managing walnuts for nut production and for timber production:
 - a. Nut producing walnuts grow on 65 foot centers.
 - b. Nut producing walnuts use special grafted stock.
 - c. Timber walnuts should be planted on 8 foot centers.
 - d. To protect a stand from catastrophic disease, or a mistake in micro-climate or soil type, mix plantings with other tree types. Mixing hardwoods in a stand also gives the forest floor more shade, thereby reducing competition.

2. Bottomlands are best for walnuts. To lessen the effects of frost pockets, alternate rows with conifers when planting.
3. Remove tall fescue grass, which has been shown to limit walnut growth.
4. Walnuts grow better if a windbreak is planted near the plantation.

The National Tree Farm Association will hold their 2014 meeting in Pittsburgh on July 17-18. On July 19, the group will tour the Burnham's Tree Farm from 9 AM until 2. I encourage you to attend the entire meeting for the wealth of information that will be available. If you can't be at the lectures in Pittsburgh, please consider volunteering to work the Field Day on July 19 to rub elbows with the many experts who will be attending. This event represents a unique opportunity for us.

---Gay Thistle

Walking in the Woods **In Praise of Dilettantism, Part 2**

Ed. Note: Continued from the Sept issue. CDug strives mightily here to arrive at...something. Identify the literary reference (poem or poet) in Part 1—"the women come and go"—and win a free dinner for 2 at the Toad Hollow Kitchens.

Where were we? Ah, yes, dabbling in the woods. Down in the Hollow, playing a new game. Striving for the suitably sustainable, with an eye out for the mildly picturesque, for the brown-eyed girl. Excuse me: woman, the brown-eyed woman.

In the 19th Century, as the savage passion play of occupying the American wilderness abated, Henry David Thoreau and John Muir put forth the deeply felt vision that mesmerizes us still. The wild, disappearing natural world they took the time to explore rewarded them—and, through their writings, us—with a peek into the enormity of time. The grandeur of Yosemite and the *giant sequoias*, the dripping moose-filled woods enveloping Katahdin—these were the results of natural forces operating for eons apart from the works of man. Let us preserve them and be inspired by them, they said, and how could we not agree. And so was born the justifiable impulse to let the back woods go, to let nature have her way.

But Thoreau and Muir were also mechanically inclined men, doers. Much of their time, by necessity, was spent in places that required commonplace work. Thoreau was an Easterner and his Concord had been inhabited and tamed for 200 years by the time he came along. He made pencils and, later, pattered in the cut over Walden woods, taking its measure, and making small, deliberate improvements. Muir was first a factory mechanic before eventually, for a decade, becoming an orchardist, a family man practicing husbandry.

Which is to say, these two great spirits, transcendent imaginers and writers who are rightfully immortalized as apostles of the woods, can also be characterized as dabblers. Wouldn't you know it: there was a bit of the old hit and miss about them, a touch of trial and error, a trace of the dilettante.

I take this as a hopeful sign, the reclamation of the little man as well as of the dreamer. We cling to our clearings, look out for our favorite trees as for old friends, keep an eye on developing stands, try to make the slightest, silliest difference.

In hope of a transforming burst of energy and insight.

---Carl Douglas

PICKING THROUGH THE SLASH....The Nov. events mark the end of SWPWO's 14th year. The gleam in John B's eye has attained adolescence. Attendance this year was very close to our goals of 20 per lecture, 15 per field event, and membership stands at about 80.... Bill Wentzel reports a few developments as we await the Emerald Ash Borer onslaught. The quarantine on moving ash firewood within PA has been lifted, though such movement is not encouraged. Still no official EAB sightings within Greene. There is some hope that stingless wasps will be a biological control.... The Sept. talk by Atty Sean High on liability issues was an eye-opener. Beware the permissions given to those, especially children, who want access to your property.... Maureen Burnham is advancing plans for a woods writing seminar. I feel a limerick coming on...From the That Government Governs Best Which Governs Least Department: overheard on High St during the Shutdown—"so long as I get my warm season grass money I don't care if they ever re-open that Thing"....**BRIEF BOOK REVIEW**—*American Canopy: Trees, Forests, and the Making of a Nation*, by Eric Rutkow (Scribner, 2012) is the history of trees in America. This is excellent popular history, well told as it covers a wide swath of territory in concise fashion. There are mini-bios of the likes of Daniel Boone, Johnny (Chapman) Appleseed, and Gifford Pinchot, as well as lesser knowns J. Sterling Morton (Arbor Day) and George Perkins Marsh, author of the ground breaking work, *Man and Nature* (1864), to name but a few. The uniqueness, and contentiousness, of the American experience is due in no small part to its extensive woodlands. Highly recommended.... Congrats to the Pirates and their fans on the return of winning baseball to Pittsburgh.

Past Newsletters, history of our Organization, and plenty else, available on our web-site (see above, top of first page)

Call 724-499-5190 or 724-447-2323 for driving directions to Events and Field Trips, or for Car Pooling Arrangements

Claim prizes and address correspondence to: dcressey@nase.org, or
D.Cressey/ 239 Johnson Rd / Holbrook, PA 15341

Our 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.

Membership Information

Membership dues will be collected at meetings or can be sent to:

**SWPWO
2506 Hollywood Dr.
Pittsburgh, PA 15235**

If sending in dues, please include name, address, phone number and an e-mail address. 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.