

# Trinity-Neches Forest Landowner

## Association Newsletter First Quarter, 2012

**Next Meeting**  
Our next meeting will be at the I.D. Fairchild State Forest in Cherokee County. A meeting announcement will be mailed at a later date.

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### ***New Column for Newsletter – Telling Our Stories to Foster a Bright Future for Our Forests and Woodlands***

In last year’s third quarter (October, 2011) edition of the CFLOA newsletter there was an article regarding a Native American Proverb, which says, “**Tell me the facts** and I’ll learn. **Tell me the truth** and I’ll believe. But **tell me a story** and it will live in my heart forever.”

Telling stories about our experiences about the forests and woodlands may instill a love for these in others. Beginning with this issue, in an effort to pass our experiences on to others and foster a bright future for our forests and woodlands, there will be a recurring column entitled, **Field Notes – personal reflections about our forests and trees**. This column will be written by people who wish to convey their passion for the forests and woodlands by telling their stories about their relationships and/or experiences with them.

The first submission, “A Tale of My Forest”, on page 2 of this edition, is by Michael Murphrey, Staff Forester with Texas Forest Service. Those who know Mike know that he’s a great story teller and has a wonderful sense of humor. I am sure you will thoroughly enjoy reading about his stroll through the woods with his daughter and how he helped her understand and come to appreciate the practical side of his love for the forest.

Let’s all make it a point to tell our stories (in print or out loud) so that future generations may gain an appreciation for it and help perpetuate the forests and woodlands we know, love and need. If you would like to submit a story to be considered for inclusion in **Field Notes – personal reflections about our forests and trees**, please send it to Susie Shockley at [sshockley@tfs.tamu.edu](mailto:sshockley@tfs.tamu.edu).

### ***Property Tax Code as It Relates to Natural Disasters and Drought*** – from Texas Forestry Association’s “Texas Forestry”, November 2011



Governor Rick Perry has declared that every county in Texas is subject to a drought disaster. Property Tax Code Section 23.522 specifically permits a landowner to cease agricultural use of property during declared droughts without losing the land’s open-space appraisal designation if the landowner resumes the same use of the land to the same degree of intensity at the end of the drought. Wildfires have also devastated some portions of the state. Special appraisal of land designated as open-space does not necessarily cease because of its inability to be used for agricultural purposes after devastating fires. Consideration of the land’s qualification for five or seven years must be given, as well as possible reclassification of the land in order to determine its productivity.

Other sections relating to natural disasters and droughts include:

Section 6.053 – provision of information to emergency authorities from chief appraiser.

Section 11.135 – continuation of residence homestead exemption when a structure that is rendered uninhabitable or unusable is replaced. Replacement structure may be subject to tax increase. Sections 11.26 and 11.261- continuation of school tax limitations for persons age 65 and older or disabled persons while a structure that was rendered uninhabitable or unusable by a casualty or by wind or water damage is replaced.

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



*A Tale of My Forest* - Michael Murphrey,  
Staff Forester II, Texas Forest Service, Lufkin, TX

"Yes, your mother and I bought the forty acres in Camp County in 1994 but it's our forest," I thought; though the kids don't understand. About eight months ago I brought the understanding to my daughter, Melanie, of how this forty acres is "our" forest.

A beautiful blue bird day in February, 2011 the entire Murphrey Clan took a day trip up to Pittsburg to visit our neighbors Bill & Leslie Tucker and to check on the logging job that was taking place. The loggers had thinned about 80% of the forty acre tract located up near Lake Bob Sandlin in Camp County, Texas. I wanted to see the progress they had been making and demonstrate to the kids (Nicholaus and Melanie) why we (Tree Farmers) do what we do with our forests. We walked the tract checking out all the down rows and logging roads scattered through the tract and looking at the trees that were left. In forestry terms we call these trees residual timber; in Tree Farmer terms we call them future logs now that the poorer quality pulpwood had been removed. The tract was thinned very well. Every fifth row was removed and they thinned within the remaining four rows. It was thinned back to about a 75-80 sq. ft. basal area leaving nothing but the best trees to grow. The spacing was excellent in the remaining four rows which were thinned using a logging method called "Crown Friction." While walking through the unthinned part of the stand we discussed the density of the plantation and what was going on with all the trees that were having to compete for moisture, nutrients and sunlight.

The discussion was fabulous (in my mind) as I explained growth rates and what competition does to a tree by using the unthinned stand as example; while looking at the rings on a stump in a down row. We talked about the logging roads, water bars, erosion and why you keep water clean and how good logging and good management are beneficial to the environment and to our property. I thought (again, in my mind) I was doing a bang up job of teaching my children stewardship of the land and management of forest to improve the health of the residual trees. Until my "Baby", who was 25, said "Daddy, why did you bring me up here?"

It dawned on me that I was not communicating on a subject that she was interested in learning about. I looked into her face to see a beautiful young lady looking so confused back at me. It was then that I realized how to help her understand. All the education in the world is worthless unless you want to learn. And she didn't. Don't get me wrong she was grateful we went up there and she paid attention and listened well and was generally pleased with our walk in the woods but she just didn't understand why? Why did we drive 140 miles, one way, to walk in these woods?

So I had to think, what could I use to drive my point home on the benefits to what was taking place on "our" property; and help her understand that this land, this 40 acres, is ours?

Finally it came to me. I said, "Melanie you see that row of stumps, we call it a down row. It is created by harvesting the trees to allow access into the stand of timber for the equipment and provide access to thin the rows of residual timber on each side." I asked her, "What do you think they did with trees they removed?" She replied, "Took them to the mill to make paper." "Excellent answer," I replied. "And what did I get in return?" I asked her. She said, "Money." "That is right!" I replied. "So you see that down row - that paid for your wedding dress; that one paid for the wedding cake; that one was the catered dinner" and so on and so forth through the freshly thinned plantation we went. Now I had her attention and we could begin discussing the benefits and reasons for thinning a forest. She now knows that the forty acres in Camp County is ours and that you manage timber to pay for a wedding and for all the science and reasoning behind it. We had a wonderful walk on the property and fantastic day of education.

We teach our children to walk and talk. We teach them the difference between right and wrong. If we want them to be "Stewards" of OUR land, then we will have to help them understand that the land belongs to all of us. And to keep it healthy we'll need to manage it.

This doesn't happen overnight. So good luck and have fun with the many trips you will be taking to "y'all's forest".

**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](mailto:sshockley@tfs.tamu.edu).

## Forestry Terminology 101 –



**Texas Forest Service:**

<http://texasforests-service.tamu.edu/main/popup.aspx?id=187>

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

**Outfall Protection-** a rip rap or aggregate placed at the outlet of a culvert or water-control device to protect that area from erosion damage due to the force or velocity of the outlet of water

**Outslope-** the downhill side of a road where the side of the road slopes with the hill at or near the natural contour and runoff is allowed to drain down the hill without being channeled into a ditch or other water-control device. Out slopes are usually associated with a road in steep terrain which is literally cut into the side of the hill

**Overtopped-** trees within a stand with crown entirely below the crowns of other trees in the stand

**Partial Cut-** a silvicultural cutting system, which removes at any one time less than the total tree stand



**Perennial-** that part of the drainage network which provides water flow at all times except during extreme drought

**Pesticides-** a collective term meaning chemicals, including herbicides and insecticides, which are used to kill pests such as weeds, diseases, insects, or unwanted trees

**Photogrammetry-** the science of interpreting and making reliable measurements from aerial photographs

**Plantation-** an artificially reforested area established by planting or direct seeding and usually made up of a single species

**Point Source Pollution-** sources of water pollution (generally a man-caused pollutant) which can be traced to a specific place or location (i.e. a pipe)

**Pole Timber-** trees with diameters larger than 4 inches DBH with a very straight trunk and very little taper

**Pollutant-** dredged soil, solid wastes, incinerator residue, sewage, garbage, sewage sludge, chemical wastes, biological materials, radioactive materials, heat, wrecked or discarded equipment, rock sand, cellar dirt, and industrial, municipal, and agricultural waste discharged in the water. (P.L. 92-500 Section 502(6))

## Market Report – September/October, 2011

Product	Statewide Ave. Price		Previous Ave. Price		Price/Ton Difference
	Weight	Volume	Weight	Volume	
Pine-Sawlogs	\$24.81/ton	\$200.37/mbf	\$24.91/ton	\$191.05/mbf	0%
Pine-Pulpwood	\$5.43/ton	\$14.63/cord	\$5.49/ton	\$14.80/cord	-1%
Pine-Chip'n'Saw	\$8.02/ton	\$21.66/cord	\$8.99/ton	\$24.28/cord	-11%
Mixed Hardwood-Sawlogs	\$26.61/ton	\$234.64/mbf	\$26.34/ton	\$240.94/mbf	+1%
Hardwood-Pulpwood	\$5.68/ton	\$16.11/cord	\$5.96/ton	\$16.75/cord	-5%

*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://texasforests-service.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-service.tamu.edu/main/article.aspx?id=145>) are used. MBF = thousand board feet. Doyle Scale used for board foot measurements.

***Save the Date I - 2012 Texas Timber Tax Workshop - Dr. Yanshu Li, Forest Economist, Texas Forest Service, College Station, TX***

Texas Forest Service will host three timber taxation workshops at the Lottie & Arthur Temple Civic Center, 601 Dennis St., Diboll, Texas, from 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. on **February 17, 2012**. The daylong workshop will provide an understanding of timber tax including the latest changes to tax laws and rules for 2011 income tax return preparations with a refresher on local timberland property tax incentives.

Our workshops have trained hundreds of foresters, landowners, tax preparers, attorneys, logging professionals, land trust managers, and financial advisors in East Texas.

***This tax workshop will help you:***

- Learn special timber tax laws and rules that are not well understood by many tax professionals
- Apply the rules through examples that apply basic concepts
- Find answers to your top questions

***Instructors will be:***

**Dr. Deborah Gaddis Gunter** – She is a retired Mississippi State University Extension Tax Specialist in Forestry. A former industrial forester, Dr. Gunter has been teaching landowners, tax preparers and foresters about forest taxation since 1999. She is the author of the Timber Tax Fundamentals short course and numerous tax articles and publications. She has lectured across the United States on the subject of forest taxation. Currently she is a Visiting Assistant Professor at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale Department of Forestry.

**Dr. Yanshu Li** – Forest Economist at Texas Forest Service, College Station, TX.

***Who should attend:***

Landowners, consulting foresters, public accountants, and loggers are encouraged to participate. The workshop qualifies for **continuing education credits**: CFE (foresters) 7.0 hours, CLE (loggers) 6.0 hours and CPE (CPAs) 8.0 hours.

***How to register:***

Contact Monica Jadowski (979) 458-6630 or go to <http://texasforestservice.tamu.edu/main/popup.aspx?id=14811>.

Registration fee will be \$70 per participant (\$30 per additional family member). The registration fee includes the workbook, catered lunch, and refreshments. Space is limited. Early registration is strongly encouraged.

***Save the Date II - Drought Symposium: Drought Impacts to Forestlands and Where We are Going – Shane Harrington, Staff Forester, Texas Forest Service, Temple, TX***

Texas Forest Service and Texas Forestry Association are sponsoring this Drought Symposium on from 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Wednesday, **February 8, 2012** at the Lottie & Arthur Temple Civic Center, 601 Dennis St., Diboll, Texas.

Topics include 2011 drought impacts, forest health issues, silvicultural recommendations, mortality assessment, 2012 wildfire outlook, climate trends – past/present/future, market impacts and assistance programs.

Lunch will be provided, so please RSVP by February 3, by contacting Shane Harrington at (936) 546-1470 or [sharrington@tfs.tamu.edu](mailto:sharrington@tfs.tamu.edu).

***Save the Date III – Prescribed Fire Training – Rusty Wood, Forest Stewardship Biologist, Texas Parks & Wildlife, Nacogdoches, TX***

On **January 26, 2012**, we will hold prescribed fire training for forest landowners in Nacogdoches. The meeting will be held in room 117 on the lower level of the Stephen F Austin Forestry Building and will start at 9:00 a.m.

As you arrive, you will need to pick up a parking pass for your windshield from one of our representatives.

We have a demonstration burn (pending weather conditions) planned for Friday the 27th just outside the loop in Nacogdoches for those interested. We will have more details on that at the meeting.

Spread the word!!!

For more information, contact Rusty Wood, (936) 462-1111 or [rusty.wood@tpwd.state.tx.us](mailto:rusty.wood@tpwd.state.tx.us).

***Save the Date IV – Texas Wildlife & Woodland Expo and Spring Fling***

Learn how to protect your home and nourish the land on which you live, March 24, 2012, 10:00 – 4:00 p.m. Attend clinics on plants, trees, water, wildlife & wildfire; family adventure zone; pictures with Smokey Bear. FREE. No charge to vendors. For more information, please call (936) 273-2261 or visit <http://expo.tamu.edu>.

## ***New Best Management Practices Implementation Report Published – Texas Forest Service, Water Resources Program, Lufkin, TX.***

Texas Forest Service recently completed the eighth round of Best Management Practices (BMP) Implementation Monitoring. This was done to measure the degree of implementation of BMP guidelines by the forestry community; in other words, how well BMPs are being used in the field. Forestry BMPs are common-sense practices that help reduce soil erosion and protect water quality.

Sites on which forestry operations had occurred were randomly selected and evaluated for the presence, where applicable, and functionality of BMPs. Sites that are monitored are only done with landowner consent.

Overall BMP implementation on sites monitored was 94.1%. This is an all time high since the program began in 1992. National Forest sites had an overall implementation of 98.3%, while industrial sites had a 97.7% implementation rating. Corporate lands (commercial landowners that do not have wood processing facilities) scored 96.7% overall, while family forest owners scored 88.0%.

Implementation of BMPs was statistically higher when:

- the landowner was familiar with BMPs
- the logging contractor had attended formal BMP training
- a forester was involved in the sale or activity
- BMPs were included in the timber sale contract
- the landowner had a forest management plan.

The use of BMPs in Texas is voluntary. Continued use of forestry BMPs is important to protect water, soil, and other natural resources of Texas.

For more information, please see <http://texasforests.tamu.edu/BMP>. Look under “Publications” for the latest implementation report and earlier reports.

## ***Websites of Interest***



***Compass*** (quarterly science magazine) – Inside the Science, USDA FS, Southern Research Station,  
<http://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/compass/issue16/index.htm>

***Southern Forests Future Project*** – explore data, maps and other information to highlight key features and trends for southern forests - <http://www.seesouthernforests.org/>

***iTree*** – Urban forestry analysis and benefits assessments tool - <http://itreetools.org/>

***Texas Water Resources Institute***, Fall, 2011, *Tx H<sub>2</sub>O* - <http://twri.tamu.edu/publications/txh2o/> - “Texas Drought: Now and Then”. A timeline of drought in Texas, re-water (reclaimed water), drought detective, etc.

***Texas Wildfire Relief*** - <http://www.window.state.tx.us/comptrol/fnotes/fn1111/relief.php>

***Timber Tax Seminar*** - <http://texasforests.tamu.edu/main/popup.aspx?id=14811>

***AF&PA Grow the Vote***, hot forestry related issues on Capitol Hill - [http://www.bipac.net/page.asp?g=afpa&content=hot\\_issues\\_on\\_Capitol\\_hill](http://www.bipac.net/page.asp?g=afpa&content=hot_issues_on_Capitol_hill)

***List of public water systems limiting water usage to avoid shortages*** - <http://www.tceq.texas.gov/drinkingwater/trot/droughtw.html>

## ***Property Tax Code As It Relates to Natural Disasters and Drought – continued from Page 1***

Section 23.02 – reappraisal of property damaged in a disaster.

Section 23.23 – continuation of the residential appraisal cap while a structure that was rendered uninhabitable or unusable by a casualty or by wind or water damage is replaced. If a new structure is larger or of higher quality, it will be considered an improvement and taxed accordingly.

Section 23.129 – Chief Appraisers and tax assessor-collectors are authorized to waive certain penalties for failure to file or to timely file a declaration or tax statement for motor vehicle, dealer’s heavy equipment or mobile home inventory. There is a 30 day deadline following the event to file the written application for this waiver.

Section 53.032 – relates to installment payments for taxes on certain properties damaged in a disaster area.

For more information, please see <http://www.window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/proptax/naturaldisasters.html>.



## *Calendar of Events*

- February 8, 2012      Drought Symposium, 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Lottie and Arthur Temple Civic Center, 601 Dennis St., Diboll, TX. Lunch provided. Please RSVP by February 3 by calling or emailing: Shane Harrington, (936) 546 – 1470 / or [sharrington@tfs.tamu.edu](mailto:sharrington@tfs.tamu.edu).
- February 17, 2012      Texas Timber Tax Workshop, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Lottie and Arthur Temple Civic Center, 601 Dennis St., Diboll, TX. For more information, contact Monica Jadowski at (979) 458-6630 or [mjadowski@tfs.tamu.edu](mailto:mjadowski@tfs.tamu.edu). Online registration available at <http://texasforests.tamu.edu/main/popup.aspx?id=14811> .
- March 24, 2012      Texas Wildlife & Woodland Expo & Spring Fling, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Lone Star College, Montgomery, Texas. Drought and wildfire – how to protect your home and nourish the land on which you live. Clinics on plants, trees, water, wildlife & wildfire; family adventure zone; pictures with Smokey Bear. FREE. No charge to vendors. For more information, please call (936) 273-2261 or visit <http://expo.tamu.edu>.
- April 21, 2012      Spring Garden Gala Day – 9:00 a.m. starting gate at the Pineywoods Native Plant Center (PNPC), at 2900 Raguet Street, located between College Avenue and Austin. Parking can be found at Raguet Elementary and at the Early Childhood Research Center. Drop-off for people needing assistance at the PNPC is available as well as a shuttle service to and from the parking lots. [http://sfagardens.sfasu.edu/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=13&Itemid=40](http://sfagardens.sfasu.edu/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=13&Itemid=40). For more information, please contact Elyce Rodewald at [erodewald@sfasu.edu](mailto:erodewald@sfasu.edu) or (936) 468-1832.

## *President's Message*

The rain that East Texas has gotten is welcome and I hope that there is more to come this late winter and coming spring. We need more in order to fill our tanks and lakes back to the full level in preparation for the coming summer. We all hope and pray that the 2012 summer is milder than what we experienced in 2011.

The Texas Forestry Association will be celebrating its 100 year anniversary in 2014. We are looking forward to that event, as we seek to honor the past of this fine organization.

Be sure to join this organization for the coming year if you have not done so.

On February 8, at Diboll Civic Center the Texas Forest Service will host a Drought Symposium, Drought Impacts and Where We Are Going, from 0830 until 1500 for all to attend. This meeting is FREE and lunch will be provided. If you plan to attend please RSVP to Shane Harrington, TFS , at 936-546-1470 or [sharrington@tfs.tamu.edu](mailto:sharrington@tfs.tamu.edu) by February 3, 2012.

The Texas Forest Service has a good check list for planting of seedling and it can be found on the TFS site under the name

### **To Plant or Not To Plant: New Timber Stand Drought Risk Assessment**

We are planning our Spring TNFLA meeting and the details will be announced as soon as final plans are done. We hope that all will plan to attend for a day of quality information.

I hope that all had a safe and Merry Christmas and that 2012 will be a better year.

Phil Power  
TNFLA President

Texas Forest Service  
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Jacksonville, TX 75766