

# Trinity Neches Forest Landowner

## Association Newsletter Third Quarter, 2015

### Next Meeting

**Date:** 9/12/2015  
**Time:** 9:00 am  
**Place:** Richard Saunders Home  
More detail enclosed.  
**YOU MUST RSVP TO ATTEND!!**

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### ***Management Tip***

With summer in full swing it means you should be thinking about tree planting efforts this fall/winter.

Remember to order your seedlings so you're not left bare this



### ***The Next 25 Years: Threats Facing America's Private Forest Landowners***

*Forestry Notes: Summer 2015 Edition*  
National Association of Conservation Districts  
[www.nacdnet.org](http://www.nacdnet.org)



Forest Stewardship, Forest Legacy and Urban & Community Forestry (USFS State and Private CO-OP Forestry Programs) have helped private forestland owners address a number of obstacles over the past quarter-century. These programs change how we think about managing our woodlands, and provided incentives for those willing to meet the needs of the resource head on.

So what obstacles will impact forest landowners in the next 25 years? Here are five commonly referenced issues facing private forest lands, with comments from American Forest Foundation CEO and President Tom Martin and National Woodland Owners Association President Keith Argow. These obstacles will make agency programs even more critical to preserving America's privately-owned forests in the coming years.

#### **1. It's important to plan for the future**

The future of America's private forestlands is dependent upon families deciding how best to pass the land down to the next generation of stewards. Few discussions can be as tense and complicated. Any number of factors can come into play and result in liquidation instead of succession. As Argow points out, the increasing rate of land turnover makes forestland ever more vulnerable to development and conversion. Careful succession planning not only keeps the forest in the family, but it also helps to keep tracts of forestland intact. It starts with a series of questions, followed by honest dialogue. "Family landowners need to know who they want to own the property and who they want to manage it – and those questions may have two different answers," says Martin.

#### **2. What does the future hold for forest markets?**

Wanting to maintain landownership is one thing; being able to afford to do so is another. Historically, timber harvests helped offset property tax and cost of ownership, but margins are much tighter today. "Healthy and reliable forest markets are the No. 1 concern of family forest owners nationwide," says Argow. "The highest prices are for the land, and not the trees growing on them." Will society's growing interest in sustainable products help jumpstart the wood industry? It's hard to say, as forest markets are unpredictable. Whereas markets were often considered cyclical, Martin advises landowners not to wait for blue skies. "Markets go up, down and sideways, but cyclical suggests a pattern that repeats and I don't think we have that," he explains. "Opportunities are deeply place dependent."

## ***New Online Management Tool for Landowners***

*Texas A&M Forest Service*

<http://tfsweb.tamu.edu> / [www.texasforestinfo.com](http://www.texasforestinfo.com)

Want to put in a road on your land? Protect your water resources? Enhance wildlife, harvest trees or clear vegetation? Texas A&M Forest Service's (TFS) newest online tool, Plan My Land Operation, is designed to help you protect your property and ensure sustainability as you begin your next land improvement project.

Geared toward landowners, contractors, and land managers, Plan My Land Operation is key to planning any improvement to your land. This tool helps you plan and layout your project based on your specific terrain, soil, and water resources. As a user, you can quickly map a property boundary, identify sensitive areas, place a buffer around critical features, and determine things needed like the proper size culvert.

"Planning any land operation is a critical first step to protecting your land and water resources. Without a good operational plan, your land may be at risk," Hughes Simpson, program coordinator for Texas A&M Forest Service said.

As a service-based state agency, TFS strives to provide land managers advanced tools to help efficiently and effectively implement land operations.

"Ordinarily, in order to do something like this you need an extensive GIS system or to be a land operation expert. Now, anyone with access to the Internet can map their property and generate detailed operation planning reports," Simpson said.

A unique feature of the Plan My Land Operation tool is that it is also useful to hikers and outdoor enthusiasts. Users can map out their trail and it will show the distance, elevation, and slope of that trail. While full capability of the tool is statewide, this function is available nationwide.

Plan My Land Operation is the newest online tool added to an already extensive lineup of interactive online tools located at [texasforestinfo.com](http://texasforestinfo.com). This website provides landowners, managers, government officials, local community groups, and the public state-of-the-art access to custom Web mapping applications with capabilities to discover and explore an array of maps depicting forest conditions, and query and download data on a variety of forest interests.

Other tools on the Texas Forest Info website: Map My Property, Forest Products Directory, Timber Decision Simulator, Economic Impact, and more!

## **Websites of Interest**



### **Magic Tree: Multi-Blossom Hybrid Grows 40 Different Kinds of Fruit –**

<http://www.rt.com/usa/310723-magical-art-hybrid-tree/>

### **Agriculture and Timber Registration Numbers –**

<http://comptroller.texas.gov/taxinfo/agriculture/>

### **Forest Landowners Association, Promoting Private Forests –**

<http://www.forestlandowners.com/>

### **Texas State Historical Association, Texas Almanac (Forest Resources) –**

<http://texasalmanac.com/topics/environment/forest-resources>

### **American Tree Farm System, 2015-2020 Standards of Sustainability –**

<https://www.treefarmssystem.org/atfs-standards>

## ***Monarchs of Texas***

*US Fish and Wildlife Service*

[www.usfws.gov/pollinators](http://www.usfws.gov/pollinators)

The monarch butterfly (pictured below) is one of the most beautiful and recognizable insects on earth, but it needs our help. The monarch is losing its habitat, and more importantly, it is losing its milkweed plants that used to grow in that habitat, which monarchs depend upon for laying eggs and caterpillar food. As a result, its populations across the United States and into Canada and Mexico have been dropping by about 90% over the past 20 years, reflecting a drop of about 970 million individuals by 2015.

To reverse its pressing threats (mainly loss of habitat and native milkweed plants due to urban development; shifts in agricultural practices; land management activities, such as mowing and herbicide applications along roadsides and rights-of-way; use of insecticides; severe weather events likely related to climate change; and degradation of wintering habitat in Mexico and California) the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is proactively working with partners to conserve the monarch.

### **Recovery Actions**

Habitat restoration; milkweed (pictured below) and native flower seed production; outreach and education; and research and monitoring are key aspects of this effort. Many of the projects will focus on the I-35 corridor from Texas to Minnesota, areas that provide important spring and summer breeding habitats in the eastern monarch population's central flyway. Texas has the most native milkweed species of any state with 37 species. We are working to increase milkweed availability for public planting of natives and to maintain the genetic diversity of Texas's high number of native milkweeds.

## ***The Next 25 Years Cont.***

### **3. Landowners must stay current on pests and disease**

Standing dead timber has plagued western states thanks to bark beetle. The number of states impacted by emerald ash borer continues to grow. There's Gypsy Moth and Thousands Cankers Disease. Name a tree and your local forester will name an insect or disease to go with it. There are no easy cures, but it's important to have a good gameplan for response and removal. "Creating an adaptable, resilient and actively monitored forest is the best insurance against these stressors," says Martin, "so diversity in species and age classes may offer benefits. And prompt active management where outbreaks are found can limit damage." Argow stresses the need for landowner education. "It is in the individual landowner's best interest to be able to recognize insect and disease presence early before their presence does real damage. State forestry agency detection reports help, along with visits with your forester and neighbors."

### **4. The big 'C' will impact forest landowners, too**

Landowners must at least consider how changing temperatures and water levels might impact their land. "Letting nature take its course may no longer produce the results that landowners desire," says Martin. Adds Argow: "(Conditions) will gradually change the composition of both the trees and the understory of family woodlands." There is a growing movement in USDA to make forestry a key piece in the fight to slow the affects of climate change. This means private forest landowners – even those with minimal acreage – must be conscious of how their land fits into the big picture. Carbon sequestration is still a meeting topic more than it is a tool, but as policy takes shape and programs adapt landowners will need to adapt, too.

### **5. The growing need to 'sell' the value of forests**

There is a growing number of individuals living in urban centers, hours – if not days – away from the forest. The concern is that this population will not support the need to invest in our nation's forests because it is disconnected from them. It's less likely to recognize benefits such as clean air and clean water as the generation before it. So what exactly does this have to do with the forest landowner? Because forest landowners, same as forestry professionals, need to begin to do a better job of telling their story – to stress the need of keeping forests as forests. "All of us are upset when we lose a tree in our yard or the park down the street," says Martin. "What folks don't fully appreciate is a forest, which is a dynamic thing, with death and new life a regular occurrence. And we haven't done a good job as a community in helping them understand that and the role that active management can play in making that dynamic forest more sustainable





## Monarchs Cont.

### You can help too!

Consider planting local, native milkweed and other native flowering plants in your garden to help the monarch.

Together, we can restore the monarch and help all pollinators by providing milkweed and its needed flowering native grassland habitat, to enable the butterfly to complete its life cycle and amazing migration. By conserving and connecting habitat for monarchs, we will benefit other plants and animals, including critical insect and avian pollinators.

### For Further Information

[www.monarchjointventure.org/](http://www.monarchjointventure.org/)

[www.fws.gov/southwest/es/monarchs.html](http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/monarchs.html)



## Market Report, March-April, 2015

Product	Statewide Ave. Price		Previous Ave. Price		Price/Ton Difference
	Weight	Volume	Weight	Volume	
Pine-Sawlogs	\$31.50/ton	\$249.58/mbf	\$29.72/ton	\$229.64/mbf	+6%
Pine-Pulpwood	\$9.46/ton	\$25.48/cord	\$9.21/ton	\$24.82/cord	+3%
Pine-Chip'n'Saw	\$16.05/ton	\$43.34/cord	\$16.71/ton	\$45.11/cord	-4%
Mixed Hardwood-Sawlogs	\$37.67/ton	\$352.88/mbf	\$38.24/ton	\$364.15/mbf	-2%
Hardwood-Pulpwood	\$17.54/ton	\$49.11/cord	\$15.74/ton	\$44.08/cord	+11%

*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 Dawn Spencer 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 gatewood 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 Log Scale used for board foot measurements.

## ***Protecting Our Wildlife Through Sustainable Forest Management***

*Vanishing Pieces of the Puzzle Series*

Tom Martin, CEO American Forest Foundation

[www.forestfoundation.org](http://www.forestfoundation.org)

*This post is the fifth installment in our **“Vanishing Pieces of the Puzzle”** series, showcasing new research on the benefits provided by family-owned forests—one-third of American woodlands—and the threats they face if we do not take action. For more on the campaign, visit the **“Vanishing Pieces of the Puzzle”** page where you can sign-up to receive email newsletters.*



An iconic American image, wild turkeys inhabit a wide variety of forested land throughout the country. Active, well-managed family-owned woodlands provide wild turkeys with a variety of young and mature forests that turkeys need to thrive. A proud partner of AFF, the **National Wild Turkey Federation** (NWTf) recognizes the importance of working with, and through, family-owned woodlands to protect this beloved species.

Recent research by the Family Forest Research Center indicates that there are approximately 78 million acres of core forest, or large parcels of forests suitable for habitat, owned by family woodland owners. This contiguous land provides habitat for wild turkeys, as well as many other species of mammals and birds. In fact, there are more than 14 thousand threatened and endangered species occurrences on family-owned woodlands, meaning this vast, core forested habitat is vital for providing necessary refuge for those species, like the Kirtland’s warbler and the Canada lynx, that are most at risk.

But this rich forest habitat is under threat. AFF new research, *Vanishing Pieces of the Puzzle*, found that nearly 43 percent of the core forest habitat, or 33.3 million acres, is threatened – an area larger than the state of South Carolina. These threats, including natural weather disasters, development for shopping malls or other non-forest uses and the fragmenting of big tracts of forests into small separated sections have the potential to negatively affect more than 7,500 reported species occurrences. We’ve already seen these negative effects on wild turkeys. In the last 10 years, the population has dropped approximately 11 percent, due in part to habitat disruptions from development and faulty land management practices.

Luckily, there are programs such as the American Tree Farm System (ATFS), run by AFF, that help woodland owners ensure their forestland stays ripe for animal habitat by helping them practice sustainable forestry that protects wildlife. Take for example, the Saloom family in Alabama, their woodlands are managed to ensure that wildlife can live freely and productively, with even a portion of their forest land dedicated solely to wildlife. They plant native trees that provide food for a variety of wildlife species, and make sure to postpone harvest until the hen turkeys have successfully nested. Tree Farmers, like the Salooms, continually demonstrate exceptional efforts to preserve and enhance their woodlands, and thus the wildlife habitat.

The National Wild Turkey Federation and AFF work together to ensure that turkey populations, and many other wildlife species, have enough habitat to call home. By empowering family woodland owners to keep their forests as forests, together, we’re creating and protecting habitat for native wildlife nationwide.

## *Calendar of Events*

**September 12 – Outstanding Tree Farm Tour**, 9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., Frankston, TX. This event is FREE and lunch is provided. RSVP by September 4 to Texas Forestry Association by calling (936) 632-8733 or emailing [tfa@texasforestry.org](mailto:tfa@texasforestry.org), please include your name, mailing address and total number attending

**October 21-23 – TFA’s 101st Annual Meeting**, Hilton Hotel and Conference Center, College Station, TX. More details to come!!!

**March 16 – November 8 – “History in the Making: Texas A&M Forest Service”** exhibit at the George Bush Presidential Library in College Station, TX. The exhibit brings to life the people, places and events that shaped the agency over the past 100 years. For tickets and more information please visit <http://bush41.org/>.