



Kentucky
Woodland
Owners
Association

KENTUCKY WOODLANDS NEWSLETTER

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www.kwoa.net

General Butler State Resort Park will be the location for the 2018 KWOA Annual Meeting



Leopold Conservation Award 2018 Call for Nominations

If you, or someone you know, is a Kentucky landowner who is committed to land management practices that increase conservation, the Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts (KACD) invites your application for the Leopold Conservation Award.

Sand County Foundation, the Kentucky Agricultural Council and KACD are accepting applications for the 2018 Leopold Conservation Award program in Kentucky. The \$10,000 award honors Kentucky farmers, ranchers and other private landowners who voluntarily demonstrate outstanding stewardship and management of natural resources.

Given in honor of renowned conservationist Aldo Leopold, the Leopold Conservation Award recognizes extraordinary achievement in voluntary conservation. It inspires other landowners through these examples and provides a visible forum where farmers, ranchers and other private landowners are recognized as conservation leaders. The Leopold Conservation Award Program is offered in the following states: California, Colorado, Kansas, Kentucky, Nebraska, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

Application deadline for the 2018 award is spring 2018. See the 2018 Call for Applications at kwoa.net/news for information on applying or on candidate nomination.

Mail all materials to:
Leopold Conservation Award
c/o Franklin County Conservation District
103 Lakeview Court
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

To submit materials electronically, email materials to: Steve Coleman, colemansteve51@gmail.com, 502-330-5044

The award will be presented at the Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts annual convention in July 2018.

KWOA is a sponsor of the Kentucky Leopold Conservation Award.

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A Message From Your President

It has been an interesting summer in Kentucky, with above average rainfall for most of the state. Aside from some areas of flooding, we have avoided much of the weather-related disasters seen in many parts of the country. In addition to working in their own woodlands, KWOA board members have been busy representing you at a variety of forest-related activities. We have been working to help everyone understand that sustainable forestry is an agricultural enterprise that provides benefits, both economic and environmental, for both woodland owners and the public at large.

Some of the events in which board members have participated include the Woodland Owners Short Course, the Master Woodland Steward Program, the Kentucky Wood Expo,

the state Tree Farm Field Day, the Kentucky Agriculture Council, and a meeting to discuss the implications for agriculture of the upcoming proposed changes in the state tax structure. As I attend these kinds of meetings I am encouraged by what appears to be a growing understanding of the importance of our forests to the state. However, I continue to be puzzled by the relatively small number of woodland owners who are actively practicing sustainable forestry. We need to get the word out to more people. After you finish reading this newsletter please pass it on to a neighbor and encourage him or her to become more aware of, and engaged in, forest management.

-- Frank Hicks, KWOA President

Application for KWOA 2018 Program Achievement Award for Service Foresters

Purpose: To recognize outstanding accomplishments of Service Foresters employed with the Kentucky Division of Forestry. The applicant should have not received this award for the past three years. Nominations may be submitted by any KWOA Member.

Suggested format and guidelines for nominations:

1. Entries may be typed or handwritten. Limit the award entry to 2 pages, one side only, plus 1-2 pages, one side only, of supportive information, i.e., letter(s) of support, news articles, pictures, etc. Additional pages beyond this description will not be considered. The nomination may be submitted in an electronic form if desired.

2. Consideration for the service award will be the demonstrated overall professionalism, the volume of work, the relationship with the woodland owner, the responsiveness to request and the sustained excellence over a period of time.

3. Include in the application:

- Full name, current address and title plus email address of nominee
- Name, contact information of the one preparing the nomination

4. Other considerations, if available. Work history, achievements that particularly relate to success in working with Kentucky Woodland Owners: who benefited and what were the impacts. Additional contributions made to forestry including work on

committees, task forces, and leadership positions.

5. Summary Statements of Support: Concise, well-written, easy-to-read narrative summary statement (50-75 words).

6. TIME PERIOD:

Entries are due by February 1, 2018.

Although forestry programs require more than one year completing, the major accomplishments being considered should have been realized during the past three years.

7. Submit applications by February 1 to Karen Marshall, KWOA editor: editor@kwoa.net or mail hardcopy to KWOA at PO Box 694, Maysville KY 41056.

Outstanding Forest Stewards Award

Jerry Brown, KWOA board member, and Portia Brown, KWOA secretary, have been awarded the central regional and state Division of Forestry awards for 2017 Outstanding Forest Stewards. They accepted the award during a luncheon October 20 at the KY Governors Conference on Energy and the Environment. The selection committee chose the Browns for having "... left a beneficial, everlasting mark on the natural resources of our great Commonwealth." The award reflects work done at both their farms.

Their Grayson County tree farm, that Portia's mother started a little before 1950 to curb severely eroded land, reflects successful and natural transition from a pine plantation to native hardwood. The last pines were harvested in 2014 with the help of ACA consultant, Chris Will. Jerry & Chris laid out road access to the site prior to opening the bidding process.



Portia Brown, KWOA secretary, and Jerry Brown, KWOA board member, accept the 2017 Outstanding Forest Stewards Award at the KY Governors Conference on Energy and the Environment. With them are KWOA members Greg Kuhns and Harry and Karen Pelle, 2012 Forest Stewards of the Year. Photo by Lisa Armstrong, KDF.

"Over the years we have learned so much, met many wonderful people who share our interest in sustaining the natural resources that bless us all, and tried to share our time, talents and resources to conserve these invaluable resources and promote sustainable practices."

-Portia Brown

This served a dual purpose:

- preparing the site with respect to BMP practices for logging
- allowing bidders to better see what trees were to be harvested and any areas of concern relating to the actual harvest process.

The Shelby county property contributes an educational center and reflects post-harvest regeneration. The Browns purchased this land in 1996. The majority of the land was clear cut around 1975 for transition to grazing and silage crops. An area of roughly 35 acres appears to have been high-graded about 75 years ago. Their first project was re-aligning access roads to prevent erosion and improve the quality of access. They use a number of techniques for crop tree release and invasive species control in order to nurture the regeneration of native hardwood species.

They also use several techniques to provide wildlife habitat, including:

- the establishment of over 30 acres in local ecotype native grasslands with over 50 wildflower species (such as milkweed for pollinators)
- a variety of wetland and woodland habitats

Over the years, the Kentucky Division of Forestry in Grayson County has provided outstanding service to the family by guiding them through stewardship options, educating them on the implications of different practices, and connecting them with various programs to help implement their plan. Federal programs including CRP & EQIP, administered through NRCS, have provided financial aid that made it feasible to implement many of the practices. State assistance has also come through Kentucky Fish & Wildlife and The Nature Conservancy.

Condolences

KWOA joins long time Board Members Greg Kuhns and Don Girton in mourning the recent passing of both their wives, each of whom had suffered from an extended illness.

Board Meeting Highlights

KWOA Board considered a range of important topics at its spring and summer quarterly meetings.

Woodland Property Assessment

The on-going appeal regarding property assessment by Jim Corum, KWOA past president, is based on a lack of constitutional appropriateness regarding the disparity in application of property assessment criteria. The current assessment has economic implications for landowners regarding forestland as an investment given the carrying cost of the tax burden. For example, as a percentage of net income, woodland owners pay 15.6 percent of net income compared to 3 percent for corn farmers.

KWOA has conducted lengthy discussions covering many aspects of the issue including what criteria distinguish personal use from agricultural use for timber properties and the potential impact on counties' tax base, particularly in light of the significant decrease in tax revenues from mined minerals.

Rough estimates indicate that Kentucky timber resources are only about 25 percent as productive as they could be due to lack of management. The KWOA board voted to form a committee to define what constitutes sustainable management practices. The committee will attempt to compare differences in tax rates between properties that implement sustainable management plans and those that don't.

Recent high-profile property tax assessments for lots slated for future development in Fayette County resulted in new criteria for agriculture exemptions. There is no similar criteria for tree farms. KWOA is developing a related position paper focused on retaining property tax exemptions for all 10+acre woodlands. The position paper supports greater rewards for woodlands with active management plans. The first effort will be to develop and agree on the criteria that will differentiate a "working forest" (actively farmed) from a personal use or "volunteer" forest.

U.S. Congressional Working Forest Caucus

U.S. House and Senate bipartisan caucuses were formed to pursue common legislative objectives and policies relating to responsible, active management of privately owned forests. No Kentucky congressional legislators are members of these caucuses.

KWOA sent letters with the UK Kentucky Forestry Economic Contribution Report 2016 to the state's U.S. senators and representatives. Sample letters were sent to KWOA members to encourage them to contact their congressional legislators about joining a caucus.

Member Presentation on Timber Harvest

Eric Shrader, woodland owner and KWOA member, made a presentation to the board regarding his experience with a 2015 timber harvest. He shared the challenges, lessons learned, and the result of his efforts to have a logging inspection report corrected to reflect what he considered to be violations of best management practices during the harvest. A summary of his presentation is on the KWOA Practices page at www.kwoa.net.

Guest Presentation from Dendri Fund

Barbara Hurt, Dendri Fund Executive Director, explained that the Dendri Fund is an independent foundation that gives grants focused on working groups: wood, water and grains. Born out of Brown Forman, a family-owned business, the Fund invests in building relationships, creating dialogue and shared learning, and fueling innovative solutions bringing together diverse perspectives. The Fund is in the process of changing its policy from a transactional to transformative grant-making process.

McCauley Adams, with Dendri's wood working group, spoke about its focus on the importance of wood products to Brown Forman and to the quality of life for Kentucky's future generations. Members brought up possible topics of mutual interest such as sustainable management of forests, the importance of other species besides oak and barrel-making and the threats from invasives.

KWOF Sponsors Six Programs During 2017 with \$3,450 in Funding

KWOF contributed sponsorships to the following entities during 2017:

- Greenup County Conservation District - \$400 - to help fund their annual Woods and Wildlife for Your Wallet program.
- Leopold Conservation Award - \$500 - honors Kentucky farmers, ranchers and other private landowners who voluntarily demonstrate outstanding stewardship and management of natural resources.
- UK Forestry Student Scholarship - \$1,000 - to an outstanding student enrolled in the University of Kentucky's professional forestry degree

program.-Woodland Owners Short Course - \$650 - The WOSC is designed to assist Kentucky's woodland owners in the care and management of their woodland resource.

- UK Kentucky Forestry Leadership Program - \$400 - for two competitive scholarships to the weeklong program at Jabez for students interested in natural resource management.
- Salt River Watershed Project- \$500 - managed through the Kentucky Waterways Alliance.

New Kentucky Division of Forestry Director Outlines Plans for Agency

Recently appointed Director James Wright introduced himself and updated the board on agency activities and plans. Mr. Wright reported on staffing levels at the agency and his goal to streamline management personnel and increase field staff, including an urban forester position. There is real hope to have US Fish & Wildlife Service provide ongoing support on all enforcement issues. Kentucky foresters are being sent to other states on fires and management practices through new neighbor agreements with the US Forest Service. These changes are saving general fund dollars and looking in new directions to fund and promote sustainable forestry.

Pam Snyder, KDF Stewardship Branch Manager, reported that emerald ash borer has been found in six more counties. The division is re-gearing to roles that have an economic return. It is developing a cooperative agreement with NRCS on easements and timber stand improvement.

Emerald Ash Borer

The office of the Kentucky Commissioner of Agriculture has agreed to hold a meeting to discuss issues and economics related to the emerald ash borer. The emerald ash borer (or EAB), a native of Asia, is a half inch long dark metallic green beetle that kills ash trees within three to five years after they become infested.

Former KWOA president Joe Ball has contacted several statewide agencies and associations regarding the EAB threat. He assured the board that forestry is a big issue for the current commissioner, Ryan Quarles. In discussions with the commissioner's marketing staffer, Ball thinks that woodland owners who have experienced timber loss from EAB damage may qualify for disaster relief funds. The USDA Farm Service Agency's Emergency Forest Restoration Program provides payments to eligible owners of rural nonindustrial private forest land to carry out emergency measures to restore forest health on land damaged by natural disaster events. Insect disease is mentioned as damage that is eligible for relief funds.

UK Forestry Extension is developing a fact sheet utilizing existing forest inventory data for ash trees and EAB infestations to project the economic impact of resultant stumpage, canopy and overall downstream loss from this invasive. (Ash trees comprise seven percent of forest species in Kentucky.) Joe Ball recommended that loss payment be tied to cleanup and active management of future timber.

“No Burn” Season in Effect October 1 to December 15

It is illegal to do any open burning within 150 feet of any woodland or brushland between the daylight hours of 6 a.m. and 6 p.m during the fall and spring forest fire hazard seasons, which run from October 1 to December 15 and from February 15 to April 30 respectively.

Because the humidity rises during the day and winds fall, restricting burning until after 6 p.m. during the fall and spring reduces the chances of outdoor fires escaping.

Residents should call the Division of Air Quality at 1-502-782-6592 to learn about other specific regulations before burning anything.

2017-2018 Calendar of Events



November 16

Next regular KWOA board meeting

KFIA Office

106 Progress Drive, Frankfort

For agenda: www.kwoa.net

March 20-21, 2018

KWOA Annual Meeting

General Butler State Park

Details will be posted on website

www.kwoa.net

Stickney Tree Farm Field Day Demonstrates Options For Sustainable Woodlands



Jack Stickney introduces field day participants to the many facets of his tree farm with a slideshow in his barn. (The barn was built with salvaged wood from the farm.)

Thanks to the following educators for participation in the field day and information for this article:
Eric Baker, Estill Co Extension Agriculture/Natural Resource Agent;
Jason Powell, KDF;
Sam Miller, NRCS;
Merle Hacker, KDFWR;
Billy Thomas, UK Forestry Extension;
Portia Brown, KWOA;
Henry Duncan and Clarissa Rentz, KWOA - photos

Woodlands owners experienced an exceptional on-site tour of a top-rated tree farm on October 5. Jack Stickney, 2016 Kentucky Tree Farmer of the Year, and his wife Teresa own 100 acres of woodlands in Estill County. During the field day agency professionals assisted the Stickney's demonstrations, covering topics that included timber stand improvement (TSI) practices, technical and financial assistance programs, advanced agricultural practices, shitake mushroom production and wildlife habitat management.

Estill County has beautiful natural resources and we were so pleased to have 101 people come enjoy the field day and help showcase the Stickney family's exceptional stewardship efforts on their farm and woodlands.
-Eric Baker, Estill County Agriculture/Natural Resource Extension Agent.

For decades, Estill County first thought of woodland as a logging opportunity. Too often, the woods were high graded and left without any consideration for the future. This is not a sustainable practice. It is far better to harvest in a calculated way, doing selective harvesting with management post-harvest for desirable species to come back. Managing woodlands is investing in the future.

Located in the eastern knobs and eastern coalfield region of Kentucky, Estill County transitions the bluegrass to the mountains. The county is covered by 116,480 acres of woodland which is an important part of the local economy. Approximately 75 percent of Estill County is forest, of which around 4,500 acres lie within the Daniel Boone National Forest.

The Stickneys got a forest stewardship plan from KDF in 1987, the same year they purchased the land. In accordance with the plan they have implemented timber stand improvement (TSI) on all their woodlands. Sam Miller, NRCS Technical and Financial Assistance Program, has worked with the Stickneys over the last 20 years to provide financial assistance through various programs (WHIP, FIP - now EQIP, and CRP). They broke the TSI practice down into segments of 8 to 10 acres to be tackled at a time. For this practice KDF helped by marking the trees.

Marking Trees

KDF uses a blue dot to identify trees to be killed using hack and squirt or cut stump herbicide treatment. An "X" is used to mark desirable species, such as red and white oak, hickory and poplar that could benefit from simply cutting to encourage healthy re-sprout; no herbicide would be used on these stumps.

The Stickneys have planted a variety of tree species. They began by planting northern hardy pecans 25 years ago but have not had significant nut production. The trees still help preserve water quality. In 2003, under the Conservation Reserve Program they planted more pecans and walnuts in a 2.2-acre tract of bottomlands along the Red River. This area has flooding so their practices help water quality. They also planted a few cypress trees. The first planting was 800 trees 15 years ago. Early plantings did not fare so well due to weeds and deer and beaver predation. KDF helped with the next planting - in rows 12 feet apart with seedlings at 8 foot centers - and using herbicides to control weeds.

The Stickney's first non-timber forest product venture was growing shitake mushrooms from logs. The first ten years was for personal use. After a TSI practice opened a 67 acre area, they began growing mushrooms on 500 logs. They transitioned to a commercial operation adding oyster mushrooms to the shiitake farming. Their land is at the edge of the outer Bluegrass and the Knobs limestone creek bottoms are excellent for soaking logs.



Jack displays a collection of the logs used for growing mushrooms. Eighty percent of the nutrients in mushrooms comes from the mycelium. The stem of a shiitake has a lot of medicinal value. Teresa dries the stems and grinds them into a powder that she uses to add flavor to recipes for gravy and Alfredo sauce. Jack says "Eastern Kentucky should be the mushroom capital of the world." He thinks there is a valuable future market for mushrooms as a medicinal product, especially in cancer treatment.

In 2003, the Stickneys planted native warm season grasses to provide rotational grazing for their grass fed beef production and to provide grazing throughout the summer. They have a 30 to 50% improvement over continuous grazing by using rotation. They fenced cattle out of the streams and woodlands and instead water them using gravity-fed waterlines from a spring on the property to four strategically placed tanks. In addition to rotational grazing, the native warm season grasses provide good mixes for

pollinators and value for ground nesting species, rabbits, turkeys and quail. Undergrowth in woodland habitats is fabulous for wildlife such as rough grouse and other birds. They like the scattered light as opposed to the closed canopy. Mid story removal also promotes filtered sunlight.

The next stage for the Stickney's woodlands will be to ramp up invasive species management. They are fighting bush honeysuckle and multiflora rose. Having a plant identification guide can help identify invasives. Many factors, such as ice storms, disease and insects open up the forest and introduce opportunities for invasives. Managing woods for a diversity of species helps brace against diseases that can take out one species.

Life isn't all crop production at the tree farm. The Stickneys have hosted many educational field days over the years including Scouts, MACED, Shitake Mountain Mushroom Foundation Festival and environmental practices. They have a teepee for the Scouts to use and an elevated viewing station in the woods. They have excellent wildlife and allow deer and turkey hunting.



The Stickneys have a productive garden facility using a high tunnel to extend the growing season on both ends. This provides better income and supports the local food market.

KWOA Launches Series on Timber Harvest Management for Woodland Owners

Have you conducted a timber harvest on your land? Was the experience what you expected? Were you satisfied with the results? Or if you are considering a harvest, what questions and concerns do you have? KWOA/KWOF is starting a series of articles on the topic of timber harvests. The series will include articles, publications and resources on contracts, harvesting, best management practices, landowner relationships with and responsibilities of consulting foresters, logging inspections and reports, remediation for and correction of BMP violations.

To begin the series we are providing a list of articles that have been published in the University of Kentucky Forestry Extension's Kentucky Woodlands Magazine. The articles are listed chronologically beginning with the magazine's first issue in 2006. To read the full articles go to: <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/KYWoodlandsmagazine/about.php>.

We would also like to hear from woodland owners about their experiences, questions and lessons learned. Please submit comments, questions and/or articles to editor@kwoa.net.

KENTUCKY WOODLAND OWNERS ASSOCIATION
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Frankfort, KY 40601

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Next Board Meeting: November 16, 2017 - KFIA

Members are encouraged to attend.

Kentucky Woodlands is published quarterly. We welcome submission of articles and information for inclusion in the newsletter subject to review and approval by the executive committee. Please submit copy to the address below. Editor reserves the right to edit all material for content and length.

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