

KWOA Showcases White Oak Initiative and Working Forest Panel

As KWOA members and partners you were invited to KWOA November 9, 2023, board meeting at the Kentucky State University Harold R. Benson Research and Demonstration Farm. We are grateful for the support of KSU in allowing us to use their wonderful facility and providing such a delicious lunch. The morning focused on partner reports. Special guest, Jason Meyer of the White Oak Initiative gave an enlightening presentation on their efforts to build resilience of white oak. A Working Forests Panel led by Dr. Jeffrey Stringer, filled the afternoon with lively discussion. We appreciate all our partners reporting and especially Dr. Stringer and the panelists, Logan Nutt, Bob Bauer, Jon Schultz, and Scott Taylor who took time from their busy schedules to join in this important conversation.

Thanks to Billy Thomas and UK Extension the panel discussion was recorded. We will continue to work with our partners to explore the concepts that came up in the discussion. A few key takeaways for woodland owners are:

- The roadblocks and bottlenecks that prevent forests from being managed are shared by other states and boiled down to economics and education.
- Kentucky has some unique strengths; these include the fact that our woodlands are 80% privately owned family forests, predominantly mixed hardwoods, and the level of cooperation among agencies and organizations serving Kentucky's woodland owners is exceptional.

It was a terrific day; the themes and ideas generated that day gave us much to digest and act upon in 2024 and beyond. Stay tuned for more in depth take-aways, discussions, and action items.