

## Meet the Panelists and Their Roles

Working Forests for the Future Panel Discussion

KWOA Meeting November 9, 2023

**Working Forests for the Future Panel Discussion:** Moderator Jeff Stringer (Chair UK Forestry & Natural Resources), panelists: Logan Nutt (President KACF), Jon Schultz (KY Forester NRCS), Bob Bauer (Director KFIA), Logan Nutt (President KACF) & Scott Taylor, VP KWOA. Note Brandon Howard (Director KDF) had planned to be with us; however, the entire Division of Forestry was fully mobilized for wildfire suppression (see more details in the November Wood Post). Each panelist described the role of their organization:

**Logan Nutt provided Kentucky Chapter of the Association of Consulting Foresters (KACF)** brochures listing the consultants working in KY and showing their certification(s). He explained they operate as independent businesspeople, setting their own fees and service areas. They are here to be a resource for Kentucky woodland owners by providing professional forestry services at every stage of woodland management.

**Jeff Stringer explained that the University of Kentucky Department of Forestry & Natural Resources** contributes to working woodlands and family forest through instruction, research, and extension.

**Bob Bauer spoke about the role of Kentucky Forest Industries Association (KFIA)** in terms of the wide range of members and partnerships. Private landowners are “the top of the scale” for all the partners because that’s where the logs come from. KFIA works with all the players from loggers to primary and secondary wood product businesses, from sawmills to flooring mills to brokers. They also administer and work with the Tree Farm program. KFIA is one of about 30 members of the Hardwood Federation that represents the hardwood industry in Washington DC. He noted that other states have more issues because they don’t have the kind of partnership we have in Kentucky.

**Kentucky Division of Forestry (KDF)** -fully mobilized with firefighting- Jeff filled in to explain their role. Most of us are aware of the services KDF provides in terms of Forest Stewardship and Landowner Service. What you may not realize is that KDF has crews on the ground that take the measurements and compile the forest inventory analysis data. You see this data in reports such as the economic impact reports that UK puts out. Bottom line KDF does a tremendous amount of work that helps all the partners and landowners both directly and indirectly. Again, partnerships play a huge role, and a good example is the Master Logger program that began in 1992 as an educational program with involvement of KDF, UK, & KFIA; having a master logger on every commercial logging operation is now mandated by statutes.

**Jon Schultz explained that Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)** is an agency underneath the United States Department of Agriculture and is one of the few Federal agencies that, unlike EPA, really has no regulatory authority. NRCS administers farm bill programs providing technical and financial assistance to landowners. Financial assistance comes with practice specifications set out in the farm bill, but the technical assistance is available to all landowners. Jon echoed the partnership aspect and noted that other states do not have partnerships in place the way we do here in Kentucky. The support from technical service providers working with landowners allows NRCS to provide the services they do.

**Scott Taylor represented KWOA.** The KWOA mission of bringing people and woodland sustainability together is accomplished through advocacy, education, and facilitation. Today’s panel discussion is a form of facilitation to help us recognize issues and consider how we can work with our partners to address them. Scott described KWOA saying, “We’re sort of the tip of the sphere for whatever issues arise for woodland owners in Kentucky.” One of the most important parts of being able to be an effective advocate for the membership of this organization is this partnership. During the discussions, Past President, Henry Duncan, also noted the KWOA is “The Voice for Kentucky Woodland Owners” across the state addressing issues from conservation, taxation, education, and more.