
FOREST STEWARDSHIP BRIEFINGS

Timber ✪ Wildlife ✪ Water Quality ✪ Soil Conservation ✪ Best Management Practices ✪ Recreation ✪ Aesthetics

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October 2001

Tariff on Canadian Lumber

The Bush administration announced August 10 that it would impose a 19.3 percent penalty tariff on softwood lumber imported from Canada in retaliation for what the administration said were unfair government subsidies given to the Canadian lumber industry.

The 19.3 percent tariff, which is preliminary until the Commerce Department makes a final ruling in December, took effect August 20. It will be retroactive to mid-May because Canadian lumber imports have increased 30 percent since the five-year Canada-U.S. Softwood Agreement expired at the end of March. That agreement had invoked quotas on Canadian softwood lumber imports.

The disagreements between the two countries revolve around the stumpage fees that Canadian provinces charge timber companies for logging on government lands. The U.S. forest products industry contends the fees are set extremely low, giving Canadians an unfair competitive advantage. Conversely, U.S. forest products companies and Canadian firms in the Atlantic Coast Maritime Provinces rely on privately owned trees for their timber supply.

Canadian producers deny accusations of unfair government subsidies. They say their lumber should be shipped into the U.S. duty-free.

Consumer and lumber user groups in the U.S. were against the ruling, citing possible increases in prices.★

For more information: www.safnet.org/archive/canada901.htm

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Forest Survey Program

This summer, the Texas Forest Service teamed with the Southern Research Station of the U.S. Forest Service to implement an unprecedented forest survey program to measure the status of all forest resources in the state.

The U.S. Forest Service conducted previous surveys in East Texas in 1935, 1955, 1965, 1975, 1985 and 1992. Increased demand for forest products has stimulated more intensive timberland management and thus shortened timber rotation times in the South, which necessitates more frequent data collections.

A BIG State to Cover

In the 1998 Farm Bill, Congress mandated that each state conduct an annual forest survey and, for the first time, the survey must include the entire state.

The survey results will provide current information about Texas' forests which will aid in determining potential fire hazards, land use changes, reforestation accomplishments and the future timber supply for economic and community development.

The Plot Thickens

During the first 2 years, survey crews will measure all forested and non-forested plots in East Texas. (A plot is about one-tenth of an acre.) Then the program will go statewide, surveying 20% of the state each year for 5 years, then yearly updates after that.

Texas has about 3,840 forested plots and 24,410 non-forested plots. Two-person survey crews will measure plots in East Texas. In other parts of the state, where there are more non-forested plots than forested plots and they are scattered over vast areas, cutting-edge technologies such as remote sensing, Geographic Information Systems and modeling based on satellite photographs will be utilized. The first report on East Texas forests is expected by the end of 2003.★

For more information: Dr. Weihuan Xu, Texas Forest Service, (979) 458-6650 or wxu@tfs.tamu.edu

The Value of Deadwood

Most of us recognize the importance of living trees: they provide wildlife habitat, oxygen, timber, beauty and many other assets. However, dead and deteriorating trees are also vital elements of healthy forests. They release nutrients, prevent erosion, store moisture, improve soil structure and supply food and shelter for wildlife. Good forest stewardship, then, requires us to consider both living trees and deadwood as vital, interacting components of the forest ecosystem.

Many wildlife species use tree cavities for sanctuary against predators, extreme temperatures, unfavorable weather, and for nesting and brooding. Cavity nesters play a significant role in forest ecosystems by preying on harmful insects and helping to disperse seeds.

Standing dead trees (snags) are also favorite perching sites for flycatchers, hawks, owls and, along the water's edge, kingfishers, ospreys and bald eagles. Nuthatches and some bats and salamanders use spaces between loose bark and tree trunks for roosting. Woodpeckers

and grouse use the resonant qualities of deadwood for drumming – a communication technique used to indicate territorial boundaries and attract mates.

Downed, decaying wood provides cover, foraging habitat and egg laying sites for salamanders and insects, as well as providing protection for small mammals, amphibians and reptiles.

By providing habitat and nutrition for organisms such as fungi, centipedes, beetles and ants (which in turn provide food for larger animals), deadwood plays a key role in forest food webs.

As they decompose, rotting logs slowly release nutrients that help nurture future tree growth.

Logs and branches that fall into streams and rivers help diversify habitat by creating deep pools, shady areas and shelter, thus supporting a greater variety of fish, invertebrates, algae and other organisms.★

For more information: www.for.gov.bc.ca/research/deadwood/

A Tribute to a True Conservationist

On September 6, 2001, a dedication was made in memory of Mr. Ben Upchurch at the Loyall and Ginger Turner farm west of Spearman in the Texas Panhandle.

Upchurch's 68 years of conservation service was commemorated with a sign being placed at a Living Snow Fence, located on the Turner farm, where Upchurch assisted in establishing and maintaining the site. Upchurch passed away on February 8, 2001. He was known by family, friends and coworkers as a steward of the land. His work was described as a diligent effort in helping to protect our precious natural resources and maintain our quality of life.

Upchurch was a Texas native and started his conservation career in 1933 with the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). He was later hired by the Soil Conservation Service (SCS), now the USDA-NRCS, in 1942. He retired from SCS in 1985 only to continue his conservation efforts working for the Hansford County SWCD. He retired from the SWCD in 1996, but he remained involved with conservation by volunteering his time through the NRCS and SWCD.

NRCS Natural Resources Manager, Rick Harrell said, "Mr. Upchurch had a mission in life to provide conservation service to help private landowners and operators protect their soil, water, wildlife and related resources."

The Living Snow Fence was one of many conservation projects Upchurch helped complete. It is located between Spearman and Gruver in Hansford County in top of the Texas Panhandle. The trees and shrubs were planted on the north side of the road to manage blowing snow, act as a living screen and enhance wildlife habitat. It consists of two rows of Rocky Mountain juniper and two rows of shrubs - skunkbush sumac and nanking cherry. Each row is parallel and measures 880 feet long. Upchurch maintained the site by hoeing weeds and watering the trees to aid in the establishment of the living fence. The Living Snow Fence project was a partnership among the Hansford County SWCD, USDA-NRCS and the Texas Forest Service.★

For more information: Quenna Terry, NRCS, (806) 785-5644 ext. 3, or quenna.terry@tx.usda.gov

BITS · AND · PIECES

LANDOWNER MEETINGS DEALING WITH STEWARDSHIP ISSUES:

Rusk/Smith County Forest Landowners Seminar

- Nov. 10, 2001, in Overton. For more information, call (903) 657-0511 (Texas Forest Service, Henderson) or (903) 561-7020 (Texas Forest Service, Tyler).

CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR LOGGING PROFESSIONALS:

BMP WORKSHOPS OCT. 23 & 26 LUFKIN

PHASE II WORKSHOP NOV. 9 DIBOLL

-FOR REGISTRATION, CALL TFA AT (936) 632-8733

✓ TEXAS FORESTRY ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING – NOV. 14-16, 2001 AT THE TREMONT HOUSE IN GALVESTON, TEXAS. Contact TFA at (936) 632-8733 or tfa@lcc.net.

✓ 15TH TEXAS TREE CONFERENCE – OCT. 24-26, 2001 AT THE WACO CONVENTION CENTER IN WACO, TEXAS.

Leading speakers will present the latest on planting, caring for and protecting the trees and forests where we live. →

Special this year – a concurrent track in Spanish.

Speakers will cover topics such as pruning, planting, insects, diseases and hazard evaluation.

Contact Mike Waltersheidt at (512) 587-7515 or mbwalter@totalaccess.net.

✓ FOREST HERBICIDES: RESEARCH & DEMONSTRATION II– DEC. 4-5, 2001 AT THE ARTHUR TEMPLE COLLEGE OF FORESTRY, NACOGDOCHES, TEXAS.

Application re-certification credits will be offered.

Contact Misti Compton at (936) 468-3301, or visit

<http://www.sfasu.edu/forestry/landowner/herbicide.htm>.

WE WISH TO THANK THE FOLLOWING CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS QUARTER'S NEWSLETTER:

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Tree Farm Review

PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP is conducting a Certification Process Review of the American Tree Farm System at the national, state and field levels. This management review is a precursor to a full 3rd-party audit. It is designed to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the System so that the Tree Farm Program can continue to improve, grow and gain international acceptance.

Forest certification, i.e. identification of a forest that is well managed and sustainable, is a means of promoting better forest management. It also assures the public that forest managers are carrying out environmentally sound plans and practices. The American Tree Farm System is the oldest and largest certifier of private non-industrial forestlands in the United States.

Tree Farm entered into a mutual recognition agreement with the American Forest & Paper Assoc.'s (AF&PA) Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI)SM program in May 2000. In the agreement, SFI recognizes wood sourced from Tree Farms as certified, and vice versa.

... a source of certified wood from non-industrial private forestlands.

Tree Farm provides AF&PA member companies with a source of certified wood from non-industrial private forestlands. As such, wood procured from certified Tree Farms may be counted as part of a mill's SFI certified inventory. In addition, AF&PA member companies can count stronger active participation in the Tree Farm Program toward SFI's requirement of broadening sustainable forestry practices among non-industrial private landowners.

Forest certification is the independent verification of the practice of sustainable forestry, as measured against a particular set of standards and performance measures. The American Tree Farm System, sponsored by the American Forest Foundation, is one of several certification programs available to forest landowners in the U.S. Others include AF&PA's SFI, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the National Forestry Association's Green Tag programs. Each program has its own set of criteria used to verify whether a forested property is eligible for certification.★

For more information: 1-888-889-4466, or nicole_hillman@affoundation.org



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2001 Farm Bill

The House Committee on Agriculture, with farmers, commodity and producer groups, has prepared for the U.S. House of Representatives to consider the Committee's version of the next farm bill, "The Farm Security Act of 2001" (H.R. 2646) during September.

Highlights of this year's bill include a forestry title that has a forestry incentives program that includes \$15 million per year of mandatory spending. This is the first time forestry has received mandatory funding.

It also includes: a reauthorized and expanded Renewable Resources Extension Act (RREA) Program; forestry as a more prominent feature of many of the traditional agriculture programs; a significant set of authorizations for communities and wildfire protection; biomass energy production; and stewardship contracting. ★

For more information:

<http://agriculture.house.gov/farmbill.htm>