

Forest Landowner Briefings

Volume III



Forest Landowners:

Last year, most of you received the second edition of this informational newsletter. We hope you learned a lot and found the information useful. In this edition, we give you a little more material on specific topics. Again, to really get the in-depth information, you need to follow the links provided. You can still access past editions of this newsletter at <http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/water> under “Publications.”



I don't know much about the economic aspects of forestlands in Texas, and need help in deciding how to manage the timber on my own property.

Texas A&M Forest Service has a web portal designed to showcase the benefits that trees and forests provide to the Lone Star State, help landowners in making timber management decisions, and drive economic development in the timber and wood products industry.

The Texas Forest Information Portal lets users identify where different trees and forests are located across the state and see the environmental benefits they provide. The portal serves as a clearinghouse for readily-available, easily-accessible information about trees and forests in Texas. The information can be customized by geographic area using data derived by the Forest Inventory and Analysis Program and other resources. The site offers several applications:

- Timber Supply Analysis – estimates the timberland area, as well as timber volume, growth, and removals in the state.
- Forest Distribution – features tree distribution and biomass.
- Forest Ecosystem Values – estimates the economic value attached to certain environmental benefits that forests and trees provide.
- Map My Property – an easy-to-use tool for landowners and managers to produce a simple map of their property that can be shared with others.
- Timber Decision Simulator – a tool with financial and investment calculators, plus a timberland management simulator.
- Forest Products Directory – lists businesses that buy/sell/manufacture all types of forest products.
- Forest Action Plan – provides a brief description of the issues addressed in the Forest Action Plan produced for Texas and allows the user to view maps of the priority areas developed for each issue.
- Economic Impact – an interactive tool to summarize economic impacts of the forest sector in East Texas for years 2007 and 2009.

LINK

<http://www.texasforestinfo.com> - click on the desired application



I'm worried about how the past, current, and future drought conditions will affect my pine stands.

The driest seven-month period in Texas (with records dating back to 1895) occurred from October 2010 through April 2011. Drought conditions, and its effects, continued beyond that time period. Water deficits have an adverse effect on many of the trees' growth processes, slowing down growth. Prolonged stress also renders trees more vulnerable to insect pests and diseases.

Even though rains have returned to many areas in Texas, trees are still dying. Severe drought, such as that of 2011, may have a long-term impact on trees. The stress may linger for years, long after soil moisture returns.

LINKS

<http://texasforests.tamu.edu/main/popup.aspx?id=14964> - Texas Drought – urban trees, rural forestland, watering your trees, assessing damage to trees from drought, replanting trees

<http://texasforests.tamu.edu/main/article.aspx?id=13768> - Drought, Wildfire, and Forest Health

<http://texasforests.tamu.edu/main/article.aspx?id=1991> - predicting fire danger and fuel dryness

<http://texasforests.tamu.edu/main/article.aspx?id=16442> - insects and diseases in stressed trees

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The pines on some of my forestland in East Texas have already been harvested. I want to continue raising pine trees, and even want to convert some of my pastureland to a pine stand. What are my next steps?

Now is the time to start planning and preparing to reforest your land. Start off by contacting your consulting forester or a Texas A&M district forester for the county in which your property is located (see back page). Your property will probably need to undergo some sort of site preparation before planting season, which is during the winter months. You will also need to order seedlings ahead of time to insure you have some to plant. Also, contact a planting contractor.

Sometime after the planting, you may need to apply herbicide and fertilizer. Consult with your forester for possible need and timing of these practices.

Income from your pine trees often begins around age 12 and can be counted on for the next 30 years at 5-10 year intervals. The rate of return for a well-managed forest can be about 11% annually. And that's not to mention the benefits from hunting, protecting water quality, carbon sequestration, providing habitat for wildlife on your property, and the aesthetics of having growing trees on your property!

LINKS

<http://texasforests.tamu.edu/main/article.aspx?id=17001> - reforestation and timber management

<http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/FMIS> - look under "Reforestation" for helpful fact sheets



I'm seeing more and more stories on the news about wildfires. How can I assess the wildfire risk for my property in Texas? How can I protect my land, house, and yard from the devastating impacts of wildfire?

Texas A&M Forest Service's Texas Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal (TxWRAP) provides access to information that describes wildfire risk statewide. TxWRAP is used to create awareness among the public and arm state and local government planners with information to support fire mitigation and prevention efforts. The public can use this site to identify areas that are most prone to wildfire and to learn of community priorities and needs in the way of fire protection.

The Public Viewer is a web-mapping application designed to let users zoom to a place of interest and identify wildfire risk for a specific location on the map. The featured tool in this application is called "What's Your Risk." It allows users to identify potential wildfire intensity near their home, or any other point of interest on the map, and provides a link to additional resources for users wanting to know how to reduce their risk.

In protecting your forestland, implementing certain management techniques such as prescribed burning, timber thinning, understory reduction, and installing fire breaks, can help slow down wildfire and reduce the intensity of any fire that may come onto your property.

To make your house less vulnerable to wildfire, inspect the surrounding area and do some "firescaping," such as: thin out and prune any dense areas of vegetation; clean up any dead trees, brush, limbs, leaves, and other dried vegetation; replace any highly-combustible plants and building materials with more fire-resistant ones.

LINKS

<http://www.texaswildfirerisk.com> - click on "Public Viewer"

<http://texasforestsservice.tamu.edu/main/article.aspx?id=8512> - wildfire preparedness and mitigation

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I live too far away to attend forest landowner workshops pertinent to my area. Are there any online seminars available?

You can "hear from the experts" even though you live away from your forested property. There are free webinars that cover a variety of topics in forestry and associated natural resource management.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, other participating land-grant universities, and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provide the Webinar Portal, a website that serves as a launching point for current, archived, and upcoming forestry, conservation, bioenergy, and natural resource webinars.

LINK

<http://forestrywebinar.net> - Webinar Portal



Where can I go for help?

Texas A&M Forest Service has offices all over East Texas (and other parts of the state). Contact the Texas A&M Forest Service District Office serving the county where your property is located. Go to <http://tfsweb.tamu.edu> and click on "Contact Us," then "County," and then the county of your choice on the map. Click on "Managing Your Forests" to get contact information for that area.

For more info on these and other topics, go to the Texas A&M Forest Service website at <http://tfsweb.tamu.edu>, or contact the TFS District Office closest to your property.

TFS District Offices:

Carthage	(903) 693-6865	Linden	(903) 756-5571
Conroe	(936) 273-2261	Livingston	(936) 327-4832
Crockett	(936) 544-7798	Longview	(903) 297-3910
Gilmer	(903) 734-7007	Marshall	(903) 938-8712
Henderson	(903) 657-0511	Nacogdoches	(936) 564-9276
Hudson	(936) 875-4400	New Boston	(903) 628-2711
Huntsville	(936) 295-5688	Palestine	(903) 729-7738
Jacksonville	(903) 586-7545	Pittsburg	(903) 856-7181
Kirbyville	(409) 423-2890	San Augustine	(936) 275-3438
Kountze	(409) 246-2484	Woodville	(409) 283-3785



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