



West Virginia SAF looks at Oil and Gas Development and Forestry

At the winter meeting of the West Virginia Division of the Society of American Foresters, held February 5 and 6, 2009 in Mineral Wells, WV, professional foresters had the chance to learn about the issues faced by their counterparts in the oil and gas industry and how the two industries relate. Division Chair Bob Beanblossom said the area around Mineral Wells was a particularly fitting place to hold the meeting because of its history and current involvement in oil and gas production.

About 85 people attended the two-day meeting which included talks by geologists, oil and gas producers, foresters and other professionals discussing the oil and gas resources in West Virginia, the industry, the permitting and leasing processes relative to drilling, surface owner rights, and legislative rules. A number of speakers spoke about the possible impacts of oil and gas development on forest resources, and most emphasized the need for early and active communication between oil and gas developers, land owners and resource managers. Attendees earned a total of 9.5 CFE Hours (Category 1) for their participation.

Mr. Jeff Herholdt, the Acting Director of the West Virginia Division of Energy, was the speaker for the banquet held on Thursday evening, and described Energy Issues and Opportunities in West Virginia, including transmission line development, wind energy, and coal mining.

Bluefield is recognized again as Tree City USA, thanks to help from WVSAF.

Tim Probert, chairman of the Bluefield Tree Board, and WVSAF member, participated in a tree planting ceremony in Bluefield to honor the city's 8th consecutive Tree City USA Designation. There are only 17 tree cities in West Virginia, according to Bob Radspinner, member of the Bluefield Tree Board, and WVSAF member, so "being named a Tree City USA is really quite an honor." In order to be a Tree City, a community has to have an Arbor Day activity, have an ordinance in place to care for trees, have \$2 per capita tree budget and have a resolution supporting Arbor Day. Andy Sheetz of the West Virginia Division of Forestry made the formal presentation to the city tree board.



The Tree Board meets every other month and performs several functions including reviewing trees in the city that are in danger and working with the power company on trees in the right-of-way. Probert said that the tree board has organized 2 community workshops and that the group is working to develop a tree nursery in Lotito Park to establish 200 seedlings. At the conclusion of the ceremony, Probert and other tree board members planted a flowering crabapple tree in Chicory Square.



Tim Probert, Andy Sheetz and Richard Dillon show excellent form in planting this flowering crab apple tree in Bluefield.

Member news:

Kirby Funderburke is the newest member of the Board of Directors for the Forest Resources Association.

Mary Beth Adams was recently selected to serve on the Board of Directors for the Soil Science Society of America, representing the Forest Soils Division.

Gerald W. Waybright is one of the new enshrinees in the West Virginia Agriculture and Forestry Hall of Fame.

WVSAF has provided funding to purchase additional copies of “Your Friend the Forester” activity book. Contact Cinda Francis if you would like some copies to use in outreach activities.

Also, additional copies of the “Greatest Good” DVD, describing the first 100 years of the Forest Service were purchased by WVSAF and provided to selected libraries, to West Virginia Public Television, and to the West Virginia State Library.

Mark your calendars! The Summer 2009 meeting of the WVSAF will be held August 26-28, 2009 at Blackwater Falls State Park. The meeting theme will be: “Uneven Aged Management: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly.” The field tour will include visits to uneven-aged management research on the Fernow Experimental Forest as well as other examples. Registration information will be out soon!