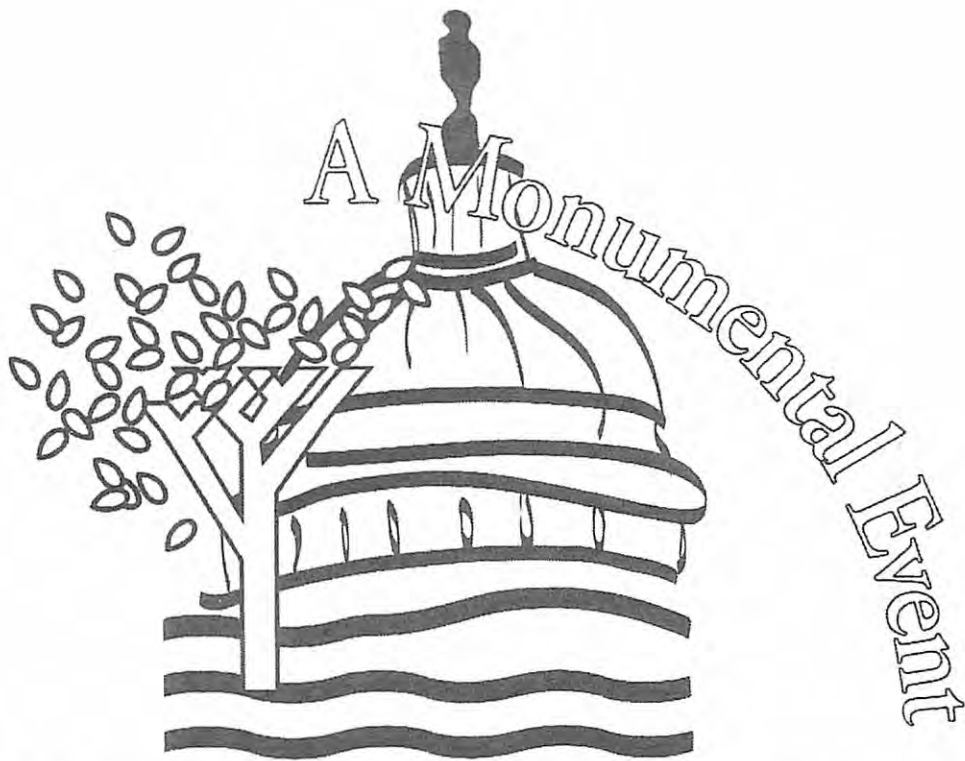


The

Allegheny News



Society of American Foresters
2000 National Convention
Washington, DC • November 16–20

Allegheny Society of American Foresters
Summer 2000

The Allegheny News

Volume 9, No. 2

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P.O. Box 699 • Dillsburg, PA 17019-0699

Editor: Jack Winieski
Layout: Catherine Winieski Carter

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Cover Artwork

The Society of American Foresters
2000 National Convention is scheduled for
November 16-20, and will be held
in our nation's capital, Washington DC.
Make your plans to attend now!



Chairman's Corner

By Mike Lester
Allegheny SAF Chair

We have a unique opportunity coming our way in November, a chance that represents a once in a lifetime opportunity. Of course, I'm talking about the SAF National Convention celebrating 100 years of our professional society. There are many great reasons to attend this festive celebration. One reason is that we have foregone our Allegheny summer meeting, so that we can attend the National Convention.

The Convention offers an opportunity to learn cutting edge techniques in everything from silviculture to policy. One of the most common laments we hear at any meeting where there is more than one forester, is that we are not getting our message out. One of the features for this Convention is an option for community outreach. The outreach program includes classroom talks, walking tours, tree plantings, Congressional meetings, or visitor education.

Furthermore, there will be a one day forestry and science colloquium (these used to be called technical sessions, but this is DC). The topics will cover every major area of forest management and then some. To me these are some of the most exciting aspects of a National Convention, the chance to catch up on cutting edge science and technology in our profession. There will also be one day where the attendees will discuss and develop plans to address current and emerging issues. This will be a unique opportunity to influence the direction of policy for our profession.

Moreover, we will have a chance to share our views with our congressional representation with a "Meet & Greet" reception on Capitol Hill.

There are many other reasons to attend this National Convention. There is a 100th Anniversary Gala at the National Building Museum, a job fair, alumni socials, icebreaker reception with colleagues, fun run (where **Ned Karger** finished second in Portland last year), open house at SAF national office, leisure tours, technical tours, poster session, student program, professional development workshops, and more. There is a potential to earn up to 50 CFE credits (you have to be really dedicated to pull this off, but you can get 20-25 just by attending convention events). And this is an unparalleled opportunity to build on your network of friends and colleagues.

I've been fortunate in my career to attend several National Conventions. The first one I attended was when I was chair of the Alpha Student SAF Chapter at Colorado

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

State. It so happened that the meeting that year was held in Ft. Collins at the CSU campus. So I had to travel three blocks, and I had an amazing experience. None since then have been as inexpensive or convenient. However, all of the National Conventions I've attended have reenergized me with a renewed appreciation for our profession and the positive impact it has on our world. It is truly a special profession. At the end of our careers, we can all look back and say, "I've made the world a better place." The National Conventions really bring that sentiment home. And finally, how many National Conventions are going to be in your backyard (OK, it's a big backyard).

This year's National Convention is at the Washington Hilton & Towers from November 16 through 20. You should have received a Convention insert in your June *Forestry Source*. There is a substantial savings by going for the early bird registration deadline of September 5th, so mark that date on your calendar. There is also a lot of Convention information on the SAF website at www.safnet.org/calendar/natcon.htm.

It takes a lot of effort to put on an event like this, and our help is sorely needed. First, there is the Foresters Fund raffle and silent auction. The Allegheny SAF has benefited greatly from the Foresters Fund, which makes it even more important that we support it. Larry Biles, the Foresters Fund Chairperson has asked the State Societies for a special effort this year to mark our 100th Anniversary. It would be nice if the Allegheny provided some items that represent our very special region. If you want to make a donation, I have a blank donation form that I can either e-mail you or send by snail mail. So be sure to reach out to your employer or other sources of items for the fund. If you have questions, Larry can be reached at:

Larry Biles
USDA-CSREES
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Mail Stop 2210
Washington, DC 20250-2210
(703) 605-4150
Fax: (202) 401-1706
Email: lbiles@reeusda.gov

There is also a need for Convention volunteers. They are needed in categories too numerous to mention, but a great description can be found again on the SAF website, www.safnet.org/calendar/volunteeropps.htm. The volunteer coordinator is Jim Culbert, and Jim can be reached at:

(202) 205-0854 (in Washington, DC until 6/30 and after 10/2)
(541) 899-1812 (in Jacksonville, OR from 7/5 to 9/30)
Email: jculbert@fs.fed.us

The National Capital SAF is really counting on us to help out in the volunteer arena. It's a great way to be part of this historic occasion. Please give Jim a call or send him a note.

I'm looking forward to seeing an impressive Allegheny SAF delegation in Washington DC. See you there.

One final note on this already overlong edition of the Chair Corner: the forestry community recently faced a potentially devastating and ill-conceived policy initiative from the EPA. I'm talking about the proposed TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) rules. In essence, these rules would have made silviculture operate under the same rules for water quality as point source pollution. Through the efforts of the forestry community, including many in the Allegheny SAF, the forestry portion of the rules was withdrawn. One of the most effective voices in this debate was our National SAF office and the National Association of State Foresters. These two groups pulled together research that exposed the poor science that EPA had used. This report became the rallying cry from an impressively large bipartisan group of legislators. So when someone asks you what has SAF done for me, this is just an example, although a very powerful one. Carpe Diem. ☺

In Memoriam

Gordon G. Hillgartner, 94, of Lambertville, NJ, died April 25, 2000. He was an SAF Golden Member with 68 years of continuous dedication to the Society and the forestry profession.

Hillgartner was a forester and landscape engineer at Stokes and Jenny Jump State Forests for the State of New Jersey, retiring as Director of the Department of Forests and Historic Places 29 years ago. He received his BS in Landscape Architecture at the State University of New York, College of Forestry in Syracuse, NY in 1929.

Locally, he was Chairman of the West Amwell Environmental Commission for many years and a longtime member of the First Presbyterian Church of Lambertville, New Jersey. ☺

In Memoriam

Louella M. Shipman, wife of Dr. Robert Shipman died March 24, 2000. Although not a member of SAF, Lou regularly attended SAF meetings and functions with Bob. She acted as his secretary (and Bob will admit) his best critic in all of the SAF committee and office positions that he held – especially the Awards Committee.

Lou retired from the State College Area School District in 1990 after 24 years in secretarial and supervisory positions. She was a member of St. Paul's United Methodist Church, the Centre County Historical Society and the Clear Water Conservancy. Our thoughts are with Bob as he adjusts to the loss of his long time friend and companion. ☺

**Contact Allegheny
News Editor Jack
Winieski by e-mail:**

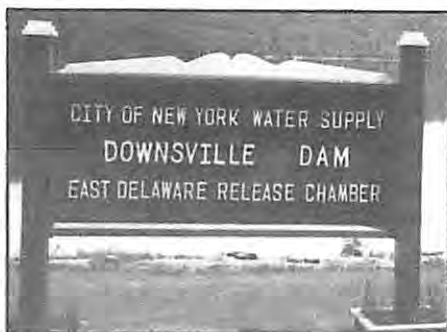
ansaf@paonline.com

**Next newsletter
deadline is
September 15, 2000**

NE Association of Watershed Forest Managers Meet in October

By Randy Kelley, NY DEP Forest Mgr

The Northeast Association of Watershed Forest Managers (NEAWFM), the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP), and the Watershed Agricultural Council's Watershed Forestry Program (WAC WFP) will be sponsoring a field program and meeting October 19-20, 2000 on the New York City Watershed.



This annual field program and meeting will begin on Thursday, October 19th at 8:00 AM in Liberty, NY and will end on Friday at 5:00 PM in Windham, NY.

Included in the field trip will be visits to a variety of sites west of the Hudson portion of New York City's Watershed. Highlights will include: forest management activities at the Cannonsville Reservoir; WAC's Lennox Model Forest; a WAC-funded private forest site; a land acquisition site in the Neversink Basin; the USGS research site in the Ashokan Basin; and a stream management site in the Schoharie Basin.

The evening program on Thursday will include a buffet dinner and an informal discussion of current watershed forestry issues. Lunches will be provided on both field days.

Anyone interested in attending should contact (by September 1, 2000): **Randy Kelley, DEP Forester, PO Box 227, Margaretville, NY 12455 or phone (845) 586-4060.**

Please respond early, since the number of participants and registration will determine other costs. ☺

Councilman's Report

By Tim Kaden, SAF District VII Representative



Think SAF National Convention 2000 — think celebrating 100 years of the Society of American Foresters!

By now you should all have received the convention registration and hotel information. Has the sticker shock of registration fees and hotel rooms worn off yet? Probably not. There is nothing I can say that would make these costs more palatable to you. I do not like them any more than you do. At our last Council meeting, these expenses were discussed. **John Heissenbuttel**, SAF-VP and Convention General Chair said that these costs are because you are in DC, and they are the going rate and we are receiving reduced rates in some accommodations

and activities. Maybe so, but they are still high. I sincerely hope that you will make every effort to attend. Not everyone has the opportunity to celebrate a centennial of any sort, let alone a celebration of your profession.

The Council voted to place the 5th draft of the new SAF Code of Ethics on the fall ballot. Please take a close look at it. Also read the July issue of the *Journal of Forestry* for further insight into the total ethic question. To those of you that sent comments to me, I believe that in part some of your suggestions were considered and are reflected in this document.

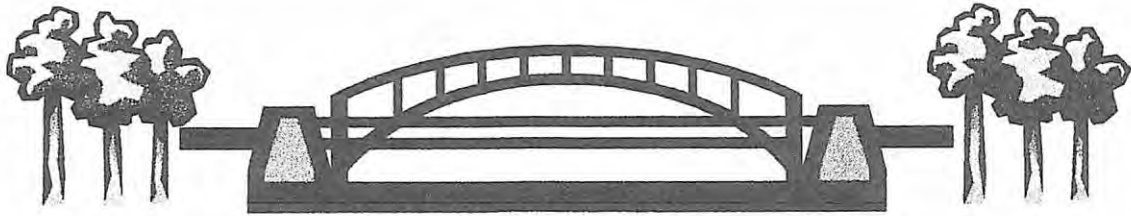
As I mentioned in the Spring issue of *The Allegheny News*, forester licensing/registration is a goal of President **Fred Ebel**. The council directed a national task force to proceed to gather and evaluate data on the licensing/registration and managed treatment on forestland. Let me know what you think about the licensing and registration issue in your state, and how you think that the SAF should be involved?

Just a quick note on membership: the Allegheny membership is growing. As of May 31, 2000 we had 1,143 members; National membership is down to about 17,000 members. By the time you read this, the National Office will have purged the membership records of those who have not paid their dues and will no longer be considered members. So keep up the good work of recruiting and retaining members who are considering letting their membership expire. To our Student Chapter Chairs, get those incoming freshman involved in the SAF (have your own orientation program).

The national office is going to develop a proposal for "market" research to identify why SAF members have left the Society. Council has approved the recommendation to include Canadian and Mexican foresters as full members.

Do not forget to let me know when and where your next Chapter or Division meeting is going to be — I will really try to attend. A month's notice for me would be nice. I hope to see you at the convention in DC or your next SAF unit meeting. Have a great rest of the summer. ☺

**A FREE instruction booklet for the SAF
Certified Forester Program is available from the
National Office at (301) 897-8720, ext. 122**



Building Bridges Connecting Forestry and Watershed Management

Come Join Us for the
78th Annual Allegheny Society of American Foresters
Winter Meeting
February 21-23, 2001 at the
Tropicana Hotel on the boardwalk in Atlantic City, NJ.

CONFERENCE TOPICS

- ✓ Riparian buffers-a case study
- ✓ Nutrient loading and forestry practices
- ✓ EPA proposed regulations-TMDL's
- ✓ New watershed initiatives
- ✓ Implications of managing by watershed boundaries and integration of BMP's

Mark your calendar today to come help NJSAF celebrate our 50th anniversary!

New Jersey Tree Farm Committee Honors Volunteer Inspectors

By Ron Sheay, Allegheny SAF Historian

The New Jersey Tree Farm Committee recently honored volunteer Tree Farm Inspectors for nominating, inspecting, and re-inspecting Tree Farms in the State.

Chrissy Harrigan was presented with the Silver Hard Hat Award for nominating over 50 Tree Farms and is New Jersey's first Tree Farm inspector being so honored. **Judson Bennett** was awarded the Bronze Hard Hat Award for nominating over 25 Tree Farms.

Current SAF members on the NJ Tree Farm Committee include **Dennis Galway**, Chairman and a member of the NJ Division Executive Committee, **Greg Huse**, Treasurer, **Dave Finley**, Secretary, and committee members **Mark Vodak**, **Doug Tavella**, **Judson Bennett**, and **Ron Sheay**.



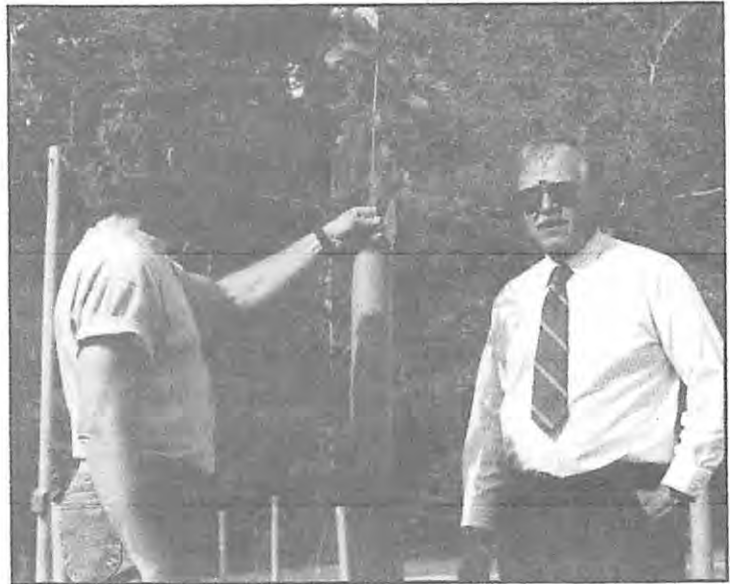
Chrissy Harrigan accepting the Silver Hard Hat Award from Tree Farm Chairman, Dennis Galway at Tree Farm Day on June 2, 2000

PASAF Tri-Chapter Meet

By Alex Day, Chief, Nursery Operations, PA DCNR

In late spring fashion, which has been common for several years, the Northern Hardwood, Plateau, and Rothrock SAF Chapters of the Allegheny SAF met for a forest tour and research update on June 9, 2000 in Pennsylvania's Moshannon State Forest.

Beginning with a box lunch at the Quehanna forest headquarters (please ask PennDOT not to oil and chip the highway next year when we meet, guys!), the group of 28 enthusiastic SAF souls heard Bureau of Forestry's **Merlin Benner** give an excellent power-point illustration talk on quality [deer] herd ecology (QHE). The bottom line message to all was, "harvest the biggest female deer!" The little ones are, more often than not, small "button bucks." These little fellas need to remain till next year when they will have nice racks. Why are we shooting more "button bucks?" Simple answer. There are more of them. Why are there more "button bucks?" Now that's the question you'll have to ask Merlin Benner. Contact him at Mbenner@dcnr.state.pa.us.



Wayne Wynick (right) discusses the American Chestnut Foundation's blight-resistant breeding program with Ned Karger

Following the deer report, the assembly heard from California University of Pennsylvania (CUP) wildlife professor **Dr. Bill Giuliano**, who is the principal investigator involved with the Appalachian Cooperative Grouse Research Project on the Moshannon State Forest. Together with graduate assistants **Bob Long** and **John Tirpak**, Dr. Giuliano presented a fascinating overview and update of their research so far in Pennsylvania.



Grouse nest located under a fallen tree trunk in the tornado blow-down zone of the Moshannon State Forest, in which a brood of eight chicks was successfully hatched

Through live trapping, banding, and radio-monitoring all ages of grouse, these wildlife experts have collected preliminary data that indicate the number of grouse in the state are declining. The answer to the downward trend is not conclusive yet, but according to Bill Giuliano, the answer may lie in the fact that there is a lack of early-successional habitat (brush) that grouse favor. This young tree stage also provides the best winter food for Pennsylvania's official game bird. In a phrase, Bill Giuliano said, "Cut more trees!"

The researchers were able to show us a grouse nest, which they had located through radio-telemetry devices that were fastened to live-trapped birds. Since 1997, the trio of researchers have live-trapped and recorded data on 200 grouse on the Moshannon State Forest project. After being fitted with radio transmitters, the birds are followed year round to estimate survival, reproduction, and other aspects of grouse ecology.

Following a 15-mile dusty ride, we arrived at the Moshannon State Forest headquarters along Rt. #153, just south of Pennfield. Assistant District Forester **Wayne Wynick** gave a very concise and encouraging update on the progress of the American Chestnut Foundation's (ACF) progeny test planting at the headquarters (site of the former William F. Dague State Forest Tree Nursery). Wayne is the chief tree tender of the Pennfield planting, with over 300 back-crosses of (Chinese x American) X American chestnut selections growing and waiting for careful evaluation to determine which will exhibit resistance to the dreaded chestnut blight – and be used in future back crossings. ACF has been conducting an extensive back-crossing program that they hope will result in blight-resistant populations within the next 20 years! Let's hope they are successful. 🍂



We "eat and discuss," (left to right) Alan Sam, Marc McDill, Bob Bauer and Ned Karger

Valley Forge Chapter Tours Octoraro Native Plants Nursery

By R. Bruce Arnold, Chair, Valley Forge SAF Chapter

Members of the Valley Forge SAF Chapter had the privilege and pleasure of visiting the Octoraro Native Plant Nursery in Kirkwood, PA on June 16, 2000. At a luncheon at the Red Rose Inn in West Grove, PA, Nursery President and General Manager, Mr. **Jim MacKenzie** presented members with a preliminary overview of the nursery history, intents, and capabilities. The group of fifteen then journeyed on an extended walk-through of the operation.

Mr. MacKenzie and his partner, **Mark Gutschall**, jointly launched their business in 1990 to provide Eastern Pennsylvania and Maryland, and Southern New Jersey with an array of plants native to the area. Nearly 40% of plants in those areas are presently non-native. The nursery concentrates on producing native trees, shrubs, herbaceous/aquatic plants, and streambank stabilization/bioengineering plant material.

Octoraro Nursery conducts a wholesale-only business. Many of their sales are to state agencies for highway construction, where they are used to stabilize embankments and remediation materials for wetlands.

The tour included observation of the greenhouses, and mechanized operations and management practices employed therein. A newly constructed greenhouse includes a conveyor-belt system for loading planter flats and pots with growing medium and seeds for placement in the growing houses. In some of the greenhouses, the growing tables were heated with circulating hot water to help the young plants survive through cold days. All greenhouse plants are irrigated by automatic overhead spray systems.

At the end of the tour the group visited the Octoraro Stream, where the Nursery has been engaged in stream mediation activities such as heavy rock placements, and bank stabilization using their native plant materials.

Mike Lester, current Chair of the Allegheny SAF visited with the group and discussed the apparent success of SAF and others in the forestry community in getting the EPA to back away from proposed water quality regulations that would have negatively affected the practice of forestry. He also brought the group up-to-date on the upcoming 100th Anniversary Celebration of the founding of the SAF at the National Convention in Washington, DC November 16-20, 2000 — and the need for volunteers wishing to assist during Convention to contact **Jim Culbert**.

The August meeting of the Valley Forge Chapter will be a visit to the forge at Hopewell Village National Park, where the group will be updated on the American Chestnut Foundation's breeding efforts. In late October, Valley Forge SAF will tour the Hagley Museum in Wilmington, Delaware (**Tim Kaden** take note). This is their annual meeting with spouses, and the MD/DE Chapter may make it a joint meeting. ☺

PASAF Sponsors Deer Management Update

By Robert W. Bauer, Chair, PASAF Division

The PA Division of the Society of American Foresters (PASAF) is sponsoring a statewide meeting on deer management in Pennsylvania on September 27, 2000, from 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM, at the Lamar Comfort Inn, Lamar, PA. The purpose of this meeting is to acquaint foresters, sportsmen and women, farmers, legislators, and the general public with the history of the Pennsylvania deer herd and the PA Game Commission's (PGC) recent deer management initiatives.

PGC Game Biologist **Gary Alt** and other PGC and Penn State professionals familiar with all aspects of the deer herd, will give us an insight into the recently implemented management efforts, and prepare all to better assist in supporting PGC's goals with all publics. I believe Gary has done a super job addressing deer management in terms that hunters and others can understand and be willing to support. Gary also believes that some of this support is fragile, and he will need all the support he can get in the future. He has told me he will bring us up to date on where the PA Game Commission is currently on deer management, and where he hopes to head in the coming seasons. The "forestry community" needs to be there to help these efforts in every way we can.

We are inviting not only the SAF members but also other segments of the "forestry community" including: forest industry, Pennsylvania Forestry Association, forest landowner groups, consulting foresters, and key leaders in the farming community. We all have a lot at stake in this issue, and I believe we can lend some valuable support to the PA Game Commission's efforts. Our efforts in the past have been helpful, but, if we can package them in the approach Gary has taken, we may get more accomplished.

I believe the speakers we have scheduled will cover the broad spectrum of deer management and challenge us to get behind this effort. We do not want to preach to the choir but rather give the choir a new and more complete version of the song with some new verses added. I think these new verses will give us a more complete message to help sell the PGC initiative. By facilitating this meeting, SAF is once again providing an example of our commitment to the SAF mission (see below). The agenda and registration form for the meeting is listed on the next page. Hope to see you at the Lamar Comfort Inn! ☺

The mission of the Society of American Foresters is to advance the science, education, technology, and practice of forestry; to enhance the competency of its members; to establish standards of professional excellence; and to use the knowledge, skills, and conservation ethic of the profession to ensure the continued health and use of forest ecosystems and the present and future availability of forest resources to benefit society.

Allegheny Society of American Foresters Pennsylvania Division
and Pennsylvania Forestry Association
present

The Future of Deer Management in Pennsylvania

September 27, 2000 at the Comfort Inn, Lamar

Tentative Agenda

Moderator: James R. Grace, Pennsylvania State Forester

- 9:30 a.m. Welcome and Housekeeping
9:40 a.m. The History of Deer Management in Pennsylvania - **John Dzemyan**, Land Manager,
Pennsylvania Game Commission
10:30 a.m. Current Developments in Deer Management and A Look to the Future – **Gary Alt**,
Chief Biologist, Deer Management Section, Pennsylvania Game Commission
12:00 p.m. Lunch
1:00 p.m. Educating Our Publics in Regards to Deer Densities – **Tim Pierson** and Others, Extension
Forester, Penn State Cooperative Extension Service
1:30 p.m. How Deer Management Affects All Pennsylvanians, and Is There An Alternative to
Hunting – **Gary San Julian**, Professor, Penn State University
2:00 p.m. Where Do We Go From Here? – **Ben Moyer**, Editor, Pennsylvania Sportsman Magazine
2:15 p.m. Question and Answer Period
3:00 p.m. Meeting Adjourned

Registration - \$15.00/person (includes lunch)

Registration Deadline September 21

Information: Doug D'Amore at (w) 570-923-6011, (h) 717-236-3867, email: ddamore@dcnr.state.pa.us

Name _____ Day Phone _____
Address _____ City _____ State/ZIP _____
e-mail _____ Total enclosed _____

Make Checks payable to: PA SAF Division
c/o Doug D'Amore
PA Bureau of Forestry
HCR 62 Box 90
Renovo, PA 17764

Seguin Moreau and PaSAF Plan & Plant for the Future

By Gene F. Odato, Chief, Rural & Community Forestry PA DCNR, Bureau of Forestry

PA SAF Division members and the Seguin Moreau NAPA Cooperage, Inc., a California-based barrel maker (see *The Allegheny News* Winter 1999-2000 issue for background), teamed up to plant 350 white oak seedlings on the Sproul State Forest in Clinton County Pennsylvania on April 22, 2000.

It doesn't really sound like a big planting job, but circumstances resulted in the loss of stored, source-identified acorns. The small 2000 planting was then accomplished with a portion of selected 1-0 seedlings from the same seed lot at the Bureau of Forestry's Penn Nursery which will be planted as 2-0 seedlings in 2001.

SAF members Alex Day, "Butch" Davey, Gene Odato and family (wife Cathy, and children Meredith and Nicholas), and Jack Winieski showed up on a rainy Saturday before Easter to plant the trees and install "Tree Pro" protectors for deer protection. Thanks, perhaps to the wet weather conditions, the quality seedling stock and the expert planting crews, survival at

this writing is near 100%. The young seedlings inside the tree protectors have survived the deer and gypsy moths, and are on their way to becoming wine barrel material.

Seguin Moreau has been selecting their fully-grown logs in the forest for over 30 years to make quality wine barrels in California, France and Australia. Most of their "stumpage" comes from central France, but they do purchase oak in Pennsylvania. They maintain that their best white oak raw material comes from forest sites north of the 41st parallel. The combination of soils and climate in these areas results in dense, tightly



Cathy and Nicholas Odato, and "Butch" Davey



"The Crew" minus photographer Jack Winieski

packed fibers that are essential in the manufacture of quality wine barrels, and the tannins that are found in this dense wood helps to bring out the fullness of flavor in wines.

The PA SAF Division members plan to continue to partner with Seguin Moreau in coordinating the planting of selected white oak seed and seedlings on Pennsylvania sites with long term management objectives. ☺

**POSITION RE-ANNOUNCEMENT
JOSEPH E. IBBERSON CHAIR IN FOREST RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
SCHOOL OF FOREST RESOURCES
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES
THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY**

- Position:** The Joseph E. Ibberson Chair in Forest Resources Management is a newly endowed position at the University Park campus, to be filled for an initial three-year term, with subsequent five-year terms possible. The chair's purpose is to educate students and conduct scholarly work in the professional management of private forest resources. The work of the chair is advised by a committee composed of faculty, professional foresters from private, public, and industry sectors, and private landowners/citizens.
- Starting Date:** January 2, 2001, or as negotiated
- Responsibilities:** Teaching responsibilities include at least two undergraduate courses (at least one will have a major field/laboratory component) and one graduate course annually, emphasizing sustainable forestry, forest stewardship, consulting forestry, and integrated forest resources management. Additional instructional responsibilities include recruitment and supervision of internships, student advising, and placement assistance. Scholarly responsibilities include addressing the evolving philosophies, policies and practices of forest resources management, particularly related to forest sustainability on privately-owned forest lands, and the development of effective teaching/learning methodology. The Ibberson Chair is also expected to participate in professional service, university service, and other faculty duties.
- Qualifications:** At least one degree in forest resources management and a distinguished record of accomplishments in forest management (emphasizing privately-owned forest lands) are required. A doctorate is preferred, but non-doctorate candidates with exceptional experience, knowledge, professional standing or accomplishments will be considered equally. Substantial professional experience advising forest landowners is required.
- Application:** Applicants should submit a letter of application, resume, academic transcripts, and names and addresses of three professional references to Dr. Larry A. Nielsen, Director, School of Forest Resources, Penn State, 113D Ferguson Building, University Park, PA 16803; telephone 814-863-7093; fax 814-865-3725; email lan3@psu.edu. Persons wishing to nominate others should send contact information to the same address.
- Closing Date:** The search committee will begin reviewing candidates on August 29, 2000, and continue until a suitable candidate is identified.

Penn State is committed to affirmative action, equal opportunity, and the diversity of its workforce

TMDLs: Lessons Learned the Hard Way

By Mary Wirth, Rossi American Hardwoods

For the past year, many in the forestry community have fought a hard battle opposing the proposed EPA's Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) rule that would have granted EPA unprecedented power to regulate forestry and other activities on private lands. The rule opens the door for EPA to have oversight everywhere that rain falls. It is a big deal, and it will create additional costs, hurdles, and liabilities for private landowners.

From the start, the forestry community understood the serious implications of this rule and set out to work with EPA to attempt to create a rule that was more effective, efficient, and affordable. EPA did make some concessions, but the most contentious issue, the reclassification of forestry activities from "nonpoint" to "point" sources of pollution which would then require an NPDES permit, were nonnegotiable to the EPA. The forestry community was ready to fight.

Sue Swanson, from the Allegheny Hardwood Utilization Group, and I went to Washington DC, for a briefing on the issue. Because the rule was not a piece of legislation that requires congressional approval, stopping the rule meant creating huge public opposition. Several states in the south had organized public rallies opposing the rule that were effective in raising awareness on the issue, getting legislators involved, and gaining media attention. We decided to attempt the same in Pennsylvania.

The result was the creation of a broad-based coalition of over 30 organizations and companies in Pennsylvania, including forestry, farming, landowner, agriculture, livestock, and business. The group represented almost every aspect of Pennsylvania's economy. We stood together in opposition to the rule, contacted every federal legislator in Pennsylvania (23), implemented a massive mail campaign, and planned two public meetings in the state. It was risky holding the public meetings, for if people didn't show up it would be disastrous. I remember the evening of the first meeting, nervously watching my watch, praying people would come.

One by one, they began trickling in, and when it was all over, more than 650 people attended the two meetings. We got excellent coverage in the newspapers, and as a direct result of our public meetings, both Congressman Shuster and Holden (both of who serve on key committees) came out publicly calling for the withdrawal of the rule. It was an unprecedented act of cooperation from all the groups, and we accomplished our objectives in the state. Other states were equally engaged.

EPA, under enormous pressure, pulled the forestry language from the rule. Congress held 12 hearings on the issue, introduced six bipartisan bills, and eventually submitted language in an emergency appropriation bill restricting EPA's ability to finalize and implement the rule. Despite more than 30,000 comments, 20 public forums with over 20,000 participants, opposition from manufacturing, forestry, farming, landowners, environmental groups, state agencies, governors, and congress, President Clinton had EPA expedite the process and get the rule finalized before the deadline to sign the appropriations bill passed. The end result is the rule is finalized, without the forestry language, but maintains language that will prove detrimental to landowners in the long run. Because of the appropriations language, the rule cannot be implemented until November of 2001.

The forestry and agriculture communities should be proud. We stood our ground, we stood united, we stood on sound science, and we won a major victory. Many who have never gotten involved in these issues before stood up and said "enough is enough." The forestry community provided dynamic leadership in this effort. We held EPA and congress accountable. Although the President chose to ignore us in the end, we did succeed in raising awareness on this issue, changing the language, and creating bipartisan support to withdraw the rule. The fight isn't over yet.

I am proud to have been the coordinator of the coalition in

Pennsylvania. I am proud of what we accomplished. I am sure we have created a foundation of cooperation that will continue with other issues. I can remember when trying to form the coalition, I stated to the group, "We are the people who feed, clothe, and house this nation. We need to stand together to remind the citizens and leaders of our country that we are hard-working, decent people who contribute to the well being of all Americans, and we are worthy of their respect and support." We set out to do just that, and we proved to ourselves that it can be done.

This ordeal has left us stronger and more united than ever and has taught us some important lessons. Anyone who thought that regulatory obstacles that impede sound forest management were going to end at the boundaries of public lands should now be enlightened. But most important, I hope we have all learned that we can, as individuals, come together and make a huge difference, and we must if we are to survive. For numbers do matter, and every number begins with one, and grows one by one. Many thought that our efforts would be in vain and we were taking on insurmountable odds. But, one by one, our momentum grew, and it is my hope that that momentum will continue to grow. ☺

PA SAF Division Members actively participated in the above PA Coalition. Chair Bob Bauer conducted one of the two public meetings and Jack Winieski represented Bob in a coalition meeting in Harrisburg. Other SAF members assisted in many ways making influential contacts and providing input into public meeting discussions.

Mary Wirt's e-mail
103303.2041.@compuserve.com

Greenpeace Founder to Speak At MFA Annual Meeting

Grantsville, MD – *Forestry in the New Millennium – Who will Lead the Way?* is the theme of the Maryland Forests Association's Annual Meeting, October 27-28, 2000



Dr. Patrick Moore
(photo credit: National Speakers Bureau)

at the Sheraton Columbia Hotel, Columbia, Maryland. Dr. Patrick Moore, founder of Greenpeace, will be the keynote speaker at the Awards Banquet, Friday evening, on the 27th. Dr. Moore's address is entitled, "Getting it Right: Environmentalism for the 21st Century," which will focus on issues such as: forging consensus, the truth behind species extinction and deforestation,

preventing forest loss, dispelling the "less wood" myth, and helping others see with a "new pair of eyes." The event is open to nonmembers. Preregistration is required.

Dr. Moore heads Greenspirit, Vancouver, B.C., a consultancy focused on environmental policy and communications. He has been a leader in the international environmental field for more than 25 years and was a founding member of Greenpeace. He served for nine years as president of Greenpeace Canada and seven years as director of Greenpeace International before breaking ties with the organization. Currently, as chair of the forest practices committee of the Forest Alliance of B.C., he leads the process of developing the "Principles of Sustainable Forestry," which have been adopted by the majority of the industry.

Educational sessions on Saturday morning will include presentations by Robert Worcester, President, Maryland Business for Responsible Government (MBRG); Bill Matuzewski, Director, Chesapeake Bay Program, USDA-EPA Region 3; and Logger/activist Matt Bennet of Emmett Vaughn Lumber, Knoxville, TN. Commercial and educational exhibits will be on display throughout the event.

Registration packets are available by contacting Karin Miller at the MFA office at (301) 895-5369 or via e-mail at mfa@hereintown.net.



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Why Pennsylvania Needs to Reform The Property Tax on Forest Land

By Marc E. McDill, Assistant Professor of Forest Management, Penn State School of Forest Resources

Most foresters would rather not think about property taxes. They often think of property taxes as a thorn in the side of the landowner, but also as something that is largely outside the daily concerns of the average forester – a subject best left to the accountants and academics. Recently, however, many Pennsylvania foresters have begun to realize that property taxes are indeed something they need to be concerned about. Stumpage prices rose dramatically in the 1990s. The high values some forest landowners were earning caught the attention of county commissioners, creating a renewed interest in reassessing forest lands. Since no counties had reassessed their forest land since the late 1980s, it was a reasonable thing to do. However, the recommended assessed values published by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Bureau of Forestry had doubled or tripled since the last reassessments (Figure 1). McKean County was the first to reassess. The new assessed values came as a shock to landowners in the county, and a group of landowners sued the county to have their assessments reduced. They won the case, but the victory was based on legal procedural issues and did not affect landowners in the county who were not party to the suit.

The McKean County case did raise awareness in the Bureau of Forestry about problems with the way they calculated their recommended values, and in 1999 they revised their procedures. The new system for assessing forest land values has six forest types instead of two and no distinction by site class. Yields and prices are estimated separately for four different regions of the state. Also, the recommended assessed

values vary from one county to the next, due to variations in millage rates and assessment percentages. (All else being equal, higher tax rates reduce property values.) The assessed values recommended under the new system are much lower than they would have been under the old system, but many believe that they are still too high. Significant additional reductions in assessed values do not seem likely within the

context of the current Clean and Green legislation, however. In fact, as long as stumpage prices continue to rise, the recommended values will also rise.

Because of its impact on the basic profitability of long-term forest management, the current property tax system is a major impediment to sustainable forest management in the state. Alternative taxing methods, such as a severance or yield tax, could raise the same amount of revenue as the property tax with significantly less impact on forest management profitability. It is important that foresters understand these issues and begin a dialogue about alternatives to the present system.

The purpose of this article is to clarify a few key issues regarding forest land property taxes in Pennsylvania. It addresses four basic questions:

- Why have forest land assessed values in Pennsylvania risen so dramatically?
- Are higher assessments a problem?
- Why is the productivity tax a bad tax for forest land?
- What can be done?

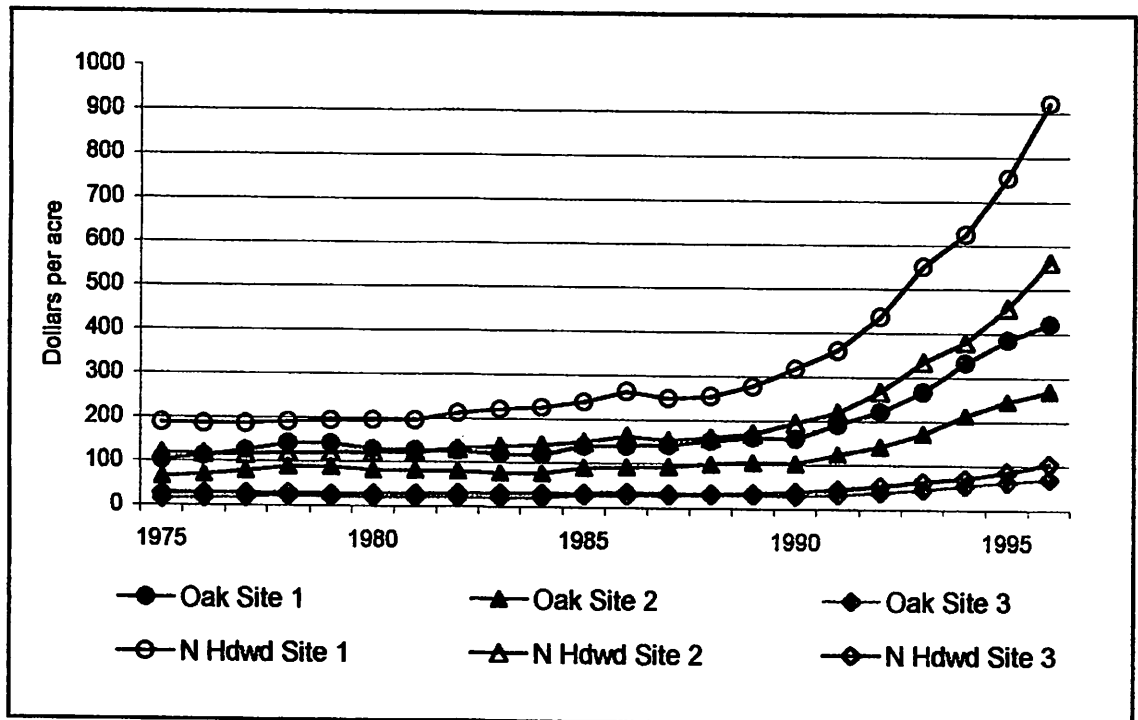


Figure 1. Real (i.e., adjusted for inflation: 1996 dollars) recommended assessed values for property taxation in Pennsylvania by forest type, site class — 1975 to 1996 (source PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry).

Why have forest land assessed values in Pennsylvania risen so dramatically?

The forest land assessed values recommended by the Bureau of Forestry (Figure 1) increased fairly dramatically during the 1990s for two key reasons: 1) stumpage prices went up, and 2) inflation went down. In some cases, stumpage prices have increased fairly dramatically. For

example, between the first quarter of 1992 and the third quarter of 1999 average black cherry stumpage prices in northwest Pennsylvania increased from \$505/mbf to \$1,449/mbf.¹ This represents a 15% annual rate of increase. Over the same time period, inflation, as measured by the Producer Price Index, averaged 1.2% annually; thus, most of this increase was specific to the timber industry. While black cherry is a relatively extreme example, similar, but somewhat less dramatic increases occurred with the other more valuable species. For example, northern red oak stumpage prices in southwestern Pennsylvania increased from \$282/mbf to \$475/mbf over the same period of time – an annual rate of increase of about 7.2%, and approximately 6% above the inflation rate.

Of course, it seems only reasonable that as stumpage prices rise, forest land values should also rise – and taxes, too. However, the second major reason why forest land assessed values (and thus taxes) have risen in Pennsylvania – because inflation is down – is a little harder to explain. To understand the relationship between inflation and assessed values for forest land, it is necessary to briefly review the formula used to determine forest land assessed values under the Clean and Green legislation.

In 1976, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Agriculture Offices of Planning and Research and Crop Reporting, in cooperation with the Department of Environmental Resources, Bureau of Forestry, recommended the following formula for assessing use-values of forest land:²

$$\text{Assessed Value} = \frac{\frac{(P \times Y)}{R} - C}{i}$$

where P = the stumpage price per unit of wood produced,
 Y = the yield of wood at a rotation age of 100 years,
 R = the rotation age (set at 100 years),
 C = the average annual management cost, and
 i = the interest rate (also called the capitalization rate, or the discount rate).

It is important to understand the rationale for formula (1). The value of any asset – stocks, bonds, real estate, etc. – is determined by the expected present value of the costs and the benefits (i.e., revenues) that will accrue from the ownership of that asset. Equation (1) is based on the basic formula for discounting (finding the present value of) an infinite series of annual payments, that is:³

$$V_0 = \frac{p}{r}$$

where V_0 = the present value of an infinite annual series of payments,
 p = the amount of the annual payment, and
 r = a real annual interest rate (i.e., an interest rate that excludes inflation).

The numerator in equation (1) corresponds to p in equation (2) and should give an estimate of the average annual net earnings from an average forested property within a given forest type and site class. The term $(P \times Y)$ estimates the gross income earned every rotation. The gross revenue is

divided by the rotation to give the average annual gross revenue. Subtracting the average annual cost converts this to an average annual net revenue.

With this background, we can discuss why the decline in the inflation rate caused assessed values to go up. A different symbol for the interest rate (r , rather than i) is used in equation (2) because the appropriate interest rate for discounting an infinite series is a real interest rate (i.e., one that has been adjusted to account for inflation). Although a real interest rate would have been more appropriate, a nominal interest rate (unadjusted for inflation) has typically been used in determining assessed values. Using a nominal interest rate in equation (1) has had the effect, especially in the mid-1970s when the formula was first used, of introducing a significant negative bias into the formula – reducing assessed values on forest and agricultural land alike, sometimes by as much as two thirds. More recently, however, inflation has been relatively low (close to 1%, as noted earlier), and the impact of this negative bias has been reduced. In fact, in 1999 the Department of Agriculture recognized this problem and began using a real interest rate, rather than a nominal interest rate. This was a good time to make this change, since the difference between nominal and real interest rates is so small right now.

Thus, two trends came together in the 1990s to cause Clean and Green assessed values for forest land to rise: 1) stumpage prices went up, in many cases by between 2 and 3 times since the last time many counties reassessed forest lands, and 2) nominal interest rates went down, largely because inflation went down. In a sense, tax increases due to both of these trends are perfectly appropriate: assessed values should go up when stumpage prices go up, and the reduction in the rate of inflation – and the recent switch to using a real interest rate in equation (1) – has led to a more correct application of the formula. The fundamental problem, however, is that the approach to forest land taxation implicit in the formula places a heavy burden on the financial viability of forest land management. I believe that the formula would never have been accepted back in 1975 if stumpage prices had not been so low at the time, and without the large discount incorporated into the formula through the improper use of the nominal interest rate where a real discount rate should have been used.

Are higher assessments a problem?

What is the impact of higher assessments on the profitability of forest land management? To answer this question, consider the case of an oak forest in central Pennsylvania which might be managed on an 80 to 100 year rotation. Table 1 shows the future value of an annual property tax of \$1 per acre accumulated over 80 and 100 year rotations at 4%, 6%, and 8% interest. The numbers in the table show how much revenue must be earned per acre at the end of the rotation just to pay for the accumulated cost of an annual property tax of \$1 per acre. (For an annual property tax of \$2 or \$3 per acre, multiply the numbers in the table by 2 or 3, respectively. For example, the future value of \$2 per acre per year over 80 years at 6% interest is \$3,493.) While the specific values vary depending on the rotation and the

(Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 13)

interest rate used, the main point is that at interest rates of 6% or higher very few timber harvests will produce sufficient revenue to cover the accumulated value of even a \$1 or \$2 per acre per year property tax. Simply put, with 80 to 100-year rotations, a property tax greater than \$1 per acre per year tends to make growing timber unprofitable.

In most cases, even the new assessed values under Pennsylvania's Clean and Green Act will result in tax payments that are simply too high to allow landowners to make even a modest profit managing forest land for timber in the long run. With the economic incentive to manage forest land for the long term taken away, reassessments may cause landowners to want to get out of Clean and Green. But a penalty must be paid when land enrolled in Clean and Green is removed from the program. What do you think these landowners will do?

Why is the productivity tax a bad tax for forest land?

A property tax based on equation (1) is termed a *productivity tax* in the forest economics literature. The discounted annual series implied by the equation is generally quite appropriate for agricultural land, where income is earned every year. However, as all foresters know, forestry is very different from agriculture. Because forest land does not typically generate annual revenues, in most years property taxes on forest land must be paid with no offsetting income. The taxes therefore accumulate interest charges each year until sufficient income can be earned to cover the taxes plus the accumulated interest. As shown in the previous section, over rotations of 80 years or more, these interest charges amount to far more than the cost of the taxes themselves.

The fundamental problem with applying equation (1) to forest land appraisal is that the formula assumes that the average net income will actually be earned each year. This can only be true on large properties with a balanced age-class distribution. With smaller properties containing only one age class, income is earned periodically – for example, once every 80 years. Financially, there is a huge difference between paying \$1 every year for 80 years and paying \$80 at the end of 80 years. Consider a hypothetical case of an 8,000-acre forest that would pay \$8,000 per year under a \$1 per acre per year property tax. If the forest was regulated on an 80-year rotation, 100 acres would be harvested each year. An equivalent amount of tax revenue could also be raised from this forest with a severance tax that generated \$80 per acre at the time of harvest. If the average revenue per acre at harvest was \$2,000 per acre, then a 4% severance tax would raise this amount. At an interest rate of 6%, the present value of \$80 earned one year at a time is \$16.51, while the present value of \$80 earned 80 years from now is only 76¢ – approximately 1/22 of the first value. Thus, the property tax would reduce the bare-land value of the forest by \$16.51 per acre, while the

Table 1. The future value of an annual payment of \$1 over 80 and 100 years, for 3 interest rates — 4%, 6%, and 8%.[†]

Rotation	Interest Rate		
	4%	6%	8%
80 years	\$ 551	\$1,747	\$5,638
100 years	\$1,238	\$5,638	\$27,485

[†] The formula used to calculate the future value in year n (V_n), at an interest rate i , of a regular, annual payment (R) that is made for a fixed number of years (n) is $V_n = R[(1+i)^n - 1]/i$ (Klemperer, W. David. 1996. *Ibid.*).

severance tax would reduce bare-land values by only 76¢ per acre – even though the forest pays the same tax in both situations.

The important point of the example is that the same amount of revenue is raised under both taxes, but the impact of the productivity tax on forest land values is 22 times higher than the impact of the severance tax. (At higher interest rates or longer rotations, the difference is exponentially larger.) With the value of bare (recently harvested) forest land already quite low, many acres become sub-marginal for growing timber (having negative bare-land values) as a result of the property tax, creating incentives to harvest the timber and abandon the land, or at least to change the land use to a non-forest use. Incentives to invest in long-term forest management are eliminated, and the quality of the forest resource – and the tax base – will diminish over time.

Because of the length of time required for forest production, the timing of a cost or revenue is very important. Costs that are incurred early in the life of a stand weigh far more heavily on the profitability of growing trees than costs that occur toward the end of the life of the stand. Equation (1) does not recognize the importance of the timing of costs and revenues. This is why, if we assume that a fixed amount of revenue must be raised from the forest land within a county, a severance (or yield) tax would be preferable to a property tax, since the severance tax would be paid at the end of the rotation – at the same time that the offsetting income would be earned.

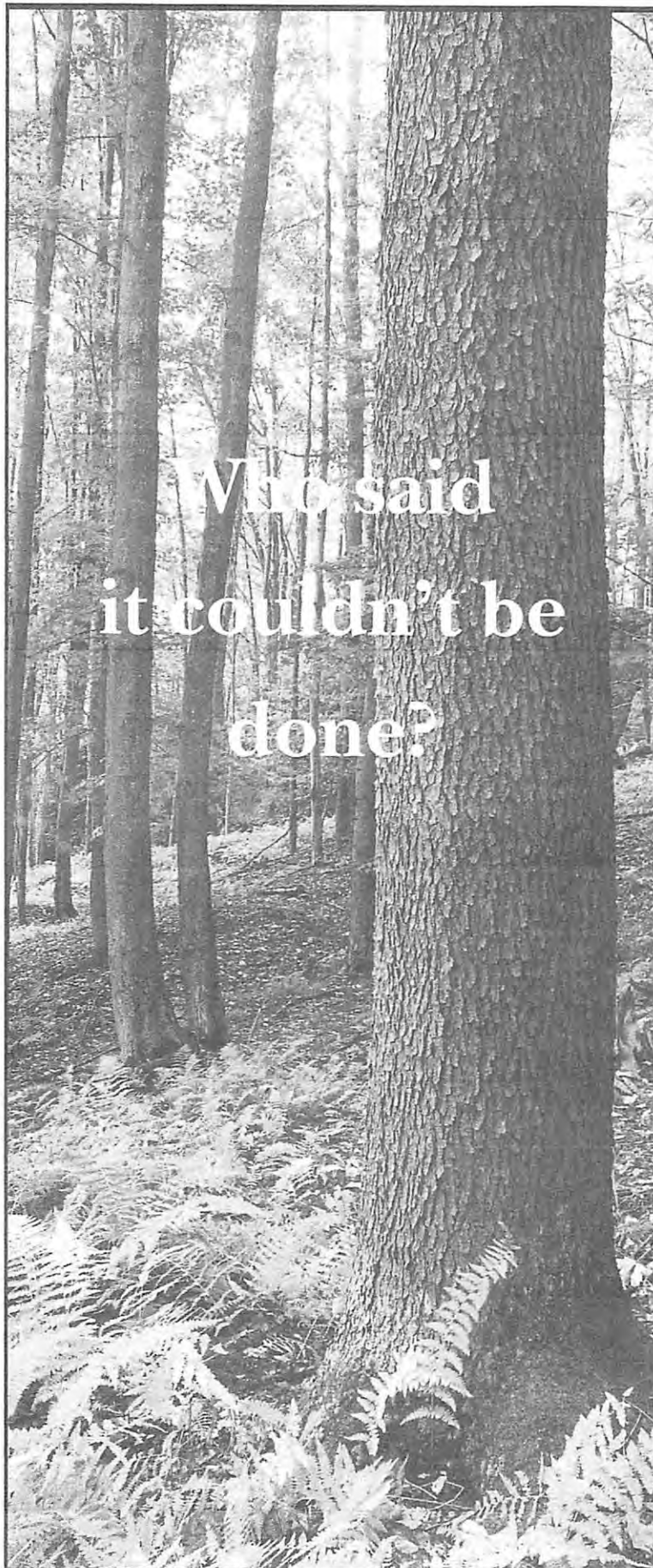
What can be done?

The two most basic questions about taxing forest land are:

- What is the an appropriate contribution that the forest land of a county should make to the local tax base? and,
- Should forest land be taxed annually – as under a property tax – or at the time when a harvest takes place – as under a severance or yield tax?

In thinking about these questions, three basic criteria should be considered for evaluating alternative tax arrangements: equity, incentives, and administration. The first question is about equity: what is the forest landowner's

(Continued on page 16)




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fair share of the tax base of the county? Forest landowners have a responsibility to help pay for the services provided by the county. Without a specific reason for relieving forest landowners of this responsibility, the default assumption should be that the tax revenue raised from forest landowners should be comparable to what they would pay if all types of rural land were taxed, more-or-less, under a single system. An argument can be made, however, that forest landowners deserve a tax break because their lands provide many values that are important to the public for which landowners receive no income, including watershed protection, wildlife habitat, open space, and aesthetics. Even if one accepts this argument, however, determining just how much of a tax break this entitles forest landowners to is difficult. Furthermore, from a political perspective, it is likely that county governments would oppose any proposals that would involve reductions in their tax base without some compensation from the state government. It would probably be wise to assume that any alternative tax structure on forest land would have to be at least revenue-neutral for counties.

The second question raised above – whether forest land should be taxed annually or at the time when a harvest takes place – is about incentives. The arguments laid out in this article suggest that taxing forest land at the time of harvest would be the best approach. For a given amount of tax revenue raised, such a tax would have a significantly smaller impact on the profitability of growing timber than an annual property tax. Making timber growing more profitable provides an incentive to landowners to keep growing trees and reduces the incentive to subdivide and sell off the land. I believe this was the basic intent of the Clean and Green Act. Changing to a system based on harvest revenue, rather than an annual property tax will require some fairly significant changes in the legislation concerning the taxation of forest land in the Commonwealth. One approach might involve instituting a severance tax, coupled with a dramatic reduction of the property tax on forest land. Under this approach a small, nominal annual property tax in the range of 50¢ to \$1 per acre per year could be retained. The revenue lost by the counties as a result of the reduced property tax would be raised by a severance tax levied on timber sales. This tax would most likely be administered by the state government, with the revenues re-distributed to the counties.

Many questions need to be answered regarding the specifics of how such a system would work. A problem with the severance tax, relative to property taxes, is that revenues would fluctuate from one year to the next. Counties would prefer to have a predictable source of revenue. Can the fluctuation in the tax revenue be smoothed out over time? What would happen if harvests or stumpage prices declined significantly and revenues dropped? Who would the alternative tax system apply to – would all timber sales be subject to the severance tax or only timber sales from lands enrolled in a special program (like Clean and Green)? In the latter case, what penalties would be applied when land is removed from the program? How much should the tax be (i. e., what percent of the timber sale value)? How would the tax be enforced?

Addressing these issues will require a statewide dialogue among all those interested in forest management, and with county governments, whose revenues could be affected by a new tax system. If there is a consensus that change is needed, the forestry community will need to be prepared to propose specific legislation. At that stage, information about how other states tax forest land and how their programs are administered would be extremely useful. Other states have replaced property taxes with severance or yield taxes. How did they resolve these questions? What problems have other states encountered in taxing forest land and what solutions have they tried? Furthermore, if legislation is proposed, the political support of other groups interested in sustainable land use – e.g., conservation organizations such as the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, the Nature Conservancy, the Audubon Society, and others – will be needed. There is much to do, and the process of achieving an efficient and equitable approach to forest property taxation will take time. As a first step, foresters must educate themselves about the issues and begin the dialogue that is needed to reach a consensus on how to achieve this goal. ♻

¹ Timber Market Report, Penn State School of Forest Resources

² The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Agriculture Offices of Planning and Research and Crop Reporting, 1976, *A Procedure for Determining the Use-value of Land under the Pennsylvania Farmland and Forest Land Assessment Act of 1974*

³ Klemperer, W. David. 1996. *Forest Resource Economics and Finance*. McGraw-Hill, NY. P.113, eq. (4-8)

⁴ The formula for the present value of \$1 each year for 80 years at a discount rate of 6% is $[(1.06)^{80}-1]/[.06 \times (1.06)^{80}]$. The formula for the present value, at 6%, of \$80 received in 80 years is $80/1/(1.06)^{80}$ (Klemperer, W. David. 1996. *Ibid.*)

⁵ The terms “severance taxes” and “yield taxes” are often used interchangeably in forestry. One distinction that has been made is that a yield tax is a tax paid at the time of harvest in lieu of property taxes, while a severance tax is any other tax paid at harvest time. Another common distinction is that severance taxes are based on the value of harvested timber at the time of harvest, while yield taxes are paid on the volume of harvested timber at the time of harvest

Enemies, or What?

By Jim Coufal, Past President, National SAF

The two pieces by Harry Wiant in the Spring 2000 *Allegheny News* were, as typical of Harry's work, well written and thought provoking. Harry and I have long ago agreed that we often respectfully disagree, and though my response herein will not provide the sugar-coated optimism Harry asked about, I may well be included in that group Harry calls, with obvious disdain, "well-known leaders in our profession (who) try to convince us that so-called environmentalists are our friends." So I feel compelled to state another case.

Harry sees the "so-called environmentalists" as enemies. I look at the same people and, like the students Harry wrote about, I see C-I-T-I-Z-E-N-S and potential friends. These are the people who, as professionals, we pledge to provide service. They, in turn, provide us certain professional privileges so long as they trust us to provide the services they need and desire. If they stop trusting us, I respectfully suggest that we should look to ourselves for the reasons. Two items in the Spring 2000 *News*, Bill Maxey's letter about mountain top removal coal mining, and the report that forest harvesting assessments in West Virginia and Pennsylvania revealed "In both states . . . a good percentage of the harvesting has left the stands with little future, due mainly to diameter limit cutting and high grading," provide examples of why the public may not fully trust us.

There is an old saying that when the archer misses the target, he/she doesn't look to the target to see why, but looks to him or herself for the cause. While I think that we have to do exactly that, look to ourselves, I must admit that one of our problems is that we shoot at a moving target; that is, a fickle public. Such is one of the difficulties in dealing with a people-oriented profession and with a dynamic ecosystem that doesn't operate on a year-by-year budget cycle or a decade-by-decade attitude change.

If we believe that the citizens are misinformed, we need to ask why and what have we done to overcome such information. We have been successful occasionally and spectacularly with some information. We have been successful occasionally and spectacularly with some information (Only you can prevent forest fires!, Plant trees, grow jobs) but not with others (clearcutting and the need to produce commodities). In a participative democracy, civil dialogue and the marketplace of ideas are fundamental. If we haven't been able to carry the day with our ideas, we need to ask "why not?" before throwing more money and ideas at "the problem." Perhaps we haven't defined the problem correctly.

Over 90 years ago, Robert Underwood Johnson, to paraphrase, said that foresters, unlike preservationists, haven't learned to capitalize on public sentiment about forests. Have we learned to do so in the ensuing years? I think not, as we plunge ahead talking science and dollars to people who see beauty and grandeur. For a long time, I wondered why society didn't see forests as "tree farms." Now I believe that forests are icons of the American experience, with values not equivalent to rows of corn, but rather to another American icon, the family farm, and all the values it stands for. You care for, treasure, and protect icons, you don't kill them. But we cut them down, so what can we do?

About 15 years ago a French psychiatrist did a

commissioned study for the American Forest & Paper Association (in its then current guise). He looked at how Americans perceive forests, with some interesting results of which space doesn't allow discussion. But one of his strongest suggestions was to give up defending clearcutting; not to give up clearcutting but to give up the idea we could make the American public accept it. Basically, he called it a losing battle, the bloody head butting the brick wall. Instead he suggested we concentrate on the fact that as foresters we nurture, tend, care for, cultivate, and keep healthy forests for 60, 80, 100 or whatever number of years the rotation we work with, and then we regenerate a new forest. Clearcutting focuses on one moment in the life of a stand that we have honestly nurtured for all those years. And yes, the terms he suggested are more feminine than those traditionally connected with clearcutting, and therefore maybe politically correct. But they are also just plain correct.

I find the worry that we can't define ecosystem management to everyone's satisfaction disingenuous. Many scholars have written about how ill defined multiple use has been and is, and yet we proudly proclaim we practice it. I was at a forestry meeting just a few years ago where the assembled foresters could not agree on whether multiple use had to be practiced on every acre or over the

(Continued on page 20)

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412-362-8451
E-mail: dongibbon@aol.com

08 May 2000

Jack Winieski, Editor
The Allegheny News
Society of American Foresters
PO Box 699
Dillsburg, PA 17019

Dear Jack Winieski:

This Spring 2000, issue of the Allegheny News carried a column by Harry Wiant, which expressed some deep-seated frustrations with the position the forestry profession finds itself in, vis-à-vis the public. These frustrations were echoed in comments by other speakers at other events, found scattered through the newsletter. Those same frustrations were near the surface in the question-and-answer session after my recent presentation at the Ben Roach Forestry Forum in Kane (PA).

There seems to be a sort of massive professional unwillingness to admit that there may be something behind the public's current feeling of antagonism for the way forestry has been practiced in the last few decades. A leader in my Church once commented, "**There may be relevant insight in reproach.**" I have often found that when I was reproached and was feeling defensive about it, if I was honest with myself, I would see the mistakes I had made that underlay the reproach.

On the off chance that there may be some misunderstanding about some of the key issues, let's begin with the economic one. Let's try a "what if . . ." game. **What if you were the owner of, say, the Bridger National Forest, or the Tongass, or the Chugach . . . (Not the Allegheny)?** You're the outright owner of one of those massive properties, and you decide to put some of the timber up for sale. Would you require that the purchaser of the timber provide you with an income from the purchase, over and above any costs you might incur? Would you require that when he left your property he would assure you that regeneration of the forest would occur so that you would be able to harvest that same quality timber again at some future date? Would you require that the forest not be depleted of some essential components, that soil erosion not occur, that the streams not be clogged with logging debris or silt, so that the cold-water fisheries on your property would be maintained?

I think you would so require, if it were your property. But the truth of the matter is that these requirements have not been met, over and over again, in the relationship of industry with the Federal government, acting on your and my behalf as the owners of these properties. The most obvious violation of these requirements is the one about covering the dollar costs, even though this may not be the most important violation in the long run. We can, make more somehow. But we can't replace things that are truly gone from the system. And in case, for some reason, you don't get it, **THIS MATTERS A WHOLE LOT TO THE PUBLIC!**

Back to the money issue: many in industry and in the more conservative parts of the political spectrum have placed great weight on balancing the Federal budget. And yet, when it comes to forest issues, that point seems to get lost. The Forest Service has sold the timber on the public lands at a huge discount below costs. The subsidy amounts to hundreds of millions of dollars, over and over. The major unpaid cost is for the hundreds of thousands of miles of roads that are built and maintained to get the timber out. The price paid to the government for the timber frequently does not include the full cost of providing the roads. **THE PUBLIC IS VERY ANGRY ABOUT THIS LONG TERM SUBSIDY.** And the more radical parts of the public have said, "If you refuse to modify the system so that it pays its own way, we think we have the political power to close it down." And the forestry profession is reaping the consequences.

The profession could have avoided this situation by recognizing the real costs of the way it was advising industry to

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Jack Winieski
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operate. There is a classic problem in our economic system: most industries try to avoid paying external costs. For example, the cigarette industry; has, until very recently avoided paying the costs for the medical damage it was inflicting on the smoking public. These were "externalities," and they got rich by avoiding them. The cattle industry made a whole lot of money by overgrazing much of the public lands, causing huge erosion problems, allowing many invasive plants to come in and dominate ecosystems that had been relatively stable for thousands of years. The utility industry has been one of the most reliable sources of steady income for little old ladies for decades, in part because it never paid for the true cost of strip mined coal and the 6000 miles of polluted streams in Pennsylvania.

The timber industry; also has a very poor record in this regard. It stripped the steep hillsides and plateaus of Pennsylvania, and left the consequences to future decades. The consequences are a totally different forest that we had originally. Now suddenly the forestry profession steps up to the microphone and says: "Trust us. We can manage this forest to produce any outcome we like." But the public is very skeptical. The public doesn't like a lot of the results they see on the ground. It says, "What will you do about invasive species? What will you do about insect pests? What will you do to control the weather? We don't trust you." Look at your own newsletter on page 18, in the article on Factors Affecting Forest Health. The truth is, even though you frequently declare you can do so, **YOU CANNOT MANAGE THE FOREST TO PRODUCE ANY OUTCOME YOU LIKE. YOU ARE NOT IN COMPLETE CONTROL.**

So, I believe the major issue is one of trust. Until the forestry profession admits its limitations and starts to work well within some truly conservative limitations, allowing for natural variations in conditions outside their control, I don't believe the public is going to really trust them.

We'll have to admit that the Allegheny National Forest is in a class by itself, though not because of any positive influence by humans. It is a miraculous good thing economically that black cherry grows so well in this particular place. We had little to do with it, except to destroy what was holding it back in the original forest. Now the ANF is one of the few forests that operates at a profit. But the forest industry and profession have generally done a very poor job of presenting themselves to the public. They have tried to squeeze the lemon as hard as they could, apparently not recognizing that their actions were having a very bad public relations effect. And again, they're suffering the consequences.

You bemoan the fact that non-foresters are running the Forest Service. My reading of events is that those non-foresters in many instances can read the hand-writing on the wall a lot better than the foresters, and they are making moves to help the profession as a whole. I give the Forest Service personnel tremendous credit for the way they struggle to handle the diverse pressures put on them. . . and to serve the longterm best interests of the forest as a whole.

One of my major gripes at foresters is that so often they seem to think of forests only as stands of merchantable timber. The fact is that the forests are ecosystems, and they consist of millions of delicately inter-related parts. It may sound like a mantra coming from me, but the patron saint of the forestry profession has to be Aldo Leopold, and he said that, "**The first rule of intelligent tinkering is to not throw away any of the parts.**" It would be refreshing. . . and a real trust builder. . . to see the forestry profession live that out in their public positions and actions. In case you didn't recognize it, that's what ecosystem management is all about.

Please don't get me wrong. I am totally in favor of well-managed timber harvesting operations. I love wood products. Some of the most beautiful and utilitarian objects in my life are produced from Pennsylvania hardwoods. Right now I am sitting at a cherry roll-top desk made for me by an Amish cabinet maker in Millersville, Ohio. It was one of the great delights of my life to watch him lovingly and skillfully craft this handsome piece of furniture. But I don't want my furniture, or floors, or paper to be made at an unacceptable cost to the forest. That's my bottom line.

Sincerely yours,
Donald L. Gibbon

Allegheny Society of American Foresters

Officers

Chairman
Michael B. Lester
RR 1, Box 268
Springville, PA 18844
(o) 717-833-3194
(h) 717-965-2752
(f) 717-833-6180
mclester7@aol.com

Chairman-Elect
Kenneth C. Kane
103 Tionesta Avenue
Kane, PA 16735-1236
(o) 814-837-9391
(h) 814-837-8357

Secretary/Treasurer
Kenneth W. Jolly
1398 Primrose Road
Annapolis, MD 21403
(o) 301-464-3065
(h) 410-626-2845
(f) 301-464-0462
kjolly@dnr.state.md.us

Past Chairman
Mark R. Webb
11021 US Route 6
Union City, PA 16438
(o) 814-663-5393
(f) 814-663-4008
mrkrwebb@erie.net

Executive Committee

John Benton, Jr.
194 Bondentown-Georgetown
Columbus, NJ 08022
(o) 732-928-0029
(h) 609-298-2498
(f) 732-928-4925
sprucegoe1@juno.com

Earl Higgins
210 E. Bennett Avenue
Wildwood, NJ 08260
(h) 609-523-0208
higg210@bellatlantic.net

Jack L. Perdue
5112 Main Street
Grasonville, MD 21638
(o) 410-260-8505
(f) 410-260-8595
jperdue@dnr.state.md.us

Karen J. Sykes
PO Box 4015 Sc
Morgantown, WV 26504
(o) 304-285-1532
(f) 304-285-1505
ksykes/na_mo@fs.fed.us

Executive Director

Jack Winieski
PO Box 699
Dillsburg, PA 17019-0699
(o) 717-432-3646; (h) 717-432-3646
(f) 717-432-3646
ansaf@paonline.com

Council Representative

Timothy A. Kaden
724 Green Winged Trail
Camden, DE 19934
(o) 302-739-3423
(h) 302-697-7066
(f) 302-739-3817
tkaden@state.de.us

Division Chairs

Maryland/Delaware
Steven W. Koehn
20916 Old York Road
Parkton, MD 21120
(o) 410-260-8531
(h) 301-357-4836
skoehn@dnr.state.md.us

New Jersey
J. Scott Worrell
12 Elfland Lane
Willingboro, NJ 08046
(o) 609-877-0278
(h) 609-877-1814

Pennsylvania
Robert W. Bauer
13483 Old Route 8 N
Titusville, PA 16354
(o) 814-432-3187
(h) 814-827-2321
(f) 814-437-5122
rwbauer@pgc.state.pa.us

West Virginia
Arlyn W. Perkey
180 Canfield Street
Morgantown, WV 26505
(o) 304-285-1523
(f) 304-285-1508
aperkey/na_ma@fs.fed.us

Chapter Chairs

Keystone
John L. Bearer
517 Lamp Post Lane
Camp Hill, PA 17011
(o) 717-787-4009
(h) 717-761-8189

Northern Hardwood
Robert Hansen
PO Box 69
Towanda, PA 18848-0069
(o) 570-265-2896
(h) 570-265-8114
rsh7@psu.edu

Pinchot
Mark Sickler
50 McMullian Hill Road
Tunkhannock, PA 18657
(o) 570-842-4533
(h) 570-836-3822
marsick@mymail.emcyber.com

Plateau
Howard Wurzbacher
RD 2, Box 179-C
Titusville, PA 16354
(o) 814-589-7538
(h) 814-589-7538
nwforest@penn.com

Rothrock
Alan W. Sam
118 S. Fraser Street
State College, PA 16801-3852
(o) 814-234-7145
(h) 814-692-7285
aws@gov.state-college.pa.us

Valley Forge
R. Bruce Arnold
12 East Barnard Street
West Chester, PA 19382
(o) 610-429-9469
(h) 610-734-7224
brucearnld@aol.com

Western Gateway
Robert E. Schweitzer
139 Highview Court
Ebensburg, PA 15931-5101
(o) 814-472-1872
(h) 814-472-5207

Coming Events

August

- 24-25 **Beginning a dialogue: Ridgeway's initiative to Defend Environmental Resources**, Penn State Conference Center, PA. Adam Mattis, (814) 696-3983 or mattis@penn.com

September

- 15 **Deadline: Articles and photos for Fall 2000 issue of *The Allegheny News***
- 26 **Association of Consulting Foresters Timber Income Tax Workshop** featuring Dr. Harry Haney, Ramada Inn, State College, PA. Contact Steve Hawks (814) 726-8637

October

- 19-20 **NE Watershed Forest Managers Annual Meeting and Field Trip**, Liberty, NY. Randy Kelley (845)586-4060

November

- 16-21 **National SAF Convention**, Washington DC Washington Hilton and Towers
SAF Centennial Celebration!
* Educational opportunities and CFEs
* Technical tours for first hand knowledge of forestry related issues
* So much more!

December

- 7-8 **Sediment Symposium**, Hershey Lodge and Convention Center, Hershey, PA, addressing sediment loading to the Susquehanna River Basin and the Chesapeake Bay. Call (717) 238-0423 or www.srbc.net
- 15 **Deadline: Article and photos for Winter 2000-01 issue of *The Allegheny News***

February 2001

- 21-23 **Allegheny SAF Winter Meeting** at the Tropicana Hotel on the boardwalk in Atlantic City, NJ

Allegheny SAF Committee Chairs

Auditing*

Ronald J. Sheay
1628 Prospect Street
Trenton, NJ 08638
(h) 609-771-8301

Awards*

Kenneth W. Jolly
1398 Primrose Road
Annapolis, MD 21403
(o) 301-464-3065
(h) 410-626-2845
kjolly@dnr.state.md.us

Communications*

Charles J. Newlon
2 Irving Lane
Wallingford, PA 19086
(o) 302-739-5195, Tuesdays
(h) 610-872-6019
cbnewlon@home.com

Continuing Forestry Education Coordinator*

Mark Vodak
PO Box 231 Cook College
Rutgers University
New Brunswick, NJ 08903
(o) 732-932-8243
(h) 609-758-9449
(f) 732-932-3222
vodak@aesop.rutgers.edu

Forest Health and Productivity (ad hoc)

Kurt W. Gottschalk
USDA Forest Service Lab
180 Canfield Street
Morgantown, WV 26505
(o) 304-285-1598
(h) 412-627-4161

Forest History (ad hoc)

Ronald J. Sheay
1628 Prospect Street
Trenton, NJ 08638
(h) 609-771-8301
(f) 609-882-2243

Foresters Fund (ad hoc)

Earl A. Higgins
210 E. Bennett Avenue
Wildwood, NJ 08260
(h) 609-523-0208

Forest Science Coordinator*

Mary Ann Fajvan
Div. of Forestry WVU
PO Box 6125
Morgantown, WV 26506
(o) 304-293-3411, ext. 2423
(h) 304-892-4515

Membership*

Ken Kane
103 Tionesta Avenue
Kane, PA 16735
(o) 814-837-9391
(h) 814-837-8357
(f) 814-837-9633

Nominations*

Mark Webb
11021 US Route 6
Union City, PA 16438
(o) 814-663-5393
(f) 814-663-4408
mrkrwebb@erie.net

Policy & Legislative (PLAN)*

Timothy A. Kaden
724 Green Winged Trail
Camden, DE 19934
(o) 302-739-4811
(h) 302-697-7066

Program*

Douglas Ostergard
PO Box 284
South Main Street
Pleasantville, PA 16341
(o) 814-589-7143
(h) 814-589-7143
(f) 814-484-7563

Student Coordinating (ad hoc)

Kim C. Steiner
Forest Resources Lab
Penn State University
University Park, PA 16802
(o) 814-865-9351
(h) 814-234-8754

Student Quiz Bowl

Elizabeth Brantley
Penn State Mt. Alto
1 Campus Drive
Mt. Alto, PA 17237
(o) 717-749-6200
(h) 717-337-1284
(f) 717-749-6069

Tellers*

Susan L. Stout
US Forest Service
PO Box 267
Irvine, PA 16329
(o) 814-563-1040
(h) 814-726-2023
(f) 814-563-1048
sstout/ne_wa@fs.fed.us

*Standing Committees

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total acreage involved, and this after how many years? They didn't conclude that they should stop practicing it. Ecosystem management is not a recipe; it's an approach, like French cooking.

Finally, in full recognition that Harry's contributions were opinion pieces, I am bothered by unsupported but scurrilous assertions like "our research and science is hostage to political correctness," and the USFS "marches arm-in-arm with the Sierra Club." Such statements, without proof, do no more good than saying, "All clearcutting is bad." We can do better.

Whether it's optimistic or not, I'll conclude by saying I think forestry is still a young profession. And like the great American philosopher Radar O'Reilly, I am of the opinion that, "If this is what its like in puberty, I can't wait to see it in its adultery." ☺