

Tri-County Forestry News



Anderson, Oconee, Pickens, Greenville

Summer 2005

SCFA Convention to Spotlight Team Building

Program a follow through of '04 Forestry Summit

SCFA's (South Carolina Forestry Association) 2005 Annual Meeting program will address issues involved in leading a successful business through leadership development and organizational performance. It will help members increase revenues and profits and improve employee engagement through effective leadership at all levels of management.

The theme, *Building a Winning Team*, is based on PRIORITIZE! – a system developed by program speaker Joe Calhoun for leading you business and life on purpose.

Once again, the Crowne Plaza Resort, Hilton Head Island, SC, will host the convention Nov. 2-4.

The program will follow through on last years Forestry Summit which identified ways South Carolina and the forest products industry can achieve a competitive advantage through clustering.

Breakouts will address topics of interest to family forest owners, manufacturers, foresters, loggers, and other stakeholders. Attendees may

participate in two of three sessions: wood biomass fuels, carbon sequestration, and green building codes.

The schedule again features the annual business session, recreational activities, awards, social events, Silent Auction, and professional entertainment.

SCFA members will receive program details and advance registration information in early September.

Forest Fairs Planned

The schedule for South Carolina's Wood Magic Forest Fair is:

- Sept. 20-23 – Upstate SC Forestry Commission's Piedmont Forestry Center, Salem, SC
- Oct. 14-21 – Midlands Harbison Environmental Education Center, Columbia, SC
- Nov. 14-18 – Lowcountry Sewee Visitor & Environmental Education Center, Awendaw, SC

The Fair's purpose is to provide information to students and teachers about the sustainable management of forest resources and the role of forests and forest products in their daily lives.

Volunteers are needed to assist with a variety of Fair tasks.

Now in its seventh season, the Fair is sponsored by more than 30 organizations including the SC Forestry Foundation.

For additional information, call (803) 896-8893 or visit:

www.state.sc.us/forest/wmfair.htm.

Report Identifies Export Trends

South Carolina Forest Products: An Export Overview identifies trends in wood product export for the US and South Carolina, specifically. Here are some of the highlights:

- Hardwood lumber is SC's top wood product export, totaling \$33.6 million in 2003.
- The top three destinations for SC wood products are Japan, Canada, and China.
- Exports from SC to China have grown ten times faster than the US rate.
- Emerging growth markets for SC-based forest products are Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Mexico.
- Strong trade relationships dictate the flow of commodities via SC.
- South Carolina exports are concentrated in primary products such as logs and lumber and steps should be taken to diversify current export capacity for other value-added products within the state.
- Recommends further research into production/trade of forest products in South Carolina be initiated to truly understand the nature of the global competitiveness of South Carolina's forestry industry.

A copy of the report is available at www.state.sc.us/forest/fprodex.pdf.

Mt. St. Helens Anniversary Marked

A ceremony was held May 18 at the Mt. St. Helens National Volcanic Monument marking the 25th anniversary of the eruption that blew the top off of the mountain. Weyerhaeuser's Forest Learning Center sits on a bluff just 12 miles from Mt. St. Helens. The Center tells the story of how active forest management jump-started the forest ecosystem after the Mount St. Helens erupted in 1980.

As the largest private landowner in the area, Weyerhaeuser lost 68,000 acres of forests in the blast. "This was a moonscape when we planted baby trees here 25 years ago," said Center director and forester Dick Ford. "Today these trees are 70-feet tall and part of a healthy and productive forest."

Deer Overpopulation Impacts Tree Regeneration

Clemson Experimental Forest site of deer browse study in South Carolina

In eastern states, deer populations continue to increase with deer browsing having some potentially detrimental effects on trees and other plants. Deer numbers have increased due to the absence of predators and declining hunting pressures resulting from urbanization.

An obvious effect of excessive deer populations is that tree regeneration is greatly affected by deer browsing. Fencing or individual seedling shelters can be used to protect regeneration from deer, but the cost of these measures is often prohibitive.

Equally serious is that deer browsing may be changing the forest composition by favoring species that deer do not eat

as much or don't like to eat. This problem may be particularly difficult to detect on forest lands where silviculture is not employed.

Recent studies document that deer browsing may be decreasing the diversity of herbaceous understory and increasing the risk of extinction for rare plants.

In a study in the Smokey Mountains, tops of large mossy boulders (too high for deer to reach) had many more plant species than similar, shorter boulders.

Other studies have shown that certain herbaceous species can be eliminated from farm land woodlots where deer forage for crops but spend the rest of their time in the woodlot. It is also likely that the elimination of forest understory vegetation by deer could have a negative impact on bird populations.

"The effects of deer browsing on ecosystems in the Southeast are not well documented, but many biologists consider overabundant deer populations as a major threat to biodiversity," said Dave Guynn, Clemson University Professor of Forest Resources, Clemson, SC.

"We are implementing a study (results due 2007) on the Clemson Experimental Forest to assess the impacts of deer browsing on forest regeneration and vegetation communities. It will also allow for development of deer harvest strategies to provide for natural regeneration of hardwoods and maintenance of biodiversity," Guynn added.

According to Charles Ruth, SC DNR Wildlife Biologist, Columbia, SC, "Most complaints related to deer in South Carolina involve damage to agriculture production, deer/vehicle collisions, and suburban deer management issues."

He noted DNR promotes deer population management through increased harvest of does. In recent years, bucks and does are being harvested in about the same proportions. Data indicates the deer population has been reduced about 20% since the late 1990's.

SC Educator Receives National Recognition

Dr. Larry M. Kowalski, Midway Elementary School in Anderson School District 5, has been selected as one of Project Learning Tree's (PLT) National Outstanding Educators for 2005.

Dr. Kowalski was recognized at the PLT International Coordinators' Conference in Welches, OR June 8-11. He is also invited to attend the World Forestry Center's Summer International Educators Institute, held in Portland, OR, July 23-30. The unique study tour is designed for a small group of national and international leaders in the education profession and features field trips to premier environmental education sites and forest landscapes in the Pacific Northwest.

Dr. Kowalski was South Carolina PLT Outstanding Educator of the Year in 2003. He is a PLT educator and facilitator, and also serves on the state PLT Steering Committee.

Ivory-billed Woodpecker Sighted

The Interior Department and the Dept. of Agriculture have announced a "multiyear, multimillion-dollar partnership" to protect the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, a large, showy bird with a red head and cream colored bill, which has been rediscovered 61 years after it was put on the extinct list.

Interior Sec. Gale Norton said a Corridor of Hope Cooperative Conservation Plan will be developed to save the woodpecker. The “Corridor of Hope” refers to the Big Woods of Arkansas, an area about 120 miles long and up to 20 miles wide in eastern Arkansas where the bird has been sighted.

The Ivory-billed woodpecker, the largest woodpecker in the United States, is the second largest in the world and had been one of six species of birds in North America thought to be extinct.

SFI Listing is Online

A listing of SFI (Sustainable Forestry Initiative) Trained individuals, through the Timber Operations Program (TOP) in South Carolina, is available online. Go to www.scforestry.org and click on the “Logger Training” button. From this page, select the “Listing of SFI Trained Individuals.” You must have Adobe Acrobat Reader to view this listing.

To use the Acrobat Reader search feature, click on the binoculars icon and type in the search terms.

Controlled Burning Helps Keep our Children Safe

Keeping our forests healthy is one of the best ways to keep our children safe from fire. According to “Fire in the South,” the South leads the nation in the number of wildfires with an average of more than 45,000 wildfires annually. These fires damage our forests, impact local economics and destroy homes and businesses.

Like doctors who prescribe medicine to keep patients healthy, professional state foresters set supervised prescribed

fires to keep Southern forest healthy and free of disease. Each year, trained state foresters treat nearly one million acres of forests, in the hope that small supervised fires will reduce the debris, grass and dead trees that act as fuel for wildfires.

Though forest experts know that these small, supervised fires are one of the most effective ways to keep a forest healthy, this treatment process faces growing opposition as developers continue to build homes in the South’s forests.

Throughout the South, neighborhoods are cropping up in forested areas. When homeowners purchase these homes adjacent to undeveloped forestland, they are troubled by the fires because of the smoke and ash they produce. Since the homeowners’ objections are valid and the fires are necessary to keep the South’s forests healthy, trained foresters are using the latest technology to provide a compromise. By using new technology to forecast weather patterns, foresters are able to reduce smoke and ash from the supervised fires.

Through these practices our forests remain healthy and our kids remain free from the devastating effects of wildfires.

FLA member McPhail addresses Congressional Staffers

Long time FLA (Forest Landowners Association) member, Dr. Walt McPhail of South Carolina recently spoke at the Congressional Sportman’s Foundation’s April breakfast briefing in our nation’s Capitol. Caucus Members and Congressional staffers listened intently as Dr. McPhail discussed some of the undue pressures forcing non-industrial private landowners to sell forestland for development purposes. Forest land loss

in the US can be greatly reduced through permanent repeal of the death tax, woody biomass initiatives and strengthening of the Endangered Species Act.

As reported in *Forest Landowner* and "Fast Facts," FLA's weekly e-newsletter, McPhail, an active member of the forestry community recently held a one-day workshop entitled "Forest Products, Measurements and Inventory" on at Clemson, SC.

Recent Congressional Bill offers Incentives for Biomass

Recently the House approved a far-ranging energy bill, the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (H.R.6). This legislation, among other things, promotes incentives for renewable energies such as biomass, wind, solar and hydroelectricity. After two days of debate and amendments, the legislation was approved 249-183, with 41 Democrats joining the GOP majority. The administration has embraced the legislation, although a White House analysis expresses reservations about the size of the incentives to the oil and gas industries.

Important to forest landowners: The bill contains a Federal Purchase Requirement for renewable electricity including biomass, a renewable fuels (including biodiesel) requirement of 5 percent by 2012, a \$20/per green ton grant program to offset the cost of purchasing biomass to produce electricity, heat, transportation fuels or substitutes for petroleum-based products, and a \$50 million per year grant program to offset costs of projects that develop and research biomass utilization opportunities. In both grant programs, biomass is defined as those materials

removed to reduce risk of fire or insect/disease infestation.

The Senate is expected to develop its bill in the coming weeks. The House and Senate versions then would have to be meshed in Conference.

Sustainable Forestry Initiative Standard Enhanced

The Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) program is a comprehensive system of principles, objectives and performance measures developed by professional foresters, conservationists and scientists, among others that combines the perpetual growing and harvesting of trees with the long-term protection of wildlife, plants, soil and water quality. Now in its 10th year, the SFI program is the largest certification program in North America.

The SFI Standard is the guiding document under which SFI program participants must manage their lands. By adhering to the SFI Standard, program participants demonstrate they are operating under scientifically proven and socially acceptable practice of sustainable forestry. Currently, there are more than 211 SFI Program Participants in North America with more than 152 million acres in the SFI Program. More than 93 million of these acres are third-party certified to the SFI Standard.

In January 2005 the Sustainable Forestry Board (SFB), the independent, 501c3 non-profit organization responsible for oversight of the SFI Standard and associated certification processes, released the final version of the 2005-2009 SFI Standard. The release culminated a 12 month review process that allowed wide ranging public participation and debate among all forest stakeholders.

The extensive public comment and research resulted in a number of enhancements to the standard including a closer examination of the ecological impact of forest conversion, the impact of commercial forestry on biodiversity and the threat from invasive species. The SFB also added several provisions to address social issues and issues related to the management of public lands.

“With these enhancements, the SFI Standard strengthens its position as one of the most rigorous and environmentally friendly standards now in use in North America and the world,” said Mr. Lawrence Selzer, President of the Conservation Fund and current Chairman of the SFB. “But there is always room for improvement. As the science of sustainable forestry produces new findings, the Sustainable Forestry Board will continue to explore new horizons and push for balanced enhancements in the future.”

Current SFI Program participants have one-year to come into compliance with the new standard, while new programs participants will have to meet all the requirements of the new standard before they join the SFI program.

More information and a copy of the 2005-2009 SFI Standard can be found at www.aboutsfb.org. For more information contact Brad Williams at brad_williams@afandpa.org or 202/463-2744.

Give Wildlife a Home When You Lop Your Tops!

By: David Mercker, University of Tennessee Extension Service

A common landowner concern prior to a hardwood timber harvest is, “What

about the tree tops left after the logging?”

To some, tree tops look trashy. To others, tops rotting on the forest floor are part of a natural process of growth and decay. Even woodlands that are never harvested have trees that die, fall and return to the upper layer of soil. These tops offer temporary habitat suitable for small mammals, ground birds and amphibians.

Yet the orderly nature of most of us wants things “spruced” up. Two simple solutions can lessen the visual impact of tree tops (also called slash):

- (1) The tops can be cut up for firewood to be hauled off
- (2) They can be “lopped”

Top lopping is simply cutting the tree tops so the branches lay on the ground. Doing so removes the visual barrier so you can more easily see through the woods. Plus, the branches will decay more quickly on the ground, due to increased moisture and insect activity.

Take heed though. Some tree tops have bent branches that are under great tension. When cut, these branches can “spring” with considerable force, sending their energy into the person with the saw. Use caution, and focus first on the high profile areas where aesthetics matters most – such as near roadways and trails.

Log A Load

The South Carolina Forestry Association (SCFA) is again sponsoring LOG A LOAD FOR KIDS – a campaign for loggers to participate in the Children’s Miracle Network Broadcast to raise funds for hospitals caring for

South Carolina's children. SCFA initiated the program back in 1988 as a means to demonstrate logger's commitment to community service and professionalism. Since then, the program has gone national in scope.

The most important and unique aspect of the Broadcast is that all funds raised locally remain with the children's hospital in this area. There is no national headquarters collecting the money raised.

For additional information about the program, contact Chairman Donnie Watts: South Carolina Chair Donald "Donnie" E. Watts, Jr. CIC Davis-Garvin Agency, Inc. P.O. Box 21627 Columbia, SC 29221 Work: 803/732-0060; FAX: 803/781-3641; Mobile: 803/920-6929 dwatts@davisgarvin.com

SC Project Learning Tree Training Opportunity

South Carolina Project Learning Tree (PLT) is offering natural resource professionals an opportunity to receive environmental education training alongside teachers in how to use PLT materials.

Project Learning Tree is an international environmental education program designed for teachers and informal educators who work with students from pre-kindergarten through high school. PLT uses the forest as a "window" into the natural world, helping

young people gain an awareness and knowledge of the environment and their place within it. The program teaches students "how to think, not what to think" about our complex environment.

To sign up for a PLT workshop, contact Jerry Shrum at 803-896-8892 or jshrum@forestry.state.sc.us. I, Jason Caudill, county agent in Oconee County, have been trained as a PLT instructor. I am available to do PLT lessons for students of Oconee County. Contact me at 864-638-5889 or caudill@clermson.edu for more information.

Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to people of all ages, regardless of race, color, gender, religion, national origin, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital or family status and is an equal opportunity employer.

Sincerely,

Howard H. Hiller,
County Extension Agent

D. Jason Caudill
County Extension Agent