

WASHINGTON FARM FORESTRY ASSOCIATION

Landowner News JAN / FEB 2011

THE VOICE OF THE SMALL FOREST LANDOWNERS IN WASHINGTON STATE

Calling All WFFA Members –

Pick Up The Phone & Make A Difference

Are you one of the many WFFA members disappointed with the countless *Forest and Fish Rules* failures? If your answer is *yes*, please consider becoming an important part of the solution *today*. Schedule time today to contact your district Senators and Representatives to seek their support of House Bill 1192/SB 5783.

WFFA is requesting action from our entire membership as grass roots supporters. We are an association committed to a simpler and more efficient Forest Practice process for tree farmers, and this legislation is both timely and critical as we move toward our common goals.

Since November 2009, this newsletter has been laying out our Forest and Fish Policy efforts, explaining the groundwork for this specific legislative effort. (*See archived newsletters at www.wafarmforestry/newsletters*).

Some WFFA members answered the call last year, when asked to contact your legislators. Your efforts gave us the opportunity to present at a House Natural Resource Committee in July, where we successfully received the support of the Chairman of that committee, Representative Brian Blake (19th). Chairman Blake agreed to sponsor and support HB 1192/SB 5783 this year.

Today, we urge each and every one of our members to take the time to contact your district Senators and Representatives to seek their support of HB 1192/SB 5783. (*Read in full at: www.leg.wa.gov Click on Bill Information.*)

Your call is critical, if the WFFA to be heard by our lawmakers. As a volunteer organization, we compete against many well financed special interest groups in Olympia. In this instance, our association's power lies in the hands of you, our members. Please take a few moments to contact your legislators and tell them how important this is to you. Ask them to support HB 1192/SB 5783. Please call today.

Top Reasons To Support House Bill 1192/Senate Bill 5783

- *Fulfills legislative promise for “alternate harvest restrictions on smaller harvests (RCW 76.13.100)” from the ten year-old Forest and Fish Rules.*
- *Saves taxpayers Millions of dollars ANNUALLY in FREP payments by allowing more timber harvest, instead of a government payment for that timber.*
- *Increases forest excise tax revenue for counties by allowing more timber harvest.*
- *Provides real jobs for loggers, truckers, mills, accountants and rural communities.*
- *Helps maintain timber infrastructure needed for forestland investment.*
- *Maintains clean cool water in our streams while reducing oversized stream buffers on smaller streams.*

(For more talking points on HB 1192/SB 5783, see the last article in this newsletter.)

For the last ten years, the WFFA has spent member dues and countless volunteer hours working to achieve the promises of HB 2091, the Forest and Fish Law. Now, the past legislative promises of a viable Small Forest Landowner Office, an effective Alternate Plan template process, and funding for a Forest Riparian Easement Program are all but lost. Small Forest Landowners desperately need this legislative effort 1) to be paid for our trees and 2) maintain the abundance of public good provided by our tree farms. Thank you in advance for responding to our call. Please call the WFFA office if you have questions about this important effort.

**Landowner News is the official newsletter of the
Washington Farm Forestry Association.**

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Designed & Edited By

Maureen O'Neill, Moxie Web & Print, Olympia, WA

From the President

Time To Renew Your WFFA Membership!

It's that time of year when we sit down to balance the checkbook and figure out our finances for the coming year. We all have fixed costs that come first, such as property taxes, and we have discretionary costs, such as our membership in WFFA. Each year, there are a number of folks who do not renew. Often, this decision is a matter of priorities. Given the age of our membership, health issues sometimes preclude all other issues. In those cases, WFFA can be thankful that such folks have supported our organization over the years. In other cases, people belong to a number of organizations, such as Farm Bureau, Chamber of Commerce, Grange, WFFA, etc. and may find that WFFA dues fall low on their priorities. Others may feel that WFFA has not been effective in representing their interests.

Recently, one WFFA member was good enough to write and inform us as to why he was not renewing his membership. He told us that he looks on the WFFA as a business organization. He feels that his dues to WFFA have not been particularly effective in promoting his economic interests since Forest and Fish was implemented in 1999. This member went on to quote *The Fifth Amendment to the Constitution*, which includes that "*Private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation.*" This is not an unusual reaction by many of our

members. It also reflects the attitude of current WFFA officers which is that, we, as Family Forest Land Owners, deserve just treatment for lands we've purchased and have managed with our life energy. There are also current members who feel that WFFA is too concerned about the economics of our tree farms, and they would like to see their dues channeled toward education and information. The officers and staff of WFFA fully recognize that our membership is diverse and WFFA must appropriately provide support to all of its members.

Personally, I have found that having my lands in Forest Use Classification affords me a savings that more than makes up for the WFFA membership. WFFA has advanced countless financial advantages that are now afforded to all Small Family Forest Land Owners. WFFA is *the* group recognized and respected by the state as representing all SFFLO's. In essence, WFFA represents all SFFLO's, members and non-members alike.

I'm just a "workin' stiff" and I've supported WFFA for many years and will continue to do so for many more. As president, my aim is to represent all WFFA members. We are a membership-based organization and our membership is vital. It only makes sense that the more SFFLO's that join and maintain their membership, the better we will all be represented, serviced, and informed. PLEASE support WFFA with your membership renewal and sign up a family member or fellow SFFLO!

Sincerely,

Sam Comstock

President, Washington Farm Forestry Association

2011 WFFA Annual Meeting

Clark and Cowlitz Chapters of the WFFA have joined to host an elegant vacation annual meeting get-away to be held at the beautiful Heathman Lodge in Vancouver, WA on April 14 -16, 2011. A half-day Executive Board meeting will

be held in the afternoon on Thursday the 14th and a social gathering for all members Thursday evening. On Friday, a dynamic keynote speaker will be followed by informative breakout sessions sure to bring more value to your tree farm.

The Washington Tree Farm Program annual “Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year” luncheon is at noon, with an awards dinner held that evening. Saturday features a Pomeroy Living History Farm tour, a local tree farm tour, and a steam donkey logging show with an active spar tree.

Registration was mailed out to members in January. For information, contact Chairman Bob Brink at (360) 607-6468.

“Long Leader” Contest

The WFFA will hold its first annual “Long Leader” contest in 2011 for members attending our annual meeting. We are looking for the longest conifer leader grown by a member in the spring of 2011. It will be measured from the base of the last growing seasons ‘branch whorl’ to the tip of the trees new growth (leader) by members of the WFFA Executive Committee.

The Rules Are Simple:

1. Be a member of the WFFA.
2. Have grown the conifer “long leader” on your Washington State property.
3. Attend the WFFA Annual Meeting
4. Bring your “Long Leader” to the Saturday April 16, 2011 General Business Meeting of the WFFA at 7:30 AM for official measurement or bring a photo with a tape measure alongside your leader.
5. Prize will be awarded at the conclusion of the General Business meeting.

Tree Farmer of The Year 2011 Nominees

Westergreen Family Tree Farm

Tom, Bonnie, Ed & Louise Westergreen, Whatcom County, WA

The Westergreen Tree Farm is a 760-acre tree farm located four miles south of the Canadian border in Whatcom County, near Sumas Washington. This family has a deep generational love for the land and for tree farming. This became evident many years ago, when Great Grandfather Gus Westergreen immigrated from Sweden and homesteaded in the valley in 1888. As recent as 2011, his heirs have continued to purchase forestland. The forestland legacy that Gus started now has fifth and sixth generations that have become involved in the forest's stewardship. Years of hands-on trial and error has created a diverse, productive tree farm that continues to supplement income needs, while enhancing water resources and wildlife.

Graves Family Tree Farm

*Keith & Sally Graves,
Snohomish County, WA*

The Graves Family Tree Farm is four parcels, totaling 228 acres. It is located near Arlington Washington in Snohomish County where the Graves reside on one of their forest parcels.

Keith and Sally have a passion for developing quality reforestation following timber harvest. Their attention to plantation maintenance is outstanding and necessary for their sustainable forest goals. Timber harvest in the past has played a big role in the Grave's ability to purchase additional parcels of forest. The Grave's realize that bringing back another crop of trees is much more difficult than removing them, but in doing so, they have had a wonderful physical outlet and a very rewarding experience. Keith's hands-on stewardship addresses many natural resources on his land, including fish habitat enhancement, plants, multiple tree species planting, rocked permanent access roads, to mention a few.

K-Diamond-K Ranch

Dave Konz, Ferry County, WA

The K-Diamond-K Ranch is a 1280-acre tree farm located six miles south of Republic Washington on the Sanpoil River in northwestern Ferry County. The K-Diamond-K Ranch is a working tree farm, ranch and guest ranch. Throughout the

year K-Diamond-K ranch hosts a diverse group of visitors, ranging from Girl Scout groups to international organizations. Dave consistently informs visitors of daily

forestry operations and the relationship between tree farming and the overall ecosystem health. The Konz family has put forth tremendous energy to maintain the

K-Diamond-K Ranch as a financially solvent operation. Their emphasis on cattle, timber, recreation, wildlife and aesthetics provides a unique showcase for the balance that can be achieved on an intensively managed, and well-stewarded tree farm.

Wester / Russell Tree Farm

Brian Wester & Sylvia Russell

Pierce County, WA

The Wester / Russell Tree Farm is a 20-acre tree farm located in the McKenna Forest Reserve developed by the Weyerhaeuser Company. It is also the residence of Brian and Sylvia Russell who are full of enthusiasm and commitment to growing trees for the long term. They have a “hands-on” attitude and are a husband-wife team effort. As WFFA Pierce County Chapter Tree Farmers of the year in 2009, they show others that having only 20 acres is *not* a reason not to invest their time and energy in forestry. They both work on the tree farm improving its timber stand condition through pre-commercial thinning, pruning, and vegetation management.

First and foremost, Brian and Sylvia desire to learn and to practice what they learn. Brian and Sylvia have championed forestry and healthy forests with their neighbors in the forest reserve.

B & D Tree Farm

*Bryon & Donna Loucks,
Lewis County, WA*

The B & D Tree Farm is a combination of three parcels located near Chehalis Washington that totals 207 acres in Lewis County. Bryon and Donna were honored as the 2010 WFFA Lewis County Chapter Tree Farmer of the Year. The Loucks reside on one of their parcels, and it has been said that their lives revolve around tree farming. When Bryon and Donna aren't working on a project for a forestry-related organization, they are working on their tree farm, which is an outstanding example of a well-managed tree farm.

The tree farm primary objective is to provide timber harvest income for the Loucks in their retirement. Equally important, however, is the ability to do this while still receiving the enjoyment that comes from owning and working on the land, and witnessing and enhancing wildlife habitat. The B & D tree farm welcomes their neighbors to hike, ride horses, ride bikes and hunt and enjoy the beauty of their tree farm.

Tie Pond Meadow Tree Farm

*Dick & Mary Anne Easter
Clark County, WA*

The Tie Pond Meadow Tree Farm is the residence of Dick and Mary Anne Easter and is a 115-acre model tree farm located in the beautiful scenic shadow of Mt. St. Helens in Clark County Washington. The Easters were awarded the WFFA Clark County Chapter 2010 Tree Farmer of the Year. Dick and Mary Anne embody all the core values of tree farming. Their goal is to leave a legacy, not just for their family, but for the greater good. They have tirelessly proven this with their political, community and personal involvement. Dick has been a hands-on leader and spokesperson for tree farmers and has mentored people who have gone on to be valuable leaders and mentors. Dick and Mary Anne have left a legacy of achievements in championing for tree farmer's, instilling a love of the land to their children's children, and advancing the mission to provide wood, wildlife, water and recreation for all.

Bridge The Space Between Human & Nature

by WFFA Intern, Jena Sorenson

When I was a student in college, a farmer from the Oregon Sustainable Agricultural Land Trust visited our senior capstone class as a guest speaker. A slightly overweight bearded man, dressed in classic dirty denim overalls, began with a simple question: “How many acres of land do you think it would take to survive for a year?”

He then asked how we would store food produced by the land and how much energy did we think it would require to accomplish these tasks. I looked around at the blank faces of my peers and I realized how difficult those questions are to answer, and how problematic it would be to live without the refinements of our affluent society. The speaker illustrated an overlooked, yet glaringly obvious reality of western life that had somehow previously escaped me. I had an intuitive sense that this fundamental reality indicated some phenomenal evolution of, not only the structure of our society, but of our minds. It was a result of the western concept of “nature” which is inevitably indicated through other aspects of western culture.

My classmates met the speaker’s demonstration of our dependence on modern constructions with a peculiar irrelevance. A long history of scientific discovery and invention has afforded us the luxury of ridding ourselves of concerns like these that carry the ultimate burden of survival. We no longer have an imperative need to know how to garden, store or prepare food, to hunt and gather, or to build fires. These are primitive means of survival that have escaped the dominating position they once held in the minds of Western man. We have established systems that guarantee our basic necessities will be met with ease. We heat and light our home with a switch; we receive water from a faucet, and retrieve food from a store. We do so with an unconscious dependence on the processes that make these common amenities possible. As a result, the skills necessary for self-sufficiency are easily dismissed and regarded as irrelevant.

We have traditionally thought of ourselves as unique, transcending the natural world rather than being a part of it. Our fundamental conception of human and nature as being separate is strengthened by the refined use of our natural resources.

We seek out inventions that ultimately remove any necessary, direct engagement with the natural world. We have created an existence where we experience life through culture. We are separated spatially and functionally from the natural world, but remain dependent on it for its essential services to provide clean air and water. The way in which we use and rely on natural resources continues to grow distant, and the natural world is lost somewhere in the peripherals of our imagination.

Our life experience in Western culture is ultimately enacted through artificial constructions removed from what we conceive as “*the natural world*”. However, engagement with nature is not completely removed. Nature oriented activities are a common feature of Western culture, however these are pursued with the same underlying conceptions. For example, endeavors once thought of as necessary life skills, like gardening or hunting, are now considered “hobbies” pursued for pleasure or relaxation, not as modes of survival. We have created an existence where physical threat from a previously undomesticated world has been removed. We now engage with nature by hiking, camping, or gardening, for pleasure or as a way to vacate culture and the stresses of everyday life. In this sense, we approach the natural world motivated by its counter culture qualities.

A culture can be defined by the way its characters conceive of themselves and the way in which they associate themselves with the world. In Western culture, we have a contrasting conception of culture and nature, where to define one, would be to oppose the other. Through domestication, invention, and a refined use of natural resources, we have further strengthened this concept. This creates in our minds a dualistic world in which the former is motivated by *consumption* to engage with the latter.

We are at a point in history where we have reached Earth’s threshold. We have expanded our human realm to a degree in which the Earth is becoming increasingly incapable of supporting human demands. As we search for ways to maintain our existence and protect the natural world, it is important to understand our conceptual basis of thinking. We must search for solutions that bridge the space between human and nature to find a balanced place to coexist. As we strive to correct environmental damages we must seek answers from new perspectives.

Editor: “Can tree farms play a role in re-connecting our society with the importance of nature to our survival?”

Ms. Sorenson is a 2010 Portland State University graduate of Environmental Studies. She is interested in connecting sustainable Agriculture to our changing society. Growing up in Chehalis, WA, she had the opportunity to engage in growing and gathering some of her family's food. This experience shaped her interest in, and willingness to write, on these issues.

Send questions or comments to Jena at rdunning@wafarmforestry.com.

Background & Talking Points For House Bill 1192

BACKGROUND

When the Forest and Fish legislation passed in 1999, small forest landowners cautiously signed on based on a promise for alternate rules for our smaller harvests. After a decade of working in Olympia, we've had some minor successes, but we have not achieved the regulatory intent of the legislation. In fact, some new rules have *increased* the number of our trees that *cannot* be harvested.

The original Forest and Fish legislation included a special law for those of us that have parcels that are 20 acre or less and own not more than 80 total acres. Those that use this special rule for small harvests are not eligible to receive payments from the under-funded Forest Riparian Easement Program (FREP) but can cut more trees. FREP was another major part of the promise to us in Forest and Fish, to partially compensate small forest owners for the disproportionate impact ("Take") by the legislation.

Because this special law (RCW 76.13.130) was considered risky by some, federal and state agencies have been tracking the use of this "20-acre exempt" rule. After ten years of monitoring, the state has confirmed there has been little no cumulative impacts or risks to our streams by the use of this special rule. This monitoring would continue when HB 1192/SB 5783 passes. If, over time, 10% of a watershed is potentially influenced by these small harvests, this rule would be revisited. But so far, after ten years, no watershed has even gotten to 1%!

HB 1192/SB 5783 would simply allow all "smalls" to utilize this rule if they are willing to limit individual harvest units to 20 acres. Anyone choosing to utilize this amended rule would *not* be eligible for the under-funded FREP – potentially

saving the State (taxpayers) millions of dollars annually. Additionally, HB 1192/SB 5783 would require DNR to simplify this rule; eliminate conflicting language that seems to trump the legislative intent and eliminate some quirks that require protections or “shade” for stream segments that are underground or have no summer water.

TALKING POINTS

From A Landowner Perspective, HB 1192/SB 5783 Would:

- Allow more of you to harvest more of your crops, if you limit your harvest units to 20 acres or less.
- Eliminate your eligibility for FREP – you get more logs, rather than a 50-year government contract with payment for half your leave trees.
- Potentially make the harvest rules more understandable by owners (and regulators).
- Increases your chances to actually get to the top of the FREP funding list, by reducing the number of those applying for this mitigation program.

From A Public Resource/Stream Protection Perspective, HB 1192/SB 5783 Would:

- Retain existing monitoring, and revisit the rule if a watershed has 10% potential influence.
- Encourage smaller, low impact harvests.
- Bigger streams have bigger buffers.

From A Washington State Perspective, HB 1192/SB 5783 Would:

- Help honor the state’s regulatory promises to smalls.
- Encourage more folks to keep their land forested.
- Increase forest excise tax revenues to the State and Counties .
- Potentially save the State millions of dollars annually and up to \$1 Billion in FREP obligations over the next 40 years.

We believe this is a win for the taxpayers of Washington, this incentivizes small forest landowners to maintain their forests, protects habitat, and maintains the cool clean water in our streams...all without impacting the existing Forest and Fish establishment.

Contact Us!

Phone: (360) 736-5750

Fax: (360) 736-2704

E-mail: info@wafarmforestry.com

Welcome To Our New WFFA Members!**CLARK**

Terry Cornelius

Gary & Karleen Jergensen

Pamela & Lance Lehto

David & Katherine Welsh

COWLITZ

Johnny & Lisa Hill

Gayle Kiser & Pat Huson

Adam & Breanna Lee

Diane Shuler

Walter Vandeperre

Bob Wright

LEWIS

Stephan & Deidre Dillon

Julie Fogde

Todd Graham

Jim & Dusty Guenther

Barry & Gail Panush

NE WASHINGTON

Dennis & Kathy Frazier

Elaine Preston

Mark Simpson

John Stuart & Carol Mack

OLYMPIC

Jim Messmer - Camp Robbinswold

Gabe & Katy Ryguard

PIERCE

Steve & Tammy Eshom

SOUTH SOUND

Jeff DeGraan

Terry & Dorthie Gregg

Upper Puget Sound

Ken Morrison

WHATCOM

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