

Landowner News

Washington
FARM FORESTRY
ASSOCIATION



“Stewards of the Land for Generations to Come”

November 2007

Message From the President

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

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Public Affairs

Martin Flynn Public Affairs, Inc.

Edited by Martin Flynn Public Affairs, Inc.,
Olympia, Washington.



To paraphrase Charles Dickens, “It is the best of times, it is the worst of times” for small forest landowners. As we head toward a new year, economics continue to pressure small landowners to convert their forests to other uses. In addition, our state’s regulatory structure seems intended to drive small landowners off the landscape. And we still do

not enjoy the kind of timber prices that would make all our hard work seem worthwhile.

But at the same time, thousands of individual landowners are resisting the pressure to convert. They are staying on the land because they are stewards of that land and are dedicated to maintaining active forests. In Olympia, your Farm Forestry Association continues to chip away at burdensome laws and regulations, continuing to build on our successes.

Perhaps best of all, many of our families’ younger generation are stepping forward to take over our family forests. I am convinced that only through the involvement of the new generation of landowners will tree farming survive as a way of life .

I was very encouraged to see the healthy response to our recent dues restructuring survey. It demonstrates to me that we have an active, vibrant association that is ready to meet the challenges of the years ahead. (The results of that survey are inside). Thank you to everyone who took the time to respond with questions, comments and concerns.

Florence and I wish you and yours all the best for the upcoming holidays.

Don Theoe

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Forest Owners Field Days Tremendous Success

Andy Perleberg, WFFA Education Chair

"An Out-in-the-Woods Educational Event" is how Steve Gibbs, the DNR Forest Stewardship program manager describes the Forest Owners Field Day. Indeed, over 700 family forest owners attended either the eastern Washington field day located in sunny Cle Elum, or the west side Hama Hama Field Day in 2007. Landowners could attend up to six of the 24 one-hour lessons taught by recognized experts.

WFFA is a major contributor to the successful execution of this event. WFFA volunteers poured out all types of logistical support, from helping "Sarge" park cars, manning the registration desk and information display, to selling refreshments (a great way to drum up new interest in the association).

Event evaluations show that most people learn about the field day by direct mailings. In eastern Washington, 50% - 90% of the forestland is owned primarily by people who live in the Puget Sound region, those owners specifically targeted for the event. Comments that help the field day team know that they have made a positive influence on the future of Washington's family forests. are "This workshop was right-on for my needs for introduction to appropriate management. It taught me to evaluate my trees in a way I would not have otherwise done. "

Event sponsors and contributors were American Tree Farm System, Society of American Foresters, Family Forest Foundation, Washington Farm Forestry Association, Cascade Land Conservancy, Stihl Northwest; Silvicultural Solutions, Northwest Resource Management, Williamson Consulting, Lusignan Forestry, Loggin' Larin, Kubota, John Deere, Ellensburg High School, North Mason High School, Kittitas Conservation District, Mason County Conservation District, WA Dept. of Agriculture, WA Dept. of Revenue, WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, WA Dept. of Natural Resources, Washington State University - Extension, USDA Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Yakama Tribe. **Thanks to all.**

WFFA Co-Sponsors Tree Farm Program

Tree Farm System Recognizes Stewardship Plans for Certification

Washington Farm Forestry has joined the Washington Forest Protection Association as a co-sponsor of the Washington Tree Farm Program, an affiliate of the American Tree Farm System (ATFS).

The American Tree Farm Program is a certification program and is mutually recognized by the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) certification program. Now, large forest landowners typically are certified by SFI, while the non-industrial tree farmers use the ATFS.

The ATFS is also known for its National Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year award. Washington State tree farmers have received this national award twice in recent years. Tom and Sherry Fox of Ethel were the 2005 winners and Bob and Lynette Falkner of Frances were the 2003 winners. Bob Playfair, the 2006 Washington State Tree Farmer of the Year was named the Western Regional Tree Farmer of the Year for 2007.

In addition, the Department of Natural Resources and the ATFS have announced that ATFS certification universally recognizes DNR-approved multi-resource Forest Stewardship Plans as meeting management planning requirements for family forest landowners.

Bob Simpson, Senior Vice President, American Forest Foundation said the recognition will open the door for thousands of Washington's family forest owners seeking affordable certification of their forest management.

If you would like your tree farm to be certified by the Washington Tree Farm Program, call (360) 736-5750 or e-mail treefarm@wafarmforestry.com

Bob Playfair and Thelma Fry 2007 Western Regional Outstanding Tree Farmers of the Year

The American Tree Farm System (ATFS), a program of the American Forest Foundation, has named Bob Playfair and Thelma Fry of Stevens County as the 2007 Western Regional Outstanding Tree Farmers of the Year. Playfair and Fry received their award during the National Tree Farmer Convention held in Madison, Wis. This annual ATFS award recognizes outstanding sustainable forest management on privately owned forestland.

The story of the Rafter-Seven Ranch began generations ago when Ben Lunan and Gertrude Hull Playfair, Bob and Thelma's grandparents, acquired 160 acres of cutover timberland just east of Chewelah, Wash. in 1910. Additional acreage was added by subsequent generations and grew into the 2,817 acres of the Rafter-Seven Ranch, Inc. of today.

Over the years, Rafter-Seven Ranch has grown from a farming homestead into a comprehensive wood utilization operation which encompasses over 3,000 acres of timber and 260 acres of farmland that includes 80 acres of the original 1910 homestead.

The sixth generation of Playfair descendents are also dedicated to the ongoing education of their children, grandchildren and family members, as



Thelma Fry and Bob Playfair receive 2007 Western Regional Outstanding Tree Farmers of the Year from Bob Simpson, Senior Vice President, American Forest Foundation.

well as the public, about the natural environment and the important role of family-owned tree farms. Bob Playfair has traveled throughout the country to teach and lecture about the life of a tree farmer and the essential need to maintain the health of the nation's forests. He lectures forestry professionals, legislators, landowners and students from elementary through college on timber management; plant and animal identification; and the natural history of northeast Washington State. Both Bob and Thelma are committed to the continual education of lawmakers regarding the importance of tree farming, timber management and timber harvesting as well as wildlife preservation in Washington State.

New WFFA Staff Member



Erica Norquist

The WFFA has hired Erica Norquist as our new Information and Organization Officer (IOO) for the association.

Erica was most recently employed at Century 21 Realtors, managing the appointments and office for a staff of 30. Erica has worked as a Legislative Assistant, Senior Secretary, and Receptionist and in Bookkeeping. Erica received a BA degree in Biology at the University of Puget Sound and is involved in her local PTA, Church, Youth Soccer, Animal Shelter and other volunteer efforts. Erica and her family live in the Chehalis area.

As Information and Organization Officer for the WFFA, Erica will manage the office and become involved in the operations of the association. She will bring support to our record keeping, membership, patron program, and communications. She will become the 'go to person' for those wishing to contact the WFFA and can be reached at (360) 736-5750 or by email at info@wafarmforestry.com.

We are excited for the potential growth of the WFFA with Erica's appointment and we look forward to having her on the staff and our team.

The Washington Forest Dataset Project

By Steve Stinson, Executive Director
Family Forest Foundation

In 2005, the representatives of the Washington Farm Forestry Association and the Family Forest Foundation approached Senator Patty Murray and Congressman Norm Dicks with a funding request to develop a state wide forest dataset from which a small forest landowner component could be extracted. The congressional representatives directed funding for the request and in 2006 the development of the Washington State Forest Dataset began.

The University of Washington, Washington Farm Forestry Association and the Family Forest Foundation are creating a seamless statewide parcel-based database. The dataset will allow a better understand of the quantity, spatial distribution, demographics, and economics associated with Washington State's forest landowners. It will further the understanding of statewide land use issues by spatially locating specific land uses and the relationship of those lands to other geographic features.

It is estimated that there are between 22 thousand (1.6 million acres) and 96 thousand (4.2 million acres) family forest landowners in Washington State. These ownerships are disproportionately vulnerable to impacts that can result from "broad brush" or "one-size-fits-all" regulatory approaches due to their small scale and location. Family forests also face challenges in restricted markets and pressure to convert to, often more profitable, non-forest land uses. When these lands are converted, the public values they provide such as clean air and water, fish and wildlife habitat, biodiversity, flood control, carbon sequestration and contributions to local cultures and economies are lost forever.

The Washington State Forest Database project will set the foundation for analysis of the family forest demographic through the development of an interactive spatial database of all small private forest ownerships within the State. Such a dataset will facilitate the assessment of family forest impacts on local and state economies and provide information on potential challenges and opportunities that family forest owners face in marketing their forest products and environmental services.

In the past few years, most of Washington State's 39 counties have acquired software for managing spatial information known as Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and are choosing to manage their counties parcel data in a GIS. With this proliferation of GIS-based parcel data, a new opportunity exists to create a seamless statewide parcel database to look at statewide land use issues that will

improve tremendously upon the 2001 data base project. However, many challenges remain. Each county stores their GIS data in a unique way, across myriad data storage

formats and with diverse sets of land use classifications and other attributes. This is a difficult but worthy task the success of which could influence future viability of family forests in Washington State. Without accurate information it is difficult to craft policy that supports the continued well being of our working forest landscape.

Data collection is currently underway. Also in development are the various definitions (industrial, family, working and small forest landowners) that can be extracted from the completed dataset. It is anticipated that a complete draft of the dataset will be completed in the spring of 2008.



Steve Stinson (center) with former National Tree Farmers of the Year Bob and Lynette Falkner

WFFA to Pursue Legislation on Riparian Easements

Legislation that would allow the value of timber on unstable slopes to be included in forest riparian easements (FREs) will be pursued in the 2008 session of the Legislature. The measure would also require DNR to determine the amount of compensation due to a small landowner applying for a FRE within a set number of days of a completed application. The new law would allow owners of 20 acres or less to become eligible for FRE compensation if they agree to abide by Forests and Fish rules. Finally, it would allow the state to pay for the cost of hiring a geotechnologist or other professional required to complete prerequisite studies or reports as part of an FRE.

15-Year Permits Authorized

The state Forest Practices Board has adopted a rule authorizing use of long-term forest practices applications by small landowners.

The board says the new rule will protect public resources while giving these landowners more flexibility in timing timber harvesting, road building and maintenance, and most other forest practices for up to 15 years.

The long-term applications should help encourage landowners to continue practicing forestry instead of converting their lands to other uses.

The process to submit a Long-Term Application (LTA) is significantly different than submitting the standard Forest Practices Application. DNR plans to partner with Washington Farm Forestry Association (WFFA) to present information on LTAs at several sites around the state. During the week of December 3-7, DNR will present information to consulting foresters in Spokane, Chehalis, and Everett. In January and February, DNR will work with local WFFA chapters to present information to small forest landowners in several areas. Watch for specific announcements to come regarding meetings in the following areas: Woodland, Aberdeen, Chehalis (Jan. 15), Mt. Vernon, Chewelah, Okanogan County, and Dayton.

WFFA Membership Dues Restructure

For the past year, a restructuring of the WFFA dues has been under discussion by the WFFA Executive Committee, the Executive Board, at chapter meetings and at the Annual Meeting in April. The need was to bring in greater revenue in order to continue the current level of association activity and maintain the WFFA office, without dipping into our reserves. But we also want to keep the dues affordable for small landowners who may be years away from making a dime of profit from their forest. The most acceptable way to do this was to ask members who own more forest land to pay higher dues. Most other similar organizations use this structure, and it makes a lot of sense since owners of larger parcels usually have more frequent harvests and are more likely to benefit more from the legislative and regulatory efforts of WFFA. Many large landowners already gave more than the minimum amount. Although it is was not required by the bylaws, a proposal for restructuring was sent to the entire membership by ballot, rather than letting a minority of the membership make the decision at the Annual Meeting. With 40% of members voting (about the same as the recent statewide election) the membership of the Washington Farm Forestry Association voted to raise and restructure their membership dues with 72% in favor and 28% against. This change will be reflected in the 2008 membership invoices to be mailed on December 1, 2007. Thanks for your votes and comments.

Forest Facts and Figures

The newest, updated edition of the publication, Forest Facts & Figures, is available online at www.wfpa.org. This 17-page, easy-to-read booklet contains interesting facts and figures about the forest products industry in Washington State. (If you want hard copies of Forest Facts & Figures, please email your request to mdavis@wfpa.org or call 360-352-1500).

Welcome New WFFA Members!

COWLITZ

Tom & Myrna Stecker

KITTITAS

Lynn & Russ Dahmen
John & Yolanda Randlett
Dan Simnioniw & Reidun Loren
Paul & Lynnea Thibodaux

LEWIS

Brenda Boardman
Richard Decker & Olivia Stone
Mark England
Randy & Alanna Harris
Patty Vance

NE WASHINGTON

Michael & Candace Pernsteiner

OLYMPIC

Dick Alescio & Vivian
Chesterley
Sheila Bayard
Christopher & Jonette Eades
Herman Nelson
John & Sue Sampson

PACIFIC

Larry & Mary Doubek
John Karnas
Victor Niemczek
Jim Olsen
Mike & Donna Turner

SOUTH SOUND

Mike Gaffney
John MacRae
Morris & Jackie Morton

SPOKANE

Jeremy & Lexine Eaton

UPS

Christian & Patricia Melgard

WHATCOM

Cheri McKay

From the Executive Director's Desk



I recently stopped by the Office of the Secretary of State in Olympia and picked up a copy of the Washington Farm Forestry Articles of Incorporation. Signed in 1953, the articles declared that the purpose of our non-profit corporation was four-fold:

1. *Providing for a medium for exchange of ideas on farm forestry between the farmers and public and private agencies.*
2. *Providing demonstrations to illustrate value of forestry in farm economy.*
3. *Providing opportunities to observe the importance of farm forest products in industry.*
4. *Making recommendations for adequate legislative, research and action programs.*

When I consider the many life altering changes that have taken place in our lives over those last 54 years, (television, computers, opportunities, anyone?) I am amazed that the WFFA purpose is still so pertinent. It allows me to admire the founders of the WFFA for starting an association that continues today to be relevant and needed in light of our growing population and the advancement (?) of our society.

As you consider your commitment to our association next month when our dues invoices are mailed out, please take a moment to reflect on what our state would be like without an association like ours. And please take a moment to thank yourselves, and all of those who have supported our purpose over those last 54 years, by doing your best to protect the liberty for others and provide the public with the values that come from tree farming.

And as we head into the holiday season consider taking a moment to provide the other value to society that our membership has come to represent. Take a moment to give thanks for what we have been blessed with here in Washington and to reach a hand across the fence to a neighbor. Like planting trees, planting seeds of hope and friendship, will carry over for our "generations to come".

Treefully,
Rick Dunning

Washington Farm Forestry Membership Application

Name _____

If this is a family membership:

Spouse's Name _____

Address _____

Local Chapter _____

City, State and Zip _____

Telephone (_____) _____

E-Mail Address _____

Dues Level (Please check One)

- General 1-40 acres \$65
 General 41-200 acres \$125
 General 201 and up \$175
 Lifetime \$1700 (onetime payment)
 Associate \$65 (non-land owning)
 Additional Chapter(s) @ \$10

Name of Additional Chapter(s) _____

Additional Voluntary Contribution to Support WFFA .
Amount \$ _____

Please cut off this form and mail with a check made payable to "WFFA" to:

Washington Farm Forestry Association
P.O. Box 1010
Chehalis, WA 98532

Please use this form to encourage new members to join.
Current members are invoiced annually in December.