

# THE FOREST STEWARDS' VOICE

*The Newsletter of Oklahoma's Forest Stewardship Program*



**Conserving,  
enhancing and  
protecting the forest  
resources of  
Oklahoma for present  
and future  
generations**



## INSIDE

- ⇒ A Message from Your State Forester
- ⇒ For Your Information
- ⇒ Featured Forest Stewardship Landowners
- ⇒ Tree Planting Time
- ⇒ Upcoming Events

## Forestry Issues in Oklahoma

### Logging Roads and Permits

Forest landowners, foresters and forest industry are watching intently as EPA and the U.S. Supreme Court consider whether Clean Water Act permits will someday be needed for constructing and maintaining logging roads on their property. EPA's long-standing "silvicultural rule" made logging roads exempt from permits, provided they were used primarily for timber harvesting and forest management activities. This rule was overturned by a 2011 decision by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals that stated "stormwater runoff from logging roads that is collected by and then discharged from a system of ditches, culverts and channels is industrial activity and therefore a point source discharge that requires a permit from EPA."



Action to restore EPA's approach to rely on state-level forestry best management practices (BMPs) to control forest road runoff is advancing on three fronts.

- 1) The Supreme Court accepted an appeal of the Ninth Circuit's ruling and heard oral arguments in December 2012 and additional briefs in January 2013.
- 2) In Congress, a fix was included in the *Silviculture Regulatory Consistency Act* that was introduced in both houses in 2011. However, legislation is stalled in committee and the language would probably have to be attached to a larger bill, such as the Farm Bill, to become law.
- 3) On November 30, 2012 EPA published a rule to clarify that discharges from logging roads are not associated with industrial activity and therefore do not require a NPDES permit. Although EPA's approach is an attempt to restore reliance on BMPs, a lawsuit was filed in early January 2013 by the Northwest Environmental Defense Center, also in the Ninth Circuit Court, that challenges this rule. Unfortunately, if the Circuit Court rules against EPA, the decision will apply nationwide and another round of costly litigation for forest owners is likely.

**In summary**, landowners do not currently need Section 404 permits for logging roads but they should stay tuned for the ruling by the Supreme Court in the Spring of 2013 and actions pending in Congress. *For more information on OFS Water Quality Programs go to [www.forestry.ok.gov/waterqualitybmp](http://www.forestry.ok.gov/waterqualitybmp).*

### **Message from your Forest Stewardship Program Coordinator:**

I am excited to release the first issue of the Forest Stewards' Voice and hope this biennial newsletter will provide useful, timely and interesting forestry related information happening in Oklahoma or nationally that may impact you. As you may already know, Oklahoma's forests and woodlands are 90% privately owned which means active management by private landowners is essential to their care and health.

The Forest Stewardship Program offers technical assistance and professional services to private landowners, like you, so that you can manage your forestlands and achieve all of the benefits they can provide.

Oklahoma's forests provide so much to Oklahomans and that is why all of us at Oklahoma Forestry Services are committed to help private landowners get the tools and resources they need to manage and plan for the future of their forests and woodlands.

I hope you enjoy the first issue of the Forest Stewards' Voice. If you have any thoughts on what you might like to see or get out of this newsletter, please feel free to contact me at [erin.johnson@ag.ok.gov](mailto:erin.johnson@ag.ok.gov) or 405-522-8888.

## A Message from the State Forester



There are 10 million acres of forests and woodlands in Oklahoma. This represents almost 20 percent of our state. These numbers surprise so many Oklahomans. To put this into perspective 10 million acres is the combined size of the states of New Jersey, Connecticut, Delaware and Rhode Island. Turns out that our prairie state is a forest too!

While over 90 percent of these forests are privately owned, all Oklahomans benefit from them. We breathe the oxygen they produce, drink the water they cleanse, enjoy the wildlife they attract, and use the products derived from their harvest. These are benefits we cannot take for granted because the very forests and woodlands that provide them are threatened by the impacts of careless development, wildfire, insects and disease.

Oklahoma Forestry Services is the state's leading agency in the conservation, management, and protection of our forest resources. Our foresters assist landowners in all 77 counties to conserve and improve these working landscapes. But it is a partnership with you the landowner and citizen of our state. It is every Oklahoman's responsibility to care for our forests. So whether you have five acres or five thousand acres, we are here to help and serve you.

**George L. Geissler, CF**  
**Director, Oklahoma Forestry Services**

### Get Involved with Oklahoma's forestry community,

#### Be Heard!

#### Join an Association Today!

##### Oklahoma Forestry Association

Dues: \$25/year

Dan Lewia, President  
 580-298-7672

##### Oklahoma Woodland Owners Association

Dues: \$25/year

Craig McKinley,  
 President  
 405-744-8065

##### Forest Heritage Association

Dues: \$25, \$100 or  
 \$500/year

Forest Heritage  
 Center  
 580-494-6497

### FOR YOUR INFORMATION...

- **Tax time is upon us.** The USFS Southern Research Station released a new tax publication available to landowners, *Tax Tips for Forest Landowners for the 2012 Tax Year*. For more information visit [www.forestry.ok.gov/forest-taxation](http://www.forestry.ok.gov/forest-taxation).
- **Call Before You Cut!!!** Whatever your reason for harvesting, it is always a good decision to contact a professional forester before selling your timber. For more information, contact your local forester at 405-522-6158 ([www.forestry.ok.gov/county-contacts](http://www.forestry.ok.gov/county-contacts)).
- **New Presidents for Forestry Associations:** The Oklahoma Forestry Association ([oklahomaforestry.org](http://oklahomaforestry.org)) elected Dan Lewia as President and the Oklahoma Woodland Owners Association selected Dr. Craig McKinley as President. Congratulations to both and thank you for the important role you play in our Forestry Community.
- **"Don't Move Firewood" Campaign.** Oklahoma Forestry Services encourages everyone to support this public outreach effort. Oklahoma's forests are at risk to invading pest species whenever anyone moves firewood from an infected area into the state. A good example is bringing in ash firewood from areas as close as Missouri that are currently affected by the Emerald Ash Borer. Introducing hitchhiking EAB on ash wood could have devastating effects on Oklahoma's green and white ash populations, in rural as well as in urban areas. Instead of bringing your own firewood to camp or to the park, cut or buy it locally. For more information visit, [www.dontmovefirewood.org](http://www.dontmovefirewood.org).
- **Youth Forestry Camp.** Oklahoma Forestry Services is hosting the 57<sup>th</sup> annual Youth Forestry and Wildlife Camp, held June 3-8, 2013 at Beavers Bend State Park. The camp involves many cooperators and sponsors from the forestry and wildlife community. The 2012 camp was at capacity, with 54 campers ranging in age from 13 to 15, plus youth counselors, adult leaders and program staff. This program is a major undertaking each year, but its impact on these young people is significant and well worth everyone's continued support. So sign your kids up today. For more information contact Jeri Irby, Forestry Education Coordinator at 405-522-6158 or visit [www.forestry.ok.gov/forestrycamp!](http://www.forestry.ok.gov/forestrycamp!)



## Featured Forest Stewardship Landowners in 2012



Congratulations to David and Sharon Grantz of Watson, OK (pictured left). OFS District Forester Caleb Fields presented the 2012 Tree Farmer of the Year award to these deserving landowners on October 11, 2012 in Hugo, OK at the Oklahoma Forestry Association's annual meeting.

Congratulations to Bill and Pat McDonald of Tucker, OK (pictured right). District Forester Craig Marquardt recently recognized them as Forest Stewards for the time and sweat they endured while implementing forestry practices on their property.



**Oklahoma Forestry Services appreciates all the hard work forest landowners put into caring for Oklahoma's forests. Thank you!**

**The Best Time to Plant a Tree was 20 years ago. The Next Best Time is Today!**

**Forest Regeneration Center.** Tree planting season is December 15-March. Our State Nursery is selling out of a number of different tree species. If you haven't placed your order yet, you should contact us at 405-288-2385 or order online at [www.forestry.ok.gov/order-seedlings](http://www.forestry.ok.gov/order-seedlings).

**Oklahoma Helps Reforest Bastrop State Park.** On the heels of a massive wildfire that swept across 34,000 acres in Bastrop County Texas leaving over 1.5 million trees charred, the Texas Forest Service has undertaken the daunting task of reforesting the area. Not a simple task when the unique ecosystem was home to the "Lost Pines," Loblolly pines that had adapted to survive the hot, dry conditions of Central Texas.

Once they had surveyed the damage from the fire that consumed over 1,600 homes and killed two people, Texas began looking at recovery. The Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS) and Texas Parks & Wildlife sprang into action to undertake the huge task of reforesting the charred landscape. The silver lining in the situation proved to be the fateful decision of one TFS employee to delay destroying stored seeds that would prove important in the recovery of the Lost Pines ecosystem. That is where Oklahoma Forestry Services enters the partnership.

Since 1951, seed from these unique native Texas trees had been used as a part of the Western Gulf Tree Improvement Program, a genetics cooperative in which both TFS and OFS participate. Demand for the species had dropped and, just before the wildfires hit, the remaining 1100 pounds of seed were scheduled to be destroyed. Just weeks before the September fires, Tom Byram, TFS geneticist, put it on his list to get rid of the seeds. As luck would have it, he didn't make it to that part of his list before the wildfires began.

"After the fires, the seed was shipped to three nurseries, including our Forest Regeneration Center in Goldsby," said George Geissler, Oklahoma State Forester. "Our staff planted the seed and delivered the first shipment of seedlings from our nursery to Bastrop in December 2012. The remaining seedlings were harvested and the Texas Forest Service picked them up in January 2013."

This is not where the story ends and much work is still to be done. The TFS website is full of pages designed to assist landowners in replanting their property with trees that will survive the tough environmental conditions. On a page titled "Get Help After the Fire" they are educating citizens about the variety of issues that loss of forest can lead to; preventing soil erosion after the fire, controlling brush after the fire, managing wildlife after the fire as well as other issues. Citizens who lived in this forest that had always been there are now part of the army rebuilding their landscape.

"We are glad our nursery was called to assist to grow the seedlings to help with the effort," said Scott Huff, OFS Nursery Manager. "Neighbor helping neighbor."

**Recognized Forest Stewards since January 2012**

Vincent Raymond  
Kelly and David Kemp  
Bill Ballard  
Ross Wilson  
Eddie Davis  
Fred Ettner  
Bill and Pat McDonald  
Cecil Ollar  
Jeanine Martel and  
Bridget Gilbert

**Thank you for caring for Oklahoma's forests!!**



**DID YOU KNOW?**

*The OFS Forest Regeneration Center grows over 30 different tree and shrub species*

*Order your trees today!!*



[www.forestry.ok.gov](http://www.forestry.ok.gov)

Oklahoma Forestry Services  
P.O. Box 528804  
Oklahoma City, OK 73152-9913

Visit us online at [www.forestry.ok.gov](http://www.forestry.ok.gov)



## The Forest Stewards' Voice

### Editor:

Erin Johnson, Staff Forester, OFS

### Editorial Committee:

Kurt Atkinson, Assistant Director, OFS  
Craig Marquardt, District Forester, OFS

Distribution of this newsletter is provided free of charge to forest stewardship landowners, professional foresters, state and federal agency professionals, state senators and representatives, various forestry-related associations, and others.

PLEASE ADVISE US IF YOU WISH YOUR NAME REMOVED FROM OUR MAILING LIST

This newsletter is also available on the web at [www.forestry.ok.gov/stewardsvoice](http://www.forestry.ok.gov/stewardsvoice).

1500 copies of this form were printed by Heritage Integrated Resources at a cost of \$953.19, as authorized by James Reese, Commissioner of Agriculture. Copies have been deposited with the Publications Clearinghouse of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries. February 2013.

## Upcoming Events

- *March 8, 2013, Seedling Truck Sales Begin*
- *March 18, 2013, 78th Anniversary of Planting the First Shelterbelt (Part of Federal Program in response to Dust Bowl) near Mangum, OK*
- *March 19-20, 2013, Riparian Vegetation Workshop, Tahlequah Municipal Armory. Hosted by NRCS, OSU and OCC*
- *March 24-30, 2013, Oklahoma Arbor Week*
- *April 6, 2013, Oklahoma Forestry Services 88th Birthday*
- *April 24-27, 2013, Forestry on the Grow Conference, Texarkana, TX*
- *May 18, 2013, Eastern Redcedar Landowner Workshop, Oklahoma State University. Stillwater, OK*
- *May 21-23, 2013, Southern Plains Windbreak Renovation and Innovation Workshop. Dodge City, KS*
- *June 3-8, 2013, Forestry Youth Camp, Beavers Bend State Park.*

***Do you know of an event which should be listed here? Contact us!***

"In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer"