



# 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*



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## Forestry Impacts in Oklahoma

### NEW DATA: Oklahoma's Forest Inventory and Analysis Statistics.

The U.S. Forest Service Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) Program provides information needed to assess America's forests. The program also projects how forests are likely to appear 10 to 50 years from now which enables us to evaluate whether current forest management practices are sustainable in the long run and to assess whether current policies will allow the next generation to enjoy the forests as we do today. Oklahoma Forestry Services has five FIA foresters, one coordinator and two 2 person crews that conduct the inventory statewide. Eastern Oklahoma has been inventoried since 1936. Central and Western Oklahoma has been inventoried since 2008 and still has about 5 more years of plots to complete a full inventory cycle. The Forest Inventory and Analysis Program reported the following statewide statistics on Oklahoma's forestlands as of 2011.

- ⇒ Acres of Forestland – 12.65 million acres (about 28% of state), with 5.8 million acres in eastern Oklahoma and 6.84 million in Central and Western Oklahoma
- ⇒ Total Timber Volume – 9.58 billion cubic feet, with 54% on eastern Oklahoma timberland
- ⇒ Net Growth and Removals (million cubic feet)

	<u>Growth</u>	<u>Removals</u>
Softwood	81.2	76.1
Hardwood	86.3	60.3

For more detailed information visit [www.fia.fs.fed.us/](http://www.fia.fs.fed.us/) or contact the Oklahoma Forest Inventory and Analysis Coordinator, Carri Abner at 918-290-9208 or [carri.abner@ag.ok.gov](mailto:carri.abner@ag.ok.gov).

### Forestry's Economic Impact in Oklahoma.

A 2013 study by Forest2Market, Inc., a consulting firm based in Charlotte, North Carolina, documented the economic impact of private and public forestlands in each state. The study was conducted on behalf of the National Alliance of Forest Owners (NAFO). Here are a few of the reported statistics for all timberland in Oklahoma:

- ⇒ Direct, Indirect and Induced Jobs: 20,085 (about 10% fewer than in 2010)
- ⇒ Direct, Indirect, and Induced Payroll: \$755,240,308
- ⇒ Total Timber Sales and Value of Manufacturing Shipments: \$2,891,886,941
- ⇒ Economic Impact – Total Contribution to GDP: \$1,037,000,000

### Congressman Frank Lucas Forestry Tour.

Oklahoma Forestry Services was privileged to host Congressman Frank Lucas for a forestry reception and tour in the Broken Bow area, August 27-28, 2013. Accompanying Representative Lucas were two of his staff plus a local representative of Congressman Mark Wayne Mullin's office. The tour began on August 27 with an evening reception and nearly 40 members of the local forestry community attended. On the 28<sup>th</sup>, the forestry tour included stops at Carter Mountain fire tower; discussions in the woods about private forest landowners issues with David Grantz and three generations of the Bohlmann family from Houston; the Broken Bow Forestry office where we reviewed fire issues and equipment; lunch and a tour of the Forest Heritage Center; and a visit to an area near Hochatown where recreational cabins are being built in the middle of pine plantations. As Chair of the House Agriculture Committee, Congressman Lucas will lead the writing of a new Farm Bill, which is relevant because this bill includes authorities and funding guidance for the core cooperative forestry programs delivered by the state foresters in partnership with the Forest Service and other agencies.

### Message from your Forest Stewardship Program Coordinator:

I hope you enjoy this issue of the Forest Stewards' Voice. If you have any thoughts on what you might like to see or get out of this newsletter in the future, 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 Your State Forester



A great portion of Oklahoma's rural character is maintained because of our forests. The management of working forests for multiple objectives and goals is critically important to the environmental, economic, and social well-being of our state. Our forests and woodlands provide jobs, forest products, wildlife habitat, clean water and air, recreation, tourism opportunities, and an overall higher quality of life to our citizens and visitors. Oklahoma's forests and woodlands will play an even bigger role in the future, as we face challenges such as continued development pressure, climate change, and renewable-energy development.

As you will read in this issue, through the Forest Inventory and Analysis program we are learning more about our forests and their potential to further contribute to the state's economic growth and well-being. I ask all of Oklahoma's forest landowners to voice your opinion and contribute to determining the future of forests and woodlands in our state. For all of us the number one forest management goal is keeping forests as forests.

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

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

### 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  
 405-747-9471

##### Forest Heritage Association

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

Doug Zook  
 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 2013 Tax Year*. For more information visit [www.forestry.ok.gov/forest-taxation](http://www.forestry.ok.gov/forest-taxation).
- **Prescribed Burn Program.** Oklahoma Forestry Services encourages the use of prescribed burning where it is consistent with good forest resource management principles and practices. OFS currently offers the following services on a fee basis to individuals and communities East of I-35 with an approved forest management plan: fireline construction, full service prescribed burning (turn-key) and Wildland Urban Interface hazard mitigation burning. For more information, visit [www.forestry.ok.gov/rxfire-ofs-assistance](http://www.forestry.ok.gov/rxfire-ofs-assistance).
- **Forest Health.** "At its core, APHIS' mission is protecting animal and plant health in the United States," said Acting APHIS Administrator Kevin Shea. "It's a huge job, and APHIS needs the help of the public to be successful."

Devastating invasive pests and diseases often hitch rides on things people move and pack: passenger baggage; plants and plant parts like fruit, vegetables, and wood; firewood; and outdoor gear, among many others. Fortunately, once people are aware of these risks, they can easily prevent the spread of hungry pests. For more information visit [www.HungryPests.com](http://www.HungryPests.com), which has information in English and Spanish. The Web site's "What You Can Do" section offers "Seven Ways to Leave Hungry Pests Behind." By using Facebook and Twitter links, you can engage with the issue on social media.

- **Cost-share opportunities.** The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service is now accepting applications for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (Deadline: February 21, 2014). For more information, please contact your local forester at 405-522-6158 ([www.forestry.ok.gov/county-contacts](http://www.forestry.ok.gov/county-contacts)).
- **Forest Fast Breaks.** Oregon Forest Resources Institute produced some fantastic short videos that simplify complex forestry topics into concise, engaging animated clips worth watching. Check out these videos at [www.forestinfo.org/Forest\\_Fast\\_Breaks](http://www.forestinfo.org/Forest_Fast_Breaks).
- **OSU Extension Forester.** OSU Natural Resource Ecology and Management's forestry program has undergone numerous changes in recent years and faculty retirements have raised questions about the future of the program. Dr. Craig McKinley retired June 2013 and his vacancy has not been filled. The loss of this position, regardless of whether it is short-term or long-term, severely limits the ability of OSU and other agencies to provide forestry information and outreach to forest landowners in the state. If you want to have a say and help stress the importance of hiring an Extension Forester at OSU, please contact Dr. Keith Owens, NREM Dept. Head or Dr. Mike Woods, Interim DASNR VP, Dean and Director at 405-744-5438.

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

### Time to Order Seedlings.

Seedling order forms are now available from Oklahoma Forestry Services. The State's forest regeneration program has provided quality tree seedlings for planting by Oklahoma landowners since the mid-1920s. Now is the time to order trees and shrubs for planting this winter. More than 30 species are available for conservation projects like wildlife habitat, windbreaks, erosion control, timber production, land reclamation and similar activities. Orders for up to 1,000 trees can now be ordered online through the Forestry Store at [www.forestry.ok.gov](http://www.forestry.ok.gov). You can also request order forms from any State Forestry, Conservation District, Farm Services Agency or Extension Service office. Forestry Services encourages early ordering as some species may sell out early this year because of the replanting needs resulting from recent drought.

### Shortleaf Pine: a Species Slipping Away?

Both shortleaf and loblolly pine are native to the southeastern United States, where the two species have coexisted and occasionally hybridized for millennia. Historically, hybrids were rare. In the 1950s hybrids made up just 3 percent of the pines in shortleaf stands, but since then their numbers have skyrocketed. Today, just two or so generations later, shortleaf stands contain on average 45 percent hybrids.

Scientists from the U.S. Forest Service and Oklahoma State University recently collaborated to review decades of research about the causes and implications of shortleaf-loblolly hybridization. University researchers Charles Tauer, John Stewart, Rodney Will and Curtis Lilly led the study, which was partially funded by the Forest Service Southern Research Station. James M. Guldin and C. Dana Nelson, Forest Service scientists, also contributed to the paper, which was published in *The Journal of Forestry*.

The researchers found that hybridization is threatening both species, but especially shortleaf pine. When hybrid offspring reproduce with their parents over generations, the genetic makeup of naturally regenerating pine forests is altered. This can cause the genetic identity of one or both original species to change. Hybrids may look similar to a parental species, and under some environmental conditions may thrive, but they may also compromise the unique ecological attributes that allowed the parental species to survive. In essence, hybridization averages the traits of the parent species in the hybrid progeny, which means some of the genetic uniqueness of the parent species is lost across generations.

For example, shortleaf-loblolly pine hybrids may not be as tolerant of fire as pure shortleaf pines. Shortleaf pine seedlings have a crooked root collar that grows below ground and protects dormant buds from fire, enabling young trees to re-sprout even if the top part is killed. Loblolly pine seedlings, which are vulnerable to fire, do not have this crook at all whereas hybrids have inconspicuous crooks, and most are not able to re-sprout after fire like pure shortleaf.

On the other hand, loblolly has more rapid early growth rates than shortleaf, as do hybrids. Loblolly pine's fast growth and versatility have made it the backbone of the South's timber industry since the 1930s and the focus of southern pine tree improvement programs for over 50 years. Loblolly pine has been intensively managed and widely planted, and is now far more common than shortleaf pine. There was a time when shortleaf pine was actually more abundant than loblolly pine, but those days have gone. By some estimates, the acreage of shortleaf pine in southern forests fell by more than 40 percent in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The shrinking shortleaf population may have already lost genetic diversity, making further study of genetic diversity and population structure an urgent priority.

Fortunately, managers who want to maintain the original genetics of shortleaf pine have several options. Prescribed fire can reconnect isolated shortleaf pine stands, increase regeneration success, and under certain conditions kill young shortleaf-loblolly pine hybrids. Additionally, a distance of just a few miles between shortleaf pine stands and loblolly stands or plantations can drastically lower hybridization. "Shortleaf pine is a species worth protecting," says Guldin. "It's a beautiful native tree, and we anticipate that it will be more resistant and resilient than loblolly pine under the hot, dry weather that tomorrow's climate may bring us." —Sarah Farmer, *Science Delivery Group*

*Note: Eastern Oklahoma has over 5 million acres of forestland and of that 31% is in oak-pine or loblolly-shortleaf pine forest type groups which means over 1 million acres of forestland in Oklahoma contains some shortleaf pine.*

### Recognized Forest Stewards

*Bob and Jan Keith  
Bobby Bowman  
Dewey Shoup  
Raymond Wilson  
M.C. Ollar  
Francis A. Grant and  
John Williams  
Bill Ballard  
Kelly and David Kemp  
Ken and Lois Stern  
L.V. and Patricia Baker*

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



*Shortleaf Pine-Bluestem at Pushmataha Wildlife Management Area, OK*

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

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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).

1200 copies of this form were printed by Heritage, The Integrated Resource at a cost of \$668.00, as authorized by James Reese, Commissioner of Agriculture. Copies have been deposited with the Publications Clearinghouse of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries. January 2014.

### Upcoming Events

- **February 21, 2014—NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program sign-up deadline. Contact your local forester for more details, [www.forestry.ok.gov/county-contacts](http://www.forestry.ok.gov/county-contacts)**
- **March 23-29, 2014—Arbor Week**
- **April 23-26, 2014 Four-State Forestry on the Grow Conference, Texarkana, TX. For more information visit [www.4stateforestryonthegrow.org](http://www.4stateforestryonthegrow.org).**

***Do you want to list an event here in the future? Contact us!***

### 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)



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