



TREE FARM NEWS

NC TREE FARM RE-ORGANIZES EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND STRUCTURE

The North Carolina Tree Farm program may date back to the 1940's, but the program's recent resurgence came back in 2000 when the American Tree Farm System sought to revitalize the program in the state.

A brave few, namely Al Weller and Dave Woodmansee, answered the call and began recruiting Tree Farmers that would be interested in helping rebuild a program that once boasted over 5,000 Tree Farmers. The structure put in place achieved this goal as evidenced by the health of the current program in terms of outreach events and participation in various state and private committees and programs.



Before Jim Long was battling gnats during the field tour of the Blue Farm, he was putting the finishing touches on the restructuring of the NC Tree Farm program.

However, to sustain the program in the long run, the current executive committee believed that a structural change in the committee would strengthen North Carolina's program.

"We believe that we need to groom future leaders of this program," stated current Chair Bill Berry. "We want this group to be driven by landowners, and we needed to come up with a structure that would encourage landowners to become active participants in the workings of their organization."

Tree Farmer Jim Long accepted the challenge of reviewing the program's by-laws and making a formal proposal to change the structure of the program in terms of the amount of officers and their respective roles. Long and his committee were also asked to review the structure of the existing executive committee, and see if there needed to be any changes with that structure.

Long's proposal was presented during the business meeting of the annual meeting and was unanimously approved by both the existing executive committee and the general membership in attendance.

The new structure is led by a chair, who is supported by a past-chair and a chair-elect. After some arm twisting, the new chair for 2011 is Ed Listerman, a Tree Farmer and forester, and Jim Long as agreed to be the chair-elect. Outgoing chair, Bill Berry, assumes the past-chair position. These chair positions are all one-year terms.

Three vice chairs assume the top operations of the North Carolina Tree Farm program. The vice chairs are two year terms as well.

There is a vice chair that oversees the certification and inspection process. Bryan Hulka of Weyerhaeuser has accepted this position and will work directly with Al Weller who handles the inspection process in North Carolina.

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TREE FARM'S ANNUAL MEETING IN PINEHURST IS WELL ATTENDED



The NC Tree Farm Annual Meeting starts with a welcome reception and dinner.

If you are one of the 900-plus certified Tree Farmers in North Carolina or one of those patiently waiting on our "To Do" list and you have not had the opportunity to attend one of the program's annual meetings, you are missing out on some great information and fellowship.

Next year, the North Carolina Tree Farm program's Annual Meeting will take place in Wilmington on October 11-12, 2011. Please mark your calendar today!

"Our Annual Meeting is a time where we can get together as a group and take a look back at what we have accomplished over the past year and see where we need to go in the future," explained outgoing NC Tree Farm Chair Bill Berry. "It is a great opportunity for Tree Farmers to learn more about our program and get involved."

More than 60 Tree Farmers attended the most recent meeting held in October in Pinehurst just prior to the NCFA's Annual Meeting as has been its custom in the past few years. The meeting got underway on Tuesday night with a reception and awards dinner. Dave Woodmansee was recognized as the Tree Farm Inspector of the Year.

The three Tree Farmers that were nominated as the finalists for North Carolina Tree Farmer of the Year gave presentations on their exemplary property and programs. Alan Bly provided a provocative insight into managing his Henderson County Farm in the face of urban sprawl and coyotes! Paul Howard shared his commitment to control vegetative competition on his Chatham County property using his "Trusty Herbicide Hypodermic." Albert Shaw outlined his efforts to pursue a conservation easement on his Bladen County Tree Farm. All three families were presented with plaques recognizing them as a 2010 Finalist for the North Carolina Tree Farmer of the Year Award.

"We had three terrific candidates," stated Jean Cooper, the chair of the Tree Farmer of the Year Committee for North Carolina.



Jim Gray hosted the tour of the Blue Family Farm.

"Unfortunately, we can only name one, but we wanted all three to be recognized by our membership for their excellent stewardship."

On Wednesday, at the end of the morning meeting, Bill Berry announced that Albert Shaw was the 2010 North Carolina Tree Farmer of the Year Award. In addition to a state and national plaque, Shaw received a gift certificate for a Stihl chain saw and safety equipment.

In the afternoon, the group visited Weymouth Woods to hear a presentation on the forest there and then traveled onto a tour of the Blue Family Tree Farm.

Hosted by forester Jim Gray, the four stop tour showed how pole production, pine straw and managing for wildlife can provide solid financial returns for a landowner. The tour was highlighted with a visit to an active Red Cockaded Woodpecker nest.

Gray shared how the bird initially starved off a power line from cutting across the property and then later led to a financial gain for the landowner in a mitigation case. Gray stressed that the management of the property is a balance between generating enough income to be self-sufficient while maintaining a healthy habitat for wildlife. ■



(l-r) Bill Berry presented Albert Shaw with the North Carolina Tree Farm programs's Tree Farmer of the Year Award on Wednesday morning.

2010 NC TREE FARM PROGRAM OFFICERS

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FINALISTS SHARE EXPERIENCES AND PHOTOS DURING ANNUAL MEETING

One of the best elements of the 2010 Annual Meeting was the presentation of the three final candidates for the Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year during the evening awards dinner. All three finalists - Albert Shaw, Alan Bly and Paul Howard - provided insights to their Tree Farms through power point presentations.

"When we were interviewing our three finalists, it became apparent that they all had excellent stories to share with fellow Tree Farmers," stated Jean Cooper, who coordinated the Tree Farmer of the Year competition. "So, we adapted our program to include their presentations and we hope to make this a standard part of our meeting. The response was overwhelmingly positive." ■



(l-r) Jean Cooper, Carolyn and Alan Bly pose for a photo during the North Carolina Tree Farm Annual Meeting in Pinehurst.



(l-r) Jean Cooper, Paul Howard and Barbara James pose for a photo during the North Carolina Tree Farm Annual Meeting in Pinehurst.

INSPECTIONS FOR 2010 ON SCHEDULE

The lifeline of the program continues to be the inspection process. Under the direction of Al Weller, North Carolina is required to complete 17 specific re-inspections this year to adhere to the national sampling program. Three of these inspections have been done. To date, 32 new Tree Farms have been inspected and added to the program. In total, the North Carolina program now has 918 Certified Tree Farms, totaling some 231,000 acres. Dave Woodmansee has conducted four workshops for Tree Farm Inspectors and he anticipates adding one more before the year's end. ■

PROGRESS CONTINUES ON MOU BETWEEN FORESTRY INTERESTS

Progress towards a collective MOU between Tree Farm, the Forest Stewardship Program, and NRCS continues to be made thanks to the diligence of Bob Cooper, Sean Brogan and Greg Connor. The ultimate goal for this agreement is to have mutual recognition for each program amongst the three groups in terms of management plans and monitoring for certification. During this process, the groups involved hope to develop a general template/menu of important elements for a comprehensive management plan. The idea is that if a landowner develops a forest management plan for one of the three programs, it will satisfy all three. ■

NC UTILITIES COMMISSION RULES CHIPS FROM WHOLE TREES CAN BE USED TO PRODUCE POWER

In October, the North Carolina Utilities Commission ruled on a request from Duke Energy to co-fire a Salisbury coal plant with wood and to register that facility. In that filing, Duke proposed to co-fire with wood waste as well as with whole tree chips. Several environmental groups along with MeadWestvaco intervened in the case arguing that the definition of a "renewable energy resource" in the North Carolina Renewable Power Standard (RPS) limited the use of wood to only "wood waste." The NCFCA and the North Carolina Farm Bureau also intervened arguing that the RPS statutes did not limit the use of wood to only wood waste.

With regards to biomass, the statutes define a "renewable energy resource" as "a biomass resource, including agricultural waste, animal waste, wood waste, spent pulping liquors, combustible residues, combustible liquids, combustible gases, energy crops, or landfill methane." At issue was whether or not this definition limited the use to wood to only "wood waste." The Commission issued the following ruling on the issue:

- The list of resources following the words "biomass resource, including" in the definition of a "renewable energy resource" is a list of examples, not an exhaustive or exclusive list, based on relevant case law and the specific exclusion elsewhere in the definition of other organic materials that otherwise might have been considered to be biomass resources.
- Wood fuel derived from whole trees through primary harvests is an organic material that qualifies as a "biomass resource" and a "renewable energy resource" under G.S. 62-133.8(a)(7).

While this resolves, at least temporarily, the issue of what wood can be used under the state RPS, the North Carolina Environmental Management Commission's Renewable Energy Committee is expected to discuss this further in the coming months. ■

FIELD TOUR OF BLUE FARM DEMONSTRATES DIVERSITY PAYS

Jim Gray, the forester who oversees the management of the Blue Family Farm and the host of the recent Tree Farm tour, is not really interested in defending his forestry approach, he simply knows it works. On a few occasions on the tour, he conceded that other foresters may take a different strategy. For Gray, balancing the demands from the three groups that generate income for the Blue Farm is always a fine line, which in the end, creates the farm's bottom line.



Susan Miller with U.S. Fish and Wildlife discusses the Red Cockaded Woodpecker population on the Blue Farm.

"Sure, some people might do it differently, but this works for the landowner in this case," explained Gray. "We have been able to sustain the farm by raking pine straw and growing timber. The woodpeckers fit into the management approach - sure the wildlife folks might want a little more open canopy - but we also have to keep our pine straw clients happy as well."

At the end of the day, Gray is growing Longleaf Pine timber that will some day be used in either sawmill or pole production. Along the way, Gray expects to contract out to pine saw producers, and he intends to maintain the habitat for the Red-Cockaded Woodpeckers that have made the Blue Farm their home. ■



Pine straw production is a major revenue source for the Blue Family Tree Farm

BCAP UPDATE - OPPORTUNITIES OUTLINED FOR LANDOWNERS

According to the American Forest Foundation, the new final rules for the Biomass Crop Assistance Program, which was created by the 2008 Farm Bill, have some real opportunities for Tree Farmers.

Some key points in the new rules are:

- BCAP will help create a long-term, sustainable biomass crop for energy production. This includes advanced biofuels, heat, power, as well as other forms of energy. Eligible facilities include electricity, combined heat and power, paper and sawmill facilities, as well as landowner co-ops.
- To participate, landowners are required to have forest stewardship plans or an equivalent. Tree Farm plans are eligible, but must be approved at the state and local level.
- Once enrolled, family forest owners can receive three types of payments: matching, establishment, and annual.
- Landowners can receive matching payments for biomass delivered to the energy facility, up to \$45 per ton. For instance, if a pellet mill pays you \$31 per ton for your material, then BCAP will chip in another \$31 per ton. Establishment payments will cover 75% of the cost of reforestation and afforestation if the trees will be used for energy. Finally, forest owners can enter into a 15-year contract that will provide annual payments to allow you to maintain your forests while the energy crop matures.
- One of the most important changes from the previous rules are that facilities are no longer allowed to discriminate against landowners who are participating in BCAP by offering lower rates.

To learn more about the program visit: <http://www.apfo.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=ener&topic=bcap>. Tree Farmers can sign up by contacting their local Farm Service Agency office. ■

EQUIP AND WHIP APPLICATION DEADLINES

NRCS has two more deadlines Tree Farmers need to know. EQIP, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, has a December 17, 2010, deadline to qualify for the first application period of the 2011 funding cycle. Additional application periods are determined based on available funds, so it is advantageous to apply early in the year.

Another program, the WHIP (Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program) has an application deadline of January 14, 2010 for the current WHIP ranking of applications. WHIP is a voluntary program for people who want to develop and improve wildlife habitat on private land.

NRCS provides technical assistance and financial assistance for both of these programs. For more information and to apply for these programs, contact your local NRCS field office. ■

NC Tree Farm Restructures...(from page A)

There is a vice chair position in charge of outreach and education. This position focuses on workshop development. Steve Cox, a forester recently retired from Weyerhaeuser and a Tree Farmer, has accepted this position.

The final vice chair position oversees the administration of the program such as membership, leadership development, advocacy and finance. James Jeuk of North Carolina State University Extension has accepted this role.

In addition to these positions, the North Carolina Tree Farm program is also supported by Leslie McCormick, the program's secretary and treasurer. She is the lone contract employee for the program.

Coming out of this re-structuring of the officer positions, the new executive committee will be comprised of these officers, the current Tree Farmer of the Year, which in this case will be Albert Shaw, and three at-large Tree Farmers that will be selected by the chair. These positions are all one-year terms that can be renewed annually for a maximum of three years.

The program also receives financial and staff support from the North Carolina Forestry Association and the North Carolina Sustainable Forestry Initiative State Implementation Committee.

Other state agencies and non-profits provide valuable support for workshops and the inspection process for the program, which remains one of the central components of the entire program as the global marketplace puts more and more emphasis on certification.

The new structure also creates a State Tree Farm Committee that will include the executive committee and the representatives from various sponsor groups throughout the state. This committee will be twice a year.

"We are grateful to Jim and his committee for their work on this project," stated Berry. "This clarifies some issues that we have discussed over the years in our by-laws and really creates a structure that distributes the responsibilities of our program on more individuals, making it easier for someone to come forth and volunteer." ■



What a crew! During the welcome reception, four of North Carolina's most recent Tree Farmers of the Year gathered for a photo. (l-r) Bob Vickery (2005), Boon Chesson (2006), Riddick Ricks (2009) and Bob Cooper (2007) share a smile with the camera.

MID-TERM ELECTIONS TO MAKE FOR INTERESTING 2011 LEGISLATIVE SESSION AT STATE LEVEL

By Bob Slocum, NCFE Executive Vice President

The 2010 mid-term elections will almost certainly prove to be historic in many ways, particularly in North Carolina. The big story here is that Republicans gained control of both chambers of the General Assembly for the first time in more than 100 years. Voter turn-out in North Carolina was 43% - a little above average for a mid-term election.

The membership of the 2011 session of the North Carolina General Assembly will look unlike anything in over 100 years. Republicans will control both Houses by sizable majorities. Republicans virtually ran the table in both Houses and gained more seats than most expected was possible. When the General Assembly convenes, 30% of the Senate will be freshmen and 25% of the House will be new members.

Political consultant John Davis wrote: "Many times down through the decades, Democrats have weathered eras of corrupt leaders; they have overcome Republican-friendly years, weak governors, high turnover of incumbents, unpopular presidents, budget problems, economic slumps, anti-establishment voters, third party movements, low turnout, declining party loyalty, high unemployment, unpopular wars and a surge in opposition strength ... but not at the same time like we are seeing today."

- In the State Senate, where Democrats held a 30 to 20 seat majority over Republicans, the Republicans appear to have won 30 seats while Democrats have held on to 19. The Republicans seem to have picked up all seats in contention.

Recent history in North Carolina Senate races has been that the Democrats have always had a much larger financial war chest than the Republicans - as much as 3 -1 in most years, but that was not the case this year. Preliminary third quarter financial reports show that North Carolina Senate Democrats raised about \$6.6 million and spent \$4.66 million. Senate Republican candidates raised \$6.2 million and spent 5.1 million.

The amazing thing was that Republicans held on to all Republican and leaning Republican districts and took all of the swing district races and all but two in leaning Democratic districts. Only Senators Marc Basnight and Bill Purcell survived in these leaning Democratic districts - a big change from past elections where Democrats won most of the swing districts and picked up seats in Republican districts.

- In the State House, where Democrats held a 68 to 52 seat majority over Republicans, the GOP appears to have won 67 seats, while Democrats have held 49. Four seats, House District 9, featuring incumbent Marian McLawhorn (D) v. Stan Larson (R); House District 44, featuring incumbent Dianne Parfitt (D) v. Johnny Dawkins (R); House District 45, featuring incumbent Rick Glazier (D) v. Jackie Warner (R); and House District 77, featuring incumbent Lorene Coates (D) v. Harry Warren (R) are all separated by less than 300 votes and are too close to call.

The North Carolina House will go from 68 - 52 in favor of the Democrats to a House where Republicans will have at least 66 seats and perhaps as many as 70 depending on how remaining uncalled races turn out. As in the Senate, Democrats have historically had a sizable money advantage over Republicans. While the Democrats did maintain a money advantage this time, outspending Republicans \$5.8 million to \$3.5 million, the Republicans had enough to put resources where they were needed. Like in the Senate, the Republicans held all Republican and leaning Republican districts and won many of the swing districts and picked up seats in leaning Democratic districts.

Republicans will now have to deal with a projected \$3.2 - \$3.5 billion budget deficit. Without a doubt, there will have to be more cuts in spending and most agencies are already preparing budgets with up to a 15% reduction. The lack of federal dollars and expiring temporary tax increases will make the budgeting process even more difficult.

But the real prize gained by the winner is control of the legislative redistricting process. New state and congressional legislative districts must be drawn next year and the party in power will control the process. ■



Bob Slocum,
NCFE Executive
Vice President

NEW TRAINING CENTER HONORS FORMER DIRECTOR STAN ADAMS

In October, the North Carolina Division of Forest Resources honored former state forester Stan Adams by dedicating a training center in his memory at Jordan Lake Educational State Forest.

"It is an honor and privilege to celebrate and recognize Stan for his wonderful leadership and accomplishments within the North Carolina Forest Service," said Wib Owen, the current state forester.

Adams served as the State Forester for the North Carolina Division of Forest Resources from 1991-2006. He died Dec. 10, 2009 after a lengthy illness.

Adams is best known for helping institute a thorough training regimen and emphasizing classroom and practical training as the most efficient way to learn the skills needed to be a good forester and firefighter. Adams' vision and leadership in 15 years as the state forester helped the division earn recognition as one of the nation's top wildfire fighting agencies.

"Stan would be so proud, and yet humbled," stated wife Ellen during the ceremony. "He believed that he had the best people in the world working with him. And, any credit or accolades for the achievements of the Division were the direct result of hard work and dedication of his staff."

Prior to leading the state forestry agency, Adams spent 34 years with the U.S. Forest Service and served as a forester, district ranger and forest supervisor during that span. In total, his career lasted more than 49 years. In addition, Adams served in the Navy and retired from military service in 1988 as a captain.

The training center named for Adams was completed earlier this year. The center is the division's first centrally located facility in North Carolina and can handle up to 100 people in four separate classrooms. The 3,200 square-foot center is also being used to teach school groups that visit the forest about environmental education. The center was paid for using receipts from the North Carolina Division of Forest Resources' sale of timber at Jordan Lake Educational State Forest.

The training center was filled during the dedication with friends, family and co-workers from the private, public and university sectors. One special guest in attendance was Austin Heine, who is a sophomore majoring in forest management at N.C. State University. Heine is the first recipient of the Stan Adams Scholarship Award. The scholarship is a partnership between the North Carolina Division of SAF, the Division of Forest Resources and N.C. State University. The scholarship provides a paid SAF Student Membership and tuition support to an undergraduate student in forest management.

If you would like to contribute to the Stan Adams Scholarship, please contact Jennifer Viets-Catalano at N.C. State University either by phone at (919) 513-7734 or by e-mail at jennifer_catalano@ncsu.edu. ■



A portion of the Adams family was able to attend the dedication ceremony.

Ellen poses with her grandson Parker, followed by son, David, grandson Jack and daughter-in-law, Jenny.

GENETICS WORKSHOP RE-SCHEDULED FOR NEXT APRIL

The North Carolina Tree Farm Program was forced to postpone a genetics workshop on the Hofmann Forest in Jones County that was supposed to take place last fall. Due to weather concerns, the workshop will now take place in the April and the final date and details are being finalized. The program will include some classroom style discussion and a field tour of the forest. With nearly 80,000 contiguous acres, the Hofmann Forest is the single largest holding of the North Carolina State University's College of Natural Resources. The forest is situated on what was historically referred to as the White Oak pocosin. ■