



NEWS FROM WISCONSIN'S WOODS



A partnership of the Wisconsin Tree Farm Committee and Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association

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Update on the 2015-2020 ATFS Standards

Every 5 years, since the first American Tree Farm System (ATFS) Standards of Sustainability in 2000, the Standards are reviewed and updated. The 2015-2020 ATFS Standards reflect feedback from across the ATFS community, including very thoughtful insights and expertise of ATFS State Leaders.

The 2015-2020 Standards reflect a limited number of revisions from the previous version. These revisions are designed to advance forest conservation while providing clarity, flexibility and resources for landowners. Operational transition to the 2015-2020 Standards is anticipated to be relatively simple for entities which currently conform to the 2010-2015 Standards.

Notable themes of the revisions in the ATFS Standards include:

- **Clarity regarding threatened & endangered species:** The Standards language was refined to make clear obligations for protection of occupied habitats and communities.
- **Emphasis on landowner's objectives and on-the-ground stewardship:** For example, language related to management plans was modified to allow for additional flexibility in implementation and support of landowners and foresters utilization adaptive, innovative approaches to meet landowner's objectives.
- **Enhanced approach to Forests of Recognized Importance (FORI):** To address confusion related to conservation of ecosystems of recognized importance at the landscape scale (formerly high conservation value forests or HCVF), the revisions more purposely define these resources, establish a process for identifying them in context of ATFS certification specifically and provide additional guidance regarding how a landowner may contribute to these values.
- **Holistic, integrated approaches to forest health:** The past Standards address forest health largely through integrated pest management (IPM) as an alternative to chemical use. However IPM is not uniformly understood or adopted nationally. In addition, there is widespread consensus around the need to also promote understanding into forest management broadly.
- **Continuity with the Programme for Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC):** and other sustainability frameworks: Example, the word "must" used to denote Standard requirements was universally replaced with "shall" which is used in PEFC requirements for endorsed programs, as it is by the International Standards Organization (ISO) and other systems. This allows Certified Tree Farmers greater recognition and access to markets globally.
- **Expansion of Best Management Practices (BMPs) beyond water quality:** The Standards and Guidance were enhanced to encompass BMPs that relate to air, water, soil and site quality elements recognizing opportunities for additional conservation contributions.

All landowners with woodlands currently certified to the ATFS Standards, which would include the MFL program, must transition to 2015-2020 ATFS Standards during 2015.

More information regarding the 2015-2020 ATFS Standards can be found on the Wisconsin Tree Farm Committee website www.witreefarm.org or the ATFS website www.treefarmsystem.org.

WI State Budget—What the news media doesn't tell you

Governor Walker released his budget on February 3, 2015. Press releases cry of freezing the Stewardship Fund and transferring the authority of the Natural Resources Board to the Secretary of the DNR. But did you know the Governor's budget also directs DNR to develop a plan to move the headquarters of the Division of Forestry from Madison to a northern Wisconsin location as a budget request for 2017-19 or recommends eliminating DNR approval of cutting notices submitted to DNR by cooperating foresters, on behalf of owners of MFL land, for mandatory cutting practices included in the MFL plan? Then eliminating DNR forester positions due to the reduced workload.

The WWOA Board will be discussing these and other proposals in the coming weeks. Prior to release of the Governor's budget, the WWOA Board went on record in support of maintaining the Stewardship Fund at current levels.

Your opinions, as woodland owners, on these services are important to WWOA **and** to your state legislators as they amend and approve the final State Budget. Just because these proposals don't show up in the mass media doesn't mean they won't affect YOU and your woodlands!

Writing the Story of 2015

As we begin a new year there is one question, what will be the story of 2015 and who will write it? Will it be the year we unite to correct a deficient MFL program? The year we sowed the seed of sustainable forestry to all WI woodland owners? The year of action, of giving back, and of the WWOA community coming together to ensure we provide our children with what our forefathers worked so hard to provide to us?

2014 is written, but 2015 has yet to be, and we are the authors. In 1977 Gordon Cunningham, a vital founder and contributor of WWOA, said, "We have about one generation in which to decide how we will keep our forests renewable!" We now face a similar scenario. The progress is not easy, there is no pay, yet if you look at your children, or your grandchildren, their future is the reward, and who can put a price on that?

Please take a few minutes and return your Volunteer Interest Form located in the *Wisconsin Woodlands* magazine Winter issue on page 37 or contact Caleb at the WWOA office to volunteer with WWOA. He can be reached at 715-346-4798 or email volunteer.wwoa@gmail.com or mail at WWOA, PO Box 285, Steven Point, WI 54481. Together let us write the story of 2015 as a WWOA success for all Wisconsin citizens!



2015 Annual Meeting

WWOA members please join us on **September 17-20** in Marshfield for our Annual Meeting at the beautiful Hotel Marshfield (hotelmarsfield.com).

Make your reservations now by calling Hotel Marshfield at 715-387-2700 or 855-583-2700 and mention that you are with WWOA. A block of rooms has been reserved for \$70/night plus tax. Don't miss out on the FUN!

wisconsinwoodlands.org

WWOA is creating a new website to serve you better with compatibility across browser platforms and mobile devices. It will include your favorites such as the calendar of events and chapters information and will also include new items such as volunteer opportunities. Look for our new website this spring. For now, the current website has limited capacity but the Calendar of Events continues to be up-to-date to help you find WWOA activities.

Wisconsin Tree Farm Committee News

Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year

2014 was another great year for Wisconsin with the American Forest Foundation's (AFF) Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year (OTFY) Program. We had a Regional Winner and another great State Winner.

Dennis and Kim Schoeneck, the 2012 Wisconsin Outstanding Tree Farmers of the Year, were the 2014 Regional winners in the North Central Region competing with 11 States. (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, and Wisconsin)



Here you see Dennis and Kim holding their plaque after it was presented to them by David Czysz, their nominating forester. The presentation was at the 2014 Wisconsin Tree Farm Committee Annual Field Day at Merlin & Georgie Becker's Tree Farm, in Waupaca County. Merlin & Georgie were the Wisconsin OTFY for 2013.

Wisconsin had another example of outstanding sustainable forest management and outreach when Gerald Kann received the Award for 2014 Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year.



As is our policy, the 2015 WTFC Annual Field Day will be held at Gerald Kann's Tree Farm on August 15, 2015. There will be more information available after the details are ironed out.

Every County can have a County OTFY winner. County Winners compete for District Winner and District Winners compete for the State Winner.

If you are proud of your Tree Farm and your forest management and if you are interested, we invite you to fill out an application to be a County nominee for Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year, contact your County DNR forester or the Wisconsin Tree Farm Committee.

Application deadline is March 15th.



2015 Tree Farm Fly-in

The American Tree Farm System will be having a two-day legislative conference, April 28-29. This is a unique opportunity to join Tree Farmers and family forest advocates from across the country to make the Tree Farm voice heard on Capitol Hill. At the Fly-in, you'll get an in-depth briefing on federal policy issues that impact woodlands, learn strategies for being an effective advocate, and meet face-to-face with your Members of Congress and their staffs. Come learn how you can be part of the effort to improve policies at the federal level for our forests! [For more information go to www.treefarmssystem.org/atfs-fly-in](http://www.treefarmssystem.org/atfs-fly-in)

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Help us keep you in the know

The Wisconsin Tree Farm Committee would like to reach all 38,000 Tree Farmers in Wisconsin. It has been and still is too costly to send news letters by conventional mail, even with bulk mail permits. To try to reach as many Tree Farmers as we can and still be cost effective, we are trying to get as many email addresses as possible. We realize some of our Tree Farmers do not have email, so, for now we plan to still use the Post Office for those Tree Farmers. However, if you received this Newsletter by regular mail and you have an email address we could use, please let us know.

**You can call 715-252-2001,
email witreefarm@gmail.org or
go to our webpage at www.witreefarm.org**

Enjoy Wisconsin Woodlands magazine Join WWOA

**Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association (WWOA)
P.O. Box 285, Stevens Point, WI 54481
715-346-4798 wisconsinwoodlands.org**

Voting (owners of 10 acres or more WI woodlands)

- Regular member \$45 or 3 years at \$125
- Family membership \$60
- Contributing member \$65+
- Individual Life member \$600 (\geq 18 years old)
- Gift Regular member \$25 (from WWOA member)

Nonvoting

- Associate member \$45 or 3 years at \$125
- Associate contributing member \$65+
- Student \$25 (full-time)
- Gift Associate member \$25 (from WWOA member)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ County _____

State _____ Zip Code + 4 _____

Phone (home) _____

E-mail _____

Location of woods: County _____ Acres _____

Referred or gifted by _____