



# NEWS FROM WISCONSIN'S WOODS



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

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## Two Hours of Your Time can Make a Difference!

What do you do with two hours of time? You might say read a book, work in your woods, or play with your grandchildren. What if I asked you to think bigger? What if I said, "You can increase sustainable forestry in your county in two hours." Would you accept my challenge?

Two hours of your time this summer can help us increase EQIP cost-share funding for forestry practices such as management plans, tree planting, site preparation, fire breaks, tree pruning, brush management, timber stand improvement (TSI), trails and landings and stream crossings.

Currently, the 2014 Farm Bill has allocated just \$800,000 or 8% of Wisconsin's EQIP funding for woodland management projects. Wisconsin's private woodlands cover approximately 10 million acres or about 1/3 of the state. Our goal is to double the amount of EQIP funding for woodland practices, which will provide you with more opportunities for financial and technical assistance.

We know that in most counties, the percent of woodlands greatly exceeds 8% of the land base. With your help we can increase the EQIP funding available in your local area to be more in line with the amount of woodland acres and the need for cost-sharing for woodland owners.

Never heard of EQIP? The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) is a program administered by the USDA, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). EQIP is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to private woodland owners and agricultural producers to plan and implement conservation practices that improve soil, water, plant, animal, air and related natural resources.

Woodland owners across Wisconsin are being challenged to spend two hours growing sustainable forestry resources in their local area by attending the upcoming Local Working Group Meetings for determining EQIP funding allocations.

The Local Working Group Meetings are two hours long and only held once a year during the summer. Meetings are scheduled across Wisconsin from July 14 through August 3. Meetings are open to the public and individuals are given time to address the group and may submit written comments to the chairperson.

To attend your Local Meeting:

- Find the name of your Local Work Group on at [wisconsinwoodlands.org/nrcs-2016-eqip-funding-needs-your-voice/#more-3636](http://wisconsinwoodlands.org/nrcs-2016-eqip-funding-needs-your-voice/#more-3636) or contact your local USDA, NRCS office for meeting information.
- Look up the date, time and location of your Local Working Group Meeting on the above website.
- Mark your calendar!
- Key items to think about for the meeting: % of private woodlands in your county vs money allocated to forestry practices, what local forestry practices or issues need help in your area and their priority.
- WI DNR has some wonderful Economic Fact Sheets by county at [dnr.wi.gov/topic/forestbusinesses/factsheets.html](http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/forestbusinesses/factsheets.html) to help you with facts and figures about your county.

The WI DNR's Wisconsin Forest Landowner Grant Program (WFLGP) frequently runs out of cost-sharing dollars after the August 1 deadline. NRCS's EQIP program offers you another resource for technical and financial assistance.

## WOWA Endowment Fund's Challenge Match

Thank you to all the WOWA members who have contributed to WOWA's Endowment Fund Challenge Match! As of July 12, 2016, we have received \$4,550 which is being matched 1:1 by our generous anonymous donor.

As we announced in the Summer issue of *Wisconsin Woodlands*, a good hearted WOWA member has donated \$10,000 to our Endowment Fund and challenged fellow WOWA members to match this amount by our 2016 Annual Meeting on September 17. A donation envelope was included in the Summer issue.

If you prefer to donate using a credit card, go to the Community Foundation of Central WI website at [www.cfcwi.org/](http://www.cfcwi.org/) and select "Give" then "Make a Gift" and then under established funds, Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association Fund.

Your gift of any size will be matched by our wonderful benefactor until September 17—won't you help us reach our goal of \$20,000? Your \$20 will become \$40, your \$100 will become \$200 and your \$500 will become \$1,000! This fund will help WOWA continue our mission of educating Wisconsin's woodland owners now and into the future.

## WOWA 2016 Annual Meeting

All WOWA members are invited to attend the 2016 WOWA Annual Meeting on September 16-18 in Oshkosh.

If you have never attended a WOWA Annual Meeting, fellow members encourage you to attend by sharing their comments about previous meetings ~ *Oh my gosh, the amount of information provided is enormous and the choices/options are excellent; Great camaraderie and fun new things; Great place to learn, meet new people and see what WOWA has to offer; They don't know what they are missing; As a first timer, we will be back!*

Registration packets were sent to members in early July. Nonmembers are welcome to join WOWA and register for the meeting. Remember, tours are first come, first served so register to prevent disappointment. Special hotel rates end at the Best Western Premier Waterfront on August 13 and meeting registration must be postmarked by August 20 to prevent late fees.

More information about can be found on WOWA's website including information on the top 10 questions the WOWA office is asked about the meeting. We look forward to seeing you there!



## LIP program

Private landowners can now apply for funding and technical help through the WI DNR's Landowner Incentive Program at [dnr.wi.gov/topic/EndangeredResources/LIP.html](http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/EndangeredResources/LIP.html) to create and manage habitat for rare plants and animals in Wisconsin. These include federal and state endangered or threatened species or those of greatest concern. The program covers the Driftless Area from Pierce and Pepin counties into southwestern Wisconsin to Illinois.

## wisconsinwoodlands.org

To keep up with WOWA news or find additional information on sustainable forest management topics remember to visit WOWA's website. Our website also has a calendar of events, chapter listings and activities, information on our Women of WOWA gatherings, and volunteer opportunities. If you are on Facebook find us at <https://www.facebook.com/WisconsinWoodlands/> and then like our page so we can keep in touch with you.

## 2016 Tree Farm Field Day

Please join us at our 2016 Wisconsin Tree Farm Field Day at Carl & Doris Muller's "Quarry Tree Farm" in Trempealeau County on August 13, 2016.

This field day will give you an opportunity to see and learn many interesting things. Some of the sites to visit include a storm water retention pond, thinning of pine, red oak, walnut and white birch. Learn about bluebird habitat and visit the pollinator site and learn about bees. We will also have an opportunity to learn about Land Legacy and passing your tree farm on to the next generation. Gather with friends and other tree farmers as we celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the American Tree Farm System. To register or for more information, go to [www.witreefarm.org](http://www.witreefarm.org).

## 2016 North Central Regional Tree Farmer of the Year

Gerald (Jug) and Charlotte Kann were selected as the 2016 North Central Regional Tree Farmers of the Year. Their tree farm, The Kann Tree Farm, is located in Monroe County. Their hard work, excellent stewardship as well as their outreach and education has earned them this title. Congratulations to them on this outstanding achievement!

## American Tree Farm System is 75 Years Old

In 1940 the westward expansion and divesting of corporate land opened the doors to individual landowners settling on large tracts of land. Education and support for landowners on forest management and other issues, such as dealing with wildfire, was not yet readily available, yet the demand on the forest products industry for wood supply continued to grow. To meet these demands, the American Tree Farm System was established, which became a forestry movement founded on the concept of recognizing landowners who practiced good forest stewardship and would encourage others to do the same. This conception quickly began to take root.

On June 12, 1941, the nation's first tree farm was dedicated near Montesano, Washington. Owned by the Weyerhaeuser Timber Company, the 120,000-acre Clemons Tree Farm launched a nationwide

movement. Over the next few decades the American Tree Farm System would expand across all 50 states. On August 16, 1955, Wisconsin included all classes of private ownership with a ceremony on the property of Fred Grunwald, Jr. in Waupaca County to become the first Wisconsin Tree Farmer of the Year. Prior to the expansion to private woodland owners, Wisconsin's program was restricted to industry ownership. Today the American Tree Farm System remains a strong and essential program to conserve our state's forests and their benefits, with more than 48,000 individual and family members who own and manage more than 2.8 million acres of woodlands in Wisconsin.

The American Tree Farm System, a program of the American Forest Foundation is made possible by volunteers from the local small woodlands associations, conservation organizations, forest products companies, university extensions, and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

On May 26, 2016, Dan Peterson presented the Governor's proclamation celebrating ATFS 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary at the WI Council on Forestry meeting. Many key supporters of forestry were represented for the event: WI DNR, Great Lakes Timber Producers Assoc., WI Consulting Foresters Assoc., Wisconsin urban forestry, WI Woodland Owners Assoc., WI County Forests Assoc., University of WI Extension, USDA Forest Service, WI State Senate, WI State Assembly, Boy Scouts of America, Society of American Foresters, Nature Conservancy, and forest products industry representatives.

L to R: WI State Assembly Rep. Jeff Mursau, WI State Senator Janet Bewley, WTFC Chair, Dan Peterson. Rep. Mursau and Sen. Bewley are both on the Wisconsin Council on Forestry and are strong supporters of good forestry in Wisconsin.



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### **MFL Policy Changes Requires “Opting-In”, Not “Opting-Out” of the Tree Farm Program**

Lands enrolled into the Managed Forest Law (MFL) program can enjoy membership in the MFL Certified Group. MFL Group members benefit from the ability to sell timber as “certified” in the marketplace. An independent certification body verifies that MFL Certified Group lands are managed in conformance with American Tree Farm System® (ATFS) and Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC) standards of responsible forestry. Participation in the MFL Certified Group is voluntary. Prior to July 1, 2015, all MFL lands were automatically included in the MFL Certified Group at the time of enrollment or transfer, and a landowner could choose to opt-out of the Group by filing the MFL Certified Group Departure Form (2450-191). As of July 1, 2015, inclusion in the MFL Certified Group is no longer automatic. For MFL enrollments beginning in 2017, and all transfers, landowners must choose to opt-in to participate. Landowners can opt-in or out of the MFL Certified Group at any time by filing the Managed Forest Law Group Application Forms.

Joining the MFL certified group will give you assurance that your woodland meets national and international standards for well-managed forest. It also gives you the ability to sell timber in a certified marketplace. More and more wood using industries are buying certified wood as proof to consumers that they are sourcing materials responsibly. In addition, you are eligible to display the Tree Farm sign.

As a member of the certified group, you are responsible to follow the MFL program requirements. You must also understand and consider special certification requirements such as avoiding the use of genetically modified organisms, avoiding the use of highly hazardous pesticides and give special consideration to protecting threatened and endangered species. Membership is voluntary, but you must check the box on your MFL application or on your MFL change of ownership form. Group members do not have extra costs for being in the MFL group. Becoming a group member ensures that you are a member of the Tree Farm family.