



You are Invited to
Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association Inc.
47th Annual Meeting
September 17-20, 2026
Holiday Inn & Suites, Rothschild



You are invited to join WWOA members from around the state for an engaging autumn weekend in central Wisconsin. Don't miss this opportunity to network with WWOA members and learn more about your woods through our tours, presentations, and field day. Mark your calendar, make a hotel reservation, and send in your meeting registration to join us in Rothschild.

We will gather at Holiday Inn & Suites, 1000 Imperial Avenue, Rothschild (ihg.com then input Rothschild to learn more). Make your room reservation by calling the Holiday Inn & Suites at 715-355-1111 and mention our group code "WOA" for our special room rate of \$101 per night plus tax. Make your room reservation by August 16 to receive this special room rate. Check in time is 3 pm and check out is 11 am. The hotel is dog-friendly. Rooms include mini-refrigerator, microwave, and Keurig. The hotel offers a variety of amenities including an indoor pool, fitness centre, and onsite restaurant, Cedar Creek Grill House. The Holiday Inn & Suites requires notice of cancellation 24 hours prior to the day of arrival for individual reservations. Failure to cancel prior to 4 pm the day prior to arrival will result in a charge of one night's stay.

Annual Meeting Overview

Thursday and Friday tours focus on central Wisconsin woodlands including an apple orchard, Christmas tree farm, and special places like the Ice Age Trail and School Forest in addition to the arts, forest products, and geology of the area. Thursday the WWOA Board of Directors will meet. On Thursday evening, after dinner on your own, join us for members Sharing Experiences presentations. Friday evening's social will include WWOA's Gift Shop, exhibitors, cash bar with snacks, raffles and silent auction. After dinner, we'll hear from our 2025-26 AmeriCorps member, Aaron Ballak. Saturday morning's keynote speaker, Dennis Schoeneck will share an update on the TPCE cooperative and Tilleda mill. WWOA's Business Meeting will highlight the past year's activities. Saturday afternoon choose from a variety of concurrent sessions, the Landowner Café, or sit and stitch craft session. Our celebration continues with a social and Saturday evening's Awards Banquet and Annual Fundraiser drawings. Sunday's field day will be held at the Wausau School Forest in Mosinee.

Important Details

Deadlines

Aug. 16 – Special Holiday Inn & Suites room rates end
Aug. 22 (postmarked) – Early discounted Meeting Registration rates end

- ▶ Please check the WWOA website page at wisconsinwoodlands.org/annual-meeting/ for additional details, links, and updates on 2026 Annual Meeting activities. WWOA's carpool policy can also be found there.
- ▶ There are a variety of registration options—attend an event, a day, or come for the whole weekend! Weekend and whole meeting packages are discounted.
- ▶ After registering, you will receive a meeting confirmation letter from WWOA with your selected activity schedule, tour maps, and additional details.
- ▶ Tours are filled on a first come, first served basis and are limited in size. All tours include lunch. Dress appropriately for the field by wearing sturdy footwear. You are welcome to bring a hat, water bottle and walking stick. Tours are held rain or shine.
- ▶ Bus transportation will be used only for the Friday Forest Management Tour.
- ▶ Before driving to your first tour stop, check in at registration to pick up your nametag and registration packet. Bring the tour maps provided in your confirmation packet. Tour times listed on the next page are the times you will leave and return to the hotel.
- ▶ Handicapped accessibility is available for the Birds in Art and High Ground Tree Farm tours. Contact WWOA at 715-572-4223, if you have concerns.
- ▶ Bring your silent auction donation(s) to the registration table when you check in and make sure to attach your name securely to the item.
- ▶ Your support of WWOA's fundraising activities is greatly appreciated and helps us provide you with more services. *New Donation*—WWOA's Blackhawk Chapter donated a \$500 gift card to the Annual Fundraiser—Thank you!
- ▶ Accepted payment options are *cash or check* for shopping at the Gift Shop, bidding on silent auction items, or purchasing raffle tickets.
- ▶ If interested in volunteering a few hours during the Annual Meeting please contact the WWOA office.
- ▶ Questions? Contact WWOA at 715-572-4223 or wwoaoffice@wisconsinwoodlands.org

Thursday, September 17

Holiday Inn & Suites

- 6:30–11:00 AM Cedar Creek Grill House is open for breakfast
 8:30 AM–10:15 AM & 3:00–6:30 PM Registration in Conference Center, tour participants please check in
Note: tour start times are when you should be leaving the hotel to meet your tour group on time
 9:30 AM–3:45 PM **Birds in Art & Orchard Tour with lunch...** meet at the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum in downtown Wausau for a guided tour of the 51st juried Birds in Art exhibition. Then drive to Rock Ridge Orchard near Edgar where they grow 30 varieties of apples. Enjoy lunch and an afternoon wagon ride tour of the apple orchard. Handicapped accessible. Round trip is 56 miles.
 9:45 AM–3:15 PM **Forest Industry Tour with lunch...** meet at Domtar's paper mill, which produces high-quality commercial printing paper, and their biomass power plant in Rothschild for a tour. Lunch will be at Sam's pizza followed by a tour of nearby Wausau Homes where they utilizes a custom panelized construction method of building personalized homes. Round trip drive is 9 miles.
 9:00 AM–3:00 PM **WWOA Board of Directors meeting**
 7:00–8:15 PM **Sharing Experiences...**three WWOA members will share their experiences
My Timber Frame Education, *Rich LaValley of Merrill* will share how and what he learned to be able to build a timber frame cabin mostly on his own to replace his damaged old log cabin.
Our Off Grid Journey, *Geary & Kay Searfoss of Ojibwa* have lived off the grid for 21 years on their tree farm and in 2026 they embarked on a major upgrade to their system.
How to make and use biochar and protecting young trees, *Past President Don Hoffman of Black River Falls* will discuss his biochar system and experiments for forestry use along with several experiments to protect young trees.

Friday, September 18

Holiday Inn & Suites

- 6:30–11:00 AM Cedar Creek Grill House is open for breakfast
 7:45 AM–6:00 PM Registration in the Convention Center, tour participants please check in
Note: Tour start times are when you should be leaving the hotel to meet your tour group on time
 8:45 AM–3:15 PM **Tour 1—High Ground Tree Farm & History of the Prairie River Tour with lunch...** meet at the High Ground Tree Farm just east of Merrill for a tour. WWOA members, David and Brenda Black, are second generation, fulltime Christmas tree growers and more! Travel to Merrill for lunch and a presentation from John Meachen of WI River Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited about the history of the Prairie River. Tour is handicapped accessible. Drive is 61 miles round trip.
 8:45 AM–3:30 PM **Tour 2—Fromm Brothers Fur Farm & Marathon Co. Historical Center Tour with lunch...**meet at the Fromm Brothers Fur Farm for a 1.5 mile walking tour of the historical fur farm and ginseng operation. Learn the history of how the four Fromm brothers impacted both the fur and ginseng business. Then travel to downtown Wausau to the Marathon County Historical Center for lunch and a presentation by Ben Clark on The Great Wisconsin Pinery. Morning of tour is not fully handicapped accessible. Drive is 59 miles round trip.
 9:00 AM–2:30 PM **Tour 3—Forest Management Tour with lunch...**board the bus with WDNR forester Jeff Sorenson to hike 1.7 miles of the Plover River segment of the Ice Age Trail in eastern Marathon County. Learn about hardwood and aspen management in the woods adjacent to the trail. Discussion will include timber harvests that were implemented in the previous few years. Enjoy lunch at the Dells of the Eau Claire County Park on the way back to the hotel.
 9:30 AM– 3:15 PM **Tour 4— Rib Mountain Geological Tour with lunch...**meet at Rib Mountain State Park for the day—did you know this geological feature is not Wisconsin's highest point? Keith Montgomery will give a presentation on the geology of Rib Mountain and then take a walk with park staff. After lunch Lisa Siewert of UWSP's Department of Geography and Geology will lead a beautiful fall hike in the Park. Tour is not handicapped accessible and drive is 15 miles round trip.
 4:00–6:00 PM **Friends & Exhibitors Social...**Enjoy time with fellow members, visit exhibitors, make your purchases at WWOA's Gift Shop and for raffle tickets. Cash bar and snacks available. *Bring your checkbook or cash for purchases.*
 6:00–8:30 PM **Friday Evening Dinner, Raffles, and Presentations...** Help celebrate the 250th year of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and enjoy a casual evening of good friends, a delicious buffet, and lots of laughter as raffle winners are revealed. WWOA's 2025-26 AmeriCorps member, Aaron Ballak, will summarize his time with WWOA.

Saturday, September 19

Holiday Inn & Suites

6:45–8:00 AM	WWOA Board of Directors & Chapter Chairs Breakfast Meeting
7:00–11:00 AM	Cedar Creek Grill House open for breakfast
7:30 AM–2:30 PM	Registration, Exhibits, Gift Shop, Silent Auction, and Annual Fundraiser
8:30 AM	Drawing for Door Prizes
8:45 AM	Welcome by Ken Kempfert, WWOA President
9:00–10:00 AM	Keynote: Update of Chip Mill in Tilleda , Dennis Schoeneck, President of Timber Professionals Cooperative Enterprises - Learn more about the Timber Professionals Cooperative Enterprises, as the first member-owned cooperative in the country to purchase a facility of this kind. The current focus at the Tilleda mill is improving efficiency, expanding the customer base, and exploring opportunities for higher-value products.
10:00–10:30 AM	Break— Refreshments, Exhibits, Gift Shop, Silent Auction, & Annual Fundraiser tickets
10:30–11:30 AM	47th Year Annual Business Meeting , President Ken Kempfert
11:30 AM–1:00 PM	Lunch followed by Exhibits, Landowner Café, Gift Shop, Silent Auction, & Fundraiser tickets
11:30 AM–2:45 PM	Landowner Café—food for thought and your woodlands ...come and go as you please to learn more about a topic or get your questions answered by experts - Timber Professionals Cooperative Enterprises, Managed Forest Law program, Natural Resources Conservation Service programs & cost-share, nontimber goods, ticks and their diseases, and biochar and protecting young trees!
1:00–2:15 PM	Concurrent Sessions , no preregistration necessary, just attend the one of your choosing ► Cultivation for Conservation: Growing American Ginseng in Private Woodlands , Tony Johnson, UW-Madison Extension, Horicon — Learn how you, as a private woodland owner, can grow high-value, wild-stimulated ginseng on your own property. ► Understanding the past and predicting the future of American martens in a recovery network of Wisconsin , Dr. Jonathan N. Pauli, UW-Madison Dept. of Forest & Wildlife Ecology, Madison — The American marten is endangered in Wisconsin. Management practices that promote forest complexity and landscape heterogeneity can be used to improve conditions for marten persistence and recovery.
1:00–4:00 PM	► Sit & Stitch Craft Session , bring your needlework or other craft project to work on (no supplies provided) and enjoy some good conversation. The craft area will be open all afternoon. We recommend if additional lighting is needed that you bring a battery powered light source.
2:15–2:45 PM	Break— Refreshments, Exhibits, Landowner Café, Gift Shop, Silent Auction & Fundraiser tickets Silent Auction ends at 2:45 pm—so check your bids!
2:45–4:00 PM	Concurrent Sessions , no preregistration necessary, just attend the one of your choosing ► Wound Response in Trees , Dr. Les Werner, Professor Emeritus, Forestry, UW-Stevens Point, Stevens Point — Examination of the strategies trees use to mitigate the impact of external injuries. ► Three years of tick citizen science...what have we learned? , Dr. Jennifer K. Meece, Marshfield Clinic Research Institute, Marshfield — In 2024, we launched our first year of the Tick Inventory via Citizen Science study in Wisconsin. Three years in, we have collected nearly 18,000 ticks and have a deeper understanding of the impact of the diseases they carry.
4:00 PM	Winners pick up Silent Auction items—accepted payment options are cash or check
5:00–6:15 PM	Meet Your Neighbor Social , visit with new and long-time friends before dinner at the cash bar
6:15–9:00 PM	Awards Banquet Celebration , enjoy a delicious dinner and feel the excitement building as the Annual Fundraiser tickets are drawn. Then help us recognize and appreciate the 2026 Wisconsin Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year, WWOA's Forestry Leader Scholarship recipient, and selected WWOA members for their dedicated volunteer efforts within WWOA, WWOA chapters, or working with the next generation.

Sunday, September 20

Wausau School Forest

6:30–8:30 AM	Holiday Inn & Suites breakfast buffet is included in registration for Sunday participants—<i>Cedar Creek Grill House is not open today</i> Check out of hotel
8:00 AM	Drive to the Wausau School Forest
8:45 – 9:00 AM	Welcome by Wausau School Forest staff
9:15 – 10:15 AM	Time Period A
10:30 – 11:30 AM	Time Period B
11:30 – 12:30 PM	Buffet Lunch
12:40 PM – 1:40 PM	Time Period C
1:55 PM – 2:55 PM	Time Period D

Sunday Field Day...

Join us at the Wausau School Forest for an autumn day of fun in the woods and fields with your WWOA friends and where you will have the opportunity to learn from natural resource professionals about a variety of topics while getting your questions answered. The Wausau School Forest is located 11 miles southwest of Wausau on the banks of the Wisconsin River in Mosinee.

The School Forest has been a part of the District's curriculum since 1942. An entry on their facebook page shares the history of the property and their programs. The school forest started in 1942 on land donated by Arthur and Edwin Prehn, Mosinee Paper Mill and Marathon County. Hugh Curtis was hired in 1956 as the first full time employee. He was the director for 33 years. Jack Scharraschmidt an elementary and junior high teacher help start school camping. Bill Paul and Arlyn Parks were the first to use the school forest in their curriculum. Mr. Johnson an industrial Arts teacher helped build many of the buildings with assistance from students. The current Bannerman Hall was built in 1973. In 2023, the Wausau School Forest Environmental Learning Center was completed. It is over 9,000 square feet and has wildlife displays, classrooms, large meeting room and outdoor amphitheater. Currently the School Forest covers over 400 acres with a diversity of habitats such as the Wisconsin River shorelands, bottomland hardwoods, wetlands, pine plantations, prairie restoration, food plots, northern hardwoods, and aspen. All Wausau School District students have the opportunity to attend special learning experiences on the school forest.



Sunday registration includes breakfast buffet at the hotel, catered lunch, field day activities, and handouts. As station topics are confirmed they will be added to the website page. During the Annual Meeting a more detailed description of the stations will be available and you will be able to preregister for the Sunday stations of your choice. If you stay for the whole day you will be able to attend four (4) stations.

Tentative station topics include (more will be added):

- forest health issues—oak wilt, pine pocket decline
- American drone demonstration
- Wisconsin Trappers Association—dealing with nuisance wildlife, learning about trapping
- identification of branches and twigs taken from common Wisconsin native trees in winter