



Partners News

April 2012

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WELCOME NEW PIF MEMBERS:

* David and Tracie Clanaugh *

JOE'S COMMENTS

Spring was exceptionally early this year. Ironwood, Michigan posted 89 degrees on March 18. On April 1 there is not a trace of snow remaining in the woods, and the lakes have been open for close to two weeks. And, it appears we are primed for yet another spring drought, based on the very low March snow- rain fall after a snow storm on leap day.

I recently heard from a member that he was leaving PIF because we “are against mining in Wisconsin.” Where on earth did he get that idea? On our website it clearly states PIF supports responsible resource extraction of minerals as well as sustainable timber management. We did question AB 426, which I personally liken to a bad logger high grading the forest and rutting the ground as well as damaging the remaining trees. Like Jack Parker said in the interview, if any one is against mining have them walk to Baltic (but do not use the roads) and explain their position. As I said, it is unconscionable for us in this developed, wasteful society to expect people in the third world to die in their mines to supply our desires.

At Penokee, I made a plea to a group of legislators to strongly consider the benefits of an underground mine. In the Penokee Hills the resource apparently goes almost 2000 feet deep, at a diagonal angle, with the Tyler Formation being above the iron ore area. The Tyler Formation is suspect of containing significant deposits of Pyrite, which when exposed to the elements, causes acid drainage not too different from a sulfide mine. An underground mine could, at least in theory, obtain much more of the deposit (no open pit in going to 2000 feet), creating more jobs, retaining the potentially polluting Tyler Formation and the very important (for tourism) aesthetic values of the Penokee Hills. Create jobs, save the watershed, prevent air pollution, retain much of the forests above the hills.....what is there to argue with. You can learn much more about the Penokee issue at www.partnersinforestry.com and www.northwoodalliance.org. It appears to me that part of the problem in the whole Penokee discussion has been the reluctance of the mining company to release their data to the public. Much of what the public knows is from the 1978 Marsden Report which can be found at <http://www.northwoodalliance.org/GogebicTaconite/Marsden1978.pdf>.

Thanks to those who have recently renewed their memberships, and especially to a few stalwarts who have been exceptionally generous. Once again I ask, IF any one knows of any membership organization which gives as much as we do, back to the members, we all need to know about it. Your PIF board and volunteers give generously of their time and additional expenses to make this organization function FOR its members. Some have expressed confusion of the dates of renewal. Since we are all volunteers in this, please bear with us. All the early, long time members are still in the January 1 to December 31 time slot. The past several years have brought more mid year members. Perhaps it would be best to simply go with all members January-February. The board needs to decide that with your input.

I write this as I return from the first PIF outing of the year. A trip to Wildcat Falls attracted at least 100 people from all over the UP and well into Wisconsin. You will recall PIF involvement in the Forest Service land exchange at Wildcat Falls began almost 3 years ago when long time member Pat Oltz appealed to the PIF Board to get involved. The final decision is in the hands of the Regional Forester in Milwaukee. Follow the website for updates on the Wildcat Falls situation.

I was asked by one outsider what gripe we have with the Ottawa. My response was simply ‘we care for the Ottawa deeply. We work to defend them when they are correct and correct them when they are wrong.’ I thank Rod Sharka for being with me at every step in this process, he is equally passionate about this public injustice.

This is your COOP. Please be involved. As John Schwarzmann stated in the renewal letter, there is a place for everyone.

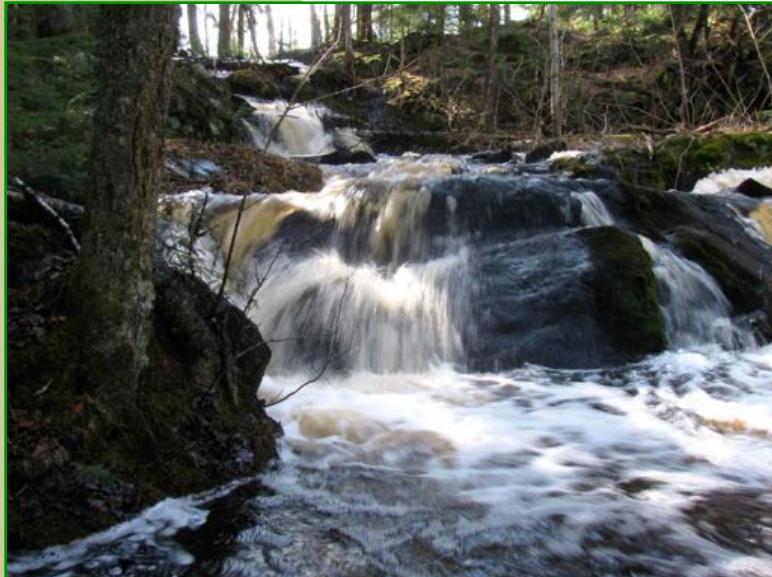


Photo submitted by Rod Sharka

WILDCAT FALLS HIKE

Approximately 100 people gathered on County Line Lake Road a few miles northwest of Watersmeet, MI for a hike to Wildcat Falls. The group expressed serious dissatisfaction with an Ottawa decision on the Delich Land Exchange Project and mourned the sacrificial loss of these special Forest Service parcels containing the unique natural features of potential old growth hemlock/cedar forests, amazing rock outcrops, high quality Scott & Howe Creek, as well as Wildcat Falls. The crowd contained not only local residents, but numerous individuals who travelled from as far away as Houghton/Hancock, Marquette, Iron River, and Ironwood MI, as well as Rhinelander, WI. This hike was sponsored by Partners in Forestry Coop (a local woodland owners organization dedicated to sustainable forestry practices), the Northwoods Alliance, and the Northwoods Native Plant Society.



Photo submitted by Rod Sharka

The Ottawa Forest Service has agreed to trade these parcels (that it claims are too isolated and difficult to manage), to a private land speculator/developer in exchange for a parcel of land south of the Porcupine Mountain State Park, that this

same individual has recently logged off and badly abused. This same individual has openly stated his intention of logging off these parcels and subdividing them for residential development.

At least six individual appeals against this land exchange are currently being reviewed by USDA-Forest Service, Eastern Region Appeal Deciding Officer Chuck Myers of Milwaukee, WI. A final decision is expected by mid-April.

Rod Sharka, one of the organizers, pointed out that the US Forest Service has promoted a plan in recent years called the "Open Space Conservation Strategy" which points out that "*the loss of open space impacts the sustainability of natural systems and the overall quality of life for Americans.*"

In this plan, the first stated goal is: "*Protecting the most ecologically and socially important lands.*"

Sharka stated, "I'd like to know...How is the trading of these parcels to someone who admittedly intends to log off these woods and subdivide these parcels for development, in exchange for land he has already cut over and abused, adhering to the conservation principles stated in this plan? "Perhaps these parcels are small relative to the million acre Ottawa, but they are unique and should be treated as such. It's NOT just Wildcat Falls. It's NOT just the old growth hemlock/cedar. It's NOT just the impressive rock outcrops. NO, it's the special combination of all of these unique features in one, concentrated area that makes these parcels so important to the public."



Photo submitted by Rod Sharka



Photo submitted by Rod Sharka



Photo submitted by Rod Sharka

BUTTERNUT CANKER

Contributed by:

John Schwarzmann, Forest Supervisor
Board of Commissioners of Public Lands

Butternut (*Juglans cinerea*), also known as white walnut, commonly grows on rich loamy soils in mixed hardwood forests. It ranges from eastern Canada west to Minnesota and as far south as Arkansas, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi (Figure 1). The wood is valued for furniture, paneling, specialty products, and carving. Butternut produces nuts for wildlife and is important for commercial nut production. In addition, butternut contributes significantly to forest biodiversity, especially in the northern part of its range where the closely related black walnut (*J. nigra*) does not grow.

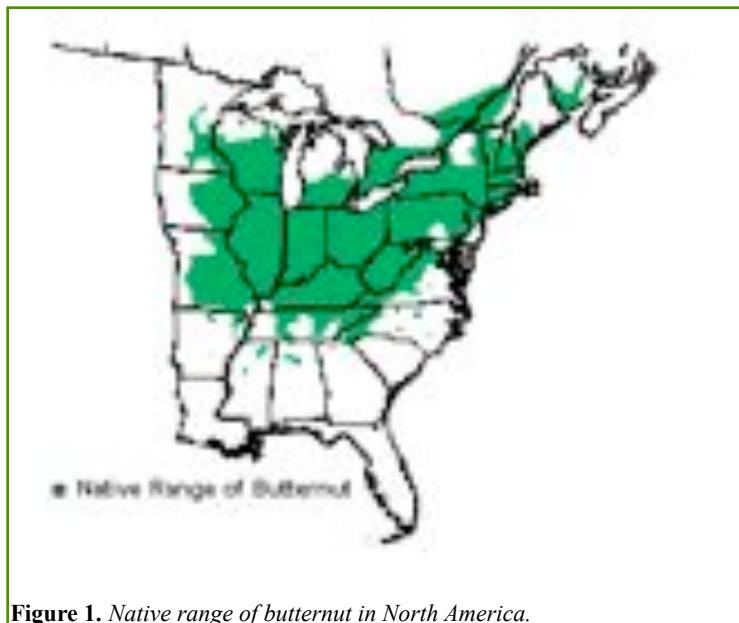


Figure 1. Native range of butternut in North America.

Butternut is being killed throughout its range by *Sirococcus clavigignenti-juglandacearum*, a fungus most likely introduced from outside of North America (Figure 2). The fungus initially infects trees through buds, leaf scars, and possibly insect wounds and other openings in the bark, rapidly killing small branches. Spores produced on branches are carried down the stem by rain, resulting in multiple, perennial stem cankers that eventually girdle and kill infected trees. Butternut canker was first reported from southwestern Wisconsin in 1967; however, it has probably been present much longer than that based on detailed examinations of killed trees in North and South Carolina. The disease has contributed to as much as an 80 percent decrease in living butternut in some States.

Young, annual cankers are elongated, sunken areas commonly originating at leaf scars and buds (Figure 3), often with an inky black center and whitish margin (Figure 4). Under the bark, the fungus forms pegs that break through the outer bark surface, exposing the spores (Figure 5). Peeling the bark away reveals the brown to black elliptical areas of killed cambium (Figures 6 & 7). Older, perennial branch and stem

cankers are often found in bark fissures (Figure 8), or covered by bark and bordered by successive callus layers (Figure 9). Cankers develop throughout a tree, but commonly occur on the main stem, at the base of trees and on exposed roots. Butternut is the only natural host known to be killed by the fungus. The fungus can survive on dead trees for at least 2 years. It is spread by rainsplashed spores, possibly by insects and birds, and perhaps by seeds.



Figure 2. Butternut killed by butternut canker.



Figure 3. Young canker with sunken bark and inky-black exudate.



Figure 4. Stem canker with black center and white margin.



Figure 5. Above canker with outer bark removed to expose fungus pegs.



Figure 6. Typical cankers with bark removed, revealing the elliptical areas of killed cambium.



Figure 7.



Figure 8. Stem canker under bark revealed by black exudate.



Figure 9. Tree killed by multiple cankers.

Growing Butternut

Currently no butternut selections are available that have known canker resistance. A few healthy butternut trees have been found growing among diseased and dying trees and may be resistant to the disease. Seedlings planted in areas with diseased trees will probably become infected. Healthy seedlings planted where the disease is not present likely will survive.

Butternut is closely related to black walnut so many of the recommendations for seed collection and storage and for planting are similar for both species. Butternut is shade intolerant. Reproduction can only be sustained in stand openings or fields where shade cannot impede its development. Young trees may withstand competition from the side, but will not survive shade from above. The minimum size opening needed to establish and promote early development is about 2 to 3 times the height of the surrounding dominant trees. Competing vegetation must be controlled when planting seeds or seedlings to maintain vigorous growth.

Butternut trees begin to produce seeds at about 20 years, and seed production is optimal between 30 and 60 years of age. Good seed crops occur every 2 to 3 years, although some seed is produced every year. Seeds germinate in the spring after seedfall and a cold period (34-410 F) of 90 to 120 days to break dormancy. Squirrels and other rodents are aggressive consumers of butternut seed, and frost, anthracnose leaf spot, insects, and lack of pollination can reduce yields of viable seeds.

Suggested Tree Retention Guidelines

Butternut is a relatively short-lived tree, and stress from old age and competition often leads to root diseases, decays, infection by other fungi, and invasion by wood-boring insects, resulting in tree death unrelated to butternut canker. If butternut canker is responsible for the loss of crown volume, there is almost always evidence of stem canker. If some other factor such as storm breakage caused the missing crown, then the grower must judge if the tree is likely to survive. Vigor of individual trees in managed woodlots, urban, or other high-value landscape settings may be increased by proper pruning and tree care.

If management objectives include conserving potentially resistant trees, the following guidelines will be helpful in retaining trees for seed and nut production and in selecting trees for breeding:

1. Retain trees with more than 70 percent live crown and with less than 20 percent of the combined circumference of the stem and root flares affected by cankers.
2. Harvest dead or declining trees to salvage the quality and value of the wood, or maintain the trees in the forest for their wildlife value.
3. Retain trees free of cankers with at least 50 percent live crown and growing among diseased trees. These trees may be resistant and have value for propagation by grafting or for future breeding. Efforts are underway to locate potentially resistant trees in native forest stands. Contact the USDA Forest Service North Central Forest Experiment Station in St. Paul, MN, for further information if you find a healthy butternut.

MARION TRUE INTERVIEW

Prelude by Joe.

I only recently met Marion True as he came to us thankful for our opposition to the Delich Land Exchange project. Marion was a Forest Service Silviculturist and involved in forestry at many different aspects, so I felt we needed him to share his experiences. He has some in depth advice on growing red pine. Note the date he entered college, to get a hint at his age, but his energy will make many younger folks envious. Like the interview with Jack Parker last month, I really appreciate learning from those with this extensive experience.



Under the canopy at Wildcat Falls on April 1, 2012

From left to right: Marion True, Joe Hovel, Jack Parker, Rod Sharka, Rich Sloat

PIF: Please tell us a bit about your back ground in forestry.

MT: *I was born and raised in the small farming community of Eddyville, Iowa. I entered Iowa State College 1949 (and that is no typo), majoring in Forestry. I worked in forestry related summer jobs in a white pine blister rust control tent camp in N. Idaho, another summer on the Ft. Apache Indian Reservation in N. Arizona and again in N. Idaho on the Powell Ranger Station. I entered U.S. Air Force. After service discharge, I worked in Louisiana for a lumber-oil company, then onto Kentucky with the Kentucky Division of Forestry as a farm forester, then back to school at N. Carolina State University in Raleigh, North Carolina. My U.S. Forest Service career started in 1960 in Missouri on the Houston Ranger District of the Mark Twain N.F. I then transferred to Cadillac and Mio, Michigan. At Mio on the Huron N.F. I was involved in a 550 acre jack pine control burn for the Kirtlands Warbler. At a separate occasion had the unusual experience of having a K. Warbler right on my hand, as my sister and I were peering down at a warbler nest. I was then on to the Branchville Job Center of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society on the Hoosier N.F. in Indiana. Next stop back to Missouri as Ranger on the Willow Springs Ranger District of the Mark Twain, where Carmen Springs, a wild turkey refuge, was successfully producing genuine eastern wild turkeys for export to northern Missouri and other states such as Michigan, Wisconsin and Iowa. Then on to Springfield, Missouri, and then up here to the Ottawa, where it pretty well ends. My wife, Gayle, a school teacher and nurse, is from Campbellsville, Kentucky. We have three children. I enjoy downhill skiing, stream and tube fly fishing, steelheading and walleye fishing, night time tubing during the big hex hatch in late June-July and, lastly, pheasant hunting in the Dakotas.*

PIF: What a great resume. You have been all over the US, yet you ended up in the Ottawa and then retired here also. Is there something special about the upper midwest, or were you too darn tired to move any more?

MT: *My career seemed to have flattened out plus wife Gayle and I decided to stay put and at least get our 3 youngsters thru school. Well we've been here 39 years now. Besides the UP is a nice area to live.*

PIF: Since our members are most interested in the midwest, please tell us about your best experience on the Ottawa (ONF). How many Forest Supervisors did you work under in your career? How many in the Ottawa?

MT: Number of Forest Supervisors: Career 13, Ottawa it is 6.

My best experiences on the ONF-- Two come to mind. (1) When I came to grasp the key factors in management of red pine plantations, especially high site (growth potential) red pine. A Mich Tech Forestry Prof Mike Coffman was focused on this and I was fortunate to have quite a bit of on the ground contact with him. Has to do with identification of soils and indicator plants as clues. Soils people played a part in this, especially Jim Jordan a soils scientist on the ONF. (2) Getting confidence in selection marking of northern hardwood stands. The objective in selection marking is to get, over time, vigorous trees of DIFFERENT size (age) within the stand. Experience and patience are prerequisites. A Forest Service researcher Dick Godman and his side kick Gib Mattson (?) were mentors on the Argonne Experimental Forest near Hiles, WI. Most of our second growth hardwood stands are pretty much even aged, a product of the extensive regeneration following the heavy cutting 60-90 years ago.

PIF: Unfortunately, it was a negative action, as viewed by you and I, that made our acquaintance. It was the Delich Land Exchange Project on the ONF. Both of our positions on that have been in the open, so we have no need to dwell on that here. What are the biggest challenges you see in the management of the ONF, and why?

MT: Increasing the volume of timber sales. *The ONF has a 90 million board feet/year allowable SELL (per the 2006 ONF 10 year Forest Plan.) The ONF has been able to sell only an average of 42 million/year for the past 5 years. Less than 50% of the allowable. In 2017 the allowable raises to a breath taking 134 million/year and in 2027 raises some more. The ONF is still a young growing forest. Growth far exceeds mortality and volume removed in timber harvests. Insufficient funding from Congress is a factor. Also, the perception by some of the public (and some employees as well) that National Forests should be uncut or limited cut takes its toll in delays, shrinking size of a sale / sale volumes or outright cancellations of a sale opportunity. And lastly, in my opinion, the Forest Supervisor has to be very clear to all his staff (hydrologists, botanists, archaeologists, etc.) that they be part of the solution to getting more volume sold, not part of the problem. I would like to see the ONF be able to increase its sell for 2012 to ,say, 50 million and perhaps to 60 mm 2013. With a proper dedicated staff they can accomplish this, in my view, in a very environmentally sound manner, not only benefiting the forest but the needs of a growing society.*

PIF: You have talked to me about red pine management. We agree on the very necessity of timely management of red pine or the very real risk of almost total loss. Tell us about red pine management. Comparisons of plantation vs. natural stand red pine.

In Wisconsin, Plum Creek has garnered support for clearing off red pine at age 60, which seems crazy to me. Do I just like big trees, or can 60 year total removal be justified? How does our red pine compare to the southern pine species you were in contact with?

MT: So you want to grow Red Pine: Start off right by scalping away the sod (about 12" square) either by a grub hoe type hand tool or some mechanical scalper for hand planting. If you are machine planting have scalpers just ahead of the colter(disc). Proper site prep a necessity, but timing and other issues also need to be planned out in advance. Also, remove overstory competition (aspen, maple, hazel, etc.). The more sunlight the better, as soon as the trees are planted. Small acreages may be done by hand (axe-saw), bigger acreages probably mechanically or with chemicals if necessary. A mixture of a few trees of a different species hardwoods, white pine, white spruce adds diversity, however keeping it monoculture may be easier to manage for the longer term. Monoculture will give your friends and

neighbors something to criticize you about. Many suggest that red pine plantations are akin to biological deserts, but a friend of mine who hunts rabbits claims they are great to protect hares and cottontails from birds of prey.

Spacing--I suggest no closer than 7x8 or 8x8 = 778 and 680 trees/acre. Nothing wrong with wider spacing, especially between rows when the first thinning with equipment moving down the rows will take place. Do some inquiry on best guess on equipment limitations as a basis for between row spacing. First thinning usually by age 25, when some trees will have two pulp sticks. Don't delay. It is very important to keep the plantation crowns vigorous. I forget what live crown: total tree height ratio is recommended but an early first thinning should keep the crowns vigorous. (Note by Joe; I normally use the one in three ratio...crown 1/3 of height of tree). Proceed with a second thinning in 12-15 years, maybe earlier with good growth. Expect at least 15 % mortality in planted seedlings the first 2-3 years. Plantation pine: the crowns are all about the same height. Very important to thin regularly to keep crowns vigorous, so they resist against sleet, ice and snow breakage. With natural regeneration there is less concern as crowns of various sizes are mixed and the larger trees usually have fuller crowns and win the battle for survival.

About Plum Creek and harvesting red pine at age 60 or so. Only thing I can come up with is that the annual growth and probably most important to a business investor, the additional VALUE the red pine will produce is tapering off by 60 to the point that the cost to keep is more than the cost to start over. This could suddenly change with a new market appearing, or a change in the species Plum Creek wants in their pulp mix, for example. Plum Creek has very different management objectives than most family woodland owners. I personally have a 15 acre shortleaf pine plantation and a 15 acre loblolly pine plantation in the Ozarks of Missouri. I planted them in 1961 and thinned three times and the biggest are the loblolly up to 16" DBH. I have had a local pole company want to buy 35-40-45 foot poles, but I don't need the cash and I shudder to think of the damage to leave trees by skidding out those long lengths. Red pine looks a lot like, and is managed about the same as shortleaf and loblolly pine. Missouri plantations also have to contend with ice, sleet and snow damage. Shortleaf pine is native to Missouri Ozarks and handles ice, etc., better than the longer needle loblolly pine. The loblolly pine seedlings came from central Arkansas, about 200+ miles further south with less ice.

PIF: What advice do you have for a family woodland owner who is contemplating management for the first time?

Advice for a long term manager on keeping their land wholesome?

MT: Contact a state farm Forester if your state has such a program or a consulting forester, for a walk thru to suggested a plan of action, based on what your interests are. And go to woodland demonstrations, logging shows and visit logging jobs to see what it takes. Industry foresters (Sappi, etc.) have sales going on all over the place summer-winter and you might be welcomed to ride along with them. Some county agents, Soil Conservation Districts, have forestry connections you might tie into. Partners in Forestry is a good way to do some networking. If you want to get into tree planting don't bite off more than you can chew. Better to do a good job of planting and caring for 50 trees than a poor job with say 500 or 5000 trees. Besides you can always plant more next year. Planting hardwoods can be real challenge due to nibbling by deer, mice, rabbits plus it is easy for the seedling to get lost in the grass, if not carefully mowed, etc. I don't care for the plastic stove like pipes put over newly planted seedlings. My observations on survival is that it is very low, possibly because the plastic absorbs the sun's heat and cooks the seedling. I would be interested in success others have had. They are used a lot in Scotland, however, but I have forgotten why they are considered necessary over there, possibly weeds and rodents, but likely less sun scald there also.

PIF: You spent your whole career in the woods and you are still amazingly vibrant at your age. It is very clear that hiking in the woods still energizes you. What is it about the woods that connects people? It seems almost spiritual?

MT: There is nothing better than being outdoors. I would likely be just as happy on a tractor in a farm field, or pheasant hunting in the prairie, but those big trees sure are an attraction.

TIMBER TAX TIPS FOR LANDOWNERS

SOME ESTATE PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

By Jim Burns

Poor Judd passed away! During his working life, he was able to purchase a number of timberland tracts, which now total 200-acres. He loved these lands and was proud of the good job of forest management he had done which had resulted in growing a large volume of high-quality sawtimber. The rest of his assets included life insurance, investments in stock, certificates of deposit and his house.

Since his wife passed away a few years ago, Judd Jr., his oldest son, had been working with him in the management of his timberlands. Judd always intended to leave the timberland to this son so the careful management of these assets would continue unchanged into the future. The remainder of Judd Sr.'s assets was to be split between his daughter, Sara and youngest son, Percy who had no interest in the timberlands.

Judd was always busy with work and never got around to having a will prepared by his attorney. He also envisioned "the kids will be reasonable and know what I want." Unfortunately, without a will, ***the entire estate*** is now going to the children as 1/3 undivided interests each. Father's intentions mean very little at this point. Are the children "reasonable"? Read on.

The quarreling usually commences at the funeral or shortly thereafter. Judd Jr. and his son have been the only ones working with the timberlands and expected to inherit the timberlands. Percy, who lives in San Francisco, claims that Dad had given him (no deed) a favorite 40-acre tract and even called it "Percy's 40." Other than that, he wants a 1/3 interest in all remaining assets.

The biggest surprise is Sara, who hasn't seen her older brother or father in at least 25-years because she considered them "timber beasts" as they killed trees and called it management! Sara belongs to every loony "green" organization on the planet. She has completed her homework, however, and calculates that her 1/3 interest in the timber comes out to a cool \$200,000.00 for the right to clear-cut the 200-acres. She has a contract from Quick Bucks Logging Company to prove

it! The other part to her plan is to then sell the cut-over acreage and other assets. Poor Judd is really rolling in his grave!

Three heirs, three different viewpoints and excellent paying work for three lawyers. Is this an unusual scenario about a dysfunctional family? No! Based upon my years of experience as a forester and timber tax preparer, I would say this is the usual outcome. Even with the existence of a will there can be problems.

In this example, splitting-up the investments, insurance, CD's and even equipment is not that big a problem, but real estate is. Anytime timberland is involved, all kinds of problems will transpire unless some legally binding direction has been pre-determined and codified.

There are numerous legal entities available which can be used to ensure that your future vision for the management and financial benefits of the timberland can be passed on to your heirs without causing an acrimonious end to the family. Trusts, LLC's and partnerships would be a few examples. My objective in this article is not to advise which legal structure would be the best for you, but in realizing that one size does not fit all situations, I urge you to seek legal and accounting advice in this matter.

First of all, the advice I would like you to take to your attorney is the fact that timber is a capital asset and income from sales of timber should be reported as capital gain for federal and state income taxes. Reporting as such, you are entitled to take a **Timber Depletion Deduction** from the gross revenue to arrive at a **net profit** which is then taxed at the lower federal capital gain tax rates.

The depletion deduction is calculated from the cost basis of timberland, meaning; the higher the cost basis, the less income tax you will pay and, the lower the cost basis, the more income tax you pay. For example, if Judd's father had purchased the timberland in 1945 for \$100.00 – that would be his cost basis. Let's say, in 1970 the father **gives** the land to Judd. The original cost

basis goes with the gift, so Judd's cost basis is only \$100.00. Now, if Judd **gifted** the land to Judd Jr. before his death, Junior would only have a \$100.00 cost basis in land that is worth a half million dollars today.

The better plan, tax-wise, would be to allow Judd Jr. to **inherit** the land which would give him a new cost basis of a half million dollars and little or no capital gain whenever he sold timber. Gifting timberland with a low cost basis is usually not a good idea.

The second tip you need to take to your lawyer concerns the actual future management of the timberland. Spell it out. If you have a written forest management plan, attach it as part of the legal document controlling the property. The other important part of this is to designate **one** person as the decision making authority. Timber

sales are going to be made, contracts signed, property taxes incurred, easements, etc.

If two people are involved with decision making authority, the entire management process will go into slow-motion and perhaps cease. With three or more people involved, nothing will happen. Remember, when there are multiple heirs to timberland, the odds of having a ringer involved like "Sara" are high.

Jim Burns is a professional forester who owns and operates Burns Timber Tax Services and works in conjunction with Susan Metcalfe at Metcalfe Forestry LLC. For more information, call Susan at (989) 348-3596 with your questions.

metcalfetimbertax@hotmail.com

www.metcalfeforestry.com

PIF is working with E G Nadeau of Cooperative Development Service and Pam Porter of the Biomass Energy Resource Center, in exploring our greater involvement in wood energy.

If you have an interest in this topic please contact us, as we would like your participation.

Have you checked out

PIF's website?

www.partnersinforestry.com

Please use the website to expose your business, service, or tree farm. Share thoughts, ideas, articles, photos, links.

All suggestions are welcome and appreciated! This is your COOP, we need your input as much or more than your dues.

Please forward the information to Margo Popovich at margo122050@mac.com.

As a service to PIF members, contact Joe for special pricing on your needs for:

- Napoleon wood stoves
- wood finishes and preservatives
- garden and tree amendments
- grass seed for trails

Future Articles

PIF members are encouraged to submit articles, announcements, photos, and items of interest for future newsletters. Submissions may be forwarded to Margo Popovich at margo122050@mac.com or mailed to:

Partners In Forestry
6063 Baker Lake Rd
Conover, WI 54519

THE SUSTAINABLE RESOURCES INSTITUTE, INC. ANNOUNCES THE LAUNCH OF THE SUSTAINABLE FOREST RESOURCE MANAGEMENT NETWORK

The Sustainable Resources Institute, Inc. was awarded FSC® Forest Management/Chain of Custody Certification for their group certification program on February 7, 2012

With support of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Sustainable Resources Institute, Inc. (a Wisconsin-based non-profit organization) was awarded USDA US Forest Service FY2011 State and Private Forestry grant to implement a Forest Stewardship Council™ (FSC®) Group Certification program for non-industrial landowners who are not in the MFL program in late summer 2011. Since that time, the Sustainable Resources Institute, Inc. has developed the FSC® Group Certification program, contracted the Rainforest Alliance (a FSC Accredited Certifying Body) to certify the program, and was officially awarded FSC® Forest Management/Chain of Custody (FM/COC) Certification on February 7, 2012.

The Sustainable Resources Institute, Inc. (SRI) has named their group certificate program the “Sustainable Forest Resource Management Network” and is now accepting members. Membership is open to any interested non-industrial private forestland owners or public forests located in Wisconsin and/or Michigan wishing to enter less than 2,470 acres (per ownership structure). Once accepted, members are provided access to the FSC® FM/COC Certificate and able to sell wood as FSC® Pure.

Unique to the Sustainable Forest Resource Management Network, any wood sold utilizing the SRI FSC® FM/COC Group Certificate must be harvested by a Certified Master Logger Company. This requirement is in place to ensure that any management activities taking place on the property under the scope of the FSC® Certificate are done using sustainable forest management techniques and will follow the State’s Best Management Practices. Additionally, the Master Logger Certification programs in Wisconsin and Michigan have received FSC Chain of Custody Certification, allowing them to directly purchase wood from FSC Certified lands and deliver to FSC Certified Mills. For more information on the Master Logger Certification programs and their requirements, visit: www.wimlc.com and www.mimlc.com.

If you are interested in learning more about the Sustainable Forest Resource Management Network, visit www.sustainableforestresource.com, send an email to info@sustainableforestresource.com, or contact Don Peterson, Program Director, at 877-284-3882.

IN DA WOODS

by Melanie B. Fullman

Bessemer District Ranger, Ottawa National Forest
US Forest Service



Worm free forest

AS THE WORM TURNS

When some folks see worms, they (the people) squirm. Others grab a fishing pole. Most of us were probably taught that worms are good for the soil.

Sure, they're slimy and not very flashy. But they aerate our gardens, and feed robins and fish, so they must be beneficial, right?

Not So Fast

Turns out – earthworms are NOT native to the Great Lakes region. Any native North American earthworms that might have been here were frozen out when glaciers covered the Upper Midwest 11,000 - 14,000 years ago. Natural recolonization by earthworms happens VERY slowly, less than a half-mile in 100 years. So there's just no way that native worms south of the glacial area, in the southern US, could have gotten to the UP on their own (they would have only moved a mere 40 miles or so).

All the earthworms you have come to know and love are exotic. First brought here by European settlers in the mid-1880s, they continue to be transported, intentionally or unintentionally, by humans. Like when unused fishing bait is dumped along the shore of a lake, or when we transport compost and mulch, buy potted plants from distant locales, or bring in firewood or equipment that has dirt on it.

The widespread use of earthworms as fishing bait is probably the leading cause of their spread: one need only look at the advancing edge of the earthworm invasion that radiates from lakeshores, fishing resorts, and boat landings. Besides, all our common bait worms are non-natives: night crawlers, Canadian crawlers, leaf worms, and angle worms.

"Don't they just drown when I dump them in the water?", some

might ask. Earthworms can actually live in water for many months because they "breathe" through their skin. So unless those fish that wouldn't come to the worm on your hook suddenly decide to eat all your dumped worms, chances are some not only survive, but thrive in their new North Woods home.

Dandy Duff

For the past 10,000 years, the forests of the Great Lakes region grew without earthworms. In the absence of such a powerful detritivore (eater of dirt and dead vegetation), natural decomposition of leaf litter was controlled by fungi and bacteria. This decomposition occurs at much slower rate than that of earthworms. As a result, a thick, spongy forest floor, known as "duff," was able to develop.

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In un-wormed areas (there's still a few left), the natural duff layer is typically 4- 5" thick, MUCH deeper than in areas with worms. Dozens of native understory plants need extra thick duff, including trilliums and other spring flowers. Well-developed duff provides protection from predation and

insulation from temperature and moisture extremes. The thick duff is so critical that many understory plants and tree seedlings root exclusively there, since it is where most nutrients are found.

The loss of a forest duff layer also causes changes in the diversity and composition of microscopic animals, insects, fungi, and small mammals, which are the primary food source for hundreds of species of forest birds, other mammals, bigger insects, spiders, amphibians, and reptiles. While earthworms can be a good food source for some of these animals, the loss of cover means they are more vulnerable to becoming prey themselves.

Researchers at the University of Minnesota and elsewhere have documented dramatic changes in native hardwood forest ecosystems when exotic earthworms invade. These changes include losses of native understory plant species and tree seedlings, changes in soil structure, and declines in nutrient availability.

Winning the Worm War

Some large earthworm-free areas still exist, albeit mostly in the most remote areas. Ottawa Forest botanists routinely survey for

worms during timber sale planning. Standard contact clauses require contractors to clean their equipment and tools before and after operations, which reduces the risk of both worm and other non-native invasive species transport.

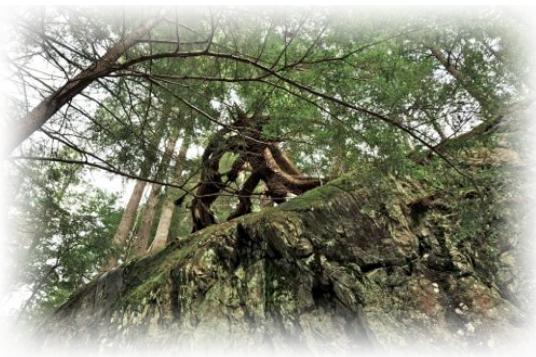
You can help, too.

1. The best way is to NOT dump bait worms. Put them in the trash instead.
2. Remove dirt/worms/seeds from your ATV, trailer, pickup, etc. before heading to the woods.
3. Don't dump compost, leaves, or garden waste in the woods.
4. Participate in ongoing worm research by joining an existing study or conducting your own as part of the Great Lakes Worm Watch. Visit www.nrri.umn.edu/worms/team_index.html or contact me for more information: 932-1330 x539; mfullman@fs.fed.us.

I can honestly say I never expected to write an article on earthworms, especially one touting their unnatural, undesirable effects on our ecosystem. Something, it turns out, that IS not supposed to be In the Woods. Hope to see YOU there instead!



Wormed forest



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