

WOODLOT WISDOM



WOODLOT WISDOM | 2021 | ISSUE 1



CHAIR'S CORNER

BY: CHRIS ANDERSON

It has been a privilege to serve Tennessee's Tree Farm Committee as your chair for the past two years and vice chair the two years prior. We have made great strides together. Our ATFS Regional Tree Farmer nominee continues to move forward in the process of possibly becoming Tennessee's first Regional Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year for the Southeast. Together we've continued to recognize and award the tree farmers who have made outstanding achievements, and began to recognize our valuable 25 and 50 year Milestone Tree Farms. This year Tennessee will be able to recognize its first 75 year Milestone Tree Farms in the ATFS certification program. We have also been proud to recognize our inspecting foresters who have held the ATFS values in high regard by helping their landowners with quality management plans that can help them achieve the integrity of ATFS certification and a healthy forest that follows.

Looking forward as a committee member, my wife Christina, and I will continue to help the committee recognize landowners and foresters gain recognition for their outstanding work and dedication to sustainable forest stewardship within the ATFS values of wood, water, wildlife, and recreation. To all who recognize the importance of healthy working woodlands today for a sustainable tomorrow, thank you, and I encourage you to preserve in your good work.

We could not have done much of this progress without the massive leg work and help that the TFA gals bring to the table. From newly formatted newsletters, webpage upgrades on their TFA site, administrative support, and their superb skills in organizing events online or in person. On behalf of the committee, thank

you Candace, Dana, and Lisa for all of your outstanding work especially during all of these new challenges since Covid.

Finally, we can be proud that our state did a great job through the audit process and for that our state has been recommended to uphold the new certificates rolling out even through the Covid challenges. Brian Hughett, a Forest Stewardship Forester for the Tennessee Division of Forestry, has led the way on the audit process and has done a wonderful job with keeping everyone apprised and informed on the needs of the auditors, committee, tree farmers, and foresters. He will bring good leadership and skills to the committee as incoming Chair to serve for the 2021-22 years as he moves from Vice Chair beginning January 2021. Our committee's new Vice Chair is Caley Monigan, a Fiber Procurement Forester for Evergreen Packaging, and moves from our committee's District Chair 2 position. She has been to the most recent National Leadership Conference and can bring those leadership skills and knowledge to our state level. If the Tennessee Tree Farm Committee can be of any assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact us through the TFA office or via your forester.



ROLLOUT OF NEW ATFS STANDARDS OF SUSTAINABILITY

BY: BRIAN HUGHETT AND CHRISTINA ANDERSON

As of January 1, 2021, the new 2021 ATFS Standards of Sustainability were approved November 11, 2020 by AFF's Board of Trustees and will serve as the basis of the ATFS certification program replacing the 2015-2020 Standards of Sustainability (ATFS, December 2020).

What these new standards mean for ATFS certified family forest tree farms or those interested in transitioning their property to becoming certified will have revisions to Standards 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8. Below is how the new standards will affect you.

- Standard 1 – Commitment to sustainable Forestry – Landowners will now be encouraged to seek and attend educational programs.
- Standard 3 – Reforestation and Afforestation – “Conversion guidance” A natural forest can be converted to a plantation if done to add economic and ecosystem value. GMOs have gained ground in forestry and therefore developed a need to monitor as necessary.
- Standard 4 – Air, Water and Soil Protection – “Use of Pesticides should be documented by the landowner or designated representative”. There will be more guidance to come as the transition rolls out throughout the year. Currently it will be addressed in the addendum.
- Standard 5 – Fish, Wildlife, Biodiversity and Forest Health – Additional guidance is provided in the standards on what constitutes an appropriate resource that determine TE species. These resources include “natural resource agencies, state natural resource heritage programs, qualified natural resource professionals or other current sources of information to determine occurrences of threatened or endangered species on the property and their habitat requirements”.
- Standard 7- Special Sites – Additional guidance is provided in the standards on what constitutes an appropriate resource for special sites and FORIs.
- Standard 8 – Forest Product Harvests and other Activities – The standards allow for designated representative to monitor, harvest, and contract services.

AFF is providing a 1 year transition period for current and potential ATFS certified landowners and their foresters to adjust to the new standards. By 2022 it will be in full effect. You can find more details, the addendum for these Standard revisions, and additional documents related to the new 2021 Standards of Sustainability rollout on the ATFS website found directly at the link here: <https://www.treefarmssystem.org/view-standards>. If you have any questions or concerns please reach out to your forester, anyone in the Tennessee Tree Farm Committee, or the Tennessee Forestry Association and we will do what we can to help you along the process.



BRIAN HUGHETT has been elected TN Tree Farm Committee Chairman for 2021-2023. Brian is Stewardship Forester for the TN Division of Forestry.



WOODLAND STEWARDS

A Regional Extension Program for Landowners

A forestry education series for Forest Landowners through the Woodland Stewards Landowner Education program!

GETTING STARTED MANAGING YOUR LAND

February 23, 2021 | 1 PM EST

Put your knowledge and plan into action to manage your forest land! This presentation will help you learn how to implement a woodland management plan that achieves your objectives.

JACOB MULLER & BILLY THOMAS

University of Kentucky

COLBY LAMBERT, NC State University

NEW GUIDELINES AND TRAINING FOR FORESTERS

BY: BRIAN HUGHETT AND
CHRISTINA ANDERSON

With the new 2021 ATFS Standards of Sustainability all Tree Farm Inspectors will need to complete inspector training. Even if you are not typically due to renew this year, AFF has required all foresters to complete the new training in order to be certified for ATFS inspections. Unlike years past, once trained under these new standards AFF has said that your inspector credentials will remain active for the life of the standards regardless of activity. These trainings will begin to be offered online in late February 2021 through April 2021 by AFF. The Tennessee Tree Farm Committee does not have any current plans of holding in person trainings at this time with materials, but any new changes will be made known from the committee via email. Please make sure that we have your most current contact information.

When taking the new standards certification program there will be new materials to review. Such as the 004 form is changing to 021 form which will capture additional information. There is a new addendum, standards, training materials, outreach materials, and more. You can view the new standards and addendum on the ATFS website at <https://www.treefarmssystem.org/view-standards>.

Some of the other new changes you can expect are to inspection protocols and tree farm eligibility. For instance, remote inspections will now be acceptable with the requirement of plan reviews and support gathered from remote sensing data. In addition, states that participate in the 5 year, 3rd party audits, annual required inspections will be made optional for that given year. Under these new certifications, tree farm eligibility has been clarified further noting more types of non-forested areas are eligible for inclusion with certified acres. They have also come up with an "84 foot rule." In that if a paved road is more 84ft wide dividing the property and the split piece is <10 acres it doesn't have to be a separate Tree Farm.

AFF should be in direct contact with you about how to proceed with the online certification. However, if you do not receive anything by the beginning of February please reach out to anyone in the Tennessee Tree Farm Committee or the Tennessee Forestry Association, and we will do what we can to help you along the process.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

CHECK OUT THE TENNESSEE FOREST ACTION PLAN

The Tennessee Division of Forestry has developed an action for our state's forests. Please check out the link below to view the plan:

<https://www.tn.gov/agriculture/forests/protction/ag-forests-action-plan.html>.

THE AMERICAN FOREST FOUNDATION TREE FARM NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Would you like to participate in AFF's virtual annual meeting?

Dates are February 23-25, visit the website below or contact TFA for more information.

2021 NLC & Inaugural Virtual Landowner Convention (treefarmssystem.org)

TREE FARM INSPECTOR TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Tree Farmer Inspectors Will Need to be Re-Trained in the Sustainability Standards, inspector eligibility, Tree Farm eligibility, and inspection protocols. Dates & times are as follows:

MARCH 1 11:00 a.m-3:00 p.m. ET
MARCH 5 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. ET

For access information, contact TFA. The TN Tree Farm Committee will work on plans to provide access to inspectors who are unable to participate in these training opportunities.

SPRING TENNESSEE HEALTHY HARDWOOD DATES SET:

APRIL 17 Univ. of Tennessee Arboretum,
Oak Ridge, TN
MAY 15 Chickasaw State Forest,
Henderson, TN
THEME: Special Forest Products

Brochure and details will be available soon.

PRESCRIBED FIRE

... IS GOOD FIRE

7 BENEFITS OF A BURN

REMOVING HAZARDOUS FUELS

Prescribed fire reduces or removes fuel that can burn, which **lowers a potential wildfire's intensity**. This makes it easier and safer for firefighters to suppress a wildfire and act as an insurance policy to **protect timber investment** from more catastrophic wildfires.

FOREST HEALTH

Fire returns nutrients to the soil creating healthy habits while controlling some diseases, insects and invasive plants that can affect tree health. **Periodic fire can improve water quality** by increasing aquifer absorption.

ECONOMIC GAIN

Prescribed fire can **aid regeneration of Southern pines**, by creating seedbeds for proper germination. Prescribed fire also **helps establish seedlings** by controlling competing vegetation.

COMMUNITY

RISK REDUCTION

Well planned prescribed fires **help protect and reduce wildfire risks to communities** where wildfires pose the greatest threat to life and property.

AESTHETICS

Prescribed fire increases the occurrence and visibility of wildflowers, which attract pollinators, and maintains open spaces and transparency that improves the scenic quality of a forest.

FARM, RANGE AND BRUSH MANAGEMENT


Periodic fire can replenish rangelands by improving the palatability, quality and quantity of grazing forage while reducing needs for fertilization.

WILDLIFE HABITAT IMPROVEMENT

Prescribed fire can **attract wildlife and songbirds** by increasing plant diversity which also yields a variety of food. Fire **allows plants to capture sunlight and grow**.

WHAT IS IT?

Prescribed fire is the use of fire to meet a specific objective, using a specific plan, to restore or maintain the health of a specific ecosystem. The prescription includes specific weather and fuel conditions required to carry out the fire.

 Like a doctor prepares a prescription for a patient for specific results, a **prescribed fire** has a science-based prescription prepared for it.

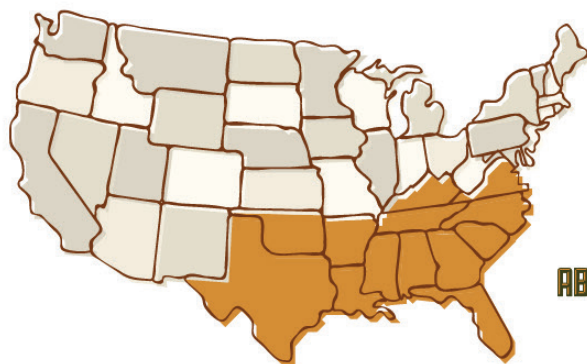


DID YOU KNOW?

The South prescribe burns more acres annually than any other region:

ABOUT **6 MILLION**

In fact, several ecosystems of the South are dependent upon periodic fire to sustain healthy animal and plant communities.



50% or more of the wildfires that occur in the US annually are in the South.



Publication provided by the Southern Group of State Foresters through a grant from the USDA Forest Service.

GoodFIRES
GoodFires.org

INFOGRAPHIC CAMPAIGN PROMOTES

PRESCRIBED FIRE BENEFITS AND PROCESS

DIVISION OF FORESTRY ENCOURAGES WIDESPREAD PARTNER USE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 15, 2021

CONTACT: Tim R. Phelps

(615) 428-5913 | tim.r.phelps@tn.gov

NASHVILLE - Like a doctor writes a prescription for a patient for specific results, a prescribed fire has a scientific based prescription written for it. Prescribed fire is the use of fire for a specific objective, using a specific plan, to restore or maintain the health of a specific ecosystem or to reduce hazardous fuels in advance of a wildfire. This outcome is achieved under specific weather and fuel conditions to restore or maintain the health and viability of a fire adapted or fire dependent ecosystem.

To illustrate this concept, the Tennessee Department of Agriculture Division of Forestry (TDF) teamed up with other state forestry agencies across the South and produced a series of infographics through a cooperative with the Southern Group of State Foresters. The series, funded through a grant from the USDA Forest Service, had a goal to increase awareness of the benefits and the process of conducting prescribed fire.

“Prescribed fire is a very useful tool for meeting a number of objectives including wildfire fuel mitigation, wildlife habitat improvement, and plant community restoration,” TDF’s State Wildland Fire Chief Wade Waters said. “This campaign serves to introduce this resource management tool to conservation-minded citizens and visitors on the benefits provided while describing the safety and efficiency of the prescribed burn process.”

The campaign focuses on the benefits of prescribed fire as well as how prescribed burns are conducted. A key strategy aims make these products widely available for others to use and co-brand in order to reach a broad audience. These products portray the Why and How of

prescribed fire and should serve to educate the viewer on the need for use of this tool while demystifying the process and ensuring the practice is carried out in a safe manner. This introductory and elementary presentation style could lead to further discussions on smoke management and respiratory concerns but is intended to focus on the benefits and safety of the tool.

In the South, where 50% or more of U.S. wildfires occur, early spring is the time to celebrate prescribed fire and all its benefits. TDF, along with the Tennessee Prescribed Fire Council, encourages others to spread this prescribed fire message by sharing the infographic series. Tennessee branded versions of the series can be found in the Prescribing Fire section of TNWildlandFire.gov. Partners are encouraged to add their logo to the graphics, share their community success stories, and post to their social media channels using the hashtag [#goodfire](https://www.instagram.com/goodfire) and linking to www.goodfires.org.

The Division of Forestry protects Tennessee’s forests by fighting wildfires, coordinating all hazard emergency response, providing prescribed fire guidance and contract services, as well as wildland fire training, in addition to promoting the wise use of forest resources by assisting landowners, providing quality seedlings, monitoring insects and diseases, improving urban forests, managing state forests, protecting water quality, and collecting forest inventory data. The Division also works to promote primary and secondary forest industries to stimulate the state’s economy. Visit www.tn.gov/agriculture/forests for more information.



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PROTECTING YOUR LAND DON'T BECOME A VICTIM



BY: SPECIAL AGENT
LALONNA KUEHN (ACU),
TN DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Tennessee landowners who own more than five acres need to know how to protect themselves from becoming a victim of timber theft, vandalism, unwanted hunting, illegal dumping, or trespassing. There are two easy steps to help safeguard your property.

Step 1: Learn to mark your boundary lines and how to properly post your property. Contact your area forester or agriculture extension office for guidance. The Tennessee Department of Agriculture Division of Forestry has a listing of area foresters online at www.tn.gov/agriculture/forests/staff.

Step 2: Set up a plan of action with a neighbor, especially if you do not live on the property. Your plan should include your name, how to contact you, and how to contact local law enforcement. If you do live there but will be away from home for an extended period, let

your neighbor know you will be gone. That way, if your neighbor sees something occurring on your land, they know to contact you. Working together with the members of your community is a benefit to all. Follow the adage, “See something, say something.”

There are numerous local and state agencies that can assist a landowner in being pro-active in protecting their assets. The Tennessee Department of Agriculture’s Agricultural Crime Unit (ACU) is a specialized unit dedicated to serving the citizens of Tennessee by investigating and enforcing state laws and regulations related to agriculture, forestry, animal health, and agribusinesses. Visit the ACU’s webpage to learn more, www.tn.gov/agriculture/consumers/ag-crime-unit.

Agricultural crime can be minimized by learning how to implement protective guidelines for your land, livestock, timber, equipment, and our natural resources. The Department of Agriculture is an asset to all Tennesseans, offering a wide variety of programs and services. Find more information online at www.tn.gov/agriculture.