

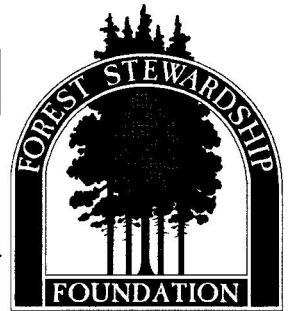
The Forest Steward's Journal

Winter 2013 Volume 19

Journal of the Forest Stewardship Foundation

The MISSION of the Forest Stewardship Foundation is to "educate and inform landowners, natural resource professionals and the general public about the science and ecology of forest lands, the many values derived from forested lands and the principles of sustainable forest land development."

DISCLAIMER: As in the past, we again advise that this information is submitted for your interest only. The Foundation's mission, as indicated above, is to "educate and inform", not to advocate or persuade. The Foundation takes no position either endorsing or opposing, approving or disapproving, any of the assertions or arguments in the contributed information.



Theme for the 2014 Landowner Conference: The Family Forest - Strengthening Connections

by Gary Ellingson, Montana Stewardship Foundation Board Member

The Fifth Annual Montana Forest Landowner Conference has been scheduled for Friday, May 23, in Helena, at the Red Lion Colonial Hotel, under the theme The Family Forest - Strengthening Connections. The all-day event, sponsored by the Montana Forest Stewardship Foundation and Northwest Management, Inc., will feature a variety of topics and expert speakers that will address topics related to the stewardship and management of Montana's forest lands. The conference provides a great opportunity for landowners to network with forestry, wildlife and land management experts; fellow landowners, and forest contractors. The speakers are always informative and this a wonderful opportunity to further develop your knowledge regarding management of your forest resources.

We are also excited to announce that a Ties to the Land workshop will be held in Helena on Saturday, May 24 (See Page 2 of the Journal for details). This highly acclaimed workshop is designed to help landowners and family members with succession planning and transfer of land from one generation to the next.

By offering these two educational opportunities on back to back days in a single location we hope to provide interested landowners and family members a special opportunity to attend two great learning opportunities in a single trip.

More information about both workshops will be forthcoming later this winter. In the meantime if you have any questions about either workshop please contact either Gary Ellingson at 406-544-7169, email: nwmanageMT@nmi2.com, or Ed Levert at 406-293-2847, email: televert@kvis.net.

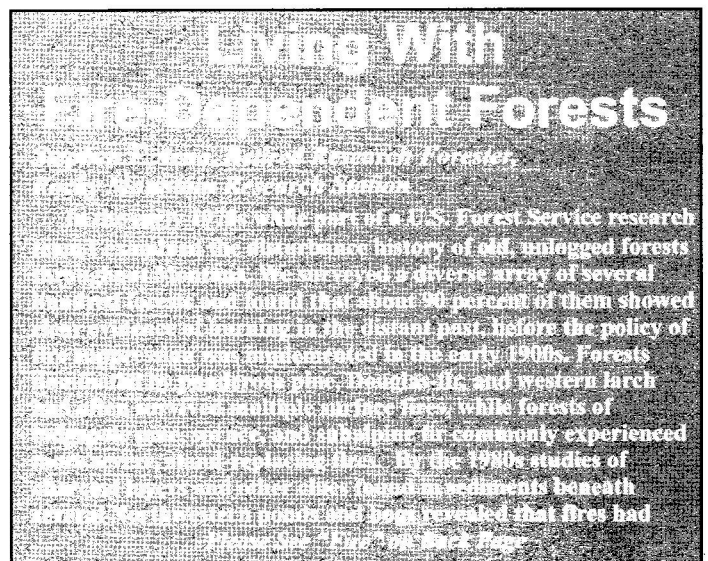
We sincerely hope to see you this spring!

From the Chair

by Ed Levert, Montana Stewardship Foundation Chairman

In past Journals I have talked about the need for our foundation to identify educational needs of forest landowners that are not currently being delivered in our state. Well, we believe we really found a big need and that is succession planning - or who is going to end up with the family property.

Will the property end up split up, subdivided or remain a family heirloom? Kirk and Madeline David are a teaching team from Athol, Idaho certified to conduct Ties To The Land workshops. Kirk retired recently from
Please See "Chair" on Page 2



**Forest Stewardship
Foundation
Board Members**

Ed Levert, Chair
5220 Kootenai Road
Libby, MT 59923
(406) 293-2847 E-mail:
televert@kvis.net

Gary Ellingson
Northwest Management, Inc.
P.O. Box 565
Helena, MT 59624
442-7555
406-544-7169 (Cell)
nwmanage@montana.com

Linda Leimbach, Treasurer
262 North Central Road
Libby MT 59923
(406) 293-3205
plleimbach@gmail.com

Dan Happel
P.O. Box 243
Pony, MT 59747
(406) 685-3419
happelmt@3riversdbs.net

Doug Mote
P.O. Box 6938
Helena, MT 59635
(406) 439-1632
doug@motelumber.com

Kim Matthew
190 Trout Creek Rd
Trout Creek, MT 59874
Kmatthew@blackfoot.net

Ralph (Rem) Mannix
16745 Highway 141
Helmville, MT 59843
(406) 492-6710
rmannix@wildblue.net

Andy Darling
39 Big Dipper Drive
Clancy, MT 59634
(406) 690-5383
apdarling@gmail.com

Glenn Marx
Montana Assn. of Land Trusts
P.O. Box 892 Helena, MT 59624
(406) 490-1659
montanamalt@q.com

Advisor
Carol Daly
919 Elk Park Rd.
Columbia Falls, MT 59912
(406) 892-8155
cdaly1@centurytel.net

**“TIES TO THE LAND” –
YOUR FAMILY FOREST HERITAGE:
Planning for an Orderly Transition –
An Intergenerational Family Forest Project**

It's no secret that today's family forests are critical resources. We who are privileged to own forest land supply society with timber and non-timber products, clean air and water, wildlife habitat, and scenic beauty. We express our values in the responsibility we take for managing our forests and the joy we take in simply walking the land.

It's also no secret that the current owners of private forestland are aging. Look around during your next Tree Farm or landowner meeting. How many graying heads do you see? The truth is that millions of acres of family-owned forest, range, and agricultural land in the U.S. will change hands this decade. Whether that land we have worked so hard to conserve passes intact to our families or becomes a casualty to development, division, or other conversion depends largely on how well we take charge of the process of succession planning now while we have choices and time to implement those choices.

Do you want to pass your land to your children? Have you asked them if they are interested in owning and caring for your family forest? Are you waiting for the kids to bring up the subject? Do your children have the skills to manage the family land? Are you able to explain to your family your devotion to the land and its heritage? Are you afraid to stir up trouble between family members by discussing the topic of inheritance? Are you just at a loss to know where to start with the whole idea of succession and estate planning?

“Ties to the Land”, an award winning daylong workshop about intergenerational transfer of forest, farm or range land, is for all who need that boost to start the all-important family conversations about the future.

The program presents practical tools and interactive exercises to help families learn to face succession head-on. The curriculum touches on estate planning and legal processes, but focuses on the conversations that need to take place within a family before the attorneys and accountants are brought in.

TIES to the LAND

The Montana Forest Stewardship Foundation is pleased to offer a “Ties to the Land” family workshop on Saturday, May 24, 2014 at the Red Lion Colonial Hotel in Helena in conjunction with the Fifth Annual Montana Forest Landowner Conference. Another workshop is scheduled in Missoula on Thursday, May 22, 2014 at a location to be determined.

Remember, succession happens! Whether that succession is planned and results in the successful transfer of your forest to the next generation depends on you. “Ties to the Land” can help. Sign up soon and take charge of your family land's future.

Chair...from Page 1

University of Idaho Extension Forestry. We will be teaming up once again with the Montana Association of Land Trusts with financial assistance from the US Forest Service to present two workshops in 2014, one in Helena and one in Missoula. For those of you who will be attending the annual Helena Forest Landowner Conference in May you may stay another day and participate in this workshop. We have included an article from Kirk and Madeline in this journal that introduces the Ties To The Land Course.

This journal includes another article from Whitefish area logger, Floyd Quiram, on regenerating the forest. Floyd has a wealth of experience and offers practical and cost effective suggestions to forest landowners. Floyd is a modern day logger with a deep respect for good land management practices.

Establishing a New Forest

by Floyd Quiram, Special to The Journal

In our travels around Montana either for work or play I am sure that anyone with an interest in trees sees it. It is a marvelous sight, that new forest coming on strong. It does not matter what specie of tree, they can all do it. Vibrant, green, maybe a couple of feet between whirls and of course the newest growth for this year that we always equate with amount of moisture we had last spring and the warm or cold temperatures then also. It truly is an awesome feeling to know that a new forest can do so well. Most of the time we can tell a plantation from a natural seeding event so we are particularly impressed when we think we recognize a naturally seeded forest. Right away I think, man, what a deal!

In most cases the naturals have superior characteristics that enable for good survival and growth long into the future. But best of all I think that I have the best tree for the least work and expense.

My tree planting experiences, while not extensive, have been mostly miserable experiments of futility. At best I've had only about 50% success. And sometimes that includes putting a fence around the tree—more expense and time. So my disappointment of planting trees has caused me to think more about how to establish the new forest.

On many sites some species have disappeared for various reasons: all forests have not maintained their historical specie structure. Fire and harvest have changed forests dramatically. A changing climate in the future will likely change specie composition in forests also.

At this point I will make it clear that I am not picking one method of reforestation over another. However, I do think that currently, small private and on some agency harvests we are implementing prescriptions that are precluding trying to encourage the next forest. Simply put, in my opinion it seems we are more than happy to park it out—leave all the big trees—not stir up the dirt—be touchy feely and generally believe that what we see now will be here forever when in fact we know that the forest is dynamic.

So what's important to growing trees? Well of course there are some basics: seed source, seed bed, soils, lack of competition, sunlight, water, elevation, etc. Seed source and seed bed are absolutely necessary for natural regen. However, all the remaining criteria are to be considered with planted regen also.

In my mind there are several ways to obtain regeneration. Fire: it's a great tool but not very applicable to most sites today for the obvious reason of damage to surrounding assets if the fire was to get away from you. One still useable fire option is small piles that are placed near

seed sources so that when burned a very good seed bed without competition and an immediate fertilizer boost is available.

Planting allows new species to be introduced, re-introduce a historical one or provide for the continuation of the previous stand. Success rates can be variable and planting can limit the amount of regen that might need pre-commercial thinning later. I personally would rather thin than plant. You know the old saying "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." Planting success may be helped by spraying or scalping an adequate area to first kill and then slow competition for the new tree.

Natural regeneration from seed trees: This option has best results when adequate seed trees are available- (always leave the best tree) 4 -15 trees per acre may be adequate. I would tend to go the higher number especially on south slopes to provide some summer shade. Also, every situation is different but I might not leave trees up tight against a remaining seed wall that is a harvest boundary or adjacent property that you know will not be treated in the next 3 to 4 years.

The natural regen option does require the one thing that we seem to have taken a step back from and that is turning up some dirt, rooting out some brush and just generally exposing soil for seed to get going in.

Foresters understand this option and its necessary parts very well. But as it is, harvest in Montana includes quite a few small private parcels and increasingly harvests in the WUI (Wildland Urban Interface). It seems emphasis on the next forest is being reduced. Remember most private and WUI lands are in our best tree growing areas. These lands are generally at lower elevation with warmer temperatures, good access, and maybe even closer to the mill.

I think one of the arguments against creating planting sites for natural in filling is how to get the right amount of dirt without creating the potato patch effect. I've been around long enough to make clear cuts in the 70's, scarify to an excess in the 80's and then watch the new way from the mid 90's until now.

The old and big crawler dozer certainly could provide more than adequate exposed soils for new trees in the past and that is basically what prompted the move to excavator "spot" scarify today. No crawler dozers allowed.

Not to downplay the excavator too much (I have some) but hey they can be way over rated and in my opinion are more costly. Does this mean never use one? Of course not. When there really is enough slash to pile I give the nod to the excavator simply because of a cleaner pile to burn. Use every tool in the tool box. But I think I know of an option that does as well, maybe better, and with skilled operators, can be

"Planting allows new species to be introduced, re-introduce a historical one or provide for the continuation of the previous stand."

a cheaper alternative for obtaining scarification. So the new small crawler dozer was there in the seventies also. There were only a couple of manufacturers and they certainly weren't the same quality then as they are now. Everybody makes one now.

Throughout the process from cutting the tree to preparing for the next tree, technology in logging equipment has not only produced better equipment it has created better results on the ground. Small crawler dozers today weigh 8 to 15 tons compared to the bigger older dozers that went 15-25 tons and more. The small crawler dozer equipped with a six way brush blade and an experienced operator needs to be re-introduced into timber harvest site prep. Small dozers have proven to be top notch equipment in every phase of logging. They are small in size, are narrow gauge, have six way blades, have low ground pressure, and don't have big tall grouser to cause excess soil displacement. I prefer around the 70 to 90 horsepower machines. Scarification can be obtained by using the blade to do a little digging. Scarification also happens at the point the dozer is turned, often times the sharper the better. This allows the tracks to dig in, rub away the duff and scuff up some dirt. Twenty to thirty percent of disturbed exposed soil is okay.

Another situation that I believe the small dozer can be a big player is in slash work where again the excavator seems to have been given more credit than it might have earned. Specifically the slash on the ground scenario creates visions of fires destroying most everything. I propose a different slash reduction plan. Can you live with the slash until it turns red in August? If you can, think about this, what if you left your slash until it is red and you could small dozer trample and scarify in one pass? You can do wonders eliminating slash and fire hazard and create the scarification you need in time for the new seed crop to hit the ground. Also, you can benefit from all those nutrients that might have gone up in smoke. For those of you that are compulsive obsessive of having every stick removed from your harvest site I wish you would reconsider. In a couple of years no one will know the difference and you are likely to have saved some money. Keep in mind that HRA's (hazard reduction agreements are for eighteen months) which will include a summer season.

That's all for now. Implement those BMP's and remember the trees keep on growing!"

Forest Stewardship Foundation
PO Box 1056
Libby, MT 59923-1056

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE PAID
MISSOULA MT
PERMIT #74

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



The Forest Stewardship Foundation is a Montana non-profit, public benefit corporation qualified under the 501 (c) (3), IRS Code.

The Forest Steward's Journal is a publication of the Forest Stewardship Foundation. Comments, articles and letters to the editor are welcome.

"Fire"...Continued From Front Page

shaped our forests continually over thousands of years.

A century ago some prominent forest landowners in northern California urged the Forest Service to test controlled burning as a method for managing forests to keep fuel from building up to hazardous levels. However, at the time forestry was new to the United States, having been developed in humid regions of Europe where fire was not a prominent force of nature. Also, the science of ecology was scarcely known at that time, and thus the importance of natural processes in managing native forests was not recognized. For these and other reasons forestry agencies decided to attempt to virtually eliminate fire in the forest—a policy known as "fire exclusion."

Fire exclusion seemed to work reasonably well during the middle of the 20th century, as less than one million acres burned each year in the 11 contiguous western states. Then in the late 1970s an alarming new trend emerged—a steady increase in large, severe wildfires which continues today. Fire analysts attribute this trend to a prolonged absence of fire leading to fuel buildup and increasingly warm, dry conditions in Western forests. Another contributing factor is the explosive growth in the number of homes, cabins, and other developments embedded in fuel-rich Western forests. As a result, the limited firefighting resources are diverted to protecting homes rather than attempting to control the growth of the fire perimeter. Thousands of dollars of public funding is often expended to protect an individual home, even if the homeowner has done nothing to make his forest property or buildings fire resistant. Fire managers are reluctant to refrain from pouring resources into even undeserved protection, fearing the political repercussions. Also, many firefighters get caught-up in the heroics of their mission, despite clear guidelines that order them not to risk life and limb. Recent testimonies of firefighters in the wake of 19 deaths in the Yarnell, Arizona, fire confirm this misguided sense of mission.

Westerners will continue to be plagued by increasing peril and costs of wildfires until we adopt a saner attitude about the role of fire in our forests. For some inspiration we could look to the Southeastern U.S., where states have "right-to-burn" laws (limiting liability to reasonable levels) and provide extension forestry help to foster responsible prescribed burning by private landowners. Rural Southerners have long recognized the essential and inevitable role of fire in their forests. We could do likewise by accepting that fire will continue to be a fact of life in our forests, but that we can influence the way fire affects our forest by managing its structure and its fuel using mechanical treatments, fuel removal, pile burning, and prescribed fire. Even in the most severe conflagrations of recent years, forest properties and homesites that were thinned and made fire-resistant experienced far less damage. It is high time to heed the advice that California timberman George Hoxie published in 1910: We had best adopt fire as our servant; otherwise it will be our master.

Forest landowners who wish to learn about the role of fire and what they can do to make their forest and homesite fire-resistant can find helpful information and guidance at www.FiresafeMT.org.

**See You In Helena on May 23, 2014 for the Fifth Annual
Montana Forest Landowner Conference**