

The Forest Steward's Journal

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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.”

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From the Chair

This journal edition is primarily focused on alternative wood product markets for our forest owners. Log markets have not been that hot since 2007 and many forest owners struggle with how they can manage their forests for a profit. It's not just the profit we are concerned with; it is also our need to maintain a healthy forest. We all have seen the shrinking number of mills across the state and with increased competition in a world-wide economy the future doesn't look that bright for our products. On the good side, we are seeing more small wood markets springing up such as beams from large trees, cedar mulch, beauty bark, etc.

Having recently toured Sweden and Norway I had an opportunity to see what those landowners are doing. Not surprisingly, they have many of the same difficulties as we seem to. One general observation in Sweden is the large number of forest landowners who belong to forestry cooperatives. These cooperatives are able to use the power of many to get the best prices for their logs, while providing many of the professional services that landowners cannot, such as planting and pre-commercial thinning. However, getting back to the subject at hand, I did find some examples of home spun enterprises that got my attention.

One example in Sweden, north of Stockholm in the county of Dalarna, we had an opportunity to see a whole tourist industry based on the folklore of the Dalecarlian horse. These colorful wooden horses are made in all sizes from Scots pine blocks and provide incomes for many craftsmen as well as log suppliers.

Another example of taking advantage of a niche market was a log home manufacturer near Oslo. The mill operator was only taking oversized Scots pine over 18" diameter. These large logs are not desirable in the Scandinavian markets for the same reason we often get docked on prices in this county for larger trees. This mill was producing 20 fully constructed homes a year at \$150,000 each as well as shipping the logs for another 40 similar homes. (Scandinavian Scots pine is much like our ponderosa pine).



Scots pine cone

Concluding our visit near Oslo we saw a successful operation where the family owners were providing local woods as well as many woods from the United States to homes, apartment complexes and businesses. Working with an architectural firm, their success came from an emphasis on the beauty of woods and catered to a high end market. The annual gross income for this operation was over five million US dollars.

So the question we all need to ask, where are there alternative markets for our products and who amongst us has the vision and determination to create a niche market? We hope this issue might give you some good ideas to pursue.

Ed Levert, Chair

7th Annual Montana Forest Landowner Conference and Society of American Foresters State Meeting a Joint Success

By Gary Ellingson, Northwest Management, Inc

The Montana Forest Stewardship Foundation is pleased to have been able to sponsor the 7th Annual Montana Forest Landowner Conference in Helena this past April 15. Joining the conference this year was the annual State meeting of the Montana Society of American Foresters (SAF). This is the second time the two groups have joined, with the last joint meeting occurring in 2013.

Attendance this year was around 120 people. Both landowners and professional foresters expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to join together and take advantage of this continuing education opportunity. As usual there were a number of excellent speakers representing a broad cross section of the Montana forestry community. Speakers represented The University of Montana; Montana Historical Society; Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe; U.S Forest Service; MT DNRC; several consulting firms such as Tetra Tech, Electronic Data Solutions, and Northwest Management, Inc.; and the Kootenai Forest Stake Holder Coalition and the Blackfoot Challenge. Notably, the Honorable Governor of Montana, Steve Bullock made an excellent luncheon presentation. During his presentation the Governor acknowledged the dedication and importance of Montana forest



Montana Governor Steve Bullock – Photo Courtesy of Glenn Marx

landowners and expressed his gratitude for all the hard work they do to benefit natural resources and the Montana economy. The Governor also described several of his forestry initiatives such as the *Forest in Focus* program and emphasized that forestry would be a key focus of the Western Governors Association while he serves as chairman of the association in 2017. This is the second time the Governor has participated in the conference and we all appreciate his efforts to improve the condition of Montana’s forests. Numerous conference evaluations noted the high quality of the speakers and presentations throughout the day. A common lament was that it was hard to choose between breakout sessions and miss what seemed to be a great topic occurring in another room at the same time. In other words folks wished they could be in two places at once! Of course the conference is more than just listening to great speakers. Breaks between sessions allowed time to visit in person with speakers and connect with friends and acquaintances. Silent auctions benefitting the Forest Stewardship Foundation and UM SAF Student Chapter provided opportunities to bid on some great gift items. Several vendors were also on hand to describe their respective organizations and the services they offer.

The conference would not be possible without the support of numerous sponsors including Northwest Management, Inc.; Edward Stamy, CPA; F.H. Stoltze Land and Lumber Company, Idaho Forest Group; Mason, Bruce and Girard; MT DNRC; MT Logging Association; MT Wood Products Association; MT SAF; Weyerhaeuser; RY Timber; Sun Mountain Lumber Co.; The Venture Motor Inn; and the U.S. Forest Service. The date for the 8th Annual Forest Landowner Conference has already been set for April 21, 2017 in Helena. It’s not too early to mark your calendar for next year! Please feel free to contact us with any suggestions or questions you might have in regards to the conference.



Society of American Forester award winners standing next to Governor Bullock L-R are Scott Kuehn, Allen Chrisman, Bob Castaneda, and Lorrie Woods. Photo courtesy of Glen Marx



Paul McKenzie, Stoltz Land and Lumber with Spenser Merwin, aide to Senator Daines - Photos courtesy of Glenn Marx



Gary Ellingson, Northwest Management Inc., visiting with Boyd Morgan, who does aerial spraying for western spruce budworm through his company Quality Spraying Services.

Getting More Value Out Of Your Logs

By Tom Jones, Lincoln County Forest Landowner and MFSF Board Member

Since most of my experience has been selling logs, I will write primarily about getting a better price for logs.

We will say you have just finished laying out a sale and have a good estimate of the board foot volume by species and are familiar with the size and quality of the timber to be sold.

The next step is to find out what types of logs are marketable in your area and what prices are being paid. This can be accomplished by contacting loggers, contacting a service forester with the Montana DNRC, or by contacting other forest landowners. These people can give you information about what logs are desirable and where the buyers are located. Next, contact the buyers (large sawmills, small family sawmills, log house constructors, and post and pole plants) and ask for the product specifications and prices delivered to the saw mill or plant. Don't limit yourself to a small area. You may find that you can haul a long distance and still get more for your logs.

While you are visiting with the buyers, ask them if they get any orders for specialty products. If you have the logs for these products, ask them to consider buying from you. The prices are usually very good. The only drawback with these orders is that you will probably need to get the logs to them in a short period of time. Following are some examples of how to make some extra dollars by being aware of the markets for different logs:

1. There is a sawmill buying logs for lumber 30 miles from my property and another buyer 120 miles from my property buying peeler logs. The price for peeler logs is considerably more and even with the long haul cost, my share for the logs will be greater. Since the peeler log specifications require larger small end diameters and are limited to Douglas-fir, larch and ponderosa pine, about one third of the volume will be shipped to the sawmill 30 miles away. The rest will go as peelers and my profit will be greater even with the extra log sort.

2. There is a house log buyer about 30 miles from my property who buys spruce, larch and Douglas fir most of the time. Although the specifications for these logs are very strict, it is very (See "Getting More Value" on page 4)



Hendrickson's sawmill north of Avon, MT does custom milling for clients, working primarily with large Douglas fir logs, or "whatever I'm able to get" according to Harvey Hendrickson.

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worthwhile for me to sell these when we have trees that meet the specifications. Some of these logs would make peelers too, but the price is more for house logs and the haul is shorter.

3. Oversize logs (over 18 inches outside the bark on the large end) that don't meet house log or peeler specifications require long hauls from my property and lower profits. Once in fifteen years I was able to sell most of my oversize grand fir logs to a small mill that were cut into beams to fill a special order. I filled another special order for decorative cedar logs with the bark on to the same small mill. Oversize Douglas fir logs can be more frequently sold to be sawed into beams. Keeping these specialty logs on the stump until an opportunity arises means more profit on the logs.

4. About 20 years ago we pre-commercially thinned some predominantly lodgepole pine stands. Now these stands need a light commercial thinning. There are a few saw logs but the majority of the material to be removed is posts, poles and pulp. We do have a market for this material but if I hired someone to do this, I would probably have to pay them a portion of the cost for the operation because of the small amount of material to remove. If I do it with my farm tractor, that has a winch and front end loader, and my pick-up truck and trailer, I can break even or maybe make a few bucks. This could be a good family project.

Small operations such as mine where I have access to a large portion of the property at any time make it easier to meet specialty product orders when they become available and to log other products when the prices are high. Some of my cutting prescriptions leave good quality larch, ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir where they are easily accessed for higher value products in the future.

I realize that my situation may not be like yours in other areas of Montana, but I hope I have started you thinking about how you may be able to get more profit from your products and timber in mind.

Editors Note: The following article is being reprinted by permission from the author. It was originally published in the Winter - 2006 edition of “Northwest Woodlands”, a publication of the Oregon Small Woodlands, Washington Farm Forestry, Idaho Forest Owners & Montana Forest Owners Associations. Though ten years old, the article's theme and concepts still apply as valuable guidelines for forest landowners who are wrestling with suppressed timber markets and having to search outside the box for less obvious ways to add to and derive value from their forest lands.

New Century Forest Products: Opportunities for the Family Forestland Owner



*By Tom Nygren, forester and Washington County Oregon
Small Woodlands Association member*

Family forestland owners (FFLOs) can see the handwriting on the wall. While there will probably always be a market for their Douglas-fir logs, the commodity price they receive will be dependent on many factors over which they have no control:

- as the “supply of last resort” for industrial operations, FFLOs may not receive the most favorable offers;
- as the national commodity market goes, so goes their stumpage value;
- as the number of mills shrink, there is less competition for their wood and haul distances are longer.

(See “Opportunities for the Family” on page 5)

“Opportunities for the Family”...continued from page 4

Clearly, the future for FFLOs is not in the past and relying almost totally on a commodity market. The future lies in recognizing and taking advantage of all the resources in their forest.

What resources—and what markets?

Three general types of markets are important to family forest owners: traditional, non-traditional and non-timber.

- *Traditional* wood products markets are based on commodities that are widely used and consumed. The common traditional wood markets are dimension lumber, veneer, pulp, poles and export.
- *Non-traditional* wood product markets are primarily dependent on their unique characteristics such as species; size; wood characteristics such as density, grain and color; and niche markets.
- *Non-timber* products and values are useful and in demand by society completely apart from any wood product value. These include decorative materials such as greenery; shade-loving plants and foraging crops such as ferns, mushrooms and herbs; experiences, such as recreation; and agroforestry opportunities.

How do I know if these opportunities exist?

Most FFLOs have a basic understanding of traditional markets. Nontraditional and non-timber products and values require a similar level of understanding. Listed below are some points to consider.

- Study what the markets want, including species, quality parameters, specific characteristics, and predictability of quality and supply.
- Learn how to inventory for these products and/or values.
- Determine the potential to create the product or value if it doesn't already exist and how to keep it sustainable.
- Examine the operability of harvesting the product or using the value.
- Is there an accessible market?
- How competitive is my product/value in the marketplace?
- Will the income from pursuing these opportunities pay for the time, equipment and other costs of utilizing them?

Factors affecting small woodland markets

Markets for traditional, non-traditional and non-timber products and values are all susceptible to broad market changes and implications at the national and international levels. Factors such as monetary policies, housing starts, import/export regulations and building material trends are the primary determinants of broad market changes.

Within any particular product or value market, specific trends or fluctuations also exist, such as when innovative new products replace an “old standard.” The replacement of the plywood market in large part by oriented strand board—relying on different processes and even different species—is an example.

The market is very responsive to cost factors. As a result, labor, equipment, maintenance and transportation costs all along the conversion chain from raw material to end-user drive the prices that can be paid for raw material — the

(See “Opportunities for the Family” on page 6)



A portable mill can be very useful in converting a log to a product valued in a niche or non-traditional market, such as beams used in many new homes for their rustic effect or furniture blanks for secondary processing. Lyal Purinton uses his mill to convert some of his Washington County, Oregon trees to products, as well as for custom work for other family forest owners. Photo courtesy of Tom Nygren.

“Opportunities for the Family”...continued from page 5

products from the forest. FFLOs may seem to be at the complete mercy of market and cost factors. After all, what effect can the small amount of product from one forestland owner have on markets or costs? However, the apparent weakness of size and lack of established market mechanisms can yield competitive advantages.

Competitive advantages for the FFLO

The key is capitalizing on FFLO characteristics such as intimate knowledge of the product, flexibility in operations and cost control through personal involvement. FFLOs can find niches and opportunities that larger owners would not find economic or might overlook. Small firms may want to work directly with an FFLO and thus bypass the middleman. Examples of these FFLO

niches and opportunities flow from some basic questions listed below.

Top Ten Marketing Tips

1. Know your product(s)—how much you have and its quality.
2. Know the markets and possibilities.
3. Select your target markets and match your products with the markets.
4. Do your homework. Understand the economics of producing the products.
5. Open the lines of communication with market experts, family forest owners and others.
6. Build a business plan and include short- and long-term goals, and how-to-dos.
7. Meet the marketers: Make and maintain market contacts.
8. Demonstrate product reliability, including amount, timing and quality.
9. Be business-like in all your contacts, record-keeping and correspondence.
10. Innovate and adapt.

What species are attractive on the market? Particular characteristics of a species for a consumer or construction product or a successful marketing strategy can be used to your advantage. The Northwest has many hardwood species that have potential value for the right market. For example, Oregon white oak is used for wine casks, flooring and furniture; and red alder is used in the cabinet and furniture industry.

The *competitive advantage for FFLOs* lies in their ability to include minor species within their management strategy and to provide the small quantities of a particular species that the market may desire.

I have this defective (unusual, rare, distinguished, atypical, striking) wood—what can I do with it? Markets can be created for the unusual, different and even bizarre types of wood or other forest product found on your woodland. “Denim pine” is simply bug-killed timber with a distinctive coloring from blue-stain fungus. Once shunned by traditional markets, denim pine is now sought by a segment of the log home market. “Pecky cypress” is another example of using a previously defective material to create a new market. How about developing a new name and market for wormy cedar? Other examples include various growth defects such as burls, spiral or wavy growth rings, or twisted stems that can be used for decorative columns or sculpture.

Creating new markets is not limited to wood products. Shrubs, herbs, old bird’s nests for decoration or crafts, unusual or especially scenic woodland settings, nuts and berries can become cash opportunities for the FFLO.

The *competitive advantage for FFLOs* is the ability to match products to specific niches in the market— something that large landowners might find outside their business goals.

But I only have a small amount—how can small amounts be marketed? When a small amount of product is projected, the FFLO can seek a traditional market that will accept the amount, look for portable mills or mills that process for a limited market, or work with other landowners to “package” wood from a number of FFLOs. Log sort yards are a potential option to aggregate small amounts from FFLOs into a more marketable quantity.

A good example of finding a market for small quantities comes from Vermont, where FFLOs have found a use for “ash butts” – the four-foot long sections of ash trees cut during pre-commercial thinning. The butts are shipped to Ireland, where they are used to make “hurleys” – a 36-inch long stick used in the traditional sport of hurling. It’s a small market, but still consumes enough Vermont ash butts to make 150,000 hurleys a year! (See “Opportunities for the Family” on page 7)



A 100 year old Douglas fir with heavy sweep near the base and 40 feet of saw log above. Wouldn’t this sweep make unique planks for coffee tables, recreation room counter tops, or an entrance archway? On the northwest Montana property where this tree is located, there are many similar examples of various shapes and diameters probably caused by wind or snow-load damage when the trees were young. If there was a market, the value in these trees could be well above that of firewood or saw logs. Photo courtesy of Clyde Robbe

“Opportunities for the Family”...continued from page 6

This example demonstrates the value of information: One must first be aware that such a product exists, then the specifications (wood species, lengths, widths, etc.) and then who the buyers are.

The *competitive advantage for FFLOs* is the flexibility to seek a variety of small market options that best meet their product situation.

My trees are too small/large/etc.— How can I find “market fits?” The “revolution” in log processing over the last 20 years has created many problems for FFLOs. Large logs over 30 inches in diameter are not welcome at all mills or are discounted. FFLOs can seek non-commodity markets, such as those that require tight grain or large size, and find premium prices for their logs. Market opportunities exist for furniture, cross-ties for utility poles or beams for interior home design. Portable mills or existing large-log, low-volume mills can be used to “break down” large logs to meet product specifications for these markets.

Similar opportunities exist for small wood, particularly the small diameter poles from thinning operations. Poles, posts and other supports used in agricultural and nursery operations can be a market for thinnings.

The *competitive advantage for FFLOs* is that they have the flexibility of production to meet the needs of secondary markets. By creating linkages to these markets and meeting their particular needs reliably, FFLOs can create market relationships well into the future.

Can I get rewarded for good management through higher prices and/or better access to markets? One way of getting market recognition for good management is by getting your management certified as sustainable by a certifying organization, such as the American Tree Farm System or Forest Stewardship Council. While a price premium has only been given commodity markets in isolated cases, smaller markets that serve “green” manufacturers (furniture makers and custom builders) more often do provide a premium price. The more realistic reward at present is an increasing acceptance of certified wood (or not accepting uncertified wood) and therefore better access to a variety of markets.

The *competitive advantages for FFLOs* who practice good management are: 1) creating quality products that fit niches not filled by commodity wood producers; and 2) access to new markets that seek sustainable certification.

My timber won’t be ready to harvest for a long time. What can I market to pay my expenses in the meantime? While large forestland owners are able to produce regular income through their scheduled harvests, FFLOs usually must wait a long time between their timber harvests. During the intervening years, non-timber forest products can be a significant source of income for family forest owners. These products include *nonwoody species*, such as mushrooms, ferns and other understory plants; *nonwoody parts* of trees such as cones, fruits, bark, foliage and sap; and *woody material* such as firewood, small posts and poles, and boughs. Often, the more diverse the forest, the more types and amounts of products that can be recovered. While investment costs for harvesting are

(See “Opportunities for the Family” on page 8)



Examples of mortise and tenon patio furniture constructed from lodge pole pine post and pole material. The tools required to make the joints for this type of furniture are readily available and with a little practice, even the inexperienced builder can produce functional and eye pleasing furniture for personal use or to market.

Business and Wood Products Trends that Affect Markets and Family Forest Owners

1. Globalization—the world has shrunk, look for international markets, and anticipate the affect of them on traditional products.
2. Market niches—small is beautiful...and profitable!
3. Value-added is where the profit is. Can you find a way to “move up” the product process chain?
4. Integrated operations provide increased efficiency; get the most out of your forestland by marketing all possible products.
5. Sustainability is important to consumers—relating your good management to your products increases market options and product value.
6. Growth in engineered wood products processing sector. Technological advances in glues and lamination have spurred the increasing use of engineered wood, along with decreasing availability of high-strength construction wood at competitive prices.
7. Under-the-radar business enterprises—includes business enterprises targeted at specific markets, such as trends toward organic food products, energy efficiency, and antique or historically significant furniture.

“Opportunities for the Family”...continued from page 7

low, labor costs may be high.

The four largest segments of the non-timber forest products industry in the Pacific Northwest are holiday greens, floral decorations and greens, wild edible mushrooms and medicinal plants. The keys to success are knowing what potential products you have on your woodland, learning how to harvest them and finding markets in your area. Portions of your woodland not intensively managed for timber, such as riparian areas, meadows and low-productivity areas are good areas to explore. Jim Freed, Washington State Extension forester, knows one owner that harvests \$15,000 of bough material a year from five acres of riparian area (*Capital Press*, Dec. 13, 2002).

The *competitive advantage for FFLOs* is in-depth knowledge of their woodland with the opportunity to use the incidental growing capacity of their woodland to get a supplemental crop (or to market desirable forest experiences), and the ability to offer quality and freshness.

Next Steps

What can FFLOs do to improve their marketing opportunities and create income sources? The following are some “do-it-yourself” ideas to improve marketing opportunities for small woodland owners.

- Search out information about a wide range of market products. Other FFLOs can be a valuable source.
- Find out what “product specifications for inventory” and inventory techniques are needed to determine how much potential you have for the products. For some products, you may have to use your judgment to extrapolate specifications from what you see on the market and what you see in your forest.
- Inventory your forestland for the products, using the specifications you have learned or developed.
- Determine how available technology can help you create saleable products: cutting guides, portable mills, drying regimes (and kilns), and other pieces of “know-how” and equipment are examples.
- Work with other FFLOs to develop cooperative ventures and relationships for multiple owners, such as marketing agents, collection and sorting facilities, primary processing (break-down) facilities, grading services, equipment sharing and financial resources for short-term loans.

Landowner Success Stories

Pre-Harvest of Cedar Boughs

An example of integrating your forest product opportunities is the pre-harvest of bough material from a timber sale. A family forestland owner in Washington County recently used this strategy successfully on a harvest he and his family conducted on 50 acres of Douglas-fir.

Western red cedar was intermingled with the fir in some parts of the stand. The owner arranged with his logger to fall these cedars prior to the major operation in the stand, a clearcut. He timed the falling so that the cedar would be available for bough collecting while they were fresh. After the cedar trees were felled, the owner and his crew collected the cedar boughs for sale to local bough markets. Once the boughs were removed, the logger returned and completed the harvest operation.

The net benefit to the family was an “added value” of over \$5,000, in addition to the timber volume.

Shade Culture—Value Underneath the Canopy

The dominant tree canopy is evidence of the timber value in a forest. However, underneath the canopy is an opportunity for values of a different sort: mushrooms, floral greenery, fruits and berries—and ferns.

One family forest owner in Washington County has taken advantage of the growing space and the shaded conditions found underneath the dominant canopy by growing ferns for market. The ferns are collected as small plants from roadsides, harvest areas or other sources, and placed in pots. The pots are then placed underneath the canopy to grow under ideal light conditions, and with human care and culture, to the stage where they command a premium market price. Meanwhile, the over-story grows toward whatever timber product is specified in the owner’s management plan.

By rotating the fern-canopy combinations over time, ferns can provide an annual income while waiting for periodic timber harvests to provide the investment income.

“Opportunities for the Family”...continued from page 8

(Landowner success stories continued)

Looking for the Value-Added Product

Certain Douglas-fir trees, primarily older trees with tight, straight grain, can be worth significantly more to the right market. One of those markets is for electrical transmission pole “cross-arms.” Cross-arms require exacting wood specifications, but command a premium price. Knowing what those specifications are, and working with a competent portable mill operator to produce them, can pay value-added dividends for landowners. Sorting these quality logs in the woods will take some time, but the added value may well be worth it.

The Bottom Line

Full utilization of your timber product is important in capturing the potential of your woodland. Markets must be found or created for the low-end material (lower quality and residual) as well as the higher quality products.

Be responsive in your relationships with buyers in the marketplace. Buyers may be willing to try out a new species and “buy local,” but will demand consistency, reliability, on-time deliveries and quality that matches expectations.

Every FFLO should also have a business plan component in their management strategy. The business plan should be based on the forest-related products and services the owner expects to produce while achieving management plan goals and objectives.

The business plan will be the basis for your marketing strategy and will serve to distinguish a pipe dream from reality.

TOM NYGREN is a forester and Washington County Small Woodlands Association member who owns and manages 165 acres of forestland in Washington and Douglas counties, Oregon. He is also author of a report entitled, Market Opportunities for Small Owners, a project that was funded in part with a grant from the USDA Forest Service. For a copy of the report, contact Tom at 503-628-5472 or tnygren@juno.com.

< SPOTLIGHT ON A VALUE-ADDED WOOD PRODUCTS COMPANY >

Cardwell, Montana – Kipp Huckaba, owner and operator of Huckaba Custom Design (HCD) stands next to his saw rack and some rough cut lumber produced at his workshop near Cardwell, MT. Specializing in custom rough cut lumber and timbers, 3-D wood signs, furniture and custom moldings, Kipp has found a way to add value locally to the saw logs that might otherwise be shipped off to more distant plants or markets for dimensional lumber processing. Kipp established the facility in 2004 and has watched over recent years as availability of timber, especially large diameter trees, has dropped off considerably. By doing his own custom cutting, whether for custom orders or to supply his own 3-D sign, furniture and molding business, he keeps all labor and handling under one roof, greatly adding value where Mother Nature has left off. HCD can be visited at 726 State Hwy 2 East, Cardwell, MT 59721, or you may contact Kip at (406) 287-3347, kipp@huckabawoodcarvings.com, www.huckabawoodcarvings.com





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Ducks Unlimited

Special to the Montana Forest Steward's Journal

Celebrating Montana's Open Land

by Glenn Marx, Montana Forest Stewardship Board Member and Executive Director of the Montana Association of Land Trusts

If there's one thing all Montanans can agree on, it's that open land – our forestlands, agricultural lands, vast landscapes and our freedom to roam – are absolutely unbeatable. That's what Montana Open Land Month, celebrated in July 2016, was all about.

Open land fuels Montana's wood products industry, multi-billion-dollar tourism and agricultural sectors, and entices entrepreneurs to locate their businesses here. Open land provides respite for veterans healing from tours abroad. Open land provides us all - hikers, bikers, hunters, people who work and play in the woods - places to get out and do what we love.

What is open land? Undeveloped land that grows food and fiber, provides outdoor recreation and wildlife habitat, and generates fun and economic benefit. Yeah, Montana's got a lot of it. And that's good. What is Montana Open Land Month? Recognition of the importance and value of open land. It's a pretty simple concept, really.

Given the importance of open land to Montana, it's not surprising that Governor Bullock officially recognized July 2016 as Montana Open Land Month. In his official letter, the Governor acknowledged that "...open spaces not only provide for vast scenic viewing and healthy wildlife populations but also contribute overwhelmingly to Montana's tourism, agriculture and outdoor recreation industries. Montanans take great pride in our outdoor heritage legacy we are entrusted with and must safeguard for future generations."

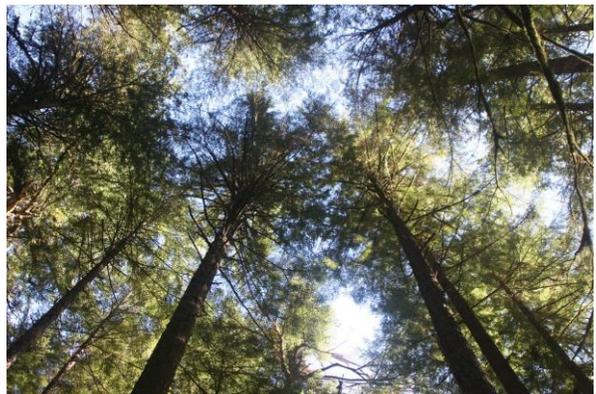
Montana Open Land Month is about fun. It's about economic value. It's about celebrating what Montanans share in common: an incredible place to live and work and recreate.

So in July Montana celebrated open land with events in places like Troy (Alvord Community Forest) and Whitefish (Haskill Basin with Stoltze Land & Lumber), in the woods near Tupper's Lake in the Clearwater Valley (Revive and Thrive Work Party), and dozens of other events around the state. Check out the Open Land Month's website at <http://openlandmt.org>, and follow us on Facebook at facebook.com/openlandmt, on Twitter at @montanamalt and @openlandmt, and on Instagram at mtmalt and openlandmt.

The Montana experience is invariably an outdoor experience. Individually, and collectively, open land is important to our Montana way of life and our economy.

A friend of mine named Ron Marcoux, an inaugural inductee into the Montana Outdoor Hall of Fame, wrote recently that "open land helps sustain Montana's economy

(See "Montana's Open Land" on page 10)



“Montana’s Open Land”...continued from page 10

and nourish our souls. All too often we take our vistas, farms and ranches, our forests wildlife habitat, river bottoms and recreational opportunities for granted – as if Montana can’t and won’t change. As if our open land will always be there.”

The core message of Montana Open Land Month was clear: It encouraged Montanans to get outside and celebrate what they love most about this “Big Sky, Open Land” state and to ponder the importance of our open land “always being there.”



Montana Forest Owners Association (MFOA) Update on Montana Legislative Session

By Mike Christianson, President, Montana Forest Owners Association

We are less than six months away from the Montana Forestry Forum for State Legislators. Landowners, forest products industry, and virtually everyone involved with forestry will likely be impacted by legislative action and/or inaction. MFOA is gearing up to testify and otherwise influence legislators on behalf of sustainable and responsible forestry.

Education of legislators is important! Topics at the Forestry Forum will include the following:

- Good active forest management and the benefits to our communities and State regardless of ownership
- Dispelling the myth that forestry is only a federal land issue
- Dispelling the myth that forestry is an industry of the past
- Basic forestry tenants, laws and regulations in place
- Overview of ownership distribution
- Review of economic impacts
- Status of the forests in Montana
- Summary of the benefits of active management

We hope you will attend the forum. If you wish to voice your concerns to the Montana legislature, consider contacting MFOA at info@montanaforestowners.org or at (406) 5866362, and/or attending the Forestry Forum for State Legislators on December 6, 2016, from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. in Helena. The Forum is sponsored by Montana Wood Products Association, Montana Tree Farm, and Montana Forest Owners Association. Come and interact with members of the legislature, listen to a presentation on an important forestry issue, and provide your input.

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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.

Should you join the Forest Stewardship Foundation?

By joining us you become a part of a small but energetic organization that gets things done. We are all volunteers, but since 2011 we have been able to co-sponsor the Helena Landowner Conference and several "Ties to the Land" workshops. We have also contributed, as funding is available, to MSU Extension Forestry to help fund stewardship workshops. Plus, twice a year we publish and distribute over 1,300 Forest Steward's Journals.

We know money is tight, but our dues are still only \$25. We currently have 98 members so you can do the math and see that we don't have much of an operating budget once we publish and mail the Journal. Your membership means a great deal to our continuing success. Please consider joining the foundation by completing the membership application form/envelope found in each winter's edition of the Journal.

And finally, I am happy to report that the Forest Stewardship Foundation Board of Directors recently made the decision to construct and maintain a webpage to replace the Facebook site. Though the webpage process will take several months to complete, we know it will offer members, resource professionals and forest landowners timely access to conference notifications and registration, current news stories and archived Forest Steward's Journals.

<https://www.facebook.com/montanaforeststewardshipfoundation>

Thank you sincerely for your help.

Ed Levert, Chair

