



News From

North-Central Forest Landowners Association, Inc.



Box 141, Port Allegany, PA 16743
McKean, Potter, Cameron and Elk Counties

We're holding tomorrow

August, 2010

www.orgsites.com/pa/ncfla



Terminal Buds



by Tim Pierson

Your association has been busy providing educational opportunities for all forest landowners in our region and as usual our members have been very involved in the process. A special expression of appreciation goes out to Ken and Jane Cogan who hosted our NCFLA Annual Picnic and Demonstration Day. They have provided us with this opportunity for fun, fellowship and education every year since our association's beginning in 1998. Also, special thanks to Marie and Walt Petrick and Verda and Roy Knowlton who opened up their properties as part of a very successful Forestry and Wildlife Conservation Field Day in June. It is exactly this kind of effort that has made our association a leader in forest management and stewardship.



A key message pointed out at our Field Day and in previous newsletters is the importance of a forest and wildlife management plan that is up to date, relevant, accurately reflects your objectives and is comfortably doable. That plan is often the basis for important action and decision making. Therefore, this article will continue our series in developing a forest and wildlife management plan that works for you and your family that will conclude with a planning workshop where you bring it all together. So, let's get started with developing your plan or revising and updating your present one! Those of you with an existing Forest Stewardship or Tree Farm Management Plan, get it out and dust it off! Those of you that already do this annually know why it is so important. We live in a changing world and the forest is always in state of change.

This article is a continuation from last time and an introduction into getting much of the information you will need to work on your plan and be able to explain the completed plan to others. Some of this information is readily available (topographic maps, aerial photos, soil surveys, deed descriptions and land surveys- will be covered later) and some will require a little soul searching on you and your family's part. Knowing how you and your family presently use your land and what your objectives are for the future are most critical. Enclosed, we have included a Forest and Wildlife Management Plan Landowner Survey identified in our last newsletter to help you gain insight on your true objectives. A similar survey has been used in developing forest stewardship plans. Take the time to complete the survey and reflect on some of your responses because reality will often drive your management decisions and help others (family and resource professionals) understand your goals and objectives. For example, if you, family or friends will be harvesting firewood from your woodlot, this can play a beneficial role in helping your forest grow quality sawtimber or have a detrimental effect on future sawtimber value. Planned harvesting of firewood can actually serve as an effective means of completing timber stand improvements (TSI) or assist in crop tree management in your forest. However, there may be the opposite effect by unplanned/unmarked firewood harvesting by removing some of the best straight future timber trees (hot-burning, easy lifters and splitters). If hunting is an important objective and you are planning a timber harvest in the near future, then you can plan to utilize that harvest to provide long-lasting hunting opportunities well into the future. You will use this survey to develop a new management plan or evaluate and adjust your present plan. Additional copies will be available on our website or by calling the McKean County Cooperative Extension Office (814-887-5613). Share it with a friend or neighbor! Remember- Enjoy Your Woods!

NCFLA Calendar:

Tuesday, September 14
Board of Directors meeting
DCNR office
Emporium, PA 9:00am

Sunday, Sept 26
Woodswalk at Rick and
Cyndee Smith's Rte 155
Port Allegany
1:00pm - 4:00pm

Sunday, November 7th
Annual banquet.
Invasive Plants Species
by Art Gover, McKean
County, 12:00pm - 4:00pm

Tuesday, December 14
Board of Directors meeting
McKean Co. Ext. Office
Smethport, PA. 9:00 am

2010 Forest Tent and Eastern Tent Caterpillar Defoliation Report

Stan Hess, DCNR Service Forester, Potter & McKean Counties



The 2010 spring season came early with warm weather in late March and early April. As a result the eastern tent caterpillar eggs began hatching on April 1 and their tents

were visible in 2 days. The forest tent caterpillar eggs began hatching on April 5 and continued hatching over a prolonged period even from the same egg mass. This stuttered hatching accounted for all sizes of caterpillars observed during the feeding season.

The weather turned cold again and leaves slowed down in the leafing out process. Both species of caterpillars turned to eating buds until renewed leaf expansion. The hard and numerous frosts killed very few caterpillars. Once the weather finally turned generally warm, defoliation began in earnest. Defoliation was heaviest south of Route 6 in Potter County and expanded further into Cameron and Tioga Counties. Some towns had extensive defoliation on maple trees from the forest tent caterpillar with caterpillars crawling, hanging, and blowing everywhere. An aerial survey by the Bureau of Forestry mapped 294,864 acres affected to some degree. This compares to last year's total of around 320,000.

As the season progressed, the fungal and viral diseases of the caterpillars became very effective and massive numbers of both species died. The degree of mortality was higher in the areas that were defoliated the last two years. The native friendly fly, *Sarcophaga Aldrichi*, was even more numerous than last year becoming a nuisance and generating complaints.

Then, the forest tent defoliation just stopped in many areas as the surviving caterpillars went into the pupae stage where they spin a protective cocoon. It is at this stage that the friendly fly lays live larvae on the pupae which then eat the caterpillar pupae. This year a large percentage of both species' pupae were parasitized by the fly whereas last year 30 to 70% of the pupae survived. Other parasites of the pupae were also observed.

It appears that very few of the forest tent

caterpillars metamorphosed into moths while the eastern tent has had some success as evidenced by new observed egg masses on small trees of its preferred trees such as all cherry species, apple, and crabapple. For the most part, very few moths have been observed by the public and foresters. If you remember last year, every town and every night light was covered with moths. This story is one of how nature finally controls population outbreaks of native insect pests.

The next step in the monitoring and prediction process will be to look for eggs after the leaves fall. As the eggs are laid high in the tree crowns, foresters and landowners will survey by cutting trees and by using field glasses to observe tree branches and twigs. It appears that the forest tent infestation has run its course in the areas of multiple year defoliations. For those areas hit hard this year for the first time, a prediction at this time would be fool hardy. We are not so sure about the prognosis for the eastern tent caterpillar. Since this insect is an important defoliator of black cherry, egg mass surveys will be very important.

There are pockets of maple and beech that do not look good from the road at this time. Landowners should monitor their forest and look for trees that have no leaves or appear to be stressed from crowns with die-back or very small deformed foliage. The effect of this episode on maple trees will be that most trees will be OK. However, there will be pockets and individual trees with various levels of crown die-back and some mortality. Trees with more than 30% crown mortality will have trouble recovering. Past history of defoliating events on our northern tier sugar maple has shown that those below this threshold can recover. In evaluating your woods, do not jump hasty decisions based on crown condition now or in the fall. Conclusive results will not be visible until next year after the new leaves develop, so be sure to walk you woods again then. Have a professional forester evaluate your woodlot if you think that you need to have a salvage timber sale. As always, you can call on the Bureau of Forestry Service forester for help in determining your forest's health and advice on how to conduct a timber sale.

Pennsylvania Forest Stewards Annual Meeting, Picnic and Woods Safety In-Service Training

Walt and Marie Petrick attended the above two day forest stewardship event. The first day was the Woods safety in-service training which consisted of three sessions. The first session was an introduction to the safety equipment that was needed for working in the woods and to operate chainsaws. A brief discussion was given for advantages of using gloves, helmet, ear protection, eye protection, chaps and a log dolly. Also, the safe use of tractors in the forest for skidding logs was discussed.

The second session covered identifying and accommodating the dangers of working in the woods such as: dead branches in the over story, snags, grapevines and leaning trees. The different levels of chainsaw skill ratings were also discussed.

The third session was a chainsaw use demonstration and tree felling which included the handling of the chainsaw, the starting of the chainsaw, the determination of the fall zone of the tree, the clearing of the escape routes, the placement of the notch, the cutting of the notch and the felling of the tree. As an extra demonstration, it was shown how to bring down a tree that was hung up in the branches of other trees.

During the second day. There were 13 sessions on various aspects of forestry and wildlife. Five of these sessions were attended by Marie and Walt.

These were:

- *Salamanders in your woods* - This session revealed the large number and variety of salamanders and their contribution to the ecology of woodlands.



This log dolly can be used behind a tractor and can haul large logs out of the woods

- *Private Forest Landowner Research Discoveries*
This session described the statistics of Pennsylvania forests and land owners, taxes and inheritance laws.

- *History in the Woods* - This session provided guidelines to assist the present land owner in determining the historical use of his land. For example, level 40 foot circles would indicate charcoal pits, piles of rock would indicate an old building, rows of old trees could indicate a fence line.

- *Silviculture: Thinning and Regeneration*

This session was supposed to show how a site that had an abundant cover of acorns and had the undergrowth removed, promoted the growth of oak trees. Although the acorns were sprouting in March, by June the acorns were dead. So, instead of getting a lecture, on regeneration, we received information on the weevils that feed on acorns and a good lesson that insects can destroy otherwise great regeneration conditions.

- *Wood-crafting: Art from your woods* - This session showed how art can be created from branches, leaves, and other items commonly found in woodlands. Woodcarving and wood burning ideas were shared.

Moving Firewood?

Effective August 9, 2010 Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture signed an order of quarantine by adding 31 counties, including Cameron, Elk, McKean, and Potter. The considerable quarantine expansion was based on new detections in PA.

The quarantine is designed to help slow the spread of the emerald ash borer. Pennsylvania's quarantine restricts the movement of ash nursery stock, green lumber and any other ash material, including logs, stumps, roots and branches, and all wood chips from the quarantined area. Due to the difficulty in distinguishing between species of hardwood firewood, all hardwood firewood - including ash, oak, maple and hickory - are considered quarantined.

For more information visit <www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/fpm_invasives_EAB.aspx>

2010 Annual Picnic



Ken and Jane Cogan

The annual picnic and business meeting was held at Cogan's Tree Farm on Sunday, July 17, 2010, with thirty eight members attending.

Tim Pierson started the meeting with a summary of his Alaska trip. Other subjects discussed were some statistics and status of the Marcelles shale exploration and drilling. (It was interesting to note that a helicopter was delivering equipment to a local wooded site for oil and gas exploration, during Tim's talk.) Jim Herzog updated members on property tax issues for the landowner.

After the picnic, Tim gave a talk on chainsaw safety and demonstrated proper tree felling techniques. A period of questions followed after the tree was cut.

Joint Forestry, Wildlife Conservation and Stewardship Field Day

On Saturday, June 19, NCFLA hosted a Forestry and Wildlife Conservation Stewardship Program Field Day sponsored by: Headwaters RC&D council, PA Tree Farm Program, NCFLA, Penn State Cooperative Extension, DCNS Bureau of Forestry, USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service, Pennsylvania Game Commission and the USDA-Farm Service Agency.

The program started at the Port Allegany Moose lodge with refreshments and morning presentations on the Forest Stewardship program by Stan Hess, The Pennsylvania Game Commission Private Landowner Assistance Program, a presentation of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service farm bill programs (including CSR), USDA Farm Service Agency Biomass Program, the PA Tree Farm Program and forest management planning.

After lunch at the Port Allegany Moose lodge, there were three field trips. The first was to Pennsylvania Game Land #61. PA game commission officer, John Dzemyan gave a talk on native grasses and available grass mixes available for providing food for game. He showed the food plot arrangement on the game lands and examples of different grasses.

The second field trip was to the Petrick's tree farm. Where the Petricks showed the status of CREP planting on their property after 2+ years and the status of tree regeneration after the second year of opening up the canopy.

The third field trip was to the Knowlton's tree farm where they summarized the activities and numerous improvements on their tree farm over the past 20 years.



John Dzemyan showing an example of grass planted on PA game lands #61

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