

NORTH CENTRAL FOREST LANDOWNERS ASSOCIATION

Board of Directors Meeting

March 11, 2008

9:00 a.m.

The Board of Directors Meeting was held at the DCNR Office, Emporium, PA. In attendance were:

Directors:

Dave Lombardo, Cameron Co.

Lynda Pontzer, Elk Co.

Rick Smith, McKean Co.

NCFLA Officers:

Larry Schultz, President

Verda Knowlton, Secretary

Guest: Walt Petrick

Advisors:

Tim Pierson, McKean Co. Extension Office

Stan Hess, DCNR Bur. Of Forestry, Potter-McKean Co.

Toby Herzing, DCNR Bur. Of Forestry, Cameron-Elk. Co.

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 a.m. by President Larry Schultz. Larry said that Jean Culver could not be here today because her husband, Jack, has had some heart problems; Ken Comstock is not feeling well and had a medical appointment today.

OLD BUSINESS:

Incorporation:

Larry reported that he, along with Verda and maybe Jean Culver, will be attending a 2:00 p.m. meeting this afternoon with Attorney Steve Minor regarding setting up the NCFLA as a 501(3)c non-profit corporation. The benefits: protecting the personal assets of officers and board members from suit; allowing people to give gifts to the NCFLA and obtain a tax write off; and avoiding inheritance taxes on any property given to the NCFLA. Larry polled the members present regarding the value of incorporating the Association—all were in favor. Motion made by Dave Lombardo, seconded by Rick Smith to incorporate the Association. Motion carried.

2008 Schedule of Events:

Central Region Forest Landowners Conference—March 8:

Tim reported that there were 66 registrants for the conference on March 8th at the Penn State School of Forest Resources Building in State College.

Woodswalk at Larry Schultz's Tree Farm—May 18:

Tim Pierson handed out the draft flyer. It was agreed that we will include the language—"Registration is required so that we can anticipate refreshments and transportation" on the flyer. Larry will provide

directions to his property to Tim for inclusion in the flyer and to Walt for inclusion on the website. The NCFLA will pay for the rental of portable toilets. Larry will pick up two banquet tables from Verda Knowlton for use at the woodswalk.

Ginseng Production Workshop—June 21:

Tim Pierson distributed copies of the Agroforestry Series #6 flyer for the Ginseng Production Workshop to be held at the Coudersport High School, which is co-sponsored by the Association. (copy attached)

Woodswalk at Lynda Pontzer's—June 28 or 29:

Lynda will get in touch with her forester, Ken Kane, to finalize the date for the woodswalk on her 450-acre property. Tim will need directions to the property for the flyer.

Summer Picnic—July 12:

The picnic will be held at Ken and Jane Cogan's on July 12th; the PA Forest Stewards Annual Meeting is being held on July 26th. Tim Pierson said that around the first week in January, Ken Cogan had a femoral artery repair on his right leg and has been laid up since then.

Woodswalk at Sizerville State Park—Aug 9:

Toby Herzing reported that neither August dates were available for the pavilion at Sizerville State Park so it was agreed we will need to hold the Woodswalk at another location.

Ginseng & Medicinal Plant Production & Planting Workshop II—Sept. 6:

Copies of the Agroforestry Series #7 Flyer for this workshop to be held at the World War II Museum in Eldred were distributed by Tim Pierson. NCFLA is again a co-sponsor. Tim said that in June a questionnaire will be sent out to all who planted ginseng seeds asking for information regarding results of the plantings. (copy attached)

Woodswalk at Walt & Marie Petricks'—Sept. 20:

Tim Pierson distributed copies of the draft flyer for the Woodswalk. The same language regarding registration used on Larry's flyer will be included and Walt needs to provide the directions to the property located at 171 Allard Drive, Roulette. Walt will arrange to have a CREP representative present and he will also be showing the re-generation that is occurring in a blowdown area where the logs were taken out and the branches left in place. Walt said that they will provide the refreshments and it is not necessary for the Association to pay for them; and no portable toilet facilities are needed as participants can use the bathroom in the basement of their house.

Annual Banquet—November 2:

Larry reported that John Snyder reserved the American Legion in Coudersport after our last Board meeting. Larry will stop at the Legion to get more details and menu items in the next couple of weeks.

The last time we held it there it worked out well. Tim Pierson is getting a speaker from Northcentral Planning and Development to speak on the topic, “Exports—Where Are Our Logs Going?”

NEW BUSINESS:

Penn State Property Tax Committee—Feb. 8:

Larry reported that he and Dave Lombardo attended the Penn State Property Tax Committee, and a handout at that meeting highlights the inequity in the Clean and Green values and differences from county-to-county. Penn State is using a value based on the average amount of a species on it-- currently, a landowner with pine pays the same taxes as one with black cherry. Mark McDill, who has been developing a system to determine assessment values, has said the most palatable method could be Clean and Green and then cap for fair market value. In McKean Co., in some cases, the Clean and Green assessments are higher than the fair market value. There is also a severance tax method where the landowner pays a bigger tax bill at the time of the timber sale. In the S.E., where there are many estates enrolled in Clean and Green, there are different issues. Tim Pierson asked if they are also looking at requiring landowners to have a management plan? They are talking about certification by common groups or a forest management plan under forest stewardship to reduce the acreage costs. Tim said that in New York state, you have to have a management plan to get any relief from taxes.

One year ago, the Committee got a graduate student intern, Andy Filipzack, who is doing the research on “forest property taxes and how they are handled in other states.” Forest Stewardship funding was used to pay for the intern who needs about three years to complete the project. They are applying for an additional two years of funding which costs \$50,000 a year and are asking for support from other organizations—Kane Hardwoods, ACF, etc. They would like a letter of support from NCFLA, along with a nominal donation of \$100-\$200, which would be basically symbolic in nature. The NCFLA has 203 individual members and could donate \$1.00 per member. Dave Lombardo made the motion to donate \$203 towards the cost of the intern; seconded by Lynda Pontzer; motion carried. Larry said Mike Jacobson does not need the actual money until they receive the funding.

Larry said it now time for the NCFLA Tax Committee (Jim Herzog and Dave Lombardo) to schedule a meeting with Senator Scarnatti regarding clarification of the in-lieu-of taxes and Mike Jacobson from Penn State would also attend the meeting. When the counties received the state’s \$3.60 per acre in-lieu-of taxes, he thought it was to go towards property tax relief, not just be a windfall. Potter County got funds retroactive to the date of the original law—two years of funding.

NCFLA Website:

Walt Petrick has developed a website and gave a demonstration on his laptop PC highlighting the contents. It is located on www.orgsites.com, a free site allowing us 10 pages. The site will contain: the information from our brochure—our purpose, a Pa. county map with the counties of McKean, Potter, Elk and Cameron highlighted; a membership page including the membership class definitions and membership application which can be printed out and mailed; the names and contact information for the officers and board of directors; a calendar of events with a map showing the location of the event; a copy of our Bylaws; a copy of the latest newsletter and down-loadable copies of past newsletters; and links to other forest-related websites. Everyone was impressed with the website and

congratulated Walt, our new Webmaster, for a great job. Walt will write an article on the new NCFLA website for the next Newsletter.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Timber Theft Workshop:

Rick Smith mentioned that one of our members, Ted Isaacs, suffered a timber theft and he feels that the Association should take some action. It was suggested that we have a meeting on the subject of “Timber Theft and Landowner Liability Issues” at a general membership meeting. Stan Hess mentioned that the first step is through the civil court for a “cease and desist order” until boundaries are clarified and then there is the legal component of “timber trespass” law. Tim Pierson suggested that we have a panel consisting of: Jeff Duke, District Attorney; maybe John Becker, College of Ag Sciences law, on timber trespass and landowner liability; a surveyor—maybe Ken Comstock, about boundaries; and a DCNR forester. The panel should also cover what you can do to prevent timber theft. Tim and Dave Lombardo will work on this for an evening meeting, open to the public to be scheduled at a later date.

Pa. Forestry Association Annual Meeting:

Larry reported that the PFA annual meeting will be held in Elk County on Saturday, September 13, 2008. They want to have a 1½ hour stop at one local forest landowner as part of their meeting and he asked if there would be room for one or two busses to pull in and turn around at Lynda Pontzer’s land. Lynda agreed and said there is room for the busses to park.

Tree Tubes:

Rick Smith said that he has contacted the company producing the new mesh tree tubes developed by Jim Walizer which were demonstrated at our February 21st meeting on Woody Biomass. The company will send Rick two samples—one is \$2.56 each or \$1.04 for the mesh only—which Rick offered to bring to Walt Petrick’s Woodswalk.

First Annual Forest Management Habitat Tour—April 27:

Stan Hess distributed a flyer for the tour on the Susquehannock State Forest, which will begin at the DCNR Bureau of Forestry Office located on the top of Denton Hill. While it is targeting the campowners on the Susquehanna State Forest, others are welcome to attend. Registration is required by April 13. Walt and Marie Petrick have agreed to discuss the Forest Stewardship Program. If there is enough interest, it will be an annual event.

Friends of Allegheny Wilderness:

Lynda Pontzer distributed a pamphlet prepared by the Friends of Allegheny Wilderness which is seeking wilderness designation for an additional 54,460 acres in 8 different tracts and an additional three tracts totaling 14,477 acres for designation as National Recreation Areas as outlined in the “Citizens’ Wilderness Proposal for Pennsylvania’s Allegheny National Forest.

Next Meeting:

The next Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for September 9, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. at the McKean Co. Extension Office, Smethport, Pa.

A motion was made by Dave Lombardo, seconded by Rick Smith to adjourn the meeting at 12:10 p.m. Motion carried.

Prepared by:

Verda Weder Knowlton
Secretary