NEW FORESTRY COST SHARE PROGRAMS AVAILABLE

Informational Meeting
7:00-9:00 p.m., Thursday, January 22nd
Luana Savings Bank

Funding is available for tree planting and forest improvement practices. The EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program) and SAFE (State Acres For Wildlife Enhancement) are new programs available to assist landowners with improving their woodlands and planting trees.

The EQIP program provides cost share assistance to landowners for tree planting, direct seeding, timber stand improvement, and fencing. The SAFE program is a program under CRP that provides cost sharing and annual payments to plant trees and grasses on crop land to enhance your property for wildlife and reduce erosion.

District Foresters and area Wildlife Biologists will host a public meeting from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 22nd at the Luana Savings Bank. The practices available and the incentives provided by the programs will be discussed.

For further information contact Gary Beyer, District Forester at 641/228-6611.

Forestry Field Days A Success!

Nine forestry field days were held across Iowa this fall drawing roughly 400 participants to the various half and full day sessions. Topics ranged from woodland management and crop tree release demonstrations to mitigating deer damage and sawmill demonstrations. Speakers representing several different agencies and private landowners informed, and at times, amused participants. DNR Foresters and Wildlife Biologists, County Conservation staff, NRCS staff, Private Consultants, Extension personnel and private woodland owners all provided expertise throughout the fall. The field days would not have been possible without the support of these individuals and I would like to thank all those who made this year a success. Spring field days are being planned so please check the ISU Forestry Extension website for details (www.forestry.iastate.edu).

(IDNR District Forester Greg Heidebrink explains the benefits to even-aged management to participants attending the tree farmer of the year field day in Fayette County)

***Tri-State Forest Stewardship Conference at Sinsinawa Mound ***
Saturday March 14th 2009

Look for details to arrive in the mail or go online to www.forestry.iastate.edu
2008 Tree Farmer of the Year Awarded to the Jensen Family

Richard (Dick) Jensen and his wife Dorothy of Elgin were named 2008 Iowa Tree Farmer of the Year by Iowa’s Tree Farm Organization. A well attended field day in their honor was held on September 12th 2008. Participants were given a tour of the farm with stops leading to discussions on even and uneven aged timber management, direct seeding options, and on-farm erosion control practices. A directional felling demonstration by Paul Franzen and a portable sawmill demonstration by Tom Miller rounded out the day’s events.

The Jensen’s have owned their farm since the 1970’s and have enacted several different management strategies on their 289 acres of trees. The first Stewardship management plan was written in 1982 and has been revised several times. Dick has planted hardwood and conifers seedlings and has direct seed hardwoods on 30+ acres. He has completed shelterwood cuts on 20 acres and has 204 acres of crop tree release, weed tree and cull tree removal work accomplished. He maintains 2 ponds and 3+ acres of switchgrass for wildlife.

Dick has built 3 cabins that he rents out for people to use during the hunting season and to relax and enjoy nature during the rest of the year. Another of his projects was the building of about 3 miles of nature trails including 3 bridges over sensitive trout streams, with the help of volunteers. This trail has attracted visitors from around the world.

The Jensen’s have hosted the Fayette Soil & Water Conservation District Third Grade Conservation Education Field Day (a three day event) for 15 years, and Dick started and directs TAKO (take a kid outdoors), a program to get young people out and in touch with nature. Dick has served as a Fayette Soil & Water District Commissioner for 16 years.

The Jensen’s donated 2 acres of the farm on the edge of West Union for a park where people can plant tree memorials. In 2004 he was West Union Chamber of Commerce “Citizen of the Year” and was the recent recipient of the “Alliance Pipeline Community Hero Award”. He was also honored as “The Governors Volunteer of the Year”.

New Wildlife Damage Assessment for Woodland Owners

Last winter, several foresters and woodland owners were invited to participate in an IDNR Kaizen event that focused on Iowa’s deer depredation program. Many things came to light during that week allowing me to get a better sense of the program as a whole, and what aspects were working and what aspects of the existing depredation program that needed to be enhanced to serve more Iowans. Following the weeklong event, it became evident that existing woodlands were not being considered when damage estimates were calculated, primarily because the tools were not in place to accurately and repeatedly measure damage in existing woodlands like they were for row crops.

Iowa is not unique in their treatment of forests when it comes to damage caused by wildlife, as most other states do not quantify damage in woodlands. Paul Tauke (IDNR Forestry Bureau Chief) asked District Foresters Bruce Blair, Joe Herring, and Jeremy Cochran and I to create the tools to evaluate regeneration failure / seedling damage in woodlands and place a cost associated with mitigating the damage. Over the course of the spring and early summer the team searched scientific literature to obtain seedling numbers that could be expected in woodlands where deer were not limiting growth and survival, and where the appropriate silvicultural techniques had been practiced. From this literature search we concluded that a naturally regenerating forest needs to have as a minimum, roughly 500 seedlings of the desired species at 4 ft tall to ensure canopy dominance in the new stand. We created a worksheet that measured regeneration in 4 - 1ft strata from first year seedling germinants to seedlings up to 4 ft tall.

Your initial contact is still your local depredation biologist and NOT your District Forester. Once you have stated that you want your timber evaluated, the Deer Depredation Biologist will be the one to consult with the District Forester to arrange a time that the landowner, depredation biologist, and forester can meet at the property and together, the group will conduct a survey of the woodland in question. Using this new worksheet, the forester will initially determine if past forest management activities were adequate to allow for advanced regeneration of the desired species. If past management is found to be acceptable, the forester will determine a prescription (planting, tree shelters, etc) which will overcome the damage and help meet the landowner’s goals and objectives. Once the District Forester has completed and signed off on the worksheet detailing the prescription and the price of the prescription, his / her work is finished. If the cost of the prescription is over 1000 dollars the landowner will then work with the Depredation Biologist to enroll in the program, if the foresters prescription is less than 1000 dollars, both the forester and the depredation biologist will assist the landowner to reduce the damage through general management means.

Please Note: the District Foresters survey for damage and assign a cost for a prescription, but they can not issue depredation permits.
ISU Forestry Extension Acquires Forestry Equipment for Demonstration Field Days

Iowa State University Forestry Extension has teamed up with three premier forestry equipment manufacturers to acquire a portable sawmill, a hydraulic tree shear, and a portable fast attack firefighting unit. These new additions will enable ISU forestry extension to demonstrate top of the line pieces of equipment at management oriented field days and training sessions throughout the state of Iowa and across the Midwest region. The equipment will also assist in the management of ISU’s NREM Brayton Memorial Research and Demonstration Forest, and will be used in several management and forest product classes within the ISU NREM department. These acquisitions would not have been possible without the help of the ISU Foundation, the Iowa DNR Forestry Bureau and the three respective companies; Turner Sawmill Company of Oxford NY, Grace Manufacturing of Plato MO, and Darley Firefighting Company of Itasca IL.

ISU Reestablishing the Brayton Forest as a Multi-Use Demonstration Forest

ISU students Jarett Cook and Lucas Monson lived and worked this summer on the 320 acre Brayton Memorial Forest in Delaware county, which is owned and managed by ISU. This marks the first time that students have lived and worked on the forest since the late 80’s. It took them several weeks to clear the roads of downed trees and to regrade sections of roads that had washed out with this year’s spring rains.

Over the rest of the summer, Jarett and Lucas installed several research and demonstration plots, marked out and tallied a timber sale with IDNR District Forester Bruce Blair, and conducted small mammal trapping to establish a baseline population estimate in areas that will be repeatedly burned in the fall to promote oak regeneration. The students also located and salvaged oak trees that were previously killed by oak wilt. These trees were then milled into timbers and planks that will be used to construct signage on the trail and road systems and to highlight ongoing research projects. This fall, fire was used in a research project to remove unwanted understory vegetation, and promote the regeneration of oak seedlings. Several demonstration projects are being planned for the Brayton Forest and field days highlighting the work will soon follow.

Jessica Flatt & Jeff Goerndt, new positions in the IDNR

Jessica Flatt: As the Area Forester at Stephens State Forest, my job responsibilities include: completing, maintaining and following the Stephens State Forest management plan; marking and contracting timber sales; identifying forest management needs and meeting those needs with the help of the technicians; and maintaining good public relations to cultivate an understanding of the goals of forest management activities. I was the Operation Relieaf Forester with the Iowa DNR prior to my Stephens State Forest assignment. Outside of work I spend my time reading, working in my yard and hanging out with my husband and two dogs.

Jeff Goerndt is the new State Forests Section Chief for the Forestry Bureau of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. Jeff graduated from ISU in Forestry in 1997. He previously worked at Stephens State Forest as the Area Forester for the past eight years. His new job responsibilities include supervision and oversight of Iowa’s State Forest system and administering timber sales on state lands. Jeff is also the coordinator of the Forest Legacy Program in Iowa, which is a U.S. Forest Service conservation easement program. Jeff has a wife, Stefani and three children. His interests and hobbies include…playing with his children, fishing, hunting, and carpentry.
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