Upcoming Events
Shade Tree Short Course  March 12-13 Ames, IA
This annual shade workshop is the premier educational event for shade tree care and maintenance. Choose from more than 30 workshops  Cost is $100.

Master Woodland Manager Program- May 9, 16, 23, 30 June 6 13.
This 32-hour course will be offered in the Lucas County area. Enrollment is limited and application is required.

Master Woodland Manager Program- August 13, 20, 27, September 3, 10, 17.
This 32-hour course will be offered in the Lee County area. Enrollment is limited and application is required.

Community Tree Steward Program: Ames-Des Moines Area  (May 20, 29, June 3, 10, and 17, 24) and Carroll-Denison Area  (May 21, 28, June 4, 11, 18 and 25)
This 24-hour course on the care and maintenance of our urban forest resource is in great demand. Enrollment is limited and application is required.

Forestry Field Days: Fayette County, April 17; Dubuque County, May 14

Non-Timber (Special) Forest Products Production/Marketing Conference, August 23-24, Sinsinawa Conference Center, Sinsinawa, WI

For more information, Contact Forestry Extension, 253 Bessey Hall, ISU, Ames, IA 50011 Phone (515/294-11680 or e-mail phw@iastate.edu)

Tri-State Conference
The Tri-State Stewardship Conference normally held in March at Sinsinawa, WI has been postponed and changed. The new date for the conference for 2002 is August 23-24. Please note the conference will be two days in length and will center on the production and marketing of special products from woodlands.

If you are in NE Iowa, you will receive a special mailing as the conference brochure is developed. If you live outside the NE Iowa area and would like to receive additional information, please us know. (515-294-1168 or e-mail phw@iastate.edu)

Iowa Walnut Council Field Day
The Iowa Chapter of the Walnut Council is planning a Forestry Field Day to be held on April 20, 2002. The program will begin at the Fisher Center in Marshalltown at 8:30 a.m. and conclude by 3:30 p.m. at the GRIMES FARM located southwest of the city limits of Marshalltown between highways 30 and 330. Cost for the day is $8.00, which includes morning coffee and lunch.

Tentatively the program includes: 1) Herbicides: How to Use—How Effective—Cost—Calibrating Equipment—and much, much, MORE; 2) Organizing Basic Woodland Info; 3) Soils—The Right Site for Walnuts; 4) Walnuts, An Historical Perspective; and 5) What About Disking?

The program emphasis will be on the effectiveness of disking in tree growth. As you may know Calvin Gatch of Cascade Forestry has been a longtime proponent and disciple of disking between the rows. He has an interesting story to tell.

In 1998 Bob Hibbs, District Forester for District 3, and the Grimes began a disking project designed to furnish a scientific basis to confirm or refute the claims made for between-row disking. Eighteen
Each forest reservation shall not contain less than ♦ at least 2 contiguous acres in size and generally from property taxes the private forestland must be: To most people the “Forest Reserve” and be exempt (Chapter 427C of the Code of Iowa) or as it is known. To enroll in the Forest and Fruit Tree Reservation Act became negligible.

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Since the majority of the forests in Iowa were privately owned at that time – and public funds to purchase forestland were lacking – early conservationists and political leaders came up with an incentive effort. This incentive became known as the “Forest and Fruit Tree Reservation Act”, that was passed by the Iowa Legislature in 1906. The intention of the Forest and Fruit Tree Reserve Act was to “reduce or eliminate property taxes to induce landowners to hold their poorer lands in timber not only as a source of farm income but also for erosion control, watershed protection and game cover”. The reservation program was met with indifference in many of better agricultural areas of the state but was met with much enthusiasm in some of the more. In 1907, the year after passage of the act, 1,535 reservations (parcels) were on record totaling 12,140 acres. heavily timbered sections.

By 1922, as rapidly increasing land values occurred, the interest in the forest-fruit tree reservations increased the total number of acres to 16,273. Planted tree groves originally made up an appreciable part of the total acreage reported, but as time went along the percentage that new tree plantings comprise became negligible.

To enroll in the Forest and Fruit Tree Reservation Act (Chapter 427C of the Code of Iowa) or as it is known to most people the “Forest Reserve” and be exempt from property taxes the private forestland must be:

- At least 2 contiguous acres in size and generally not less than 66 feet wide, or a fruit tree reservation not less than one nor more than 10 acres in total area,
- Each forest reservation shall not contain less than 200 growing trees, on a fruit tree reservation at least 40 apple trees per acre and other fruit tree reservations at least 70 trees per acre,
- Forest trees are defined as ash, black cherry, black walnut, butternut, catalpa, honeylocust, Norway and Carolina poplars, mulberry, the oaks, sugar maple, cottonwood, soft maple, osage orange, basswood, black locust, European larch and other coniferous trees, and all other forest trees introduced into the state for experimental purposes,
- In forest reservations which are artificial groves, willows, boxelders and other poplars shall be included when protecting borders not exceeding two rows in width around a forest reservation or when used as nurse trees not to exceed 100 on each acre,
- No cattle, mules, horses, sheep, goats or hogs are permitted on forest reservations, and
- Not more than 1/5 of the total number of trees in the forest reservation may be removed in any single year unless the trees die of natural causes. When the number of trees falls below 200 trees on each acre, the owner shall within one year restore the number of trees to not less than 200 trees.

Private land owners interested in enrolling their forest or fruit trees into reservations must make an application with the county assessor’s office prior to April 15th of the year for which they are claiming exemption. Once the application is approved, the area shall continue to receive tax exemption during each year that the area is maintained as a forest reservation without having the owner reapply. This tax exempt status is transferred with the property as long as it qualifies.

The county conservation board or the assessor’s office to determine if it is still maintained as a forest or fruit tree reservation may inspect the reservation. If the area is not maintained or is used for economic gain other than a forest reservation for any of the exemption years and any of the five years following the exemption years, the assessor shall assess the property for taxation. Taxation will be at its fair market value as of January 1st of that year. In addition, the area shall be subject to a recapture tax for those years up to 5 years. The area shall not be subject to recapture tax if the owners have owned the area for more than 10 years.

The county assessors shall keep a record of all forest and fruit tree reservations in the county and report to the Department of Natural Resources not later than June 15th of each year.

As of September 2001, a total of 558,584.83 acres on 38,760 parcels were enrolled in forest reservations in all 99 Iowa counties. The total number of acres in forest reservations runs from 12.37 acres in Sioux county (NW Iowa) to 46,277 acres in Clayton County.
The number of acres in forest reservations accounts for 27% of the total number of acres of forestland in Iowa (2.1 million acres).

What benefits does the forest reserve have for Iowa? Since private forestland owners’ control 92% of Iowa’s forests, maintaining these lands in forests provides:

- Habitat for game and non game species of wildlife that depend upon forests for all or part of their life (deer, turkey, etc.), plus the economic activity for rural communities that cater to hunters and fishermen each year – over $1.1 billion in 1999.
- Watershed protection for Iowa’s stream and rivers, reducing sediment – Iowa’s number one water pollutant, since 50% of Iowa’s forests are on slopes greater than 10% and the other 50% are right along floodplain areas.
- Economic development in terms of the timber that is harvested, in 2000 that involved over $1.4 million paid to landowners, and over $1 billion in economic activity in harvesting and processing the timber into wood.
- Air quality enhancement as the standing and living trees absorb toxic carbon and other pollutants.
- Outdoor recreation for property owners, neighbors, and visitors to our state, as Fall color viewing in NE Iowa alone brings in over $5.9 million to local economies.

If the early Iowa conservationists who drafted the forest and fruit tree reservation act came back would they say they it was meeting its goals “to induce landowners to hold their poorer lands in timber not only as a source of farm income but also for erosion control, watershed protection and game cover”? I believe the answer would be yes! Has and is it now a benefit to Iowa in terms of lost property taxes? Most foresters and forestland owners would answer yes! But how do others feel? It is our responsibility to inform them of the benefits of the Forest and Fruit Tree Reserve Act and that its need now and into the future is just as great as it was in 1906.

Contributed by John Walkowiak, Chief – Forestry Services with the Iowa Dept of Natural Resources 515-242-5966 or john.walkowiak@dnr.state.ia.us

Wood Drying 101

Many woodland owners derive enjoyment from producing their own lumber. Felling trees can be dangerous business, so get help from a competent logger or chainsaw operator if needed. Once your logs are on the ground, you should have them milled into rough lumber as soon as possible. Inordinate storage delays can reduce the overall quality of the lumber. Options for cutting your lumber include a chainsaw mill, a portable circle or band mill, or perhaps a local sawmill that is willing and able to cut your logs.

Assuming that you already own a chainsaw, chainsaw mills can be an economical solution, albeit somewhat wasteful due to the relatively large saw kerf (large volume of sawdust). A more efficient option would be to find someone with a portable mill on a trailer. In this case, the operator can bring the saw right to your property to saw the lumber. In the case of permanent commercial sawmills, it is a good idea to check with the owner before you cut your trees down. In many cases, sawmills are reluctant to cut any logs from a yard or farm lot because these invariably contain metal - remnants of fence, nails from the kids’ treehouse and the like. Mill owners don’t want to take a chance on damaging their saws (and perhaps injuring a worker) by sawing trees that may contain metal.

Once your lumber is sawn, you must adequately dry it before use. “Green” lumber contains lots of moisture. The weight of water in freshly cut lumber often exceeds the weight of the wood itself. You can successfully air-dry your lumber by following a few simple steps. First, find a level site on which you can build a foundation so that your lumber is not stacked right on the ground. Concrete block or treated woods are good choices for your foundation. Stack your lumber in a neat pile, about six feet wide by the length of your lumber. Each “course” or layer of wood should be separated from the next course by use of “stickers”, or strips of wood about one inch in nominal thickness by 1.5 to two inches wide and slightly longer than the width of the lumber pile. Place the first sticker a few inches from the end of the lumber, perpendicular to the long direction of the lumber, and add more stickers every two feet (or less). Keep individual pieces of lumber within each course separated from one another by a couple of inches. The idea is to allow air to flow around all sides of the lumber. Stickers in successive courses should be directly over those below, that is, keep the stickers in good vertical alignment. Top off your lumber stack with a covering - an old sheet of plywood works well. This will keep direct sunlight off of the lumber and will help to shed rain or snow. Secure your roof with a generous helping of concrete blocks. Better yet, use an open-sided shed for your lumber drying operation. Maintain good weed control around your stack to allow sufficient airflow. For wood that is highly prone to splitting or checking (high density woods like oak, for example), it is a good idea to “end-coat” the lumber by covering the end-grain with paraffin, aluminum paint, asphalt, or a commercial end-coating product.

The drying rate and final moisture content of your lumber will depend on initial moisture content, weather conditions, species of wood, and thickness of
the lumber. It may take a couple of months to nearly a year to dry dead green lumber down to less than 20 percent moisture (on an oven dry weight basis). The final moisture content that you will achieve is limited by the weather - temperature and relative humidity. Generally speaking, it is unlikely that lumber will dry to less than 12-14 percent outdoors in Iowa. This will be fine if you intend to use the lumber for building construction. But if you want to make items such as furniture for indoor use, the moisture needs to be down to about 8 percent. In order to achieve this, the wood must be conditioned indoors in a heated environment. Some hobbyists put lumber in the attic during warm months to dry it down this low. Others leave it in their heated shop or basement for weeks or months to do so. Alternatively, you may be able to find someone with a solar, dehumidification, or steam-heated dry kiln to dry the wood further. In any case, it is good to keep in mind that even if wood is dried, it is still capable of regaining moisture if exposed to higher humidity or to rain or other sources of water. Dried lumber should be kept dry!

For more information, take a look at our web site http://www.forestry.iastate.edu/ext/product.html or request extension publications F-303, “Air and Solar Drying of Hardwood Lumber” and F-328, “Kiln Drying of Lumber”.

Doug Stokke, Assistant Professor

Using the Internet to Order Trees
Ordering trees in Iowa is now much easier and faster with the Internet. Iowa’s nurseries specializing in reforestation, wildlife, and Christmas trees have web sites where you can find their catalogues. This is a convenient way to get information on species availability and even place an order over the Internet via e-mail from the web sites.

Check out these Iowa reforestation nurseries and “bookmark” them for future reference:
CASCADE FOREST NURSERY:
www.cascadeforestry.com
KELLY TREE FARM:
www.kellytreefarm.com
STATE FOREST NURSERY:
www.state.ia.us/forestry

Jerry Kemperman, Iowa DNR Forestry

New Forester
On February 18, 2002 Jeremy Cochran will be joining the team of Iowa DNR District Foresters. Jeremy will be replacing Oakland District Forester Dave Asche, who has transferred to the Elkader District.

Jeremy graduated from Iowa State University with a B.S. in Forest Resource Management. For the last three years Jeremy has been employed with L&G Forestry in Burlington. While working for L&G he has assisted private landowners by developing tree planting plans, planting seedlings, maintaining plantations, and marketing timber.

The Oakland Forestry District includes Monona, Harrison, Shelby, Audobon, Pottawattamie, Cass, Mills, Montgomery, Fremont, and Page Counties. The District Foresters office is located in the Golden Hills RC&D building in Oakland. If you wish to contact Jeremy for assistance he can be reached by phone at 712/482-6245.

Paul Tauke, Forestry Supervisor, Iowa DNR