DNR Forests and Prairies - Update
In January, State Forester Bill Farris retired after 35 years of service. Mike Brandrup, formerly Forestry Services Bureau Chief, has been appointed State Forester.

Under the new DNR Director Paul Johnson and Mike Brandrup’s leadership, the Division of Forests and Forestry is now the Division of Forests and Prairies. The District Foresters have been helping woodland owners for decades and now can also assist with prairie and savanna management. The District Foresters find that many woodland owners are interested in these other natural plant communities and will welcome this additional assistance. Jean Eells, an ecologist/prairie specialist from Webster City, has been hired to help provide training and assistance in our expansion into prairies.

We are also increasing the woodland assistance available. Senator Kitty Rehberg of Rowley and Representative Roger Thomas of Elkader introduced legislation initiated by the NE Iowa Forest Advisory Group to increase forestry assistance. There will now be a SW Iowa District Forester and four new assistance foresters in eastern Iowa. Each year, interest in woodland management has been increasing and this will help provide the needed assistance.

Extension Staffing
Two forestry faculty members have joined Forestry Extension. David Countryman and Doug Stokke have partial extension appointments. Dave will assume leadership for the Master Woodland Managers Program and handle requests for information on economics, marketing, and taxes. Doug will respond to requests and develop programs for proper wood use and forest products. Other extension staff include Mark Vitosh in urban forestry and youth education and Paul Wray in forest and plantation management.

Extension staff may be contacted through e-mail, mail or phone.
David Countryman (515-294-7703) davide@iastate.edu; Doug Stokke (515-294-2115) dstokke@iastate.edu; Mark Vitosh (515-294-6739) mvitosh@iastate.edu; Paul Wray (515-294-1168) phw@iastate.edu;

Upcoming Meetings and Events
Each year, Forestry Extension, Iowa State University and the Division of Forests and Prairies, Iowa Department of Natural Resources in cooperation with County Extension Offices, County Conservation Boards and others offer educational on-site forestry field days at various locations throughout Iowa. The following locations and dates have been selected for fall forestry field days. For additional information contact Forestry Extension (515-294-1168), e-mail (phw@iastate.edu) or contact the host county’s extension office.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>Delaware Co.</td>
<td>Sept. 23</td>
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<td>Allamakee Co.</td>
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<td>Hardin Co.</td>
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<td>Dallas/Guthrie Co.</td>
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<td>Tree Farm/ Washington Co.</td>
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Iowa is co-sponsoring two multi-state Forest Stewardship Conferences. These are day-long conferences with multiple workshop selections and speakers from the cooperating states. Registration fee (includes lunch and materials) is $25 for each conference For registration materials contact Forestry Extension...
Iowa-Illinois-Wisconsin
Tri-State Forest Stewardship Conference
Saturday November 13, 1999
Quincy Holiday Inn, Quincy, IL

Iowa-Nebraska-Kansas-Missouri
1999 Central Region Woodland Stewardship Conference
Saturday November 20, 1999
Lied Conference Center
Arbor Day Farm
Nebraska City, NE

Iowa’s 1999 Outstanding Tree Farmer

Landowners are approved as Tree Farmers as recognition for their implementation of good forestry and land stewardship practices. Each year the Iowa Tree Farm Committee selects an Outstanding Tree Farmer. Larry Krotz was selected as the Outstanding Iowa Tree Farmer for 1999.

Larry manages his 80-acre tree farm for the production of high quality hardwood lumber, wildlife habitat, aesthetics, education, and research. The many tours and meetings that he has hosted is proof that he is accomplishing these objectives.

Larry is a retired Air Force pilot that has owned this land for 37 years and had it under a written forest management plan for 10 years. Larry has planted trees almost every year since he first purchased the farm. Most of the trees have been direct seeded, although he did plant seedlings the first few years and had his own small nursery for transplanting seedlings. Last fall 20 more acres were direct seeded. Primary species that have been planted are oak and walnut, but almost every native Iowa species and many non-native species are represented on his tree farm.

Larry has done some corrective pruning in the past, but now is more in favor of keeping stem densities extremely high to facilitate natural pruning and straight stem growth. He believes that with high densities he may be sacrificing some diameter growth but is getting much better stem-form overall. He has done some thinning on a few acres as a demonstration and plans on doing more thinning in the future as his veneer log form develops.

Larry has hosted Walnut Council tours from Iowa, Wisconsin, and Illinois as well as the Iowa Woodland Owners meeting. He has hosted several forestry field days conducted by Iowa State Forestry Extension and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. He has hosted many tours for Soil and Water Commissioners, local school groups, and the boy scouts.

Iowa State University Department of Forestry is conducting research on biomass production on his farm. Larry’s trees and direct seeding technique have been the source of several articles for Iowa Farmer Today and several local newspapers.

If he has time, Larry enjoys showing his “young forest” to any individual or group. He is active in many forestry activities and is always willing to help and encourage other people in their forestry endeavors. His enthusiasm for growing high quality trees is unsurpassed.

Larry’s Tree Farm will be featured at the Tree Farm/Washington Co. Forestry Field Day on Oct 28. Contact Forestry Extension for more information.

If you are interested in being approved as a Tree Farmer, please contact your Department of Natural Resources District Forester.
Gypsy moth in Iowa update

Des Moines - The gypsy moth (Lymantria dispar) is an exotic pest of forest and shade trees that originated in Europe and was brought over to Massachusetts to help breed silk worms. It escaped in the late 1860’s, and since that time, major defoliation (stripping of tree leaves) of forested areas in the Northeastern U.S. has occurred. This pest has been slowly, but ever so surely coming closer to Iowa. Currently gypsy moth populations are very high in Wisconsin from Door county to Milwaukee to Madison. This is of great concern to Iowa officials, foresters and landowners alike.

The gypsy moth has 4 life stages, egg, larva (caterpillar), pupa (cocoon) and adult (moth). It is the larva or caterpillar stage that eats tree leaves during several growth spurts or instars. Gypsy moth caterpillars prefer to eat the leaves of oak, apple, basswood (linden), hawthorn, willow and birch. However, they will feed on over 200 kinds of trees and shrubs. When mature the caterpillar is 2-3 inches long, hairy with 5 pairs of blue dots and 6 pairs of red dots on their backs. The caterpillars normally feed from late April to early July. When there are large populations of gypsy moth caterpillars, trees over vast areas can be stripped of all their leaves. This normally does not kill the trees, but forces them to use their storage of food reserves to put out new leaves, leaving them weaken and more susceptible to other pests and weather extremes. Repeated defoliation over several years can kill as much as 15-20% of the forest resources. There are few natural predators of gypsy moth in our country.

In June or July, the caterpillars enter a pupa stage and between late July and early August form into moths. The male moth is the only one that can fly and is attracted to the female by a scent or pheromone to mate. The female gypsy moth then lays a tan colored egg mass containing over 1,000 eggs, about the size of your thumbnail anywhere there is shade, from under tree limbs to people’s boats and recreational vehicles. It is this egg stage and today’s modern world of trans- portation that allows the gypsy moth to move great distances.

Since the late 1970’s, the State Entomologist’s office in the Iowa Dept. of Agriculture and Land Stewardship in cooperation with USDA and the DNR have placed detection survey traps across the state to monitor gypsy moth. This last year over 6,000 traps were placed. These orange milk carton shaped traps have the gypsy moth pheromone that attracts the male moths. Once inside the survey trap, the male moths get stuck. This allows the State Entomologist to locate areas of concern and areas for further survey work to determine where populations of gypsy moth might be.

The trends of gypsy moth trapping in Iowa, has been showing a steady increase in male moth catches associated with three things: (1) NE Iowa is seeing higher numbers perhaps due to high population levels in Wisconsin, (2) egg masses of gypsy moth coming on infested nursery stock from the Northeastern U.S. and (3) people and their items carrying gypsy moth egg masses moving from the Northeastern U.S. to Iowa.

Initial gypsy moth trapping data for 1999 in Iowa, shows a temporary decrease in male moth catches in NE Iowa, with little explanation as to why at this time. Recently, infested blue spruce nursery stock was brought into the Polk county area from a Pennsylvania wholesale nursery with numerous egg masses, and female moths attached. This illustrates the need to find where these trees might have been planted and where gypsy moth may become established over the next couple of years.

So what holds in our future battle with gypsy moth in Iowa? First, when it becomes established, it will become another stress on our trees - initially we could lose 15-20% of our trees. Gypsy moth when established will impact our use and enjoyment of our forests. So it is to our benefit to support vigilant programs of survey trapping to locate gypsy moth, and to eradicate populations when small to keep it out of Iowa as long as we can. If you would like to know more about gypsy moth or how to help in the survey trapping, feel free to contact John Walkowiak, DNR Forestry Services at 515-242-5966 or e-mail jwalkow@max.state.ia.us.

What’s wrong with the Scotch Pine?

In recent years Forestry Extension has received many calls on the quick decline and death of Scotch Pine (Pinus sylvestris) in areas throughout Iowa. In general this type of quick death (within a few weeks to a year) is appearing on all ages of Scotch Pine down to about 10 years of age. Why are these trees suddenly dying?

It is important to remember that one major reason this plant is probably having problems is due to the fact that it is not native. The two pest problems that appear to be causing the most problems with Scotch Pine in Iowa include a small bark beetle (Ips spp.) and a nematode (Bursaphelenchus xylophilus). The disease caused by the nematode is called pine wilt. Currently in Iowa it has not been determined which of the
two pest above is actually causing most of the death on Scotch Pine. The bottom line for this situation is that there are no feasible controls currently for either of these problems, and Scotch Pine should no longer be planted in Iowa for any use other than Christmas Trees.

If you have a stand of Scotch Pine with declining trees the best management method available is sanitation. Remove dead trees immediately and destroy or chip all removed material. All material converted to chips should be composted for 6 months before use, and avoid using this chipped material around other conifers.

**Timber Sale Tax Planning Can Save Money**

If you are planning a timber sale for this winter, planning now can save you money. Your timber sale income may increase your taxable income such that part of the timber sale income would be taxed in the next tax bracket higher than your normal tax bracket. Higher taxes on part of the timber sale income can be avoided by having two sales. One sale could be sold in December and the other one could be sold in January to divide the income into two tax years but still allow the area to be logged at one time in late winter before the ground gets soft in the spring.

If your timber holdings are part of a farm, lower crop prices may make this a good year for you to consider a timber sale to level your income. One strength of woodland management as part of a farm operation is that woodland can grow like a savings account to provide periodic income when needed. Timber growth occurs tax free until needed and then the timber income can occur in a year with lower total income so that more of the timber value is taxed at a lower rate. Also, farmers may qualify for income averaging when timber income is treated as incidental farm income. Landowners who produce only timber are not eligible for income averaging because they are not subject to uniform capitalization rules.

You can treat profit from the sale of timber as capital gains, which results in a lower tax rate than ordinary income. However, the sale of logs, lumber, or other products does not qualify for capital gains treatment. Thus, capital gains treatment of a timber sale may be in question if you agree to a “shares contract” with a logger.

Loses from passive activities can offset only passive income, and credits from passive activities can only be applied to tax attributable to passive activities. Thus, if your timber sale income is passive income, you need to plan activities like timber stand improvement work in the same year as the timber sale to provide passive income against which you can deduct the passive cost. Doing so reduces the cost of good land stewardship.