Tri-State 2017 Speaker List

Keynote – Bob Reber
Illinois

Adam Janke
ISU Wildlife Extension Specialist

Adam Janke is an Assistant Professor and Extension Wildlife Specialist in the Department of Natural Resource Ecology and Management at Iowa State University. Adam is certified as an Associate Wildlife Biologist through The Wildlife Society and earned his degrees in wildlife conservation and management from Purdue (B.S.), Ohio State (M.S.), and South Dakota State (Ph.D.) Universities. His extension program and research interests focus on finding opportunity areas for wildlife conservation and management in working agricultural landscapes of the Midwest, with a particular focus on gamebird habitat and populations.

Alex Lourash
University of Illinois Natural Areas Managers

Alex Lourash is the Assistant Natural Areas Manager at the University of Illinois Allerton Park and Retreat Center. Alex received his B.S. in Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences from the University of Illinois. Alex’s areas of interest and expertise are chainsaw safety and operation, directional felling, and hunting whitetails.

Brian Fankhauser
Blufflands Director, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation

Brian Fankhauser has worked with the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation (INHF) since 2005, and currently serves as the Blufflands Director. He focuses his efforts in the blufflands region of Northeast Iowa where he helps private landowners and public partners permanently protect the region’s diverse natural areas. Land stewardship activities, including invasive species control, prescribed fire and thinning, on reconstructed and remnant prairies, oak savannas and woodlands are an integral part of his duties. Prior to working at INHF, he was the Natural Resource Coordinator with Hamilton County Conservation Board. Brian graduated from Iowa State University in 1997 with a degree in Animal Ecology.

Bob Petrzelka
Owner of Geode Forestry, Inc.

Bob holds a BS degree in Forest Management from Iowa State. For the last 20 years Bob has been conducting timber sales, performing appraisals, planting trees and managing forests as a consulting forester. He is the owner of Geode Forestry, Inc. located in Swedesburg, IA. Bob's particular area of interest is in the natural regeneration of White Oak.

Chris Evans
University of Illinois Extension Forester
Mr. Chris Evans is an Extension Forestry & Research Specialist in the Dept. of Natural Resources & Environmental Sciences at the University of Illinois. Chris received his B.S. in wildlife biology from Murray State University and received an M.S. in forest biology from Iowa State University. Prior to his appointment at U of I, Chris worked as a natural resource and invasive species specialist at University of Georgia’s Warnell School of Forest Resources. He also served as coordinator of the River to River Cooperative Weed Management Area in southern Illinois, and most recently as the coordinator of the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan’s Invasive Species Campaign.

Dr. Greg Brenneman
ISU Extension Ag Engineering Field Specialist

Greg Brenneman works as an ISU Ag Engineering Specialist serving 23 counties in southeast Iowa. Greg’s educational programs include soil conservation, drainage, water quality, energy use and conservation, grain storage and livestock manure handling.

Greg received his Ph.D. in Agricultural Engineering from Iowa State University where his research concentrated on the effect of previous crops on soil erosion.

Originally from near Kalona Iowa, Greg now resides in Swisher with his wife Edwina. Greg’s hobbies include Christmas tree and hardwood tree production, hunting, trapping, shooting sports, and cutting firewood.

Gretchen Cline
Forester with Geode Forestry, Inc.

Gretchen received her BS Degree in Forest Management from Iowa State in 1997. After receiving her degree Gretchen worked for the Iowa DNR Forestry Division as a Field Forester. In 2001 she joined Geode Forestry, Inc. and currently works as a consulting forester in addition to raising her three young sons. Gretchen is especially interested in water quality as it relates to forest management.

Jay Hayek
University of Illinois Extension Forestry

Jay Hayek is the state extension forestry specialist in the Department of Natural Resources & Environmental Sciences at the University of Illinois. Jay received his bachelor’s degree in forestry from the University of Illinois and his master’s degree in silviculture from the University of Idaho. Jay’s area of interest and expertise includes hardwood silviculture; forest management; timber sales, marketing, and logging systems; and forest soils.

Jesse Randall
ISU Extension Forester

Jesse Randall is an Associate Professor and Extension Forestry Specialist in the Department of Natural Resource Ecology and Management at Iowa State University. Jesse received his bachelor’s degree in Natural Resources from Cornell University and his Ph.D in Forestry from Michigan State University. At ISU, Jesse conducts educational programs aimed at improving the management and sustainability of Iowa’s forest resource. He provides technical assistance to both urban and rural landowners throughout the state and Midwest region and conducts hands-on tree selection, planting, and pruning workshops, Master Woodland Manager Courses, forest stewardship field days, and maple syrup production demonstrations. Jesse’s lab researches the use of fire in oak regeneration systems, seedling exposure to agri-chemicals and the impact on seedling growth and function, as well as advancements in non-timber product development (ginseng and maple syrup).
Julie Blanchong  
Iowa State University  

Julie Blanchong is an Associate Professor in the Department of Natural Resource Ecology and Management at Iowa State University. She conducts research and teaches in the areas of wildlife health and wildlife genetics. A large part of her research program is focused on white-tailed deer currently including investigating survival and habitat use of fawns, identifying ecological factors associated with antler characteristics, and determining factors influencing chronic wasting disease susceptibility, transmission and spread.

Linda Haugen  
USFS  

Linda Haugen has been a forest pathologist with the US Forest Service out of St. Paul, Minnesota, for over 20 years, assisting States and federal land managers with forest health problems in the 7-State region. As a Northeast Iowa native and absentee landlord, she has a personal affinity for the forests of the Driftless Area.

Nate Beccue  
University of Illinois Natural Areas Manager  

Nate Beccue is the Natural Areas Manager at the University of Illinois Allerton Park and Retreat Center. Nate received his B.S. in Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences from the Univ. of Illinois and his M.S. in Forest Ecology from the University of Illinois. Nate’s areas of interest and expertise include prescribed fire management, general forest management, management for wildlife especially forest birds, and dendrology.

Paul Bane  
NW IL District Forester  

Paul Bane graduated from Southern Illinois University Carbondale in 2012 with a bachelor's degree in forestry. Post graduation he worked for The Nature Conservancy at Nachusa Grasslands, Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation, and as a private forestry consultant. He is a certified chainsaw operator, pesticide applicator, and prescribed fire burn manager. He has recently accepted a position as DNR District Forester for northwestern Illinois, based out of Carroll County.

Ryan Harr  
Iowa DNR Private Lands Biologist  

Ryan Harr is a private lands wildlife biologist with the Iowa DNR. Prior to his work with the IDNR he was an Assistant Scientist & Wildlife Biologist in the Department of Natural Resource Ecology & Management at Iowa State University. He hold a bachelor’s and master’s degree in Animal Ecology from Iowa State. His background lies in the ecology of prairie wetlands, grassland birds, and fire ecology. At ISU he manage a series of research projects in southern Iowa examining the effects of a fire-grazing (a.k.a. patch-burn grazing) management system on the ecology of prairies, birds, and invertebrates, as well as the socio-economic impacts for people who live and work on the land. He is the co-author on a seven part prescribed fire publication series. Be it leading a prescribed burn, conducting bird surveys, or reviewing plans for prairie seeding and grazing management with biologists, I seek out opportunities to stay involved the worlds of research, management, and extension.

Seth Applegate  
Iowa State University, Monarch Group  

Seth Appelgate is a research agronomist for the Iowa State University Monarch Research Team. Seth is researching best management practices for establishing high diversity native habitat (aka prairies) to benefit monarch butterflies, pollinators, and other wildlife. The ISU Monarch Research Team is working to conserve the Eastern Monarch Butterfly population in Iowa and the Midwest. Seth grew up on a diversified corn-soybean-swine family
farm in central Iowa. He graduated from ISU in 2016 with an MS in Crop Production and Physiology. His graduate research project examined cover crops and cover crops mixes.