

SC Tree Farm News



A Special Publication of the South Carolina Tree Farm Committee July/August 2010

Program Marks Sixty-four Years Of Service

South Carolina's Tree Farm Program is marking 64 years of service as it continues to assist landowners in making the most of their timberland via a network of dedicated volunteers.

The SC Tree Farm Committee brings foresters from industry, consultants, and government together with experienced Tree Farmers to plan and administer the

Program.

It's part of the American Tree Farm System, a nationwide community of more than 73,000 individuals and families. They share a unique commitment to protect watersheds and wildlife habitat, to conserve soil, provide recreation, and produce the wood that America needs to grow.

"The Tree Farm System in South Caro-

lina has a long tradition of working with individuals and families who share a desire for excellence in forest stewardship," said SC Tree Farm Committee Chairman Denise Bonnette, York, SC.

Program sponsors are: SC Forestry Association, SC Forestry Commission, and Clemson Cooperative Extension Service.

Weyman: National Winner

J. Kirk Weyman, Anderson, SC, has been named 2010 National Tree Farm Inspector of the Year.

He was nominated by Dr. Walt A. McPhail of Mauldin, SC, for his commitment to the American Tree Farm System and his many years of service as a Tree Farm inspector. The retired SC Forestry Commission employee is the longest serving member of the SC Tree Farm Committee and the group's District One Chairman.

Weyman will be honored at the National Tree Farm Convention in Burlington, Vermont in July.

Weyman is also current recipient of the George D. Kessler SC Tree Farm Inspector of the Year Award. The award was established in 2000 by Dr. A. G. "Skeet" Burris to honor the state's outstanding inspectors. Burris, from Beaufort, SC, is a former National Tree Farmer of the Year and former Chairman of the SC Forestry Association.



Tree Farm Tour of Unique Bay Is Nov. 3 Focus

The SC Tree Farm Committee is planning a Nov. 3 tour at the Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage Trust property in Horry, SC.

The 9,690-acre Heritage Preserve is home to bald eagles, red-cockaded woodpeckers, black bears, Carolina Bays, and many unique plant species -- just to name a few.

SC Tree Farm Tour stops will include discussions on: Carolina Bay ecology, carnivorous plants, black bear populations, prescribed burning, longleaf pine, and the 2009 Myrtle Beach, SC fire.

Prescribed burning plays a major role in shaping bay habitat and pine flatwoods. Fire spares fire-tolerant trees such as longleaf and pond pine, and favors herbaceous plants such as fly traps, pitcher-plants and native orchids.

Lewis Ocean Bay has twenty-three Carolina Bays - the largest number in one place in South Carolina. Carolina Bays are considered to be an isolated, freshwater wetland. The bay's depression fills with rainwater, usually in winter and spring, and dries in summer months. Water level determines plants and animals that inhabit it. Dense thickets of plants, such as blueberries, huckleberries, fetterbush and zenobia, cover bays and mingle with sweet bay, catbriar, gallberry and titi. A thin canopy of pond pine and loblolly bay trees usually surrounds the bays.

For more information:
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843/545-9853 or
Chastain@belle.baruch.sc.edu

Annual SC Tree Farm Field Tour Is Slated For September



Above, a snapshot from the property of Mark Jones, SC Tree Farmer of the Year.

When

Sept. 25, 2010

Where

Bottomland
Tree Farm,
Gassoway Farm Rd
(County Rd. # 63)
Abbeville, SC

Contact

Tour Chairman
Roy Boyd
803/325-1926
or Scott Phillips
803/896-8844

Attire

Field clothes



Mark T. Jones, Abbeville, SC, didn't set out to be a Tree Farmer. When he was younger, he leased land from timber companies so he could hunt deer and turkey. In 1993 he purchased 170 acres with wildlife as his primary goal.

"I soon became more interested in trees," he candidly admits.

Now, the South Carolina Tree Farmer of the Year generously shares insight on what landowners can accomplish on their property for minimal cost.

The SC Tree Farm Committee's Field Tour and Awards Ceremony will be held Sept. 25 at Jones' Tree Farm in Abbeville County.

"We want to invite all Tree Farmers to attend," says Roy Boyd, Rock Hill, SC, who chairs the Tour Committee. "The annual Field Tour is a great way for landowners to learn new management practices, network with other Tree Farmers, and meet experts stationed at the various stops."

Jones, a Greenville, SC firefighter, owns 382 acres that are certified as a Tree Farm and does about 95 percent of the work himself. Primary objectives are: profitable timber production, wildlife habitat enhancement, and to provide a demonstration area of forestry practices for other landowners.

Tour stops will include: prescribed burning, hardwood management, loblolly pine natural regeneration, log deck management, and backpack spray release program.

Directions and the registration form are included on page 3.

Drayton: SE Regional Finalist

Former SC Tree Farmer of the Year, Edward R. Drayton, Hartsville, SC, was selected one of the two Southeastern finalists in the American Tree Farm System's Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year competition. His objectives for Cattails Tree Farm in Marlboro County include managing it as a family business, primarily growing bottomland hardwoods, while enhancing the recreational, wildlife and aesthetic values. Drayton is a former SCFA Board Chairman and currently serves on the SC Tree Farm Committee.



NATIONAL CONVENTION: The 2010 National Tree Farmer Convention will be held July 13- 15 in Burlington, Vermont. Information/registration is available at: www.treefarmssystem.org

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



Hello South Carolina Tree Farmers! This is the first of two newsletters you can expect to receive on behalf of the South Carolina Tree Farm Committee in 2010. As part of our commitment and goals to revitalize the American Tree Farm System [ATFS] within the state, the newsletters are intended to open the door to increased communications with landowners and the inspectors who volunteer their services.

In this newsletter we provide well deserved recognition: 1) to two forestland owners who exemplify commitment to quality sustainable forest practices – Eddie Drayton, 2009 SC Outstanding Tree

Farmer of the Year and a Southeast Regional finalist, and Mark Jones, 2010 SC Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year; and 2) to Kirk Weyman, the 2010 National Inspector of the Year. All three of these gentlemen represent dedication to conserving forested properties in South Carolina and the ATFS. Enjoy their successes with us.

Also in this publication we inform you of opportunities to attend tours showcasing forest management practices that may be of assistance to you on your properties. Don't overlook the added bonus of breeding grounds for your networking confluences with fellow forestland owners. Speaking of confluences, check out the action alert concerning the estate tax bill that has been initiated in congress. You have the ability to make your voice heard in regards

to how it could affect you. Do you support it? Let congress know.

I would be remiss if I didn't take a moment to draw your attention to changes to the American Tree Farm System 2010 Standards. To maintain your certification, you will need to incorporate the changes into your management by Jan. 1, 2011. If you've not familiarized yourself with them, you can view them at www.treefarmssystem.org/2010Standards. To assist with updating your written management plan to meet the standards, a one page addendum template has been created for landowner's use. You can download a copy for your own use at www.treefarmssystem.org/2010Standards.

Lastly, I know thank you's have been extended to everyone who participated in the third party assessment conducted last year. But, I would like to reiterate how grateful I am to all individuals involved in the pro-

cess. Tree farmers whose properties were visited, inspectors and forest managers for those properties, and committee members heavily involved. A special thank you to Eric Smith, past chair, and Scott Phillips, treasurer, of the SC Tree Farm Committee. They both spent a great deal of time pulling the South Carolina portion of that assessment together.

On behalf of the SC Tree Farm Committee, I hope you find this newsletter informative. If you receive information to act upon to increase your management knowledge, gain new contacts, find the avenue to become more involved in the program, or are simply able to smile because it gives you a renewed sense of membership in the American Tree Farm System the newsletter has met the intended purpose.

Laura Denise Bonnette
SC Tree Farm Committee Chair

Tree Farmers Urged To Provide Input On Estate Tax Legislation

Private forest landowners across the nation are calling on Congress to fix the estate tax so we can keep family-owned forests intact and working.

The problem. The estate tax is not being collected in 2010. However, unless action is taken, in 2011, a 55 percent tax will be collected on all estates valued over \$1 million—the levels of 2001. Compare this with the 2009 rates where estates valued below \$3.5 million were exempt and the tax rate for those of higher value was 45 percent. If something is not done, a large number of family forest owners will feel the effects.

Most family forest owners are "land rich and cash poor," with the majority of families owning less than one hundred acres. The estate tax burden is one that many simply cannot afford. Each year when the estate tax is collected, an estimated 2.6 million acres of woodlands are harvested and 1.4 million acres are sold to pay the federal estate tax. One-fourth of the wooded acres sold to pay the tax are converted to other, more developed uses.

A potential solution. On May 28, Rep. Mike Thompson (D-CA) introduced H.R. 5475, The Family Farm Estate Tax Relief Act of 2010. The bill makes significant improvements in the estate tax for working family-owned forest land and farms. Where current law provides a "special use

exemption" with a limitation of \$1 million exemption and a penalty for landowners that harvest timber, H.R. 5475 provides a full exemption from the estate tax, equal to the value of the forest land and timber. To qualify, landowners simply have to agree to keep the land in their family and manage it as a forest. Additionally, if a landowner chooses to harvest timber under the Thompson bill, they can do so, provided they harvest consistent with a forest stewardship plan.

Thompson says, "The estate tax as it is currently written unfairly burdens our family farmers. When farms pass from generation to generation, too often families have to sell the farm to developers in order to pay the estate taxes. We need to preserve our agricultural land and open space, which is why I introduced this legislation to fix the tax code."

Thompson is correct in assessing the tax as being "written unfairly". Studies show only 33% of wooded estates qualify for existing special use exemptions in the estate tax and less than 25% of owners apply for the exemptions, because of complications and restrictions in the current law. This new bill is a great improvement over existing agriculture and forest land treatment in the estate tax.

America's forests provide numerous benefits—renewable energy, clean air and water, wood products, and wildlife habitat.

However, these benefits are not guaranteed. Family forest owners—who own over one-third of our forests—need tax policies that make it possible for them to keep their forests as forests.

You can help. Thompson's bill has already garnered support from many members of Congress in the House. Take action today, and urge your US Congressman to become a co-sponsor. You may take action by visiting www.familyforestaction.org to send a letter to your representative, urging them to support this important legislation.

Melissa Harden
American Forest Foundation,
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Tree Farm Website

Check Your Status: The SC Tree Farm website, located at www.sctfs.org, is being updated. "We encourage individuals to visit the site to update their contact information and/or check on their Tree Farm status," says Eric W. Smith, Past Chair, SC Tree Farm Committee. "There is a "Contact Us" section where you can fill out your information or submit questions."

Publications: To view past SC Tree Farm Newsletters, click on the Educational Activities section on the home page at www.sctfs.org. Also available in that section are past SC Tree Farm Tour Programs.



Website Contact: SC Tree Farm Committee member Dr. Tamara L. Cushing, Clemson University, Clemson, SC is responsible for updating the website. She may be reached at: TCUSHIN@exchange.clemson.edu

Champion Trees: How many champion trees are in South Carolina and which counties are they in? How do you nominate a tree? Where is the SC Champion Tree database kept?

To find the answers, go to www.clemson.edu/champtree/SouthCarolinaChampionTree.htm

Tree Farm Committee Contribution:

The SC Tree Farm Committee has made a \$3,000 contribution to South Carolina Project Learning Tree. The environmental education program is designed for teachers and other educators working with students from pre-kindergarten through high school. It uses the forest as a "window" into the natural world, helping young people gain an awareness and knowledge of the environment and their place within it.



Above, teachers participate in a Project Learning Tree lesson plan on paper making.

DISTRICT Tree Farmer WINNERS

District 1: Dennis L. Bauknight
Nominated By: Dale L. Mayson, Mason Consulting Forestry, Easley, SC

Dennis L. Bauknight, a retired District Conservationist with NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service), has had his Pickens County Tree Farm under a written forest management plan for over forty years. His primary objectives for the Tree Farm are timber production, financial, recreation, wildlife habitat, and education. He does most of the Tree Farm field work himself.



The Tree Farm is under the multiple use concept. Allowed uses include hunting, trapping, and hiking.

Bauknight received the South Carolina Wildlife Federation's Forest Conservation Award in 1998. He is a Master Tree Farmer and prescribed fire manager.

District 3: Greenville-Spartanburg Airport Commission
Nominated By: Justin R. Hilton, Milliken Forestry, Lexington, SC

The 3,517-acre property has been under a written forest management plan for 55 years and a certified Tree Farm for two years. Primary objectives are aesthetics, stewardship, and financial.

The Airport Commission's management activities on the property have been spotlighted in several television news segments.

The property is under the multiple use concept. Allowed uses include hunting, fishing, timber management, and general recreation.

"Every acre is important. Efforts to plant improved seedlings and incorporate current technological advances are paramount," says forester John Hilton. "Eradication of invasive species and protection of water quality are core in management activities."

District 4: John LeRoy Huguenot Family Farms
Nominated By: J. Bradford Thompson, Thompson Forest Consultants, Greenwood, SC

John LeRoy's Huguenot Family Farms, LLC, in Calhoun Falls, SC, includes 1,114 acres. Primary objectives are return on investment, wildlife habi-

tat, and family recreation.

LeRoy has been managing the Tree Farm since the 1960s for timber production and has done most of the work himself. Currently, he and his children do one-fourth of the field work on the property and the rest is accomplished by contracting with a consulting forester.

LeRoy is a member of the SC Forestry Association, and active in McCormick and Abbeville County Forest Landowner Associations. He serves on advisory boards for Farm Bureau, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Clemson Extension Service.



District 5: William Besson, III
Nominated By: Wes Cheatham, American Forest Management, Edgefield, SC

Dr. William Besson's Tree Farm in Edgefield County consists of 2,532 woodland acres. Primary objectives include management for timber for income and wildlife.

The Tree Farm is under the multiple use concept. The landowner has created opportunities for hunting, fishing, hiking, ATV recreation, and wildlife viewing. No timber harvesting is allowed in any of the natural hardwood stands.

Dr. Besson "is very passionate about his property, the heritage, history, and future generation," says forester John Cheatham. "He is concerned with proper forest and wildlife management to ensure that he can pass on this passion to his children. He has great love for the outdoors and his forest."

District 12: Jocelyn and Andrea Clark
Nominated By: Wade E. McDonald, F&W Forestry, Statesboro, GA

This Ridgeland, SC Tree Farm is owned by retired dairy farmers and consists of 2,944 woodland acres that have been in the family since the Thirties. It was certified as a Tree Farm in 1986.

"This is a working Tree Farm so financial considerations are important," says forester Wade McDonald. "Aesthetics, wildlife and recreation all play a significant role in the property's management.

"Mr. Clark and family members

maintained roads, mowed, sprayed, planted Christmas trees, and performed some controlled burning over the years." In the mid-1970s, F&W Forestry Services began managing the forest and continues to do so.

"Tenure, tenacity, and innovation are character traits that separate the Clarks far beyond the average Tree Farmer," McDonald adds. "They were planting trees in 1945 using advanced genetics, chemical, herbaceous, and fertilization applications long before others considered them viable forestry activities."



Sign Presentation: Tree Farm representative Dr. Walt A. McPhail (right) and former SC Tree Farm Committee Chairman George Chastain (middle), present an American Tree Farm System *Demonstration Tree Farm* sign to Brosnan Forest representative Joel Wells. The presentation was made May 18, 2010 during the SC Forestry Association's Board retreat. Norfolk Southern's stewardship of their 14,405-acre Forest in Dorchester County has evolved into a year-round endeavor of controlled burns, selective tree harvesting, and other practices that enhance wildlife habitat.

Field Tour, continued from page 1

Directions To Bottomland Tree Farm

From Greenville: Take Hwy. 25 (south) approx. 45 miles to Hwy. 178. Take Hwy. 178 (south) approx. 8 miles to Greenwood. From Greenwood, take Hwy. 72 (west) about 12 miles to Abbeville. In Abbeville take Hwy. 71 towards Lowndesville. Go about 7 miles and turn left on Gassoway Farm Road (County Rd. # 63). Go 2.5 miles and tour tent will be on your left.

From Columbia: Take Hwy. 378 (west) approx. 45 miles to Saluda. From Saluda take Hwy. 178 approx. 28 miles to Greenwood. In Greenwood take Hwy. 72 (west) approx. 12 miles to Abbeville. In Abbeville turn right on Hwy. 28 bypass and go 1.5 miles. Turn left on Old Calhoun Falls Road (County Rd. # 32) and go about 6 miles and turn right on Gassoway Farm Road (County Rd. # 63) after crossing Little River. Go 1.2 miles and tour tent will be on your right.

From North Augusta: Take Hwy. 25 (north) approx. 25 miles to Edgefield. From Edgefield remain on Hwy. 25 approx. 33 miles to Greenwood. In Greenwood take Hwy. 72 (west) about 12 miles to Abbeville. In Abbeville turn right on Hwy. 28 bypass and go approx. 1.5 miles. Turn left on Old Calhoun Falls Road (County Rd. # 32), go about 6 miles and turn right on Gassoway Farm Road (County Rd. # 63) after crossing Little River. Go 1.2 miles and tour tent will be on your right.

From Florence: Take I-20 (west) approx. 86 miles to Hwy. 378 in West Columbia. Take Hwy 378 (west) approx. 45 miles to Saluda. From Saluda take Hwy. 178 about 28 miles to Greenwood. In Greenwood take Hwy. 72 (west) 12 miles to Abbeville. In Abbeville turn right on Hwy. 28 bypass and go 1.5 miles. Turn left on Old Calhoun Falls Road (County Rd. # 32) and go approx. 6 miles and turn right on Gassoway Farm Road (County Rd. # 63) after crossing Little River. Go 1.2 miles and tour tent will be on your right.

September 25, 2010

SC Tree Farm FIELD TOUR REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____
 Name of guest(s): _____

Please check the appropriate box below:

- I will attend the SC Tree Farm Field Tour & Awards Ceremony and eat lunch.
 I will bring _____ guest(s). (Indicate number.)
 I will eat lunch only.
 I will bring _____ guest(s). (Indicate number.)

****Note:** The program is limited to the first 125 registrants

Return this form with check, payable to SC Tree Farm Committee, (\$15 per person) before September 3, 2010 to:

SC Tree Farm Committee, ATTN: Scott Phillips, P O Box 21707, Columbia, SC 29221

SC Tree Farm Committee Directory

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Past Chairman and District 4 Chair

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John E. Spearman, Jr. Awards Chair

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Johney L. Haralson

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Edward R. Drayton

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Mark T. Jones

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864-220-1525
jonesmt@bellsouth.net

SC Tree Farm Districts

| County | District | | |
|--------------|----------|--------------|----|
| Abbeville | 4 | Hampton | 12 |
| Aiken | 5 | Horry | 8 |
| Allendale | 10 | Jasper | 12 |
| Anderson | 1 | Kershaw | 2 |
| Bamberg | 10 | Lancaster | 2 |
| Barnwell | 10 | Laurens | 1 |
| Beaufort | 12 | Lee | 6 |
| Berkeley | 11 | Lexington | 5 |
| Calhoun | 10 | Marion | 8 |
| Charleston | 11 | Marlboro | 8 |
| Cherokee | 3 | McCormick | 4 |
| Chester | 2 | Newberry | 4 |
| Chesterfield | 7 | Oconee | 1 |
| Clarendon | 9 | Orangeburg | 10 |
| Colleton | 12 | Pickens | 1 |
| Darlington | 7 | Richland | 6 |
| Dillon | 8 | Saluda | 5 |
| Dorchester | 11 | Spartanburg | 3 |
| Edgefield | 5 | Sumter | 6 |
| Fairfield | 6 | Union | 3 |
| Florence | 8 | Williamsburg | 9 |
| Georgetown | 9 | York | 3 |
| Greenville | 1 | | |
| Greenwood | 4 | | |

Former Regional Tree Farmers of the Year From SC

2007 Johney L. Haralson, Denmark, SC
2005 Dyches Family, Savannah, GA
2004 John & Mary Rebecca Spearman,
Lane, SC
2003 Dr. Walter A. McPhail, Mauldin, SC
2000 Dr. A. G. "Skeet" and Gail Burris
1996 Dr. A. G. "Skeet" and Gail Burris

Former SC Tree Farmer of the Year Winners

'80-'81 S. Guerry Stukes, Summerton, SC
'82-'83 Mary Julia Royall, Mt. Pleasant, SC
'83-'84 Rufus B. Lawrimore, Hemingway, SC
'84-'85 Iverson Brookes Lawton, Allendale, SC
'85-'86 John W. Kemp, Jr., Edgefield, SC
'86-'87 Charles W. Redfearn, Beaufort, SC
'87-'88 Carroll & Jane Brown, Colleton County
'88-'89 John Carter, Sharon, SC
'89-'90 James W. Hunt, Jr. Eastover, SC
'90-'91 Robert Cecil Gentry, Salem, SC
'91-'92 Tom Turner, Rock Hill, SC
'92-'93 Francis A. Snelgrove, Lexington, SC
'93-'94 W. R. "Roy" Watkins, Cassatt, SC
'94-'95 Dr. A. G. "Skeet" Burris, Beaufort, SC
'95-'96 Gordon E. Gale, Hardeeville, SC
'96-'97 William E. Eutsler, Cheraw, SC
'97-'98 Randell C. Ewing, Hartsville, SC
'98-'99 Deer Hill, Lane, SC
'99-'00 Fred Gantt, Columbia, SC
'00-'01 Dr. Walter A. McPhail, Mauldin, SC
'01-'02 Dyches Family, Savannah, GA
'02-'03 John M. McPhail, Abbeville, SC
'03-'04 Johney L. Haralson, Denmark, SC
'05-'06 Bookman Station, LLC, Columbia, SC
'06-'07 Ben Herlong, Saluda, SC
'07-'08 Edward R. Drayton, Hartsville, SC

Auction Items Sought

Plans are underway for the SC Tree Farm Committee's Silent Auction Nov. 3-4, Marriott Grande Dunes, Myrtle Beach, SC.

"Auction proceeds will be used to support Tree Farm Committee projects, promotion, and educational activities to encourage landowners to manage their forests for multiple-use," says Auction Chairman Jeff Brown,



Elgin, SC.

To donate items, or for more information, contact:

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Forest Resource Professionals
PO Box 722
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803-438-1350 (O)
Jeff@forestresourcepro.com