



# SOUTH DAKOTA FAMILY FORESTS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

JU NE 2018

Bi-Annual Newsletter

## 2018 National Leadership Conference

Each year, the American Tree Farm System hosts more than 250 individuals from the Tree Farm network including inspectors, Tree Farmers, state committee leaders and policy supporters to its three-day National Leadership Conference.

The 2018 NLC was held in Albuquerque, New Mexico and was highlighted by a new vision for ATFS: To grow, strengthen, and deepen the impact of the program.

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Throughout the conference, presentations, panel discussions, and small group sessions focused on opportunities and strategies to achieve that vision including:

- Workable options for streamlining ATFS certification
- The use of technology in the streamlining process and how we can attract and service new landowners
- Attributes of a program with lower barriers for entry to attract more landowners
- Opportunities to leverage resources to increase impact work by Tree Farmers
- Options for increasing the engagement of landowners in a network
- Options for a sustainable funding model.

## Aspen Restoration Project Funding

If you have aspen groves on your land, you may want to have a forester check their condition. If there is little or no regeneration, you need to learn more about the Aspen Restoration Project. This program has funding available for implementing approved practices that will improve the health of your aspen grove. However, funding will not be available after this year, so there is a limited amount of time available for applying, implementing and being approved for funding.

For more information, see the article in the December 2016 SDFFA newsletter. The newsletter, as well as the application forms and other information can be found under the Resources tab at the South Dakota Family Forests Association website at <http://www.sdfamilyforests.org>. Funding is available only through 2018. That means that projects would need to be completed by August 31 in order to be paid out by the end of the year. If interested, the first step would be to contact Allyssa Gregory, the service forester with SD Resource Conservation and Forestry. Her phone number is 605-584-2300 ext. 217.

Over the last three years, the focus of our organization has been to reconnect with our SD Tree Farmers. One of our main goals was to identify what services our members needed and felt were important to manage their properties. We re-established contact with all members via telephone, mail, workshops, emails, visits and inspections. We found that many changes had occurred within our Tree Farmer Organization; some had transferred land to heirs, some of the properties were sold, others had lost interest, and some no longer qualified for the forest management program. Currently there are 112 active Tree Farms in South Dakota.

The reconnection with Tree Farmers has been primarily one sided with little active engagement by members. Response to surveys, attendance at workshops and meetings, and feedback on services has been generally low. Only about 10-20% of Tree Farmers have actually participated in any of the Tree Farm activities. Because of this it has been difficult to assess what activities and services are truly of value to our members. There have been numerous ideas floated and tried.

The one reoccurring theme that has become apparent is the need to advocate on behalf of private forest owners in SD. There is no one to stand up for our specific issues. Ag Land classification and new taxation/regulations on landowners or on the timber industry are key state issues. Fair and consistent application of the Ag Land classification is a key concern at the county level. At the national level, inheritance tax and funding for forestland improvements are key issues for our Washington DC parent organization. We need to have a strong voice in these matters to enjoy a future.

Our fundraising efforts this past year fell short of our goal and needs of the organization. Therefore, we have increased our efforts in fundraising this year and continue to pursue additional cost sharing or grants that become available.

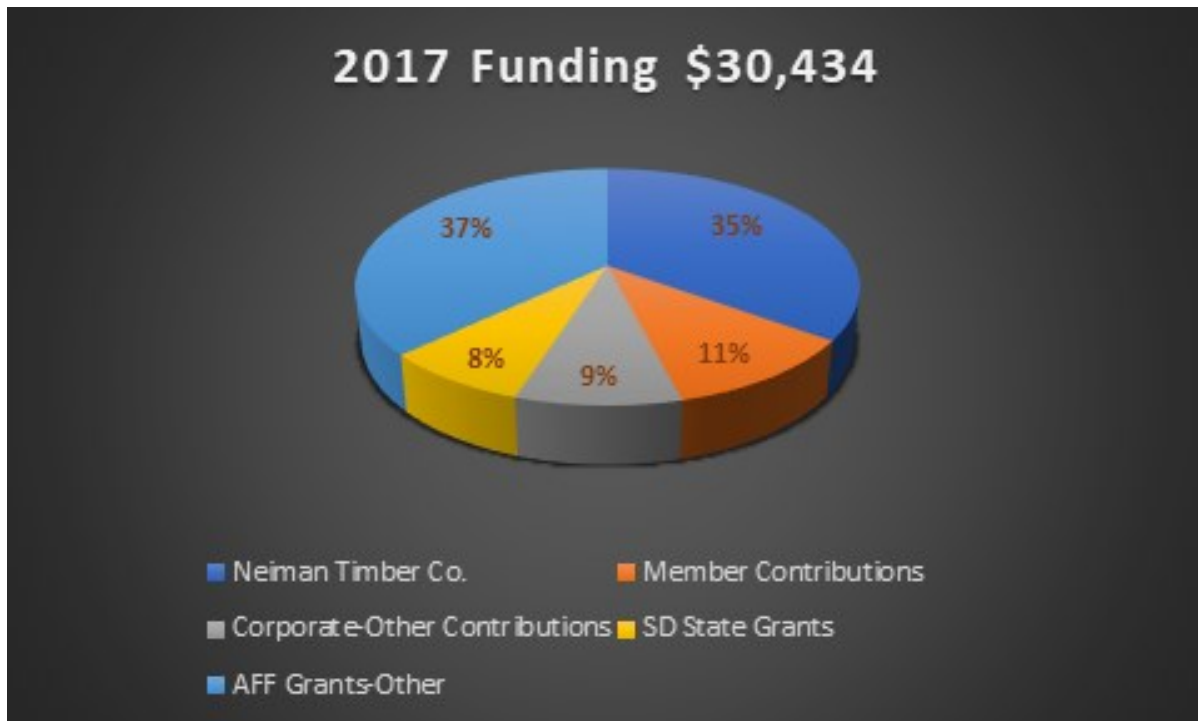
As with most non-profit organizations, volunteers are crucial to keep Tree Farm running. The Tree Farm organization is primarily made up of landowners, plus forestry and conservation professionals. We need your input and any help you can offer to keep Tree Farm a viable program for the landowners.

We remain extremely thankful for all the volunteers and financial donors who support our organization. Thank you for all your efforts that have helped us continue. We will continue in the future to balance the real value to our Tree Farmers with the resources that are available.

# 2017/2018 Financial Overview

For 2017, the South Dakota Family Forest Association (SDFFA) incurred a **deficit of \$4,900**, on revenues of \$30,400 and expenses of \$35,300. As you might recall, the SDFFA created a Fundraising Committee (FC) in late 2016. The purpose of this committee was to reach out to corporations, businesses and individuals, who had direct / indirect business contact with the Black Hills timber industry. Committee members made face-to-face contacts with prospective donors and requested their support, via a 3-year, financial commitment. The original, fundraising goal was \$15,000/year, over the 2017-2019 period. Unfortunately, for 2017, we only received \$11,500, for a \$3,500 revenue shortfall.

The following pie charts offer more detailed 2017 Revenue and Expense breakdowns.



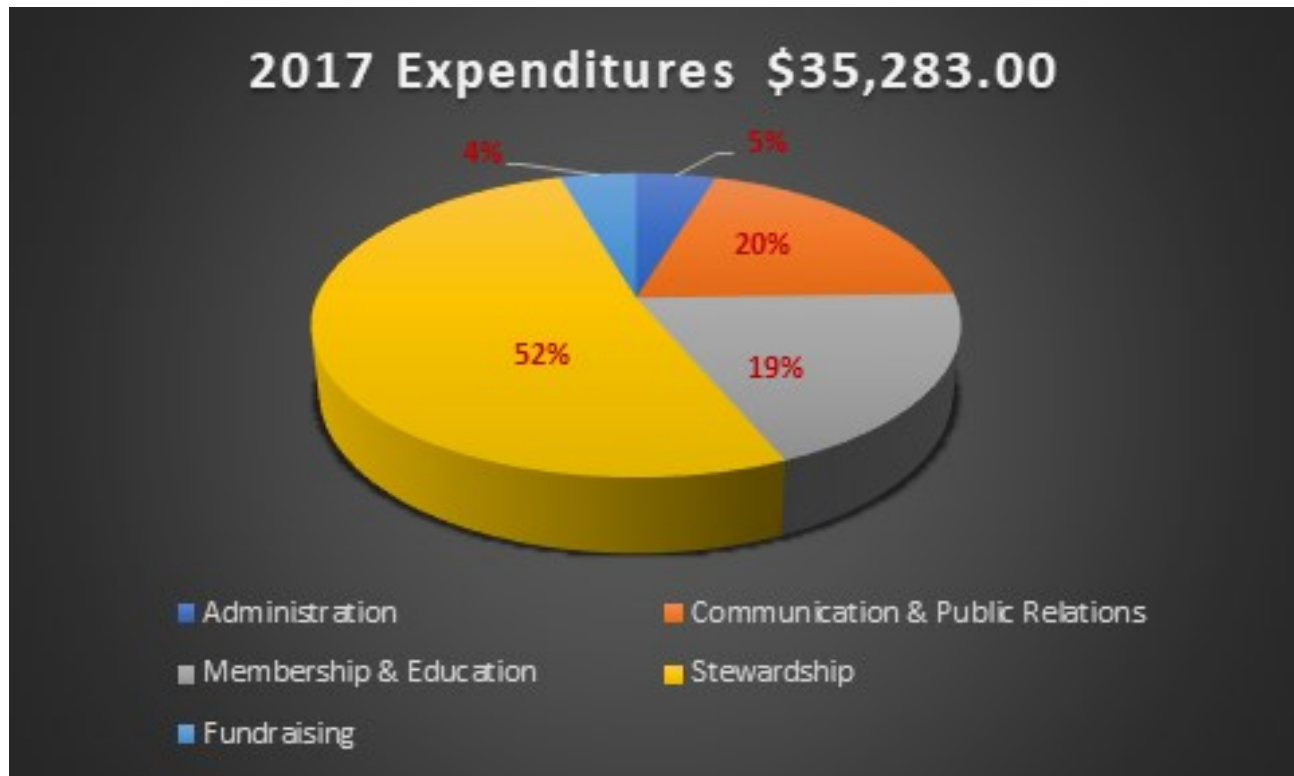
Areas of specific 2017 “Funding” interest / clarification:

**Neiman Timber** contributions were \$6,000, via a Stewardship Grant, and a \$5,000 donation for annual operating expense. Neiman’s generosity accounted for over 1/3 of the SDFFA’s revenue.

**Corporate – Other Contributions** were \$2,750 annually, based on a 3-year commitment (2017-2019). This donation was based on the Fundraising- Committee drive, conducted in late-2016 and early 2017.

**Member Contributions** were \$3,700 annually, again, based on a 3-year commitment (2017-2019). These voluntary donations were also part of the Fundraising Committee’s drive. **(NOTE: 1) Of the \$3,700 in member contributions, 40% came from individuals, most of which are holding leadership positions in the SDFFA. 2) To clarify, the recent Fundraising-Committee campaign did not formally seek voluntary contributions from the SDFFA’s general membership.)**

# 2017/2018 Financial Overview



An area of specific 2017 “Expense” interest / clarification:

Stewardship expenses / activities are the SDFFA’s “highest priority” commitment to our membership.

For 2017, eleven (11) new members realized financial help on their new management plans, while some existing members received the benefit of “no cost” inspections.

For 2018, the SDFFA Board of Directors has approved a balanced budget, with total expenses of \$34,640 and total revenues of \$35,430. This balanced budget was achieved by a combination of reducing committee-chair, budget requests by \$7,400 and increasing Fundraising Committee (FC) contributions, by 30% above 2017 levels. Your association is counting on a robust, FC to achieve this balanced budget. Again, for 2017, the FC raised a total of \$11,500. For 2018, the FC has been tasked to increase contributions to a total contribution level of \$15,000. If this 2018 contribution level is not achieved, the SDFFA may be forced to delay and/or eliminate some workshops and programs, in 2019 and beyond.

At our April 26<sup>th</sup> Board of Director’s meeting, we had a discussion on the SDFFA’s long-term financial viability. The primary issue was how our organization was going to achieve a sustainable-revenue stream, while continuing to maximize value to our membership. After over one hour of looking at various options, a motion was made and was unanimously approved to implement membership dues, effective January 1, 2019. Since membership dues will only cover a portion of annual expenses, contributions from partners and other donors will also be required, via annual fundraising activities.

**Doug Miller: Director & Chair - Membership & Education Committee**

## Walk in the Forest Program with South Dakota Project Learning Tree

South Dakota Project Learning Tree (SDPLT) will be holding the first of 2018's Walk in the Forest Program with second grade students from Valley View Elementary School in Rapid City. The event will take place May 7<sup>th</sup> 10am-2pm at the Skyline Wilderness Trail System. This is the second year this school has participated in this wonderful fun filled, forest field event.

SDPLT brought the event after a brief hiatus (budget cuts in school funding made field trips almost impossible for schools, SDPLT has helped to remedy this with covering transportation costs to these events through generous grant and donation fun in 2016 with Lead/Deadwood 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students. Lead/Deadwood has made this an annual event. In 2017 Elizabeth Seaton 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade participated in the event and this coming August 2018, Belle Fourche 7<sup>th</sup> grade will participate. This has been becoming a very popular event and we are always looking for more volunteers or family forests to hold the events at.



What is a Walk in the Forest? Take a class or two of kids, their teachers, a handful of natural resources professionals, some tree farmers, and a piece of forest at or near a school and what have you got? A magical few hours of long-lasting learning and inspiration called A Walk in the Forest.

The Walk in the Forest Program utilizes community forests and local volunteers and resource professionals to provide a forest field day at or near a school. Students and teachers rotate through "stations" set up in the forest which address such topics as forest wildlife, tree identification, soils types and why trees grow where they do, and forest management and tools of the trade. Knowledgeable professionals and volunteers provide active learning experiences which allow students to explore their local forest and learn about forestry and other natural resource professions first hand.

A Walk in the Forest is a partnership between South Dakota Project Learning Tree, the Dakota Society of American Foresters, the South Dakota Family Forests Association, Neiman Enterprises and South Dakota Department of Resource Conservation and Forestry.

**For more information or if you would like to volunteer or offer your tree farm for an event, please contact Tracy Sigdestad at [southdakotaplnt@gmail.com](mailto:southdakotaplnt@gmail.com)**



# Forest to Product Workshop—July 17-19, 2018

South Dakota Project Learning Tree and Wyoming Project Learning Tree along with partners from forestry professionals, timber producers and forest product manufacturers from both states propose to offer a three day, two-night educational workshop for South Dakota and Wyoming educators, and forest landowners.

This joint Forest to Product Workshop is being sponsored by the Dakota Society of American Foresters with additional funding, and/or in-kind support, from South Dakota Family Forests Association, Neiman Timber Co., and South Dakota Division of Resource Conservation and Forestry.

This extensive educator and landowner workshop, which will take place at Kamp Kinship (located on the 1992 South Dakota Tree Farm of the Year), focuses on the environmental, ecological, and economic benefits of South Dakota's forestlands and timber industries. The tour will take participants to a forest product mill, publicly (Black Hills National Forest) and privately-owned forests (Sawyer Memorial Park Tree Farm), and a forest harvesting operation. Participants will meet and learn by demonstration and practical exercises from natural resource professionals and members of the forest products industry, about current forest issues and sustainable forest management practices. Teachers are trained in the use of Project Learning Tree, and Project WILD materials to demonstrate how relevant conservation practices can be integrated into classroom work and student projects, while meeting State and National Curriculum Standards in science, social studies, language arts and math. Forest landowners will carry this knowledge into effectively managing their land.

The purpose of this workshop is to provide an unbiased investigation of the impact sustainable forestry has on our state's economy, environment, and quality of life.

This workshop is offered to landowners and full-time certified K-12 teachers with interest in environmental studies, life sciences, biology, tech-prep, and/or natural resource education. Non-formal educators, such as Nature Center staff, Youth Group staff, and others, but priority will be given to full-time certified teachers. Continuing Education Units, Undergraduate, and Graduate credits are available. The workshop is limited to thirty participants and is three days, two nights in length, taking place July 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>. Landowners are invited to attend all three days (SDPLT traditionally utilizes Tree farms for school field events, such as A Walk in the Forest), if they are interested in utilizing their land for school educational outreach, however the third day of tours would be most applicable to landowners.

Through these workshops, participants will be immersed in the social, economic and ecological aspects of sustainable forestry and natural resource conservation practices. Participants explore sustainable forestry issues, learning directly from natural resource professionals and by visiting private, state and federal forests; touring wood and paper mills, witnessing an active timber harvesting operation; walking in managed forest stands of differing ages; and experiencing proven classroom activities to address tour topics with their students. Participants leave with valuable information, concepts, activities and resources to explore sustainable forestry and related careers with their students.

Topics include (hands-on activities from Project Learning Tree and Project WILD specific to each topic listed will be facilitated), as well as direct, practical experience with resource professionals:

- **FOREST MANAGEMENT**
- **FOREST PRODUCT PRODUCTION**
- **WILDLIFE CONSERVATION**
- **TOURS STOPS INCLUDE**
  - Private, industrial, and public forest lands
  - Lumber, paper, furniture, and other wood product mill.
  - Cultural events highlighting the history of land use in South Dakota
  - Sawyer Memorial Tree Farm and Interpretive Trail

# WE NEED AND THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!

## Forest to Product Workshop

—Kamp Kinship & the Surrounding Black Hills-July 17-19, 2018

If you having any upcoming activities that you would like in the newsletter please email the information to: [SDtreefarm@gmail.com](mailto:SDtreefarm@gmail.com).



SEND US PHOTOS OF YOUR SOUTH DAKOTA FAMILY FOREST: WOOD, WATER, WILDLIFE, RECREATION, and **YOUR** FAMILY. Email your photos to: [SDtreefarm@gmail.com](mailto:SDtreefarm@gmail.com)

## **South Dakota Family Forests Association Board**

- Paul Schipke, Tree Farmer & Chairman
- Dennie & Mary Ann Mann  
- Executive Director & Treasurer
- Doug Miller, Tree Farmer & Secretary
- Bill Coburn - Industrial Forester
- Greg Josten, SD State Forester
- Parks Brigman, SD RC&F Forester
- Bob Burns, Tree Farmer
  
- Kory Bossert, NRCS
  
- Patricia Turbiville -
- Ben Wudtke, BH Forest Resource Assoc.
  
- Tracy Sigdestad, South Dakota PLT

## **Committee Members**

### **Communication and Public Relations**

Bob Burns - Chairperson,  
Patricia Turbiville, Ben Wudtke, Stuart Adrian

### **Financial & Fundraising**

Dennie Mann - Chairperson,  
Bill Coburn, Doug Miller

### **Certification**

Parks Brigman - Chairperson,  
Bill Coburn

### **Membership & Education**

Doug Miller - Chairperson,  
Lynn Kolund, Paul Schipke

### **Contact Information:**

Executive Director – Dennie Mann

Phone: 605-939-8156

Email: [SDtreefarm@gmail.com](mailto:SDtreefarm@gmail.com)



**SDFFA**  
SOUTH DAKOTA FAMILY  
FORESTS ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 9576

Rapid City, SD 57709