



SOUTH DAKOTA FAMILY FORESTS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

August 2019

Bi-Annual Newsletter

South Dakota Chosen to Represent the West-Central Region in 2020 Assessment

Every year Tree Farmers in a few states are invited to highlight the great work they are doing on their property by participating in a review of the American Tree Farm System through a third-party assessment. The annual third-party assessments have been helpful in showing where the American Tree Farm System needs to improve our system to ensure that we are getting landowners the information they need to manage their forested properties. They also help show how we can improve the Tree Farm program to ensure we remain a credible certification system that creates opportunities for family forest owners. We are still early in the process but making you aware of next year's assessment is a helpful reminder that now is a good time to be reviewing your management plan and compiling any records you have of any recent management activities on your property. Those tree farms selected for assessment will be notified in January of 2020 with the field assessment to follow later in the year, most likely early summer. The field assessment is simply a one hour visit to the property by representatives of the SD Family Forest Association, ATFS, and the 3rd party reviewers, Price Waterhouse Coopers. If you're thinking that this process sounds familiar, you're right! In 2016, the SD Tree Farm program went through this same field assessment process, and we received very positive feedback with some landowners being recognized for their innovative management strategies. If you have any questions regarding the 2020 assessment, contact certification committee chair, Parks Brigman at 605-394-2588 or john.brigman@state.sd.us. We look forward to another positive review of our program in 2020!

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SD Secretary of Agriculture Visits

The South Dakota Secretary Of Agriculture, Kim Vanneman, visited the Burns La-Hood Family Forest May 21st to see the importance to our Ag economy and Forest Health that comes from being a certified Tree Farm.



Attempting to view tree rings on a freshly cut stump are from left to right, Secretary Vanneman, SD State Foresters Allyssa Kennel, Brian Garbisch and Greg Josten.



The weather was slightly better in 2017 when then Sec of Agriculture Mike Jaspers and Tree Farmer Bob Burns discussed the relationship between forest health and hydrology.

Bob Burns: Chair - Communication Committee



2019 Estate Planning and Legacy Workshop

Thoughts from the Stump (literally)

Well, like they say “If it does not kill you, it will make you stronger. With that said, I am truly experiencing being a tree farmer on my own property in Wyoming, near Sundance. I have undertaken thinning about 60 acres of heavily stocked pine saplings to seedlings. By heavily stocked, I am talking over 20,000 trees per acre in some areas. Having finished about 15 acres so far, I am really appreciating the trees that I have left. Hopefully I am stronger when I get done. As you would expect, I am managing my forest to maximize the growth of my trees so I am spacing my trees about 9 feet apart on average. Hopefully I will be able write about my thinning experience in another SDFFA newsletter.

I wanted to let all of you know that the SDFFA board really appreciates the commitment you all have made to our organization by paying your 2019 dues. Currently almost 80% of our members have decided to continue their membership. We are really excited about this high retention.

There have been a few changes in our leadership. Paul Schipke and I switched positions with Paul now our Vice Chairperson and me serving as your chairperson. Paul is also taking over as chair of our Finance Committee. Doug Miller has joined Paul and Dennie Mann on the Finance Committee. One of our challenges and needs is to be able to get some new people on our board and subcommittees. I would strongly encourage you to consider volunteering for either. New people with new ideas and energy is critical for our future success.

We will continue to work hard to support you and your family forest (Tree Farm) in 2019.

“May The Forest Be With You”

Bill Coburn

Chairperson, SDFFA

Putting Their Trust in Wildlife and Public Access

300 acres of private land protected and open to public access

At the peak of the Black Hills Gold Rush in the late 1880s, John Sawyer worked as a timber agent for the Homestake Mining Company southwest of Deadwood, owner of what would become North America's largest gold mine.

Sawyer had an eye for good land, and he and his wife Nellie acquired 380 gorgeous acres eight miles southeast of Deadwood. John died in 1933, deeply enamored with the Black Hills and its forests that had provided him a vibrant life and livelihood. But the Sawyers' only child had died as an infant. With no heirs, Nellie decided after John's death to donate their 380 acres of grassy meadows and rolling hills of aspen, birch, Black Hills spruce and ponderosa pine to be managed as a "private trust for the public good."

She selected five trustees to oversee its management. The succession of trustees over the past 86 years have found many ways to benefit both public enjoyment and wildlife. Elk had just gone extinct from the Black Hills when the Sawyers first acquired the parcel, but today herds of up to 200 roam the area.

The trustees welcome walk-in public hunting, and through the years many people have filled their freezers here and brought home some serious wall-hangers, too. It's also a good spot for whitetails, wild turkeys, ruffed grouse, mountain lions and bobcats.

In 2009, the Sawyer Memorial Trust donated a conservation easement on 300 acres to the Rocky

Mountain Elk Foundation, forever protecting it from the rampant subdivision and development chopping up the Black Hills. They later applied for and received an RMEF grant to help fund a half-mile interpretive trail finished in 2014 that includes conservation kiosks explaining the wide range of habitats here. For more than 50 years, the land has been part of the American Tree Farm System that promotes sustainable forestry and private stewardship. Some 3,000 school children have visited Sawyer to participate in Project Learning Tree and Society of American Foresters' "Walk in the Forest" programs to learn about nature and silviculture. RMEF volunteers have also gathered there to construct two small water catchments and to erect fences around hard-hit aspen and birch stands that elk and deer were loving to death.

Volunteers from the local Boys and Girls Club recently cut young spruce trees crowding out the aspen and birch but that also make great Christmas trees, which they hauled to Rapid City to sell as one of their key fundraisers.

"Last year they cut 140 trees," says trustee Bill Coburn, a retired forester and the third generation of his family to serve on the trust. "They said they'd like to come back and cut at least 300 trees annually for the next few years, and we definitely have that many for them. It's pretty neat—they can help us and we can help them. We're always looking for opportunities to improve the habitat."

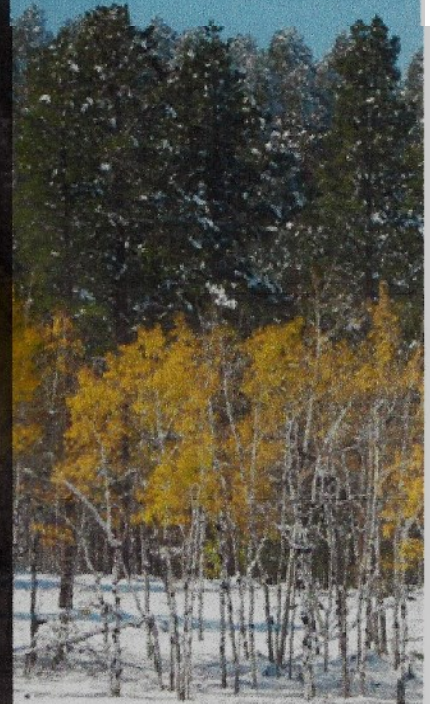


PHOTO: BILL COBURN

TREE FARMER OF THE YEAR 2019

It is my honor and pleasure to be able to announce that our South Dakota Tree Farmer of the Year is Leland and Shirley Hosemann. Lee and Shirley grew up and graduated from Deadwood High School back in the late 40's. Sometime after High School Lee and Shirley got married and Lee enlisted in flight school in the US Navy, and ending up flying jets during the Korean War. Now after 60 years of marriage, Lee and Shirley are still living their dream and cannot wait to return to their property each year from their winter home in California. Even after Lee's Air Force career took them to other parts of the world including the Korean War, their hearts remained in the Black Hills and they yearned to return to it after Lee retired. So when an opportunity to purchase some land close to where Shirley's family homesteaded came available in the 1960's they jumped at it, buying an old, overgrown mining claim. As you drive through the Hosemann property now you enjoy looking at the nicely spaced, vibrant ponderosa pine forest over lots of regen. with small groves of aspen and forest openings interspersed throughout. It has not always been the case. Lee and Shirley told me that when they bought the property much of the forest was in overgrown, dog hair stands of ponderosa pine. Being absentee landowners due to Lee's navy career, they realized that they needed help so in the late 1960s they did their homework. They found out that the ASCS, working through the SD Game, Fish and Parks, had programs to help them get their forest managed. That began about a 15 year period where they worked with these agencies to get a good share of their forest managed. By 1983, their enduring forest management efforts were recognized by the Keep South Dakota Green Association, as the South Dakota Woodland Tree Farmers of the Year. From that time on every summer, Lee and Shirley would return to their "Tree Farm" to thin their small trees and pile the slash. During the 1980's, they also helped construct a lovely cabin on top their hill. In 1994, the Hosemann's property was certified as a Stewardship Forest.

As they can attest, managing your forest is not a onetime event. They have been at it for over 50 years. Lee and Shirley have spent many of their summer hours thinning and hand piling the small, precommercial pine trees and would still be at it today if it was not for their health and age. I can remember working with them on implementing a commercial timber harvest in 2002 and Lee was out there almost every day, precommercially thinning an area just northeast of their house. This year, those trees were big enough to be commercially thinned which is evident in almost every tree.

In closing, I would like to quote a friend of mine, Alan Hendricks, who nominated the Hosemann's for their 1983 Tree Farmer of the Year award. **"The Hosemann Tree Farm is truly impressive: a living monument to the principles of wise resource management! The dedication and hard work exhibited by Lee and Shirley is exemplary of what the American Tree Farm System stands for"**.

Bill Coburn, CF
Inspecting Forester and SDFFA Chair.



WE NEED AND THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!

Aspen Days 2019

September 17-19 2 Holiday Inn Express in Deadwood, SD 57732

Aspen ecology and management workshops to assist landowners in their management. Even will contain a hike up the Sundance Trail in the Bear Lodge Mountains of Wyoming with discussion on multiple management techniques. This event does not have a registration fee but is capped at the first 40 people. Registrations must be completed by August 16, 2019 to attend the event.

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

Left to Right: Jim & Sally Scherrer



Left to Right: Greg & Sharon Overturf



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

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- Bill Coburn: Chairman & Semi-Ret. Forester
- Paul Schipke: Vice Chairman Tree Farmer
- Mary LaHood: Tree Farmer
 - Executive Director & Treasurer
- Doug Miller: Tree Farmer & Secretary
- Greg Josten: SD State Forester
- Parks Brigman: SD RC&F Forester
- Bob Burns: Tree Farmer
- Kory Bossert: NRCS
- Ben Wudtke: BH Forest Resource Assoc.

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Certification

Parks Brigman - Chairperson,
Paul Schipke

Membership & Education

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