

FOREST STEWARDSHIP BRIEFINGS

Timber ◇ Wildlife ◇ Water Quality ◇ Soil Conservation ◇ Best Management Practices ◇ Recreation ◇ Aesthetics

RIBBONS OF GOLD

For many centuries, gold has been an enduring symbol of value and worth.

My dad retired a few years ago after serving 48 years with the same company. Prior to his retirement, his boss held a fancy dinner to honor Dad's service, and gave him a rare Double Eagle gold coin in mint condition dated the year of his birth. Although the one-ounce coin had a face value of only \$20, it has an actual value many, many times greater.

Like a gold coin, the narrow bands of land that lie alongside creeks and rivers have a value much greater than their face value. Although these riparian areas make up only one or two percent of the total land area, the contributions and values they provide are far in excess of their rather small acreage.

No right-minded person in possession of a gold coin would dream of spending it at its face value. Likewise, the loss or degradation of riparian areas is also an unfortunate waste of a precious and valuable natural resource.

We could list a number of important values that creeks and riparian areas provide - natural beauty, extraordinary fish and wildlife habitat, recreational value, livestock forage, real estate value just to name a few. But possibly the value that exceeds all of these is the very real value of the water itself and the way that riparian areas function to process that water.

Restoring creeks and riparian areas to their functional potential cannot increase the total supply of water, but it can make a big

difference in the distribution and quality of that water across the landscape and over time. Many would agree that the total supply of water that we get from rainfall each year is sufficient to meet the demands, but the timing of the water supply and the location of that water is often the problem. Sometimes a creek may receive a year's worth of water all in one day, only to find a dry creek bed, small trickles or scattered puddles a short time later.

A properly functioning creek, along with its riparian floodplain area can help ameliorate and buffer those wild pulses of water over space and time and can help keep water more evenly distributed on the land longer. In fact, the essence of riparian function is to efficiently catch, store and release floodwaters. At the same time, a healthy riparian area captures sediment and stabilizes that sediment to improve water quality while continually building a bigger riparian sponge. The sustained release of that stored water from the banks and floodplains and from shallow water tables after rainfall events is the way that riparian areas process water. Good, dense riparian vegetation across the entire floodplain is the key to the proper function of riparian areas. Proper riparian vegetation dissipates the destructive energy of floodwater, slows water velocity, allows sediment to drop, protects banks, and helps build floodplains.

Like gold coins that we treasure and protect, let us do everything in our power to encourage and promote the proper husbandry and stewardship of these valuable ribbons of riparian gold. The dividends are enormous.

from "Riparian Notes," Note Number 9, Dec. 2004, by Steve Nelle, NRCS, San Angelo, TX

For more information:

- <http://texasforestservicetamu.edu/shared/article.asp?DocumentID=651>
- <http://texasforestservicetamu.edu/shared/article.asp?DocumentID=279>

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TREE FARMER OF THE YEAR

Cornie Fletcher of Nacogdoches County has been named the 2005 Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year for Texas. The announcement was made at a Tree Farm Committee Meeting held in Lufkin.

“A Tree Farm is living proof that a well-managed forest is a better forest,” said Ron Hufford, Executive Vice President of Texas Forestry Association, the sponsoring agent for Tree Farm in Texas. “Ms. Fletcher deserves to be recognized for her 25 years of excellent forest management and her commitment to forest stewardship,” he said

The Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year competition recognizes private landowners for the exceptional job they are doing of enhancing the forest on their property. Winners are also chosen based on their efforts to foster and promote the practice of sustainable forestry to other landowners and the public. Cornie Fletcher was one of two zone winners who were selected for the state competition. She was nominated by John Boyette, District Forester for the Texas Forest Service. Boyette is one of 8,000 Tree Farm

volunteers nationwide.

To be a Certified Tree Farmer, a landowner must manage his or her forest in an environmentally sound manner in accordance with the American Tree Farm System’s standards and guidelines. “Tree Farmers provide Americans with a renewable supply of essential timber and wood products,” said Hufford. “Their forests help clean the air we breathe, protect the watersheds we depend upon, and provide homes for wildlife. By constantly seeking expert advice on sustainable forestry practices, Tree Farmers like Cornie Fletcher make good decisions for their land that will sustain their forest for generations to come,” he said. In 2006, Ms. Fletcher will compete against 11 southern states for the Regional Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year title.

Established in 1941, the American Tree Farm System is the oldest and largest forest certification program in the United States. Today, 59,000 Certified Tree Farmers are managing 22 million acres of forest. There are 2,300 Tree Farms in Texas, encompassing 4 million acres.

from Texas Forestry Association's website

For more information:

- <http://www.texasforestry.org/outstanding%20tree%20farmer.htm>
- http://www.texasforestry.org/tree_farm.htm

BMP WORKSHOP'S 10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

The Texas Forest Service and Texas Forestry Association are celebrating the 10-year anniversary of the logger Best Management Practices (BMP) training workshop. The first training session was held in Lufkin on July 6, 1995. Since that date, the Texas Forest Service has trained almost 3,000 people in over 110 BMP workshops held throughout East Texas.

Forest industry began recognizing the importance of these workshops in protecting water quality when harvesting timber. With the adoption of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative, the industry incorporated this training program into their mandatory requirements. Member mills decided to no longer accept wood from loggers who

did not have this training. They even required their own employees to attend these workshops.

Forestry BMPs are determined to be an effective and practical means of preventing and reducing the amount of water pollution generated by forest management. They are only recommended guidelines established by the Texas Forest Service for landowners, foresters, and loggers to use when harvesting timber.

This workshop, along with classes on Silviculture/Wildlife/Wetlands, Safety, Business Management and Logging Aesthetics are part of the Texas Forestry Association's Professional Logger Program.

by Hughes Simpson, BMP Coordinator, Texas Forest Service, Lufkin, TX

For more information:

- http://www.texasforestry.org/state_implementation_comm.htm
- <http://texasforests.tamu.edu/forestwater/default.asp>

DEER LEASES IN TEXAS

Deer hunting is big business in Texas. Hunting leases continue to be a source of revenue for many Texas landowners.

Texas has little federally or state-owned land available for public hunting. Thus, private landowners control the major supply of huntable land, affording Texas landowners a unique source of income.

Whether a hunting lease is granted orally or given by way of an elaborate written document, the landowner and hunter should concur on key issues before consenting to the agreement. By doing so, each party knows what to expect and hereby avoids possible misunderstandings.

Some of the key components of a written lease may include the following items, along with others:

Duration of the Lease Term - The agreement should specify the beginning and end of the lease term. If the hunter has the privilege to scout the premises, set up feeders, erect blinds, etc., before the season, this should be stated.

Hunting Weapons - The parties need to

agree on types of weapons that may be used. The list may include all legal weapons or may be limited to certain ones.

Hunting Method - The hunting method, in part, is related to the types of weapons that may be used. The agreement may limit shooting to blinds only, may restrict shooting from a vehicle or may allow stalking only during bow season.

Lease Price - The price of the lease per year, per day, per hunter, or per animal needs to be set.

Clearing and Improving Premises - If the lease permits the hunters to maintain and improve the lease by clearing and improving the roads and crossings, erecting a camphouse and so forth, the tasks may be at the hunter's discretion. The expenses, however, may be borne solely by the hunter, solely by the landowner or shared.

Blinds and Game Feeders - Blinds may be provided by the landowner or erected by the hunter. Permission to use pre-existing blinds should be discussed as well as the hunter's installation of new ones.

from "The Texas Deer Lease" by Judon Fambrough, Senior Lecturer and Attorney at Law, Real Estate Center, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX

For more information:

- <http://recenter.tamu.edu/pubs/570.html>

SILVICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY EXCHANGE

Professional foresters working in the Western Gulf region (Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Arkansas) will benefit from a conference coming September 1, 2005 - the Western Gulf Silvicultural Technology Exchange. However, forest landowners with an intermediate understanding of silviculture will also benefit from this event.

Topics include:

- Early Rotation Management Schemes
- Pine Planting Decisions
- Hardwood Regeneration Decisions
- Small-acreage Management Options and Landowner Outreach
- Expanding Your Business to Meet Change

This event, held at Louisiana Tech University Technology Transfer Center at Shreveport, Louisiana, will offer 5 hours of continuing education units (CEUs) for members of the Society of American Foresters and the Association of Consulting Foresters. CEUs for ISA and pesticide license may also be available.

The fee for this course is \$120. This fee includes a conference book, lunch and additional instructional materials. You can register online at www.peopleware.net/1542a; or you can call Crystal at (903) 834-6191; or you can download a registration form from extensionforestry.tamu.edu. Check and mailing instructions can be found at these sources.

from brochure: "Western Gulf Silvicultural Technology Exchange" by Texas Cooperative Extension and the LSU Agricultural Center

For more information:

- Dr. Eric Taylor, eric-taylor@tamu.edu
- <http://treevents.tamu.edu/cgi-bin/webevent.cgi>

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Editorial Board

- Dick Pike, TPWD, Lufkin, Texas
- Joe Pase, TFS, Lufkin, Texas

EVENING OF FORESTRY SERIES

This new series is based upon the award winning master tree Farmer and Master Wildlifer programs developed by forestry professionals throughout the South. Landowners and persons considering land ownership who are interested in managing their land will find this new series an exceptional opportunity.

2005 Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Topic</u>
July 26	Tues.	Managing the Forest Site
Aug. 23	Tues.	Silviculture Prescriptions
Sept. 20	Tues.	Controlling Unwanted Vegetation
Oct. 27	Thurs.	Forest Health
Nov. 24	Thurs.	An Introduction to Best Management Practices
Dec. 13	Tues.	Forest Measurements and Forest Products

Each program will take place from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm at the TAMU Research and Extension Center in Overton, TX. The fee is \$15.00 per person. Speaker notes, handouts and refreshments are included.

For additional information, contact Crystal Littlefield at (903) 834-6191 or cdlittlefield@ag.tamu.edu.



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