

# Forest Landowner Briefings

Volume IX



## *Forest Landowners:*

*Since you live out of state, do you find it difficult to “stay in touch” with your East Texas property and the management associated with it? In this newsletter, you’ll find information and resources to help you “connect” with your investment.*



*Living out of state I worry about timber theft and its potential impact to me. How prevalent is timber theft and what are some ways I can protect my timber?*

Timber theft is a real concern to consider when managing your land. Timber is a long term investment and loss of that investment could set you back decades financially on your forestland. Additionally, the ecological impact could be severe as well. A timber thief probably will not be implementing sound practices, such as forestry Best Management Practices (BMPs) and reforestation, which help ensure the sustainability and productivity of your forestlands. Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS) Law Enforcement works diligently to ensure that timber theft can be minimized. Typically, TFS Law Enforcement investigators see timber theft incidents occurring in two situations:

1. Timber theft cases that involve absentee landowners. In these cases, the thief is often long gone by the time the crime is discovered.
2. Timber theft involving timber buying contracts. There are a number of scenarios, but the most common is that the contract is never fulfilled by the buyer.

TFS Law Enforcement recommends landowners protect themselves from becoming victims of timber theft by:

- Visiting your property frequently.
- Have someone you know and trust report any cutting on your land immediately.
- Never sign a contract without checking several references on the buyer.
- For the best price, insist on getting bids for your timber.
- Mark all property lines to assure cutting on adjacent property does not encroach on yours.
- Utilize trail/deer cameras on your property that can record suspicious activity or individuals.

## **LINKS**

<https://tfsweb.tamu.edu/LawEnforcement/ReportTimberTheft/> - TFS timber theft

**TFS Timber Theft Hotline:** 1-800-364-3470



## *Whatever happened to Smokey Bear?*

Smokey Bear, the U.S. Forest Service symbol for fire prevention, is still around and doing well. In fact, Smokey turned 75 years old on August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019, prompting many communities and natural resource agencies across the United States to have celebrations. Though Smokey's birthday was in August, many events are still happening in his honor. An interactive map of the United States located in the links section provides information on various events happening for Smokey's 75<sup>th</sup>.

Smokey Bear is the longest-running public service advertisement campaign in the history of the United States. The first campaign poster featuring Smokey appeared August 9<sup>th</sup>, 1944, and was representative of the challenges facing the United States at that time. Early campaign posters focused on World War II and how 'Careless matches aid the Axis.' From there, Smokey's campaign has still been relevant to protecting our natural resources. In 2018, approximately 89% of wildfires were caused by humans through: campfires left unattended, the burning of debris, negligently discarded cigarettes, and intentional acts of arson.

### **LINKS**

<https://www.smokeybear75th.org/> - Interactive map of U.S. showing events for Smokey's 75<sup>th</sup>

<https://tfsweb.tamu.edu/content/article.aspx?id=30355> - Smokey's impact on wildfire prevention

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## *Is emerald ash borer in Texas, and what kind of economic impact can I expect to see from this pest on my forestland?*

Unfortunately, emerald ash borer (EAB) has been found in Texas. TFS began monitoring for this pest starting in 2012 by strategically deploying detection traps during the spring and summer months. Currently, EAB has been detected in four counties throughout Texas. Initial EAB identification occurred in Harrison County in 2016 and has since been detected in three other Texas counties: Cass, Marion, and Tarrant.

The impact of EAB on your forest can be quantified to be both economically and ecologically damaging. However, the significance of this impact will vary depending on the prevalence of ash trees on your property. EAB's impact will be much greater in areas with ash monocultures, a group of trees of a single species. Most cities in the United States have an "Ash Street" or "Elm Street," typically because these streets historically were planted with ash or elm or had these species already established. Unfortunately, this creates monocultures on these streets, lowering diversity and making them hot spots for pests and diseases such as EAB or Dutch elm disease.

Ash trees can be treated and potentially saved when dealing with EAB infestations. Treatments do not guarantee your ash trees survival against EAB; however, these treatments lessen the risk of mortality or future EAB infestations. When considering a treatment consult a trained professional or seek advice from TFS.

### **LINKS**

<https://tfsweb.tamu.edu/eab/> - TFS EAB information



*I don't get to drive through Texas often to see my property; however, when I do drive through I try and time my visit so I can see the bluebonnets blooming. Do you provide any information on scenic drives in Texas that could make my occasional drive down to see my property even more enjoyable?*

Yes; we have an app for that! I couldn't agree with you more on timing your drives to see the wildflowers in bloom. Nothing helps break up the monotony of a long road trip like seeing bluebonnets or other wildflowers blooming on the side of the road. Texas has a diverse and beautiful landscape full of seasonal fall color and wildflowers blooms. However, timing your drives for the "peak" bloom time can be difficult. Luckily, with the *Texas Scenic Views* web app, timing and planning these drives can be less difficult.

The *Texas Scenic Views*, developed in 2019, was designed to highlight these scenic routes and viewpoints, allowing users to download turn-by-turn directions onto their mobile device. The app also provides a star rating system and/or comments for routes or viewpoints, helping users determine the perfect time to travel to these destinations. The app currently has 13 scenic routes and 7 view points for spring blooms across the state of Texas. Additionally, the app has 5 scenic routes and 26 view points for fall foliage color.

**LINKS**

<https://texasforestinfo.tamu.edu/txscenicviews/home> - Texas Scenic Views web app.

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*Where can I find timber prices in my area?*

Texas Timber Price Trends is a bimonthly publication reporting average prices paid for standing timber in Texas. This report is intended only as a guide to general price levels. Individuals interested in buying and selling timber can use this report to monitor market trends and get a general idea of what timber is worth. However, it should not be used to judge the fair market value of a specific timber sale, which may vary considerably due to many factors.

**May/June 2019**

| Product                  | Statewide Avg. Price |                | Previous Period Avg. Price |                | Price/Ton Difference |
|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------------------|----------------|----------------------|
|                          | Weight               | Volume         | Weight                     | Volume         |                      |
| Pine - Sawlogs           | \$22.67 / ton        | \$213.25 / mbf | \$36.48 / ton              | \$291.87 / mbf | - 24%                |
| Pine - Pulpwood          | \$7.37 / ton         | \$20.68 / cord | \$9.80 / ton               | \$26.47 / cord | - 25%                |
| Pine - Chip-n-Saw        | \$14.49 / ton        | \$39.01 / cord | \$16.60 / ton              | \$44.81 / cord | - 13%                |
| Mixed Hardwood - Sawlogs | \$34.17 / ton        | \$301.86 / mbf | \$39.06 / ton              | \$351.52 / mbf | - 13%                |
| Hardwood - Pulpwood      | \$12.38 / ton        | \$34.68 / cord | \$14.57 / ton              | \$40.79 / cord | - 15%                |

**LINKS**

<http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/TimberPriceTrends> - Texas Timber Price Trends



## Where can I go for help?

Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS) has offices all over East Texas (and the rest of the state). Contact the TFS District Office serving the county where your property is located. Go to <http://tfsweb.tamu.edu> and click on “Contact Us,” then “County,” and then search for your county or click on the county of your choice on the map. Click on “Landowner Assistance” to get contact information for that area.

*For more info on these and other topics, go to the Texas A&M Forest Service website at <http://tfsweb.tamu.edu>, or contact the TFS District Office closest to your property.*

### TFS District Offices:

|                     |                |                          |                |
|---------------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| Carthage            | (903) 693-6865 | Kountze / Woodville      | (409) 246-2484 |
| Conroe              | (936) 273-2261 | Linden                   | (903) 756-5571 |
| Crockett            | (936) 544-7798 | Livingston / Liberty     | (936) 327-4832 |
| Gilmer              | (903) 734-7007 | Marshall / Longview      | (903) 938-8712 |
| Henderson           | (903) 657-0511 | Nacogdoches              | (936) 564-9276 |
| Hudson (Lufkin)     | (936) 875-4400 | New Boston / Clarksville | (903) 628-2711 |
| Huntsville          | (936) 295-5688 | Palestine                | (903) 729-7738 |
| Jacksonville        | (903) 586-7545 | Pittsburg                | (903) 856-7181 |
| Kirbyville / Jasper | (409) 384-9427 | San Augustine            | (936) 275-3438 |

*You can still access past editions of this newsletter by going to <http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/Water>, clicking on “Publications” on the right-hand sidebar, and looking for “Forest Landowner Briefings.”*

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