

Leaves

Newsletter of the Michigan Forest Association

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Association News

Annual Meeting at St. Charles in August

Sign up now for the Annual Meeting at Hartley Outdoor Education Center at St. Charles.

Registration form can be found at <http://www.michiganforests.com/2008annmtgreg.pdf>

Hartley Education Center is one of the very few outdoor education facilities that includes resource management in its curriculum. It is the site of an early 20th century coal mine. Nature and mankind have worked together to reclaim the site; it is now productive forest and farm land. Further information is available at <http://www.michiganforests.com/meeting2008.htm> or simply call the MFA office. The information on the web site is being updated periodically, so check it out now and then.

Learn about cougars and wild boars in Michigan. EAT wild boar at the Friday night barbecue!
Paddle the inland seas with French voyageur Jean Paul LeFranc Friday evening!

Board meeting in Trout Lake

The boards of directors of the association and the foundation met Friday, May 9, at **John & Squeek Van Dyke's** Wegwas Lodge at Trout Lake. Early arriving board members were greeted by law enforcement officials with flashing lights. Officers from the local sheriff's department, state police, border patrol and DNR were searching for some tree planters who evidently had questionable citizenship. The search went on through Thursday evening and by Friday morning we were told that most had been apprehended. The important question remains, however --- did they ever get the trees planted?

Wanigan's Travels

The educational trailer "The Wanigan" was at the Kirtland's Warbler Festival at Grayling on May 17 and will be at the Wild Turkey Festival in Grayling on June 7. From one extreme to another! Thanks to **Bob Ojala, Leon Erbe** and **Jerry Lambert** for transportation and staffing.

It will appear at Ag Expo in East Lansing July 15 – 17.

We are scheduled to have the Wanigan at the Genessee County Fair August 11 – 14 and then move it to St. Charles for our annual meeting.

Help is needed for the July and August dates. Please call us.

Woodland Hospitality

Thanks for your response to our appeal for woodlands available for school groups. We've had several offers from Genessee to Baraga counties. We could use more...

Scholarships still available

The board of directors of the Michigan Forest Foundation has approved scholarships for high school students to attend a week-long forestry program at the Trees for Tomorrow camp in northern Wisconsin. If you know of interested individuals, please encourage them to apply.

Scholarships (continued)

Applications are still being accepted for the McClain B. Smith, Jr. scholarship for students of forestry or natural resources management. Contact the MFA office.

Three teachers were awarded scholarships to attend the Temperate Forest Foundation's workshop at Escanaba.

MFA Awards

Each year at the Annual Meeting, MFA takes the opportunity to recognize individuals or groups who have made significant contributions to Michigan's forests and forestry. The criteria are listed below. Please read through them and send us your nominations.

Woodland Honors Award. This award recognizes an individual, business, corporation or organization who has made an outstanding contribution to the welfare of Michigan's forest resources in one or more of the following ways: 1) Teaching and/or completing research in forestry, renewable resource management or environmental studies, 2) Contributing to media coverage and publications promoting the benefits of multiple-use woodland management, 3) Contributing to the welfare of Michigan woodlands through legislative accomplishment, 4) Contributing to the development, use and expansion of Michigan's woodland resources.

Loggers Award. This award recognizes outstanding logging contractor performance. It is designed to raise the visibility of competent, professional independent logging contractors in the forestry community. It also encourages other independent logging contractors to follow the outstanding performance of the award winners and improves forester-logger relations by publicly recognizing outstanding logging performance as an essential element of every planned timber harvest.

Woodland Merit Award. This award recognizes the outstanding service of a longstanding member who has served in a leadership role, completed volunteer assignments for the organization and been successful in expanding membership. This individual will also practice the precepts of forest management endorsed by the organization on his or her own woodlands.

Woodland Service Award. This award recognizes individuals for outstanding professionalism, accomplishments and dedicated service in one or more of the following categories: 1) Management of private woodlands, 2) Management of public woodlands, 3) Management of corporate or industrial forests, particularly those administered under multiple-use programs, 4) Cooperative extension or interagency activity designed to encourage best management practices (BMPs) on Michigan woodlands.

Climate Change?

Snow is different now. Ernie Houghton, chairman of the Michigan Society of American Foresters, observes, "I have noticed it is a little harder to get through the woods on snowshoes than in years past. This is curious because upon close examination I find no change to the snowshoes."

Not our biggest concern. A study of people's attitudes regarding the environment conducted by researchers at the University of Missouri – Columbia showed their number one environmental concern is protection of community drinking water. Numbers two and three are reducing pollution of rivers and lakes and improving urban air quality, respectively. Global warming was number eight.

The Forestry Source

Alternative Energy

Use More Wood. The 2007 federal Energy Independence and Security Act calls for a large increase in the amount of ethanol to be produced from "nonfood feedstocks". Sounds like a contradiction in terms, but it isn't. The term "feedstock" refers to the raw material used to make the alcohol. "Nonfood" could mean wood. That could be good news for woodland owners, but it will be a while before much progress is noted in the Michigan woods. There is a new plant operating in Upton, Wyoming using material from forest thinnings and logging residue as feedstocks. If it is successful, we will likely see more such plants. Ethanol may not be the final answer, however. It is said to be corrosive to engine and tank parts.

Research at the University of Massachusetts suggests it may be possible to make real gasoline out of wood.

It's all quite exciting, but we'll have to wait a few years for the technology to be developed. Meanwhile, all this wood is accumulating.

The Forestry Source

Where's the Wood? The Reno Gazette – Journal reports that a biomass power plant built to provide power to Nevada prisons has only been able to operate sporadically in its first six months of existence because of a lack of wood.

The E-Forester

Biochar Improves Soil, Restores Carbon. Cornell University researcher Johannes Lehmann says a byproduct of the conversion of biomass to biofuels by pyrolysis ("Biochar", or "Agrichar") is a very beneficial soil additive. Pyrolysis is the process used for centuries in making charcoal – the heating of wood in the absence of oxygen to drive off gasses and other chemicals. A test pyrolysis reactor has been built by Best Energies Inc. in Australia that processes 12 tons of woody biomass per day into synthesis gas that heats the reactor and powers a generator. The biochar byproduct produced amounts to about 4 tons per day.

According to Lehmann, pyrolysis reactors can be built at practically any scale: small enough for home use or large enough to power a city.

The Forestry Source

New Pellet Plant. Great Lakes Renewable Energy plans to build a pellet plant near Hayward, Wisconsin to produce 36,000 tons of pellets per year. Employment is expected to be 20 workers at the plant plus about a dozen loggers.

The E-Forester

Wildlife Notes

Slithery Survey. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is developing an atlas of occurrence of reptiles and amphibians. If you should spot a snake or turtle or salamander or other members of this group, you could report it to Lori Sargent, the Herp Atlas Project Coordinator. The survey is expected to continue for 5 to 10 years. Instructions and submission cards can be obtained by sending an e-mail to SargenL2@michigan.gov or calling 517-373-9418. Written information may be sent to Herp Atlas, P.O. Box 30180, Lansing, MI 48909.

No More Baiting? The Wisconsin Conservation Congress recommended to the Wisconsin Legislature they take action to ban deer baiting and feeding statewide.

Bill Cook

Deer Effects Noted. The Michigan Society of American Foresters has issued a news release citing hundreds of foresters' opinions that deer are having a significant effect on reducing forest regeneration and other undergrowth.

Bill Cook

Lyme Disease Moving North. According to an article in *Northern Woodlands* magazine, Lyme disease is spreading northward. Increasing numbers of infections are being seen in northern Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. Woods workers and other visitors to tick country are urged to tuck in their pantlegs and/or use DEET repellants. The E-Forester

Watch Out for Nesting Swans!

"The Department of Natural Resources reminds those enjoying Michigan's waters to stay clear of mute swans, especially those with young.

"'Mute swans can be aggressive, particularly when protecting nests or young,' said Joe Robison, DNR acting waterfowl specialist. 'Young swans, called cygnets, typically hatch in May and are not able to fly until August. During this period, adult mute swans have been known to attack humans, dogs and watercraft in an attempt to protect their young.'

"Adult mute swans have large white bodies, weigh 20-30 pounds and have wingspans up to seven feet.

"Mute swans are the most common swan species on Michigan lakes and streams in summer. The species was introduced to the United States and competes with native waterfowl for food and territory. Mute swans can be distinguished from native swans, which do not have the same negative impacts on other waterfowl and habitats.

"' Mute swans can be identified by red or orange coloring on the bill. In contrast, the rare trumpeter swan has an entirely black bill and does not typically behave aggressively toward humans.' Robison said."

Michigan DNR

Miscellaneous

Yikes! A report from the *Daily Evergreen* at Washington State University says the University is in danger of losing its forestry program. This would include undergraduate and graduate degree programs, forestry extension and research. Budget cuts and restructuring at the University are said to be the major causes. However, the paper goes on to say that part of the reason is, "there are misconceptions about foresters, what they do, and their continued importance as stewards of the natural environment."

The E-Forester

Urban Trees. According to *the Washington Post*, "Cities once planted trees because they were beautiful. Now trees are being re-tasked as 'green infrastructure' and managed by urban foresters to work as powerful energy-saving, carbon-sucking wastewater-treating tools to save the planet".
The E-Forester

Another Reason Forests are Important... Mangrove forests may have been able to prevent some of the catastrophic damage that occurred in Myanmar from the cyclone earlier this month. Mangroves form effective buffers that protect shorelines from storms. They also make it difficult for people to get to and from the shore and are often destroyed to make room for shrimp and fish farms and other uses.
The E-Forester

Arrests Made in 1999 Fire at MSU's Ag Hall. "Eight years after Michigan State University's Agriculture Hall burned in a New Year's Eve attack, four people have been arrested, the MSU police, U.S. Attorney and FBI announced March 11.
"Two Detroit men, a Detroit woman and a woman from Cincinnati, Ohio, have been indicted on four counts each of conspiracy to commit arson, aggravated arson and arson in connection with the Dec. 31, 1999, attack on Agriculture Hall. The charges also are in connection with arson of commercial logging equipment near Mesick on Jan. 1, 2000."
Michigan Farm News

Campgrounds Open Again. The 20 campgrounds that were temporarily closed about a year ago will be open this year, according to the DNR.

Interesting Meetings

May 30 – June 1, The **Master Woodland Steward** Program will be offered at R.A. MacMullan Conference Center at Higgins Lake, Michigan. Contact Roscommon County MSU Extension Office 989-275-4670 or log onto www.for.msu.edu/mws

June 23 -25, Madison, Wis. **Crisis or Opportunity?** Sustaining and Strengthening Forest-Based Industries in the Great Lakes Region.

July 20 – 25, Higgins Lake, Michigan. The Academy of Natural Resources. Contact Kevin Frailey, Fraileyk@michigan.gov or 517-373-7306

August 15 –16 St. Charles, MI. Michigan Forest Association annual meeting. See page 1 of this newsletter.

For a more thorough list of upcoming events, visit <http://www.miforestpathways.net/1-calendar.htm>.