

Leaves

Newsletter of the Michigan Forest Association

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Association News

Michigan Forest Foundation has a new board member. Please welcome Mike Smalligan of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Mike is the statewide coordinator of the Forest Stewardship Program (FSP) grant funds from the US Forest Service to encourage and enable private landowners to obtain a Forest Management Plan for their woodlands. See this issue's **MFA Partner News** section for more information.

It is Tax Season Again! MFA Assistant Executive Director Deb Huff notified us that the US Forest Service has published a new bulletin to help. "Tax Tips for Forest Landowners for the 2014 Tax Year" reviews the major Federal income tax laws to help you file your 2014 income tax return. Although tax laws on timber transactions are not common knowledge, they are an important part of the ongoing cost of owning and managing timber, engaging in forest stewardship activities, and complying with tax law. Thanks Deb!

Find yours here: <http://www.fs.fed.us/cooperativeforestry/programs/loa/tax.shtml>

MFA Needs Your Help! Are you ready to become more involved?

- 1st: MFA needs to organize a committee to shape our Teacher Workshop Program.
- 2nd: There has been an Official Request for Volunteers to Organize the 2016 MFA Annual Meeting. This is your Association and it doesn't work as well without your input and assistance - Please let us know how you can help! Contact us any way you want for more information...

Forgot to Pay Your Dues?!? Don't let yourself be dropped from our membership rolls! 2015 promises to be a landmark year for MFA and you won't want to miss a thing! There will be regional educational events, the Annual Meeting is shaping up nicely, and we hope to surprise you all with two big announcements! MFA is your voice in Michigan legislative matters and your best source for private forest landowner information from our monthly and quarterly publications. Contact the offices of MFA now to ensure your continued membership: miforest@acd.net 517-663-3423 6120 South Clinton Trail, Eaton Rapids, MI 48827

Don't Forget To Join Our Michigan Forest Association Facebook Page.

Go to <http://www.facebook.com/groups/MichiganForestAssociation/>

Wildlife News

How Was Your Deer Hunt? How Many? Yay! Now, How is Your Forest Regeneration?

Deer are a natural part of any healthy forest eco-system, within certain population ranges. Remember, too little may be as harmful as too many. Do you know the signs of deer-impacted forests? Bill Cook let us know that the USFS can help your understanding with this publication: "White-tailed Deer in Northeastern Forests: Understanding and Assessing Impacts". Seeing is believing and this PDF is full of pictures illustrating the effects deer can have on your woods. Although none of the pics were taken in Michigan, the lessons, like the forest types, are the same. Thanks for the Heads Up Bill!

Download yours here: http://www.na.fs.fed.us/pubs/2014/NA-IN-02-14_WhitetailedDeerNEForestsWEB.pdf

Grey Wolves in Michigan have been relisted as an Endangered Species by a Federal court decision, effective December 19, 2014. The act affects the wolf population of the western Great Lakes area, estimated at 3,700 individuals, and includes Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. Species management in these states reverts from their department of

natural resources to the federal US Fish and Wildlife Service. How will this effect you? Michigan's Great Wolf Hunt is now illegal and the animal may only be killed in defense of human life or in cases of livestock predation.

Forest Health

Collaboration Gets the Job Done When the Forest's Health is at Stake. The stand off between the timber industry and environmentalists in the Pacific Northwest town of John Day, OR over the past 3 decades has in this instance reached a positive resolution, one the USFS hopes will be a model for further action in the region. Blue Mountains Forest Partners, formed in 2006, brought together local residents, lumber mill owners, environmentalists, and Malheur National Forest employees among others to find solutions to the stalemate. What they found was common ground that will allow the mills to remain open, forest health thinnings to be implemented, and lawsuits avoided. Hopefully catastrophic wildfires that threaten the community will be avoided as well. West coast wildfires make headlines annually and forest health thinnings are considered one method of preventing those of a catastrophic scale, a goal everyone could agree on. http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/conservationists-lumber-industry-address-forest-health-with-ecological-forestry/2014/12/27/40ddce6c-8d29-11e4-a085-34e9b9f09a58_story.html

Forest Products

Is Your Forest Producing Biomass for Alternative Energy? Not much of a market for dead, dying and diseased trees Huh? Wrong. The USDA 2014 Farm Bill provides funds to encourage the removal of this biomass under the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP). In the Oscoda, MI Huron Manistee National Forest, the removal of some 5,000 tons was approved for harvest as material for energy creation. <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentidonly=true&contentid=2014/12/0270.xml>

Legislation

What Will Governor Snyder Do? Controversial and confusing legislation in the form of SB 0078 passed Michigan's Senate in one of the last votes of the 'lame duck' session and is making its way to the "Tough Nerd's" desk. (apparently submitted to him for approval on Friday 01.02.2014 at 9:50am). Known by some as the 'anti-biodiversity' bill, it restricts Michigan's DNR from protecting lands solely for the purpose of 'conserving biodiversity' and increases management focus on 'economic benefit' (there are a lot of ways to look at this bill and much information on it is subject to 'spin'). It contains many provisions designed to enhance Michigan's forests and forest products sector, truthfully, only time will tell if this is beneficial or harmful legislation.

Alternative Energy

What is Your Definition of Renewable Energy? Michigan's House of Representatives recently redefined what is meant by 'renewable sources' when it voted to change our state's Clean, Renewable, and Efficient Energy Act to include the burning of solid waste, such as non-recyclable plastics and rubber tires, as 'renewable energy sources'. What do you think?
Midwest Energy News

Invasive Species

European Faucet Snail (*Bithynia tentaculata*) Latest Invasive to Wreak Havoc in the Great Lakes.

Apparently this snail has been in these waters since the 1870's, probably having hitched a ride in the ballast water of a transatlantic freighter. Lately it has made the news as a threat to various species of water fowl that use the Great Lakes as habitat or a migratory stopover. This very small snail (0.5 inch at maturity) carries a 'fluke', that becomes an intestinal parasite leading to the death of the bird that ate it.
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MFA Partner News

Michigan DNR Forest Stewardship Program (FSP): Wondering how to go about getting a Forest Management Plan for your forest? An FSP Forester can help! There are over 75 FSP Certified Plan Writers and they are available in each of Michigan's 83 counties. The US Forest Service created the FSP almost 25 years ago as a way to assist private forestland owners to actively manage their woods. The funding is used by the MDNR to provide technical assistance and small cost-share grants to landowners to help lower the cost of having a FMP. Please follow this link for more information, including where you can find an FSP Certified Forester in your area: http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-30301_34240_68762---,00.html

American Tree Farm (ATF) – Michigan's New Web Site! Here is another fine source of information about sustainable active management of your forestland...maybe ATF certification is right for you! Check them out at: <https://www.treefarmssystem.org/michigan>