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TIMBER TALES

No. 123

News and Ideas for Forest Landowners from Ricky L. Kilpatrick, Area Agent in Forestry

1st Quarter 2008

24th Annual Ark-La-Tex Forestry Forum

The Ark-La-Tex Forestry Forum has been set for Thursday, March 13, 2008, at the Holiday Inn Financial Plaza in west Shreveport. This year's program will look at visions for Louisiana forestry presented by newly elected Mike Strain, Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry. Other sessions include tax planning for forest landowners by board certified tax attorney Paul Spillers, your first family's forestry meeting by Allen Nipper, a look at the economic outlook for Southern forests by Regional Extension forester Bill Hubbard and the Farm Bill and forestry by Terry Clason.

Louisiana Forestry Association officer and board member Steve Muslow will give an update of current issues that impact forest landowners in our state and region.

LSU AgCenter research forester Michael Blazier will discuss carbon credit opportunities for forest landowners.

As always, several exhibitors will be present with their products at the forum, and they will be providing fabulous forum door prizes! Use the attached form on the last page to register for the forum.

Timber Harvesting and Forest Management

In the management of your forest land, the single most critical activity will be the timber harvest. Properly done, the timber harvest will improve your situation and provide for better production in the future. However, a poorly conducted timber harvest will not only have immediate negative impacts but will also be detrimental to the future production of your forest land for years and perhaps generations. Following are some thoughts to consider during this critical event in the management of your forest land.

Timber Sale Checklist

(This list is a courtesy of the Louisiana Forestry Association.)

1. Check references for foresters and loggers
2. Select and meet with forester and logger
3. Prepare and sign written contract
4. Check local, state and federal regulations
5. Locate and mark landlines
6. Check for endangered species
7. Mark special needs on the ground
8. Mark areas to avoid on the ground
9. Review timber sale plan with forester and logger on the ground

For additional information, call Area Code 318 and ...

BIENVILLE	263-7400	BOSSIER	965-2326	CADDO	226-6805
CLAIBORNE	927-3110	DESOTO	872-0533	NATCHITOCHEs	357-3334
RED RIVER	932-4342	SABINE	256-3406	WEBSTER	371-1371

- Streamside Management Zone (SMZ) requirements
 - Layout creek crossings
 - Harvesting needs
 - Visual plan
 - Road layout
 - Set layout
 - Skid trail layout
 - Discuss temporary water bars
 - Are safety signs needed
10. Tract closure
- Permanent water bars installed
 - Closure of roads, skid trails and sets
 - Revegetation or seeding
 - Fences and gates restored
 - Ditches cleaned out
11. Final inspection with forester or logger approval

Best Management Practices (BMPs) for Pre-Harvest Planning

Note: During harvest design, careful planning and the use of BMPs will minimize soil disturbance and maintain water quality.

- Identification and delineation of sensitive areas such as SMZs, ephemeral streams, bogs, fragile soils, and steep slopes.
- Use of aerial photographs, timber stand maps, topographic maps, and soil surveys to aid in locating log decks or “sets,” skid trails, and access roads.
- The timing and type of harvest depends on soil moisture (hydrology), topography, soil type and soil conditions.
- The application of stabilizing or surfacing materials to roads; for example, stone or board run mats applied to potential trouble spots before the operation begins.

Streamside Management Zones

A streamside management zone serves as a natural filter of vegetation adjacent to a natural or manmade water body. These zones, also called *riparian* zones, reduce erosion by both slowing the flow of surface water runoff and increasing water filtration. These water bodies may include streams, rivers, bayous, and lakes. To protect water quality, extra precautions may be necessary in carrying out some forest practices.

The key objective of SMZs is to protect and maintain the quality of water on forest lands by the following:

- Maintaining a vegetative filtration strip on ephemeral areas.
- Providing an adequate canopy of forest cover along all perennial streams to maintain normal water and shade conditions.
- Minimizing forest soil erosion by maintaining the appropriate amount of residual ground cover or forest cover under various soil and slope conditions.

When timber is harvested within the SMZ, care should be taken not to compromise the objective of the SMZ. SMZs should be provided on perennial and intermittent streams and other water bodies. This includes springheads, oxbows, upland flats, and drains bordered by steep or erodible slopes. Any existing drainage structures that over time have come to resemble natural drains are also included.

A *perennial* stream is one that has a well-defined channel and flows year-round except during periods of extreme drought, when they retain pools of water. *Intermittent* streams have seasonal flow and a continuous well-defined channel. *Ephemeral* streams flow during and for a few hours or days after periods of heavy rain and the stream channel is less recognizable than either perennial or intermittent streams. Streams designated as scenic rivers will be managed in accordance with state law.

SMZ width is dependent on watershed characteristics and the risk of erosion in the SMZ and adjacent area. The risk is increased by sandy soil, steep grade, large watershed size or increasing stream width. Estimated normal flow width is the distance in feet between the water's edge on one side to the water's edge on the other. This width will be estimated at a time when the stream is at its normal (low) flow. Normal flow width will be an average for the stream, taking into consideration the stream will widen as it flows farther from its source.

Note: SMZ widths are measured from the top of each bank and established on each side of the stream. Determination of SMZ width should be site-specific and should be made by foresters or other qualified professionals. Soil type, slope gradient, vegetation cover, volume flow, and stream classification should be taken into consideration when designing each SMZ.

BMPs for Streamside Management

Along perennial streams, timber can be harvested carefully within an SMZ provided that the filtering effects of the SMZ are not compromised.

- Take precautions to protect the remaining timber stands within the SMZ.
- **Do not remove trees** from banks, beds or steep slopes if removal will destabilize soil and degrade water.
- Permanent residual tree cover is not required along intermittent and ephemeral streams if vegetation and organic debris are left to protect the forest floor during regeneration.
- Flag or mark SMZs adjacent to all perennial and intermittent streams and lakes before harvesting.
- Plan harvests to minimize stream crossings.
- Locate stream crossings where stream impacts are likely to be minimal.
- Locate roads, skid trails, fire lanes, and logging sets outside the SMZ.
- To minimize damage, limit harvesting on SMZs and sensitive forested wetlands during abnormally wet periods.
- Consider using wide-tire skidders, forwarders, cable skidders, and tracked equipment to minimize soil disturbance in an SMZ.
- Construct stream crossings to minimize stream bank and channel disturbance.
- Cross streams at right angles when practical.
- Consider using portable bridges for temporary stream crossings.
- Promptly remove all temporary crossings and restore the site after harvesting is completed.

Avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skidding across perennial or large intermittent streams, except over an adequately designed crossing. • Excessive skidding within an SMZ.

Suggested SMZ Widths	
Stream Type	SMZ Width (each side)
Intermittent	35 Feet
Perennial	
Less than 20 feet wide	50 Feet
More than 20 feet wide	100 Feet

Utilizing Your GPS

Winter is a good time to do some GPS work on your property. Your GPS unit will pick up satellite signals better and faster while the leaves are off the trees. Here are a few ideas of how a GPS can be useful with land management:

1. Marking property boundaries and corners.
2. Delineating stands or tracts.

3. Marking streamside management zones.
4. Marking roads and trails.
5. Denoting good prospective areas for logging decks, haul roads and skid trails within stands.
6. Marking deer stands, food plots, good hunting spots and other special wildlife areas.
7. Marking unusual or rare trees and plants.
8. Marking wildlife harvest data (i.e., where each of the deer were killed for the 2007-08 season, etc.).
9. Mapping land for management activities such as site prep, herbicide treatments, thinnings, reforestation, etc.
10. Mapping land for record keeping purposes.

Of course, the GPS is also very useful for measuring acreage of land areas, ponds, etc., and for plotting elevations. Once the items mentioned above have been marked, they can be overlaid on aerial photos or just printed out as maps.

Pesticide Recertification Training Meetings

Training meetings for private pesticide applicators have been scheduled over the next several weeks throughout the area. Call your parish Extension office for more information. We do have a couple of parishes that have scheduled their meetings as indicated below:

Caddo Parish Extension Office, 2408 E. 70th Street, Shreveport - (318) 226-6805
Thursday, March 6 – 9:00 a.m.
Thursday, March 6 – 6:00 p.m.
Tuesday, March 25 – 1:00 p.m.

DeSoto Parish Extension Office, 10117 Highway 171, Grand Cane – (318) 872-0533
Tuesday, March 11 – 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday, March 12 – 10:00 a.m.

Events, Thoughts and Tidbits

***Timber price reports can be found at these websites:

<http://www.ldaf.state.la.us/divisions/forestry/reports/quarterreport/original-report.asp>

<http://texasforests.tamu.edu/main/article.aspx?id=148>

***Dr. Hanna is again having his Tomato Field Day/Seminar at the Red River Research Station on Friday, February 29, from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. and is free to the public. If you plan to attend, please RSVP to the research station at 741-7430.

***Bossier Parish Community College (BPCC) is having two forestry classes in February, and they will each be day-long classes on Saturday. A forest management course is scheduled for February 16 and an inventory cruising class for February 23. The instructor is consulting forester Paul Smeltzer. Check with BPCC for further details.

***The Ark-La-Tex Forestry Forum is set for Thursday, March 13, 2008 at the Holiday Inn, 5555 Financial Plaza in Shreveport. Pre-register by March 10th for only \$17.

Sincerely,

Ricky Kilpatrick

Ricky Kilpatrick
Area Forestry Agent

It is the policy of the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service that no person shall be subjected to discrimination on the grounds of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, or disability. If you have a disability which requires special assistance for your participation in a meeting, please contact the Bossier Extension Office at 965-2326 three days prior to the meeting so that special needs can be met.

**24TH ANNUAL ARK-LA-TEX FORESTRY FORUM
THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 2008
8:30 A.M. TO 3:00 P.M.**

**HOLIDAY INN FINANCIAL PLAZA
5555 FINANCIAL PLAZA
SHREVEPORT, LA**

The program is currently being planned and speakers are being contacted. Planned topics include:

- Commissioner Mike Strain's views on agriculture and forestry in Louisiana
- Information on carbon credits for forest landowners
- Forestry taxes
- The new Farm Bill
- Your first family's forestry meeting
- And others

Door prizes will be given by several exhibitors.

Come and enjoy an excellent forestry meeting, great lunch and the fellowship of others interested in forestry.

If you pre-register by March 10th, the fee is \$17. After that date or at the door, registration will be \$22. Your fee includes lunch and a copy of program proceedings.

**ARK-LA-TEX FORESTRY FORUM
MARCH 13, 2008**

Name _____ Phone _____

Company/Organization _____

Mailing Address _____ Zip Code _____

This form may be duplicated. If more than one person shall be registered, please include names and addresses of the additional people.

- _____ Number of people registered @ \$17 per person (\$22 after March 10th)
- _____ Logger (will need certificate for CLE credit hours)
- _____ Forester (will need certificate for CFE contact hours in Category 1 – Society of American Forester Continuing Education Program)
- _____ Amount enclosed

Make check payable and mail to: **ARK-LA-TEX FORESTRY FORUM
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