



Northeast Texas Forest Landowners Association Newsletter

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How to Improve Wildlife Habitat on Your Forest Land

Wes Moorehead, District Forester, Texas Forest Service, Marshall, Texas

I often get asked the question “How can I increase wildlife on my tract?” and my response varies, depending on what “wildlife” it is that the landowner aims to increase.

There are some steps that you can take to increase the attractiveness of a particular tract to a wide range of species, while other steps are targeted to particular species.

To attract a wide variety of species it is best to have a mosaic of habitats, creating several different compartments or stands, all of varying densities, species composition and vegetation age. These stands should be irregular in shape (avoid creating square/block stands where feasible) to provide as much “edge effect” as possible. Many species of wildlife are readily attracted to edges where two or more habitats adjoin. The more habitat types you can create on one tract, the more attractive it will be to varied wildlife.



If you have a particular species that you would like to attract, you may concentrate your efforts on meeting its particular habitat needs. For example, fox squirrels prefer mature mixed pine and mast (nut) producing hardwood forests. If a landowner's primary goal is to attract fox squirrels, he/she would manage the timber on a longer rotation to achieve a more mature stand and ensure that mast producing hardwoods, such as white oak, are protected during silvicultural practices.

With an additional practice, this same mature mixed pine and hardwood stand may be made attractive to another species of wildlife. By using a prescribed understory burning regime this stand can also attract eastern turkey. Understory burning done every 2 to 3 years can create a relatively open understory, often with scattered herbaceous (nonwoody) plants, which creates great turkey foraging habitat. If this stand was one of many in your mosaic and the adjacent stand consisted of a 1 to 2 year old clear cut that has been naturally regenerated, it would not

only serve as prime turkey foraging and nesting habitat but good white-tailed deer habitat as well.

Another way to attract wildlife is with the use of supplemental food plots. Supplemental food plots can be as small as one-fourth of an acre, up to 5 acres, and should include both cool season species (planted in early fall with forage available during winter stress periods) and warm season species (planted in spring with forage available during the summer stress period). The exact species that you use in the food plot depends on what species of wildlife you want to attract. Food plots should typically be planted on the most productive soils available. The best sites are usually well drained, but not droughty, and generally should not be subject to flooding. Once you know what the habitat needs are for a species, you can cater to them and often attract the species you desire.

For more information on attracting wildlife and food plots, contact your local Texas Parks & Wildlife office or visit their website at www.tpwd.state.tx.us.

The Web Soil Survey from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is available at <http://soils.usda.gov/survey/>. This is the official soils data source for the USDA. Utilizing the information found here, forest landowners can make more informed decisions about how to use and treat their land according to the capability of the soil. The soils survey identifies more than 300 soil properties and provides a field-based scientific inventory of soils resources including soil maps, the physical and chemical properties of those soils and information on the potential and limitations of each soil.

For more information, please contact your local USDA Service Center or Natural Resources Conservation Service office.

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FROM THE FOREST



Good bye, Bill Voss

I learned early this month that our good friend and director from Upshur County had passed on in March. Bill died of congestive heart failure, a long-time problem he never told us about. He was instrumental in the change from the old Four County Association to the new one, which takes in Upshur and Wood. Bill made almost every meeting, and for the one or two over the years he did miss, he would just say "I'm sick." I don't think any of the directors or officers ever knew just how sick he was until Harry called to remind him of the April directors meeting and found out Bill had moved on.

In speaking with his wife, I learned that he'd had an ongoing congestive heart problem, and that he finally had to go to a Tyler hospice when the hospital said they could do nothing more. Bill stayed there for a while, but one day woke up and said he felt good and wanted to go home. They took him home and he passed on peacefully in his sleep later that day.

He leaves a wife, children and grandchildren, and a host of other kin and good friends in his wake. Not just a guy to work on his private golf course, Bill was involved in many church, community and charitable activities. Those that knew him best in our forestry bunch always loved the stories and appreciated his hard-nosed research into government and taxation, and willingness to lead the fight on issues that mattered to him. We also appreciated his dry wit, humility, and kindness. Not many young people these days understand the old definition of "gentleman" but I think most of us still do. Bill was a true gentleman, in all senses of the word.

As with so many I've met since we moved to the woods, I wish I'd met him sooner.

Regardless of last names, think Bill had a good bit of Scots or Irish in his blood. I know I have a lot of the Irish in me, so will offer this old Irish toast, modified a bit:

May the road rise to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face
And rains fall soft upon your fields.
And may the Lord slow your steps,
So your friends may find you
And walk with you.

Bill Tucker

Program and Meeting Notes

Our May Field Day will be a tour of Bill and Jill Russell's tree farm near Carthage, Texas. In 2005, the Russells were the Outstanding Tree Farmers for the Central Zone of Texas. This year they've won the whole enchilada and have been named 2006 Texas State Tree Farm of the year. Their place offers various stages of timber growth and harvest, wildlife food plots, and a whole lot more.

Dr. Eric Taylor, whom most of you know, will act as our guide. Eric set this event up and certainly deserves our thanks.

The Texas Forestry Association is buying our lunch, since we have once again won their membership contest. (Give yourselves a pat on the back.) We will eat well. Dining area is covered in case of rain, but bring raingear for the trails.

Susan Stutts, Program Coordinator for TFA, will be there to present this year's award to the Association. She will also have TFA caps for present TFA members and for those who join at this event. Great promotion!

We will meet in the Gilmer Civic Center Parking lot and go from there. The Civic Center is on the east side of 271, north of downtown and Walmart. Look for the white Forest Service vans. The trip takes about two hours.

We need to know: 1) how many of you are going on the tour and will eat, and 2) how many want to ride in the vans. Please check out the box on the last page and RSVP me before the cutoff date of Wed., May 3, on both counts. This particular meeting is not open to the general public. You are encouraged to bring prospective members, and spouses are fine, but be sure to include them in your head count. We need this information for both the caterer and the drivers, as well as our hosts.

The maps below show the meeting point and the quickest route to Carthage from there. I will have detailed maps at Gilmer for those driving directly to the Russell Farm, or contact me and I can email, post office mail you one, or provide phone directions.

Folks, this is a rare opportunity to have what's basically a private showing of a treasure that will be opened to the whole TFA membership later in the year — don't miss it, and don't forget to bring a guest. — Bill

2006 PROGRAM CALENDAR

Saturday, May 6, 8:00 AM

**Field Day at Russell Tree Farm
2006 Texas Tree Farm of the Year
Featuring Dr. Eric Taylor
Depart from Gilmer, Texas
Approximately 8:00 AM
Conclude with free lunch on site**

Saturday, August 12, 10:30 AM

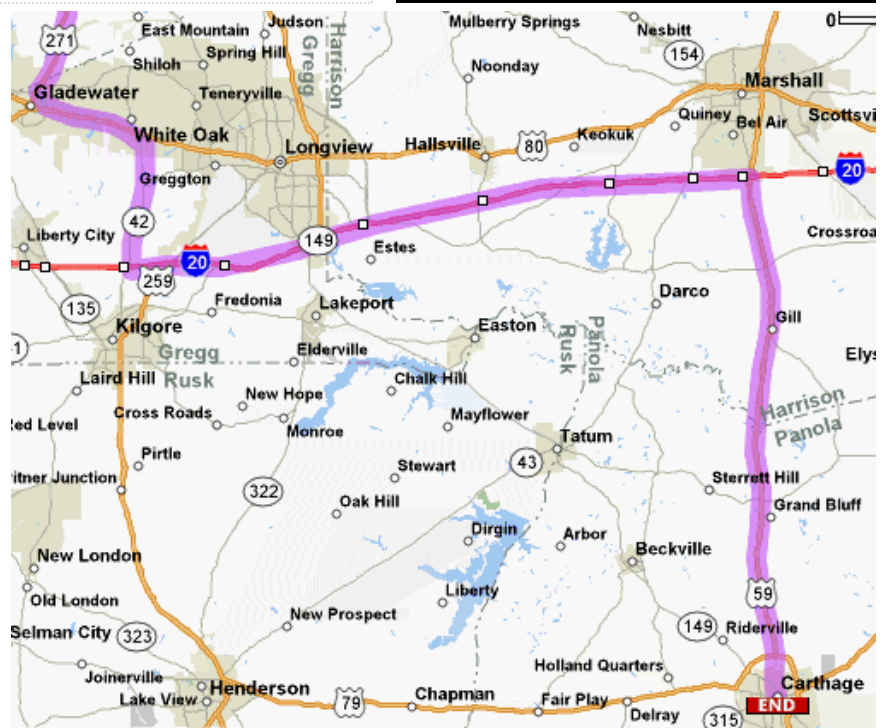
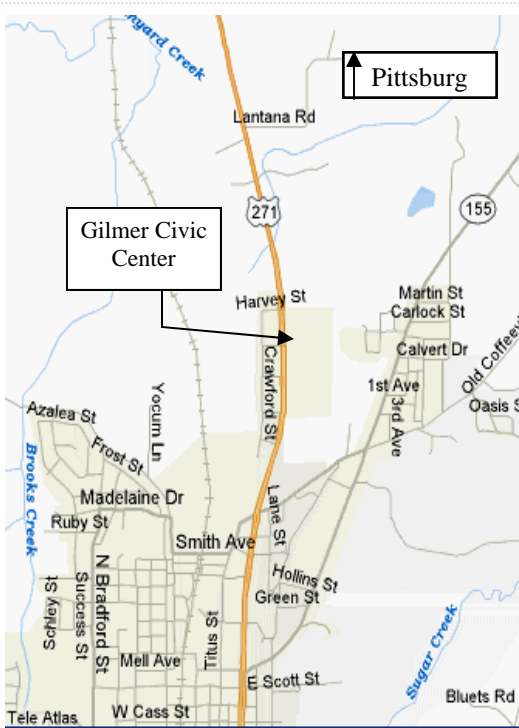
**Working Your Timber
Pro Logger's Views and Comments
Pilgrim Community Center
Pittsburg, Texas**

The red dot program continues. If you have a red dot on your newsletter, you owe 2005 dues of \$15. This is tax deductible for most.

Please make checks payable to and remit to:

NETFLA
PO Box 642
Mt. Vernon, TX 75457

If you have questions, contact Harry Earl — contact info is on the facing page.



Post-Planting Applications for Seedling Survival

*Philip G. Gates IV, District Forester, Texas Forest Service
Carthage, Texas*

O.K. You have properly site prepared your planting site, purchased the proper seedlings for your planting site, secured a reputable tree planting vendor, and have had your seedlings planted on the planting site using proper seedling care. Have you done everything to ensure seedling survival after planting? Not yet!! There are a few more options that are available to you after planting that offer seedlings the best chance of survival and increased growth.

Release herbicide applications are directed towards sites that cannot be treated prior to planting. Herbicide application treatments are recommended to remove competing vegetation for enhancing initial seedling growth and increasing pine seedling survival, not to eradicate all other plants. Five release herbicide application options are available to forest landowners; (1) Herbaceous Weed Control (Aerial Broadcast), (2) Herbaceous Weed Control (Band Application), (3) Herbaceous Weed Control (Spot Treatment), (4) Woody Release (Aerial Broadcast), and (5) Woody Release (Ground Application).

Herbaceous Weed Control (Aerial Broadcast) - Aerial application of herbicide is used for the control of herbaceous weeds and grasses in areas recently planted with pine seedlings. Applications are generally made on improved pastures, old fields, cutover areas, and prepared sites where vegetation control is desired across the entire treatment area. Aerial applications of herbaceous weed control are typically made by helicopter with accompanying fuel and chemical support trucks. The treatment area is aerially sprayed during the early periods of active growth (February-May) for herbaceous weeds and grasses using soil active and/or foliar active chemicals depending on the growth stage of targeted species. This practice is extremely beneficial to young pines, eliminating competing weeds and grasses within the same growing zone. Eliminating these shallow rooted species increases the amount of available moisture, nutrients, and sunlight for seedlings. This helps to promote growth and improve overall survival of newly planted seedlings during the first three critical years of establishment. Competition control results in more rapid growth of planted pines producing larger timber yields and shorter rotations for landowners. Aerial broadcast for herbaceous weed control ranges in cost from \$40-\$100/acre depending on tract size, vegetative cover, availability of vendors, chemical costs, application rates, etc.

Herbaceous Weed Control (Band Application) - Herbaceous weed control by banding is primarily conducted in improved or native pastures and light semi-open fields. However, this method can also be performed on cutover tracts where adequate site preparation has been conducted. The primary herbicides used in banding operations are imazapyr (Arsenal) and sulfometuron methyl (Oust). Other chemicals may be added to the tank mix, for an additional cost, to broaden the control of undesirable plant species. Bands are applied using rubber-tired tractors, ATV's (all-terrain vehicles), or backpack sprayers. Rubber tired tractors are equipped with rear-mounted spray tanks and booms with adjustable nozzles for treating several rows simultaneously. ATV's with rear-mounted tanks are also commonly used but normally spray only one row at a time. Backpack sprayers are sometimes used when acreage, tract location, or other factors make the use of other equipment impractical. Herbicides are generally applied in 3-4 foot wide bands. Four-foot bands or wider are preferred as encroachment of herbaceous material is delayed longer than areas treated with more narrow bands. Application is normally conducted in April-May with effectiveness reduced after June 1. Application of herbicide by banding reduces competition between the newly planted seedlings and established herbaceous weeds and grasses. Water and nutrients within the banded row that would otherwise have been utilized by the herbaceous material is made available to the pines. Although still dependent upon spring rains, summer weather and the quality of the planting operation, first year survival and growth is significantly improved through the use of this practice. Consistent spacing of rows by the planting vendor will make herbicide application easier and more effective. Associated costs are approximately \$35-65 per acre for openland banding and \$40-\$70 for wildland banding depending upon tract size, location, availability of vendors, chemical costs, etc.

Herbaceous Weed Control (Spot Treatment) - This practice is used primarily as a method of chemical control for herbaceous weeds and grasses in areas recently planted with pine seedlings. Applications are generally made on improved and unimproved pastures, old fields, cutover areas, and prepared sites where partial coverage with the chemical is desired. Spot applications of herbaceous weed control are accomplished through the use of a backpack or ATV-

mounted sprayer pressurized with air. After selecting the proper chemical or mixture for control of the dominant undesirable species present, the vendor will spray herbicide around each seedling. Each chemical application "spot" should be a minimum of approximately 18-24 inches in diameter. The treatment area should be spot sprayed during the early periods of active growth

(February-May) for herbaceous weeds and grasses using soil active and/or foliar active chemicals depending on the growth stage of targeted species. Spot treatment is especially useful on smaller acreages, or where aerial or skidder operations are not feasible. This practice focuses on vegetation in the immediate area of young seedlings leaving untreated areas for soil stabilization, wildlife forage, cover, habitat, etc. Best results are obtained when the application is made during the early stages of active weed growth (February to mid-May) before an established root system is developed. Associated costs are approximately \$40-\$65/acre depending on tract size, vegetative cover, availability of vendors, chemical costs, application rates, etc.

Woody Release (Aerial Broadcast) - Application of broadcast herbicide for post planting control of woody brush species is often advisable on cutover tracts of land. Hardwoods often establish themselves within a pine stand even after initial steps to remove them at the time of planting. These hardwood sprouts will compete with young pines for moisture and sunlight inhibiting growth and survival. This practice is most suited to stands with more than a 10% hardwood component. Hardwood release is usually conducted during the late summer or early fall of the year anytime after planting has occurred. Since most herbicides used for release are foliar active (taken in through the leaves), it is best to allow the site to green up before commencing application. Best results are obtained when the application is made during translocation of food reserves from the leaves to the roots (August-October). Application of the chemical is most often conducted from the air, using a helicopter equipped with a boom-type spray rig. Chemical release operations remove unwanted vegetation in competition with young pines. Reducing the amount of hardwood competition present on the site may help increase survival and growth of newly planted pine seedlings by redistributing moisture, nutrients, and available light that would have otherwise been used by the hardwoods. Application of woody release is especially important to the survival of young pines during droughty periods, when seedlings are already stressed due to lack of adequate water. Release treatment costs vary from \$60-85 per acre depending on location of the site, tract size, chemical costs, availability of vendors, etc.

Woody Release (Ground Application) - Although no longer commonly practiced, application of herbicide by ground based heavy equipment (skidders or crawler tractors) may be used in circumstances where aerial application is not possible or practical. Examples of where ground application may be necessary include tracts too small or too hazardous to attract an aerial herbicide applicator, where scattered remaining hardwoods for wildlife or aesthetic purposes remain and cannot be sprayed

around by air, as well as areas where drift of herbicide must be kept to an absolute minimum. There are two basic types of spray equipment that may be mounted on ground-based equipment. These are mist sprayers and boom sprayers. Mist sprayers are designed to apply concentrated herbicide in a fine mist that is atomized in a powerful stream of compressed air. This allows for better penetration into dense vegetation. This type of sprayer is well suited for treating stands with a well-developed understory from ground level. Boom sprayers consist of a boom, which holds a series of nozzles over the spray area. The nozzles dispense the chemical. Boom sprayers are useful for treating agricultural areas and areas that have been thoroughly site-prepared. Broadjet sprayers are an adaptation of the standard boom sprayer. They use a single large nozzle, or a cluster of small nozzles to replace the boom. Wick sprayers are another adaptation of the standard boom-type spray rig. Herbicide is applied through wicks attached to the spray nozzles. The advantage of this type of apparatus is that vegetation can be selectively treated because the equipment operator can see exactly where the chemical is being applied. Costs for ground-based herbicide applications range from \$60-90 per acre for release treatments. Costs will vary depending on tract size, location, vegetative cover, availability of vendors, chemical costs, application rates, etc.

Post-Treatments Following Planting of Hardwoods - Both banding and spot treatments with herbicides designed specifically to be used in hardwood stands may be an option to consider following the planting of hardwood seedlings. However, the herbicide must be applied before the hardwoods bud out, and after the grasses emerge. Professionals should be consulted regarding the proper chemicals and applications to be used.

These herbicide applications have the potential to improve overall seedling survival over sites without herbicide applications. However, if not applied correctly, herbicides can have little effect on competition or may even hinder growth the first planting season. Therefore you should contact your local Texas Forest Service forester or consulting forester to assist you in dealing with herbicides on your property. For more information, contact your local Texas Forest Service office or visit the TFS website at <http://txforestservicetamu.edu>.

Websites of Interest –

Information on blue stain lumber, Bill of Sale requirements, tree planting guide-lines, environmental rules for sawmills and more, Texas Forestry Association’s website - <http://www.texasforestry.org/literature.htm>

2006 edition of Timber Tax Capitalization Rate – State of Texas Comptroller’s Office – <http://www.window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/proptax/tc06/ch23e.htm>

The Southern Regional Extension Forestry office has placed three new technical bulletins on its website at: http://www.sref.info/publications/online_pubs/. They are:

- *Measuring Survival and Planting Quality in New Pine Plantations;*
- *Soil pH and Tree Species Suitability in the South; and*
New Pine Planting Strategies for the Western Gulf States

Publications of Interest – B-1 Working Group Newsletter

Forest Landowner’s Guide to Evaluating and Choosing a Natural Resource-Based Enterprise, published by the NRAES. \$19.95 plus S&H/sales tax. Contact: NRAES Cooperative Extension, PO Box 4557, Ithaca, New York 14852-4557. Phone: (607) 255-7654 or website - <http://www.nraes.org/publications/nraes151.html>

Dealing with Nuisance Wildlife - by Dr. Mike Mengak (University of Georgia) , (706) 583-8096 or mmengak@forestry.uga.edu or (<http://pubs.caes.uga.edu/caespubs/pubcd/B1248.htm>).

Wildfire Risk Assessment Guide for Homeowners in the Southern United States. <http://www.interfacesouth.org/fire/WildfireRAGH.pdf> or contact USDA Forest Service Southern Research & Information, Box 11806 Bldg. 164, Mowry Rd. Gainesville, FL 32611-0806. Phone: (352) 376-3271. E-mail: ahermansen@fs.fed.us.

Market Report

January-February, 2006

Product	Statewide Ave. Price This Period		Previous Ave. Price		Volume Difference (*)
	Volume	Weight	Volume	Weight	
Pine-Sawlogs	\$260.75/mbf	\$36.93/ton	\$273.87/mbf	\$41.37/ton	-10.7%
Pine-Pulpwood	\$18.52/cord	\$6.91/ton	\$24.86/cord	\$9.25/ton	-25.3%
Pine-Chip’n’Saw	\$43.79/cord	\$16.82/ton	\$29.97/cord	\$17.71/ton	-5%
Mixed Hardwood-Sawlogs	\$121.17/mbf	\$14.09/ton	\$174.09/mbf	\$18.82/ton	-25.1%
Hardwood-Pulpwood	\$9.88/cord	\$3.49/ton	\$27.34/cord	\$9.73/ton	-64.1%

*Conversion factors between volume and weight vary from sale to sale, so the differences in volume prices above may not equal differences in weight prices.

See [Timber Price Trends](http://texasforests.tamu.edu) at <http://texasforests.tamu.edu> for more detailed information. Copies can be purchased from the Texas Forest Service, Office of the Director, John B. Connally Building, 301 Tarrow, Suite 364, College Station, TX 77840-7896. It is recommended that you use the services of a professional consulting forester in managing any timber sale. Important factors affecting timber prices include the type, quality and volume of timber for sale, accessibility, distance to mills/markets, weather conditions, economy/market conditions, who is handling the sale, who is buying the timber, and contract requirements by the landowner.

The Texas Forestry Association is sponsoring its 9th Annual Sustainable Forestry in Texas photography contest. TFA is looking for photographs that best illustrate principles of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI)®, a national program highlighting sound forest stewardship.

Sustainable forestry means good forest management: managing for wildlife, clean water, protecting special sites, soil conservation, using responsible harvesting methods, and replanting after harvest. Judges will look for top-quality photography incorporated into the contest of SFI.

Categories

Working in the Forest, highlighting people who make their livelihood in forestry work, such as logging, tree planting, timber cruising, etc.

Sustainable Forestry in Action, depicting how managed forests support benefits such as clean water, wildlife, endangered species, reforestation and recreation.

Prizes

Equal prizes in both categories.

1st place - \$500

2nd place - \$250

3rd place - \$100

Deadline for entries: June 15, 2006

Contest is open to photographers of all ages, both amateur and professional.

Entries must be in color. Format must be **prints** up to 8x12.

Photos must be taken in Texas and labeled on the back with the date, location name and photographer's name.

Contestants may submit a total of three entries in each category, for a total of six entries per person, maximum.

All entries, both negatives and prints, will become property of Texas Forestry Association.

Judges will be experienced and knowledgeable in photography and/or forestry.

Entries may be highlighted in *Texas Forestry*, TFA's monthly newspaper or used in other TFA brochures and publications.

Winning entries may be matted and framed for auction at TFA's 2006 Annual Meeting.

For an entry form or additional information, contact Susan Stutts at:

Texas Forestry Association
P.O. Box 1488
Lufkin, Texas 75902-1488

(936) 632-TREE
(936) 632-9461 fax
email: sstutts@texasforestry.org

RSVP FOR THE BARBECUE AND TOUR

Contact **Bill Tucker** at 903-856-6316 (email btimber@aol.com) or fill out, tear off and mail this strip to:

Bill Tucker

1172 CR 2412

Leesburg, TX 75451

Your name _____

Number in your party _____

Number riding in TFS vans _____

Wednesday, May 3, is the cutoff date.