



# The Dogwood Times

A Publication of the Tyler County Forest Landowner Association

<http://tcforest.org/>

Tyler County Forest  
Landowner Association

Volume 17 Issue 3

Fall 2015

## General membership Meeting—September 19

The Tyler County Forest Landowner Association will meet at 9:30 AM on Saturday, September 19 at the Tyler County Extension Office, 201 Veterans Way, Woodville, TX. The Extension Office is located on the short side street across from the Brookshire's Store on US 69 South. We have three speakers:

**Mr. Mike Oliver**, State Forester, USDA, will talk on forest ecology understory, soils, and climate.

**Mr. Jacob Spivey**, Tyler County Extension Agent, will talk on tree identification.

**Mr. Ike McWhorter**, Fire Ecologist, U.S. Forest Service, will also be discussing east Texas ecology.

Following the individual presentations the speakers will have a panel discussion where you may ask questions. Lunch is provided, with suggestion to leave a donation to help cover the cost of lunch.

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## CALENDAR

**September 19, 2015**—TCFLOA General Membership Meeting, 9:30AM, at the Tyler County Extension Office, 201 Veterans Way, Woodville, Texas. See above for more information.

**September 25, 2015**—Workshop on Managing Land and Vegetation in SE Texas. Shepherd Community Center, Shepherd, TX. For more information contact Stuart Coombs at 936-827-4233 or scoombs@tfs.tamu.edu.

**September 25, 2015**—Hardwood Management Workshop and Field Tour. Henderson Civic Center, 1005 TX-64, Henderson, TX. For more information contact Klara Fielder at kfielder@tfs.tamu.edu.

**October 21-23, 2015**—Texas Forestry Association 101st Annual Meeting in College Station. Go to [www.texasforestry.org](http://www.texasforestry.org) for more information.

**October 27, 2015, 10AM**—Tyler County Local Emergency Planning Committee, LEPC, Tyler County Extension Office, 201 Veterans Way, Woodville, TX. Presentation by Entergy Transfer Co. on the safety and emergency plans of their pipelines crossing private lands in Tyler County. Open to the public. (*See note on LEPC, page 2*)

**Now-November 8, 2015**—“History in the Making: Texas A&M Forest Service” exhibit at the George Bush Presidential Library in College Station, TX. For information and tickets go to [bush41.org](http://bush41.org).

**January 16, 2016**—TCFLOA Board of Directors Meeting. Time and place to be announced later. TCFLOA members are invited.

In recent years surface water quality has become a paramount issue for Texas residents and landowners. As Stewards of our land we must all do our part to protect this natural resource. Using **Best Management Practices, BMPs**, is one way that landowners can protect water quality during forest management activity.

The publication “Texas Forestry Best Management Practices” is available from the Texas Forestry Association. You can request a copy at [texasforestry.org](http://texasforestry.org).



## Websites of Interest



### **Magic Tree: Multi-Blossom Hybrid Grows 40 Different Kinds of Fruit –**

<http://www.rt.com/usa/310723-magical-art-hybrid-tree/>

### **Agriculture and Timber Registration Numbers –**

<http://comptroller.texas.gov/taxinfo/agriculture/>

### **Forest Landowners Association, Promoting Private Forests –**

<http://www.forestlandowners.com/>

### **Texas State Historical Association, Texas Almanac (Forest Resources) –**

<http://texasalmanac.com/topics/environment/forest-resources>

### **American Tree Farm System, 2015-2020 Standards of Sustainability –**

<https://www.treefarmssystem.org/atfs-standards>

## ***New Online Management Tool for Landowners***

*Texas A&M Forest Service*

<http://tfsweb.tamu.edu / www.texasforestinfo.com>

Want to put in a road on your land? Protect your water resources? Enhance wildlife, harvest trees or clear vegetation? Texas A&M Forest Service’s (TFS) newest online tool, Plan My Land Operation, is designed to help you protect your property and ensure sustainability as you begin your next land improvement project.

Geared toward landowners, contractors, and land managers, Plan My Land Operation is key to planning any improvement to your land. This tool helps you plan and layout your project based on your specific terrain, soil, and water resources. As a user, you can quickly map a property boundary, identify sensitive areas, place a buffer around critical features, and determine things needed like the proper size culvert.

“Planning any land operation is a critical first step to protecting your land and water resources. Without a good operational plan, your land may be at risk,” Hughes Simpson, program coordinator for Texas A&M Forest Service said.

As a service-based state agency, TFS strives to provide land managers advanced tools to help efficiently and effectively implement land operations.

“Ordinarily, in order to do something like this you need an extensive GIS system or to be a land operation expert. Now, anyone with access to the Internet can map their property and generate detailed operation planning reports,” Simpson said.

A unique feature of the Plan My Land Operation tool is that it is also useful to hikers and outdoor enthusiasts. Users can map out their trail and it will show the distance, elevation, and slope of that trail. While full capability of the tool is statewide, this function is available nationwide.

Plan My Land Operation is the newest online tool added to an already extensive lineup of interactive online tools located at [texasforestinfo.com](http://texasforestinfo.com). This website provides landowners, managers, government officials, local community groups, and the public state-of-the-art access to custom Web mapping applications with capabilities to discover and explore an array of maps depicting forest conditions, and query and download data on a variety of forest interests.

Other tools on the Texas Forest Info website: Map My Property, Forest Products Directory, Timber Decision Simulator, Economic Impact, and more!

### ***(Note on LEPC from the CALNDAR on page 1)***

The Local Emergency Planning Committee, LEPC, in Tyler County is a partnership of county citizens and/or property owners, Industry, and local government. It is a public forum to discuss preparedness where property and safety are at stake. It includes concerns with hazardous materials, as well as natural threats, such as hurricanes and forest fires. As forest landowners in Tyler County, even absentee owners, you are not only eligible, but have a voice at the LEPC meetings. You should particularly be interested if you have a pipeline or petroleum production site on your timberland property.

See the CALNDAR on the first page for the next meeting.



## TCFLOA Gemma Power Plant Tour—August 13, 2015

On Thursday, August 13, 2015, Facility Manager, Doug Tomison, welcomed twenty members of the Tyler County Forest Landowner Association (TCFLOA) to the East Texas Electric Cooperative (ETEC) Hilton Lively Renewable Power Project biomass facility in Woodville. Yes, that is a long name! Gemma Power Systems, LLC is under contract with ETEC to run the facility.

ETEC is comprised of ten electric cooperatives, including the Sam Houston Electric Cooperative (SHECO). As a non-profit organization, ETEC can neither accept any federal subsidies, nor does it pay income taxes. However, some federal loans were obtained during construction. The facility is subject to local property taxes, per the terms of the agreement with Tyler County.

The plant, designed to produce up to 50 megawatts an hour, started operation on July 1, 2014. It operated at low levels for almost a year to work out the procedures and is now running efficiently. When running at full capacity, the plant burns about 1,400 tons of wood per day, which equates to approximately 65 loads of woodchips. Since the plant started, 104,000 megawatts of power has been produced. The plant uses some of the electricity produced for its operation; the rest goes to the electric grid.

On a daily basis, employees check with Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) <https://www.misoenergy.org> to determine the price of electricity on the energy market; i.e., the price for which they can sell the electricity they produce. If the price is high enough to cover the immediate cost of production, the facility is brought online. A lot of the electricity is purchased by distributors in Beaumont but could go as far as Canada once it hits the grid. Power prices sometimes change within 6 seconds. Prices have not yet reached a level to recover all the overhead costs associated with production, but market projections are for prices to rise over the next two years.

The facility was not producing electricity the day of the tour. When the plant is not producing electricity, the 28 employees work their scheduled hours performing cleaning and maintenance tasks. Jeff Strong, the Operations Manager, said they are frequently busiest when the plant is not running.

Because of low prices, the plant is currently silent on most weekends. There was a period early this year when the plant did not operate because the wood was too wet due to heavy rainfall. The moisture content of the woodchips needs to be around 38% to burn efficiently during processing. A large tractor is maintained on the premises to spread the waiting woodchip piles should one catch fire by spontaneous combustion deep within the pile.

**Delivery of the wood:** The specialized woodchip trucks are weighed then backed onto one of the two truck tippers. A sample of the delivered woodchips is tested to ensure quality. Then the whole truck is tipped so that the chips fall out of the back of the truck. Very interesting! If the wood is wet, the chips will be spread out on the back part of the lot to dry in the sun.

**About wood:** North American Procurement Company (NAPCO) is the plant's sole supplier of woodchips. The size of the chips matters because if they are too long, they will not make the turn in the tracks/belts to be traveled. While oak chips have the highest BTU value, pine chips are also good. However, eucalyptus are undesirable because they contain too much oil. Ash on the chips is undesirable because it is too messy. It is illegal for the plant to burn household trash. While the plant cannot process a load of only leaves or pine straw, it is acceptable for some leaves and pine straw to be mixed with the woodchips.

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*(Power Plant Tour-continued from previous page)*

**About the process:** Huge fans blow over the fire inside the boilers. There are also cameras in the boilers to transmit live video of the fire to the command center. Employees in the command center watch for dark spots in the displayed flames. Dark Spots are not good as they indicate that either too much or too little fuel at that combustion spot. Employees in the command center monitor all parts of the operation. The exhaust gases from the process are filtered and cleaned through a catalytic reactor. **The biomass plant in Woodville is considered the cleanest in the nation.**

**About Water:** Water plays an important role. Water from the high capacity water well is filtered and stored in a 750,000 gallon water tank. A measured amount is introduced into the process to be heated by the wood-chips, creating the steam used to generate the electricity. Additionally, six hundred gallons a minute of effluent gray water from the city of Woodville is used for cooling. After being used for cooling, two hundred gallons of water a minute is released into Turkey Creek. In case of a fire during processing, there is a fire hydrant that can be used to withdraw water from the large pressurized water tank filled by the plant's high-capacity water well. The plant uses the public water supply for its drinking water.

The "**bottom ash**" (residue left after the burn) should look like gravel and charcoal. If not, then too much carbon is left unburned. Now that the facility is running efficiently, the appearance of the ash has changed to reflect that the plant is achieving a much better burn than it did initially. The ash comes out a bit wet. We saw a sample of earlier produced ash; it had little pieces of wood still in the ash mix. A recent production sample shown to us did not contain any pieces of wood.

Thanks to the Gemma employees for a wonderful, informative tour!

For more information, click on <http://www.gemmapower.com/portfolio/hilton-lively-renewable-power-project/>.

## **The Next 25 Years: Threats Facing America's Private Forest Landowners**

*Forestry Notes: Summer 2015 Edition , National Association of Conservation Districts , [www.nacdnet.org](http://www.nacdnet.org)*

Forest Stewardship, Forest Legacy and Urban & Community Forestry (USFS State and Private CO-OP Forestry Programs) have helped private forestland owners address a number of obstacles over the past quarter-century. These programs change how we think about managing our woodlands, and provided incentives for those willing to meet the needs of the resource head on.

So what obstacles will impact forest landowners in the next 25 years? Here are five commonly referenced issues facing private forest lands, with comments from American Forest Foundation CEO and President Tom Martin and National Woodland Owners Association President Keith Argow. These obstacles will make agency programs even more critical to preserving America's privately-owned forests in the coming years.

### **1. It's important to plan for the future**

The future of America's private forestlands is dependent upon families deciding how best to pass the land down to the next generation of stewards. Few discussions can be as tense and complicated. Any number of factors can come into play and result in liquidation instead of succession. As Argow points out, the increasing rate of land turnover makes forestland ever more vulnerable to development and conversion. Careful succession planning not only keeps the forest in the family, but it also helps to keep tracts of forestland intact.

*(continued on next page)*



*(The Next 25 Years-continued from previous page)*

It starts with a series of questions, followed by honest dialogue. “Family landowners need to know who they want to own the property and who they want to manage it – and those questions may have two different answers,” says Martin.

## **2. What does the future hold for forest markets?**

Wanting to maintain landownership is one thing; being able to afford to do so is another. Historically, timber harvests helped offset property tax and cost of ownership, but margins are much tighter today. “Healthy and reliable forest markets are the No. 1 concern of family forest owners nationwide,” says Argow. “The highest prices are for the land, and not the trees growing on them.” Will society’s growing interest in sustainable products help jumpstart the wood industry? It’s hard to say, as forest markets are unpredictable. Whereas markets were often considered cyclical, Martin advises landowners not to wait for blue skies. “Markets go up, down and sideways, but cyclical suggests a pattern that repeats and I don’t think we have that,” he explains. “Opportunities are deeply place dependent.”

## **3. Landowners must stay current on pests and disease**

Standing dead timber has plagued western states thanks to bark beetle. The number of states impacted by emerald ash borer continues to grow. There’s Gypsy Moth and Thousands Cankers Disease. Name a tree and your local forester will name an insect or disease to go with it. There are no easy cures, but it’s important to have a good gameplan for response and removal. “Creating an adaptable, resilient and actively monitored forest is the best insurance against these stressors,” says Martin, “so diversity in species and age classes may offer benefits. And prompt active management where outbreaks are found can limit damage.” Argow stresses the need for landowner education. “It is in the individual landowner’s best interest to be able to recognize insect and disease presence early before their presence does real damage. State forestry agency detection reports help, along with visits with your forester and neighbors.”

## **4. The big ‘C’ will impact forest landowners, too**

Landowners must at least consider how changing temperatures and water levels might impact their land. “Letting nature take its course may no longer produce the results that landowners desire,” says Martin. Adds Argow: “(Conditions) will gradually change the composition of both the trees and the understory of family woodlands.” There is a growing movement in USDA to make forestry a key piece in the fight to slow the affects of climate change. This means private forest landowners – even those with minimal acreage – must be conscious of how their land fits into the big picture. Carbon sequestration is still a meeting topic more than it is a tool, but as policy takes shape and programs adapt landowners will need to adapt, too.

## **5. The growing need to ‘sell’ the value of forests**

There is a growing number of individuals living in urban centers, hours – if not days – away from the forest. The concern is that this population will not support the need to invest in our nation’s forests because it is disconnected from them. It’s less likely to recognize benefits such as clean air and clean water as the generation before it. So what exactly does this have to do with the forest landowner? Because forest landowners, same as forestry professionals, need to begin to do a better job of telling their story – to stress the need of keeping forests as forests. “All of us are upset when we lose a tree in our yard or the park down the street,” says Martin. “What folks don’t fully appreciate is a forest, which is a dynamic thing, with death and new life a regular occurrence. And we haven’t done a good job as a community in helping them understand that and the role that active management can play in making that dynamic forest more sustainable.”

\* \* \*



**Tyler County Forest  
Landowner Association**

C/O Charles Zimmerman  
298 County Road 2152  
Woodville, Texas 75979

Phone: 409-200-1451  
charles.zimmerman@hughes.net

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**DO NOT FORWARD**

OFFICERS & DIRECTORS  
2015-2016

- Pres: Sarah Reinemeyer
- VP: Jeffrey Parker
- Sect: Brianne Parker
- Treas: Charles Zimmerman
- Dir: Betty Zimmerman (past President)
- Dir: Jack Clark
- Dir: DeAnna Turner
- Dir: Dr. Jay Fish

Check your membership date on the label for 2015 dues. '15 or greater = OK.

**General Meeting - September 19, 2015**

**Membership 2015**

**Be sure to check the one or two digit code on the mailing label.**

If you see you haven't paid for 2014 dues, not to worry, TCFLOA does not entice anyone into paying for years gone by. If you renew now your membership is good through 2016.

Send your renewal check to the treasurer at the address on the membership form. Use the form to join TCFLOA or update your information.

Note that we are asking for your e-mail address. This will allow us to get time sensitive information on programs, conferences, workshops, weather, or fire situations. We will **NOT** give your address to any other groups, people, advertisers, etc. This information is for your board members and newsletter editor **only**.

Over the last 15 years we have had good delivery service by the United States Postal Service with a single folded newsletter. The last two issues has been an exception with around a dozen mutilated issues returned to me as undeliverable. I also received emails and phone calls telling me the newsletter was mutilated. Starting with this issue you will receive the newsletter in an envelope.

*Charles Zimmerman—editor*

**MEMBERSHIP FORM**

**For Calendar Year 2015 - TCFLOA**

**Regular Membership:** Private non-industrial owners of five (5) or more acres of land in Tyler Co.  
**Dues:** \$10 per calendar year per couple. One (1) vote per membership.

**Associate Membership:** Any individual not qualifying as a Regular Member who supports the objectives of TCFLOA. **Dues:** \$10 per calendar year per individual or organization. Associate Members are non-voting.

**USE THIS FORM TO JOIN TCFLOA OR TO MAKE CORRECTIONS**

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY / STATE / ZIP

PHONE

APPROX # TIMBER ACRES IN TYLER CO.

E-Mail

Please make checks payable to TCFLOA, and mail to:

Charles Zimmerman, Treasurer TCFLOA, 298 County Road 2152, Woodville, TX 75979