

Membership Newsletter

Vol. 5, No. 4

March 2008

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www.vermontwoodlands.org

2008 Annual Meeting features keynote speaker Ben Kilham

The VWA Annual Meeting will be held on Friday, April 4, 2008 at the Vermont Technical College from 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Coffee and registration will be at the Old Dorm Building on the VTC campus in Randolph Center.

There will be various presentations on the day's agenda by Steve Sinclair, VT State Forester; Jonathan Wood, Commissioner, VT Dept. of Forests, Parks & Recreation; Paul Frederick, Wood Utilization Specialist, Dept. of Forests, Parks & Rec.; Al Robertson, VWA Tree Farm Committee; and by the VWA Executive Director. Presentation topics will be on Town Forests & Brushwood Forest Project, Forestry issues before the legislature, Forests, Parks & Recreation activities, the Tree Farm program, VT Coverts spring and fall training workshops, and

Vermont Woodlands Association 2007 activities and plans for 2008.

The Vermont Woodlands Association will also be electing their 2008 board of directors. After lunch there will be an awards presentation including two 50-Year Tree Farm Awards to Balla McCree and Sable Mountain, as well as the 2008 Tree Farmer of the Year award.

The meeting will end with Keynote speaker Ben Kilham author of *Among the Bears: Raising Orphaned Cubs in the Wild*. Ben is a Wildlife Rehabilitator, researcher, and has been featured on National Geographic TV programs.

Cost for the meeting is \$30.00. To download the full agenda and registration please visit www.vermontwoodlands.org.

2nd Annual Forestry School Announced

Mark your calendars now for the weekend of April 26-27, 2008. If you missed last years workshop you won't want to miss this one - this is a great hands-on chance to help you get the most benefit from your woodlot.

Various topics will be discussed including: Forest Inventory and Condition Analysis: Resource Management Planning, which will include mapping, resource description and management prescription and Harvesting Forest Products, which will include reasons for harvesting and pre-commercial vs. commercial timber sales, both presented by Paul Harwood, Consulting Forester; Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation, County Foresters and what they do, Project Learning Tree: Presented by Ginger Anderson, Chief of Forest Resource Manage-

ment; and Wildlife and managing forests for wildlife will be presented by Kim Royar, Wildlife Biologist with Vermont Dept. of Fish & Wildlife. Participants will then take a walk and talk tour of the Hulbert Outdoor Center's forest. On Sunday, there will be a tour of the 2000 Vermont Outstanding Tree Farm.

The Forestry School begins with registration at 8:30 AM Saturday and ends on Sunday at noon. Overnight accommodations are available at Hulbert Outdoor Center along with Saturday lunch, dinner and snacks and Sunday breakfast and lunch. No alcoholic beverages will be provided but you may BYOB. Dogs are not permitted. The cost of the Forestry School weekend is \$100 per person. To see a full schedule and to download the registration please visit www.vermontwoodlands.org.

VWA Membership
Newsletter is
published four
times a year.

2007 Advertising Rates

(per year):

member/nonmember

Business Card
\$120/\$150

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1/2 Page \$360/\$500

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News from the Tree Farm Program

Why Belong to Tree Farm?

by Al Robertson

Recently VWA has been cleaning up “loose ends” with our Tree Farm membership. We have a significant number of Tree Farmers (TF’s) that haven’t paid the \$10 a year administration fee, and we needed to know why. As you remember, VWA was given permission by our national organization to charge the \$10 to offset the cost of professional administration and management of the program in Vermont. The work is time consuming and a lot more complex than it used to be, and everyone’s life is pretty busy these days making finding a volunteer “victim” to do the work rather difficult.

Armed with the phone numbers of the non-responsive TF’s in one county, I started calling, and I got some interesting responses. Most people I contacted hadn’t received the bill, or more likely, threw it out because they didn’t connect Tree Farm with Vermont Woodlands Association, the sponsor. Some of our Tree Farmers are not members of VWA and they automatically threw out what they thought was junk mail. Hopefully, they won’t throw out the new bill. A few, however, asked, “Why should I continue if it’s going to cost me \$10 a year???” That surprised me. No, I couldn’t tell them they’d get more money for their trees right now if they belong. No, membership wouldn’t help them with property taxes, or even pay for their forester any more (another change Vermont now has - see the Vermont Tree Farm website: http://www.vermontwoodlands.org/tree_farm.html.)

So, what are the advantages of being in

Tree Farm other than good forestry, better advice, management, timber quality, and the “warm fuzzies” one gets from doing the ‘right thing’? Well, like many things in life, good things take time, and the advantages of being in Tree Farm have required patience to see. Those advantages, some of which will likely mean better and more markets, better prices (not higher, but not discounted either), and opportunities to participate in new programs, are now materializing on the horizon. They include carbon trading, cellulosic ethanol, and the forest products industries - paper and saw logs, etc. - requiring that the wood they buy be “certified.” All these new programs and markets likely will require wood suppliers to be able to certify - third party certify - that their wood was grown and harvested sustainably.

That is what Tree Farm membership can do for your forest. Not belonging will eventually mean little market participation in any of the above opportunities. Certification is an international juggernaut, brought on by global warming, deforestation, environmentalists, and consumers. Certification is new, and is still in its infancy, but it won’t be that much longer before its effects are felt.

Stay tuned in for the next article on why certification is happening, and why it won’t go away!

ATFS announces new “Certified Family Forest” sign which you are now able to order.





President's Column

Legislation Matters

First, I would like to thank everyone who contributed to the Annual Fund and the VWA Endowment held by the Vermont Community Foundation. These contributions help VWA in its annual efforts and ensure the future strength of your association.

After almost thirty years of existence, the Use Value Appraisal Program came under review. "A Review and Analysis of the Use Value Appraisal Program" was prepared by a group of consultants headed by Deb Brighton. Using this analysis, a Task Force held several meetings, some for public input. The Task Force's recommendations have been presented to the legislature.

Although there were some major changes proposed, the task force voted to make minor adjustments. If major changes were made, the state's contract with landowners would be broken. Consequently, a re-enrollment of all those interested would have to be conducted while those objecting to the changes could drop out without penalty.

Also last year, the House appointed a six-member Interim Committee on Forestry. The committee met several times, took public testimony, and submitted five bills to the Legislature.

H.0756 proposes to increase the penalties for certain instances of workers' compensation fraud and carries a cost of \$70,000 for an additional investigator in the Department of Labor.

H.0755 proposes to enact a forestry and forest products viability enhancement program which would provide assistance to timber harvesters, foresters, and forest products manufacturers. It also requires the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation to investigate the feasibility of certifying state forest lands. Cost is \$300,000.

H.0757 would establish a forest credit program overseen by the Vermont Economic Development Authority to provide financial assistance to forestry and forest products industries. Creates a loan fund of \$2,000,000.

H.0758 would establish programs to help prevent the parcelization of forest land through authorizing the Housing and Conservation Board to use funds to conserve forest land. Additionally, FP&R would develop educational materials regarding the impacts of parcelization and track parcelization rates. Cost: \$500,000.

H.0759 proposes to enact programs encouraging energy production from biomass harvested on a sustainable basis. The word "sustainable" is key, as harvesting standards would be enacted by both the Public Service Board and FP&R. Cost: \$200,000.

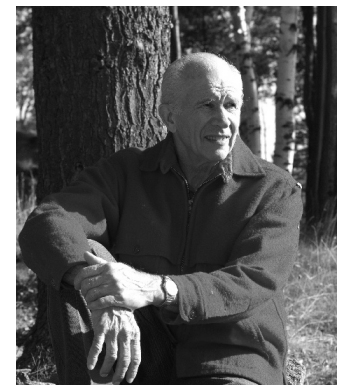
Of additional interest is H.543 which proposes to allocate one-eighth of one percent of the Sales and Use Tax to the Department of Fish and Wildlife. This has worked successfully in a few other states, but does set a precedent for other interests.

To meet the printing deadline, this column was written before any action had been taken on these bills. But it is encouraging that the Legislature is recognizing the importance of forestry. Forestry contributes as much to the state's economy as does agriculture, and if forest-based recreation is counted, even more.

In 2006 the State contributed \$8.9 million to agriculture. In 2007 the State contributed \$3.2 million to agriculture.

Admittedly, money is even tighter than usual. But will the State recognize the importance of forestry and level the playing field a bit??

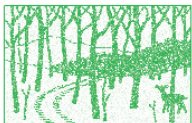
Put Blodgett, VWA President



Put Blodgett

JON GILBERT FOX

Visit our website at www.vermontwoodlands.org for information on the Tree Farm program, workshop opportunities, forestry related programs for students and teachers, and much more.



News from Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation

The Chance to Bequeath a Heritage

Ginger Anderson , Chief of Forest Management

In my new role as Chief of Forest Resource Management, I was invited to participate in a project that is part of the US Forest Service program called “Investing Where It Matters Most,” or IWMM as government programs always include acronyms for their titles. My IWMM project is called “Intergenerational Transfer of Forest Lands.”

The project seeks to find ways to help families either hold onto their inheritance of forestland or to find a way to transfer working forest to new owners who will respect the integrity of the management that has been carefully planned. The need for this project is rooted in the knowledge that as older landowners pass their lands to their heirs, much of that land will be sold and probably parcelized to satisfy inheritance and tax obligations for the next generation.

I was ironically well suited for this project because I had lived this situation in my own family two decades ago. When my grandfather’s health was failing, an estate planner helped him subdivide and sell as vacation properties his forestland in Montgomery. As a lover of forests, I was dismayed when I discovered what had happened, but later as an heir, dealing with an interest in my grandparents’ house (which included

other heirs) I understood how difficult it is to find equity and agreement while still paying the taxes without liquidation.

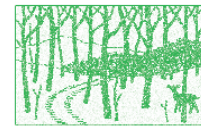
We face a situation as a society that the stewardship of many farms, forests and homes are about to transfer from the sound management of one generation to a perhaps uncertain future. As the current stewards of our forests, it is up to us to decide and to take action to chart the future of our land. Some landowners have discovered tools such as conservation easements, trusts and limited partnerships to keep special lands intact.

Thom McEvoy Extension Forester at UVM has devoted an entire book to the topic of forestland inheritance issues because he feels it is the most relevant current topic facing small forests. If there is one thing we can do for the children we love, for the land we have nurtured and the landscapes in which we live, it is to consider now how we can best insure that our forests are cared for in future. There is no one answer, but by working together, VWA members can lead the discussion, and locate the tools to insure that private forestry remains an integral part of Vermont’s natural landscape.

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Stewardship for Your Timberland Investment



News from Department of Fish & Wildlife Whip Your Land Into Shape This Year!

by David Adams, Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department



As a landowner in Vermont, you understand the value of the woods that surround you. You understand the potential financial value that your woodlot has, but understanding the wildlife values of your property is just as important. As a landowner are you interested in creating high quality fish and wildlife habitat on your property? Would you like to have more animals around to hunt, fish, and photograph or just enjoy? Are you unsure of where to start? Rest assured there is hope. The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department and the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) have partnered to deliver the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP).



WHIP is a federally funded program that encourages the creation of high quality habitats that support fish and wildlife populations of national, state, and local significance. Through WHIP, the VTFWD, and the NRCS provide technical assistance and up to 75% of the cost of habitat improvement practices for restoration and management of important fish and wildlife habitats. Targeted habitats include riparian or river corridors, wetlands, grasslands, early successional (brushy areas or young woodlots) and old field habitat, rare and sensitive species habitat and other significant Vermont habitats such as clayplain forests in the Champlain Valley.

The Fish and Wildlife Department and NRCS will work with participating landowners to develop a wildlife habitat management plan, which provides the basis of the cost-

share agreement between the NRCS and the participant. Agreements are usually 5 to 10 years in duration depending on the practices to be implemented and the goals of the project. Once agreements are signed, Fish and Wildlife Department staff will work with landowners to implement scheduled practices, and once completed they will certify that the practices were completed according to NRCS practice standards.

In the last four years, WHIP has helped to restore hundreds of acres of wetlands in both Franklin and Lamoille Counties, helped



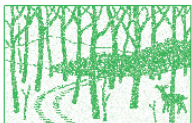
landowners reach the wildlife goals for their properties, and educated countless people about

the value of the natural world that surrounds us.

Currently applications are being accepted until March 15, 2008 to be considered for this year's funding. Applications are ranked to compete for funding based upon habitat quality and quantity restored. For more information on WHIP please contact your local USDA office in your county or one of the Fish and Wildlife Department habitat specialists listed below.

Dave Adams (Essex)
802-879-2330
dave.adams@state.vt.us

Mary Beth Adler (Springfield)
802 -885-8836
marybeth.adler@state.vt.us



Excerpt from The Economic Importance and Wood Flows from Vermont's Forest, 2007 North East State Foresters Assoc.

The Forest Resource in Vermont

Vermont's land area is 5.92 million acres. Seventy-five percent or 4.46 million acres, is forested. The USDA Forest Service classifies 4.35 million acres as timberland or land that is fertile and accessible enough to produce wood as a crop and is not withdrawn from timber harvesting by statute or regulation.

| Total land area | Forest land | Timberland |
|-----------------|-------------|------------|
| 5,919,702 | 4,462,835 | 4,352,855 |

The majority of timberland in Vermont is privately owned (4.0 million acres or 81%) by family forest owners or business concerns. Local, State, and Federal government owns just over 18.7% or 919,440 acres of Vermont's forest.

Highlights

The annual contribution of forest-based manufacturing and forest – related recreation and tourism to the Vermont economy is over \$1.5 billion.

Forest-based manufacturing contributes \$1.0 billion in value of shipments to the economy in 2005 or 9.3% of Vermont's total manufacturing sales.

The forest based recreation and tourism provides employment for over 6,300 people and generates payrolls of \$93.0 million.

Revenues from forest-related recreation and tourism activities totals \$485 million in 2005.

Vermont landowners received estimated stumpage revenue in 2005 of \$31.5 million.

The sale of Christmas trees, wreaths, and maple syrup contributed approximately \$22 million in 2005.

Wood provides the energy for approximately 6% of electrical and heating use in Vermont.

Each 1,000 acres of forest land in Vermont support 1.4 forest-based manufacturing, forestry, and logging jobs and 1.4 forest-related tourism and recreation jobs.

To receive a full copy of this publication please contact VWA office.

VWA Introduces E-News.

Vermont Woodlands Association would like to announce it's new *E-News*. We would like to keep you informed of events, workshops, and topics related to forestry on a monthly basis. You will still continue to receive the popular quarterly newsletter in print but our e-news will provide you with more timely information. If you have not yet seen our February edition, it means we don't have your current email address. Please send your email address to trish@gwriters.com or visit our website at www.vermontwoodlands.org and click on subscribe. If you wish to unsubscribe to the e-newsletter please click on the unsubscribe link.

CALL BEFORE YOU CUT

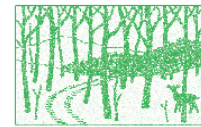
A Guide to Public Resources for Woodland Owners in Vermont

Take advantage of free services available through the Vermont County Foresters before selling timber from your woodlands.



Call Now! Before you cut...not after.

To download the Call Before You Cut brochure or to find your County Forester, or a VWA consulting forester, visit www.vermontwoodlands.org.



Member Profile

Patricia Ayres-Crawford, Tree Steward Award Winner

The Vermont Urban and Community Forestry Council recently honored forestland owner and VWA board member, Patricia Crawford, with a Tree Steward Award for leadership. Crawford has been the driving force behind West Fairlee's community forest initiative. Under Crawford's guidance, plans are well underway to create a town forest that may eventually encompass 3,300 acres.

Patricia and her husband Dave have lived in W. Fairlee for the last ten years and are the owners of about 200 acres that they have placed in a conservation easement. It was during the process of estate planning and making major decisions for the future that they learned about town forests and their importance to communities and thought, "This is a really great thing to do. Why wait until we're gone?"

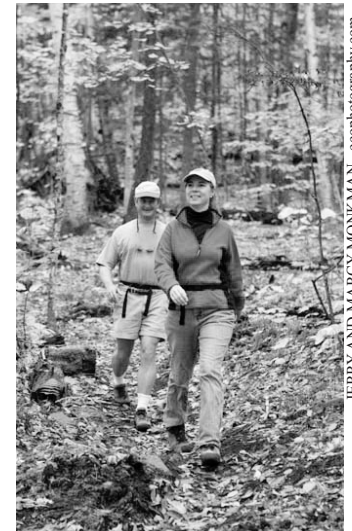
As a member of the selectboard in W. Fairlee, Patricia knew that the town had been thinking about creating a town forest as far back as 1971, but still didn't have one. Thus, this truly remarkable and unique project began. The W. Fairlee town forest will be created through the purchase of contiguous property from private landowners, with funding from the Forest Legacy Program. This

private land transfer of 1200 acres will "close the gap" between two existing pieces of public lands. According to Patricia, "It's a reversal of fragmentation." She called it a "rolling up" of private lands that will create a landscape level habitat of 3,300 acres encompassing three towns – Bradford, Fairlee, and W. Fairlee. The hope is that the existing public lands that flank this new town forest will also have conservation easements.

Forest Legacy is a national program and funding was secured through a competitive grant application as well as extensive fundraising. The Trust for Public Lands, also a national non-profit, and Jad Daley from the Vermont Town Forest project were also very instrumental in helping to put this plan together.

Patricia originally hails from Berkley, CA and came east to earn her MBA from Dartmouth in 1995. She credits her friends and neighbors in the wonderful community where she lives for showing her the importance of volunteer participation. It was her turn to step up and so she has, as a selectboard member and a dedicated leader whose work will benefit future generations.

VWA is pleased to have Patricia on the board and offers resounding congratulations to her!



JERRY AND MARCY MONKMAN - ecophotography.com

Patricia Ayers-Crawford and her husband Dave.



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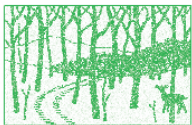
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As a benefit of membership, the Vermont Woodlands Association offers a free subscription to *Northern Woodlands*, a quarterly magazine that offers readers a "new way of looking at the forest." *Northern Woodlands* mission is to encourage a culture of forest stewardship in the Northeast by increasing understanding of and appreciation for the natural wonders, economic productivity, and ecological integrity of the region's forests. Members also receive the VWA newsletter published quarterly and E-News, offering articles of interest and educational opportunities for woodland owners.

New Member Application and/or Donation Form (Renewal notices are sent by mail to current members)

Vermont Woodlands Association is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation whose mission is to advocate for the management, sustainability, perpetuation, and enjoyment of forests through the practice of excellent forestry that employs highly integrated management practices that protect and enhance both the tangible and intangible values of forests—including clean air and water, forest products, wildlife habitat, biodiversity, recreation, scenic beauty, and other resources—for this and future generations.

Annual dues investment (check one)

Land owners and managers

- 0 -100 acres..... \$40
- 101-200 acres..... \$50
- 201-500 acres..... \$60
- 501-1,000 acres..... \$70
- 1,001-5000 acres..... \$100
- Over 5,000 acres..... \$250
- Friend/Supporter..... \$40

Foresters and loggers:

- Individuals..... \$50
- Firms and crews..... \$100

Wood products companies

- Less than 10 employees..... \$50
- More than 10 employees..... \$250

Equipment suppliers:

- All suppliers..... \$100

Name _____

Address _____

Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

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Woodland town(s) _____ County(ies) _____

Woodland acres _____ Tree Farm member? _____ Enrolled in the Value Appraisal Program? _____

Forester _____

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