



Newsletter

Spring/Summer 2016

Greetings from the FSF Team!

There are many exciting projects in the works towards protecting forested lands in our region that we are excited to share with you.

In This Issue:

- Project Outreach Update
- Guy Dunkle explores forestry in Missouri's Ozark region
- Field notes from May's FSF In-the-field forestry event
- A new segment! "Loving the Land- Landowners Tell Their Stories" in which landowners share their adventures in woodland ownership.

We hope this newsletter finds you enjoying the summer. Remember, the shade of a healthy forest canopy is a fine place to beat the heat!



From left: Annie Socci, Guy Dunkle, John Noel Bartlett, Troy Firth

Project Outreach Update

Phase II of Project Outreach is in press! Project Outreach is a large-scale, multi-stage initiative begun in 2013 to identify and make direct contact with the owners of forested properties in Erie, Crawford, Warren and Venango Counties. Over the next few weeks, over 4,000 letters and informational brochures will be sent out to owners of woodland parcels, with the hope that landowners will contact us to discuss their conservation options.

Every landowner's story is unique and it is so important to reach out to them directly to help them make a plan for protecting their piece of Penn's Woods. To continue our outreach efforts, we plan to follow up on this mailing with phone conversations and regional information sessions.

You can help! Please spread the word about the FSF to landowners in your area, or consider making a contribution of \$50-\$100 to fund regional meet-and-greets or information sessions with woodland owners. We invite you to join us for an event in your area, or even partner with us to host one!

Save the Date!

Erie Gives Day is Tuesday, August 9th



We are thrilled to once again be participating in this wonderful community event.

Your donation between 8am-8pm on August 9th will receive a prorated match to our organization courtesy of the Erie Community Foundation.

Contribute to the FSF at www.eriegives.org on August 9th
& see your support go even further!

2016 *Loving the Land Through Working Forests* Conference a Success!

In keeping with the weather that has accompanied this event through the years, May 14th was a chilly, soggy Saturday in northwestern PA. Happily, almost 100 people braved the elements to attend the FSF's annual in-the-field forestry event on the 140-acre woodlot of Jane Ewing Woods near Corry, PA.



Troy Firth addresses an eager crowd

Several featured speakers lured attendees from the warmth of the bonfire, including a keynote address by FSF Founder Troy Firth, titled “*New Approaches in Forest Management*”. Under the tents, the speaking program included “*Legacy & Estate Planning for the Woodland Owner*”, by FSF Board Member Thomas C. Hoffman, II. USDA-Forest Service researcher Robert P. Long, PhD presented “*The Changing Factors Affecting our Forests- Past, Present & Future*”, an overview of current and pending threats to our region's forest. Steven Tulowiecki, PhD, complemented Long's presentation with “*Our Forests Before Us*”, a look at our region's forests prior to colonialization. Lastly, we were lucky to be joined in the afternoon by Audubon Society researcher Sarah Sargent, PhD, who presented “*Forest Management for the Birds*”. Horse-logging demonstrations by Patrick Maloney and John Mulligan also enriched the day.

Thank you to all who attended for bringing a warm spirit of camaraderie to an otherwise chilly day. Special thanks to Boy Scout Troop 254 of Saegertown, who camped on site the night before the event, and eagerly served as volunteers throughout the day- including making an impressive bonfire!

Loving the Land Through Working Forests is an annual showcase of sustainable forest management practices, a gathering of woodland owners and conservationists, and an opportunity to celebrate the work of the FSF. We hope you can join us next time! ...and perhaps bring the sunshine with you?!



Presenter Steve Tulowiecki and Forest Stewards Guild representative Amanda Mahaffey



Conference-goers warm up by the bonfire with coffee and conversation



Tom & Leonard enjoying their lunch break

Special thanks once more to our event sponsors:



**Emil & Kathy Spadafore
Craig & Monica Schwegman
Bob & Jane Slagter**

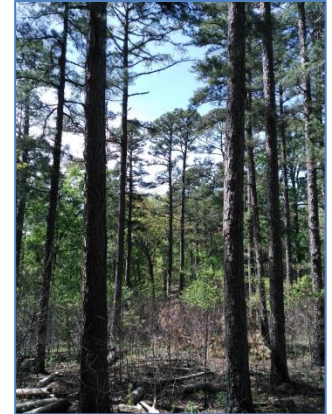
Guy Dunkle Attends Forestry Gathering in the “Heart of Roughness”, Missouri’s Ozark Region



Guy Dunkle, standing 2nd from the right, was pleased to be joining this ‘meeting of the minds’ with fellow sustainable foresters

In April, FSF Forester Guy Dunkle attended a gathering of Forest Steward Guild members, the Missouri Coalition for the Environment and the L-A-D Foundation, for a tour of the Pioneer Forest’s Roger Pryor Backcountry, also known as the “heart of roughness” in Missouri’s Ozark region.

The Pioneer Forest has a long and successful history of conservative timber management resulting in multi-aged stands of oak, hickory and pine forest. For over half a century they have used a method known as single-tree selection harvesting.



220 year old short-leaf pine stand at the Pioneer Forest, following a controlled burn to promote the growth of fire-dependent pine seedlings

The research conducted at the Pioneer Forest supports the similar approaches used by the FSF- small group or individual tree selections create gaps in the forest canopy that allow shade-intolerant species to grow. As stated by the Pioneer Forest team, *“this forest management system provides a dynamic opportunity for forest development and succession which are essential for the continuity of the forest”*. The subsequent mosaic of tree species and ages supports a diversity of wildlife habitat and timber for sustainable harvest. The FSF highly values the Pioneer Forest’s research and approach, and look forward to continuing to learn from their good work, as well as the possibility of future partnerships.

Goings on ‘Around Town’




Guy Dunkle found this spring phenomenon: Root pressure in early spring caused a newly felled birch tree to ‘bleed’ sap at the stump, which then froze on a cold April day



Conservation Biology & Forest Ecology students from the University of Pittsburgh tour a working forest in Blooming Valley, PA



Annie Socci talks good forest management with the next generation of woodland owners at the Polk Center Earth Day Celebration in Polk, PA



Loving the Land – Landowners Tell Their Stories

By Bob Slagter

Bob's story begins with an excerpt from his memoir, Dotyville Diaries:

As I drove down the abandoned railroad grade in my VW bug early one Sunday morning in the spring of 1973, I saw something very strange tacked to an old bridge. It was a sign that simply said: FOR SALE 435-2100. I had been looking for land for awhile, so I wrote down the number wondering what exactly was for sale. The phone call later that morning was one of the best I can remember.

"Hello," answered a very groggy voice.

"Hi. I'm calling about the sign on the railroad grade."

There was a long pause.

"Hello? Are you still there?"

Laughter. "Yeah, but it's only ten, and I worked late last night in my bar. When did you see the sign?"

"A couple of hours ago. I was just out for a ride."

More laughter. "I just put it up at dark last night."

"Well, sorry to bother you but what exactly is for sale?"

"I have 25 acres around where the sign is, and I need to sell it. My wife is divorcing me, and I got to get some cash and then hide it."

"What are you asking?"

"Four thousand dollars."

I paused for a moment then said, "Please hang up the phone when we are done here and then take it off the hook. I'll be at your bar by tomorrow at noon with a cashier's check."

The opportunity floored me. Here were 25 acres, and not just any acres, on Caldwell Creek at Dotyville for...could it be...\$160 per acre?

This was the same Caldwell that my family had fished our entire lives. It was our favorite trout water. And Dotyville held its own special attraction for us as well. It had been a stop on the railroad line seven miles from Titusville

with a store and post office and several homes and farms. That was 75 to 100 years before and just foundations of the homesteads remained. My dad's brother, Bill, had spent summers working a farm at Dotyville and catching big, native trout from the creek. He had even experienced a run of 20 years during which he had killed a buck from the same tree each year. There was a slight wrinkle in this good luck story. I didn't have \$4,000. In fact, I was just about broke, living for free as caretaker for a country club and working at a plastics plant in town. But I had once sold insurance for a living. I knew there was cash in the policies I'd sold my family. So I dug them out and deduced that the value of all the policies totaled just over \$4,500. Whew, that was close, but I needed the money by tomorrow, not in the time it would take to get an insurance loan.

I got in the bug and drove to the home of my banker friend, Dewey Williams, and told him what was going down.. He said that I should be at the bank when it opened at nine the next day. When I got there, he had the paperwork done and the check cut. All he needed was my signature. I would use the insurance money to repay the loan. Banks did take people at their word in those days.

Within an hour and a half, I was in Erie at the bar. I delivered the check, got the deed, and then drove to the bridge and took down the sign. I then spent the rest of the day walking the property feeling overwhelmed at my luck. This was a beautiful creek-side land with a half mile of trout stream that my family had fished for years.

Fast Forward to 2014...

What does this have to do with the Foundation for Sustainable Forests? *(continued on page 5)*

(Landowner stories, continued from page 4)

Colorful background, I guess, but it sets the stage for what happened about 30 years later on the same property. I have spent much of that time on this ground and have realized that what I found out originally is indeed true, “the land has its own energy; it gives back what you are willing to invest in it.”

A concern came as I planned for my wills and estate after my wife and I were gone. My wife, the one with the wisdom in the family, let me know she couldn’t run the property if she survived me. What would she do with land I had managed for better or worse over the years? So, I started the process of looking into where the now 60 acres would best be placed. It was around that same time when I met Troy and Guy. I knew them casually from leasing hunting land that they managed, and what always impressed me was the energy and expertise they put into their properties. We quickly found out that my land fit perfectly into their plans for conservation in the Caldwell Creek

Valley. The FSF is working toward



*Bob Slagter is an FSF
Board Member and PA
Forest Steward*

consolidating acreage in the Valley, and my land would help to make one piece of property out of multiple tracts with a total of over 1000 acres involved.

So, my little piece became much more than it ever could have been on its own.

It is a remarkable holding saved in perpetuity from development and fragmentation, and I will maintain partial control of it in partnership with the FSF for the remainder of my days.

When I began the process the details of legacy planning became tedious, but in the end as everyone established the same goals the subsequent process came to fruition with remarkable ease.

I urge anyone in NW PA and Western NY with forest lands to contact the FSF right away and see how you can work together to provide the best sustainable outcome for your beloved land. Don’t wait, you have everything to gain by acting now and everything to lose in delaying. It seems that the ride that Sunday morning in 1973 was one of the two best things that ever happened to me. I found land that morning and gave it away for the greater good these years later.

Would you like to share your landowner story? E-mail Annie Socci:

amsocci@foundationforsustainableforests.org

Join or Renew your Membership Today

Join a vibrant community of conservationists, woodland owners, land managers, ecologists, naturalists, and concerned neighbors, and strengthen our voice in forest protection – tell your friends and family about us too!

Membership Levels \$15 Individual • \$25 Family • \$50+ Sustaining

To receive your membership card, send your check payable to the Foundation for Sustainable Forests: 22418 Firth Rd, Spartansburg, PA 16434
Or visit foundationforsustainableforests.org and join using Paypal’s “Donate” option



Upcoming Events

You are invited! 3rd Annual FSF Potluck Event Saturday, November 5th, 4pm onwards



Woodland Lodge

2662 Eureka Rd, Grand Valley, PA 16420

Join us on an autumn evening as the FSF community gathers for good conversation, woods walks, food and laughter.

We will provide soft drinks and a variety of main dishes. Please bring a dish to share – side dishes, appetizers, salads and desserts welcome. We will eat around 5:30pm.

Please RSVP to info@foundationforsustainableforests.org or call Annie Socci at (814) 694-5830.

We hope you can make it!



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It's Everything We Care About

- ❖ A Land Trust dedicated to the protection of working forests for the benefit of the land
- ❖ A sustainable forestry education & advocacy organization

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www.foundationforsustainableforests.org

(814) 694-5830

Our Mission: To protect forested land and ecosystems and support rural communities through working forests; to raise awareness of the importance of preserving intact forested ecosystems; and to highlight sustainable forestry and practices for the benefit of the land.