

Forest Landowner Briefings



Volume II

Forest Landowners:

Last year, you received the first edition of this informational newsletter. We hope you learned a lot and found the information useful. In this follow-up edition, we give you a little more material on specific topics. Again, to really get the in-depth information, you need to follow the links provided. Explore!



Much of my property was burned over by wildfire. What should I do now?

First, you need to evaluate the extent of the damage. Salvaging the dead timber quickly and starting over may be the only option for many landowners. In that case, you will want to make a plan for the operation, which should also include plans for site preparation, reforestation, and continued management. A professional forester can be a great asset in this entire process.

During any forest management activity, especially salvage operations, it is important to remember the long term benefits of using forestry Best Management Practices – conservation methods designed to protect your soil and water resources. Common sense will go a long way in keeping operators safe and preventing excessive damage to the site.

Land that has been burned is at increased risk for severe soil erosion and accelerated water runoff due to the lack of vegetation and ground cover to stabilize the soil. With no protection, the impact force of raindrops falling during a heavy storm can detach bare soil and ash particles and wash them down denuded slopes into stream channels, reducing water quality and altering or degrading aquatic habitat. You can help prevent soil erosion and sedimentation by re-stabilizing the soil on your property and providing it with some structure. Sowing grass seeds and using dead, felled trees as barriers are two things you can do. Also, preserve existing vegetation (burned or unburned), and minimize soil disturbance from heavy machinery and livestock as much as possible.

LINKS

<http://texasforests.tamu.edu/main/article.aspx?id=14740> - get help after the fire

<http://tfswater.blogspot.com/2012/04/post-fire-erosion-control-measures-on.html> - erosion control

<http://texasforests.tamu.edu/main/article.aspx?id=8512> - preparing your home, property, and community for wildfire

<http://texasforests.tamu.edu/uploadedfiles/frd/referral.pdf> - Professional Management Services list

<http://www.texasforestry.org/programs/logger-pro/> - Texas Pro Logger Program



I want to do what I can for wildlife, but I'm worried about endangered species. What can I do?

Forests are very important habitats for a wide variety of wildlife species. Even small tracts can benefit wildlife in one way or another. Whether it be through habitat manipulation, planting food plots, supplying surface water, or by leaving some areas as they are, you as a landowner can enhance your property to be more suitable for certain wildlife species of interest or many species in general. Guidance from a private consultant or wildlife agency can be very beneficial in helping you reach your wildlife goals. There are also cost share and other incentive programs that can aid you in implementing wildlife management practices.

Yes – there are some threatened and endangered wildlife species in East Texas. However, if you know whether you even have these species on or near your property, know their habitat requirements, and know and follow the rules and guidelines, you can still practice forest management and enjoy the many aesthetic qualities and economic values of your property.

LINKS

<http://texasforests.tamu.edu/main/article.aspx?id=1380> - wildlife management articles

<http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/huntwild/wild/> - wildlife information

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/StateListing.do?state=all - lists of threatened and endangered species

<http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/gis/ris/es/> - list of threatened and endangered species by Texas county

http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/huntwild/wild/wildlife_diversity/texas_rare_species/ - links to management guidelines and regulations

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I need help understanding taxation of my forested property!

Dealing with taxes can be “taxing.” Forest landowners have specific tax laws to follow. They also have special tax incentives available to them. Each year, it is important for landowners to re-evaluate the status of their forested property and research any tax changes that could affect them.

The tax rules vary depending on whether your woodland is personal, income-producing (investment), or business property. You must make this determination for your land each tax year. If you do not have a profit motive, your timber may be personal property, which provides limited opportunities for deductions. If you have a clear profit motive, your property may be an investment property, or it may be business property if your management activity is more regular, frequent, and intensive than required for an investment.

LINKS

<http://texasforests.tamu.edu/main/article.aspx?id=139> - presentations covering topics on federal timber income tax and Texas timberland property tax; other tax-related links

<http://www.timbertax.org/statetaxes/states/proptax/texas/> - National Timber Tax Website, Texas page



Besides traditional timber income, what other markets are available?

Many forest landowners grow and sell their timber for traditional wood product manufacturing. However, there are other ways to utilize your timberlands for income. Some of these uses can pertain to Central and West Texas woodlands as well as East Texas forests.

Biomass/bioenergy: Woody biomass is a renewable energy source. It can be collected from forest harvesting operations, which includes logging residues (i.e. branches, tops, and stumps) left on-site, low-quality commercially grown trees, dead wood, and other noncommercial tree species. Other residues include wood that has been cut and burned during land conversion and wood from pre-commercial thinnings. There are biomass plants operating now and coming online in East Texas.

Hunting leases: Deer hunting is big business in Texas. Hunting leases continue to be a source of revenue for many Texas landowners, whether for deer or other game species such as turkey and quail.

Pine straw baling: Pine needles are a very popular material to use for landscape mulching. It is attractive, and it resists washing away. As a mulch, it helps reduce impact from raindrops, prevents soil erosion, and helps hold soil moisture.

LINKS

<http://www.extension.org/pages/55880/woody-biomass-management-considerations> - Woody Biomass Management Considerations

http://texasforests.tamu.edu/uploadedFiles/Sustainable/econdev/TXloggingmillresidue06_2005.pdf

- data on woody biomass in East Texas

<http://forestbioenergy.org/> - biomass fact sheets, presentations, and more

<http://recenter.tamu.edu/pdf/570.pdf> - The Texas Deer Lease

<http://www.naturalresources.msstate.edu/business/pine-straw.html> - pine straw production

<http://essmextension.tamu.edu/pinestraw/baling.html> - pine straw baling by hand

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What other ways can I stay updated?

You can stay “in the know” even though you live away from your forested property. As stated in the first newsletter, you could join the Texas Forestry Association and/or the landowner association in your property’s county so you can receive their newsletters and other informative correspondence. Find blogs that cover forestry topics of concern to you. Make it a point to visit (or have someone visit) your property to get a better idea of what conditions are like and what management strategies you may want to implement.

LINKS

<http://tfswater.blogspot.com/> - TFS Water Resources blog

<http://texasforests.tamu.edu/water> - first edition of this newsletter under “Publications”



Where can I go for help?

Texas Forest Service has offices all over East Texas (and other parts of the state). Contact the Texas Forest Service District Office serving the county where your property is located. Go to <http://txforestsERVICE.tamu.edu/main/article.aspx?ctrl=13> and click on your property's county. Then, click on "Managing Your Forests" to get contact information for that area.

For more info on these and other topics, go to the Texas Forest Service website at <http://texasforestsERVICE.tamu.edu>, or contact the TFS District Office closest to your property.

TFS District Offices:

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|--------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Carthage | (903) 693-6865 | Linden | (903) 756-5571 |
| Conroe | (936) 273-2261 | Livingston | (936) 327-4832 |
| Crockett | (936) 544-7798 | Longview | (903) 297-3910 |
| Gilmer | (903) 734-7007 | Marshall | (903) 938-8712 |
| Henderson | (903) 657-0511 | Nacogdoches | (936) 564-9276 |
| Hudson | (936) 875-4400 | New Boston | (903) 628-2711 |
| Huntsville | (936) 295-5688 | Palestine | (903) 729-7738 |
| Jacksonville | (903) 586-7545 | Pittsburg | (903) 856-7181 |
| Kirbyville | (409) 423-2890 | San Augustine | (936) 275-3438 |
| Kountze | (409) 246-2484 | Woodville | (409) 283-3785 |

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