

BIO Crop Assistance Program for Tennessee

Provided by: Doug Schnabel, Tennessee Division of Forestry

The following is a summary of the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) that looks to be very beneficial for many of our forest products facilities and suppliers in the state of Tennessee. This is a simplified overview and is meant to be an introduction only; all the details, forms and information are available on the USDA Farm Services Agency website: www.fsa.usda.gov

BCAP provides financial assistance to producers or entities that deliver eligible biomass material to designated biomass conversion facilities for use as heat, power, biobased products or biofuels. Initial assistance will be for the Collection, Harvest, Storage and Transportation (CHST) costs associated with the delivery of eligible materials.

The program currently includes forest products facilities that are burning biomass materials in boilers for process steam or steam for drying lumber. The matching payment is made to the supplier and not the Biomass Conversion Facility (BCF) and equals a dollar for dollar payment for the cost of biomass material up to \$45 per dry ton.

The first step is for a using facility (BCF) to apply and agree to be included as a facility participating in the Biomass Crop Assistance Program's Collection, Harvest, Storage and Transportation component. The suppliers that are selling the BCF sawdust, bark and other biomass must have some type of purchase agreement from the BCF to take to their county office of the Farm Services Agency (FSA) to apply for a CHST matching payment before delivery of any material. The supplier submits a "Request for Payment" to the county FSA office after material has been delivered to the BCF and is then paid for the delivered material.

For example: A paper mill makes application to be a BCF and is accepted and issued a BCF number. A sawmill that is taking their sawdust to the paper mill goes to the local FSA office with their purchase agreement and applies for a CHST matching payment. When the sawmill delivers loads of sawdust to the paper mill, they take their original scale tickets, invoices or payments made and conversion from green to dry tons to the county office for matching payment. A smaller lumber facility that is buying biomass for their boiler to dry lumber would have to go through the same process. An entity cannot be both a BCF and a supplier.

All the forms and more detailed directions are on the FSA website. Also, a downloadable notebook of forms and other information for BCAP producer sign-up is available on the TFA website: http://www.tnforestry.com/About_TFA/Publications/. If you have questions after reading the materials, you can call or email:

Doug Schnabel, TN Division of Forestry, 615 837 5430, doug.schnabel@tn.gov

Dana Howard, TN Forestry Association, 615 883 3832, dhoward@tnforestry.com

Pat Gibson, Farm Services Agency, 615 277 2617, pat.gibson@tn.usda.gov

Planning Funds Available for Private Forest Landowners

By: Tim Phelps, Tennessee Division of Forestry & Perry Stevens, TN NRCS

Planning Funds Available for Private Forest Landowners
~ NRCS EQIP Sign Up Deadline is Jan. 15 ~

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Private forest landowners seeking assistance to manage their forests can now get help with the cost of developing a detailed forest management plan.

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is currently accepting applications from landowners to receive funding to hire experts who specialize in developing multi-resource forest management plans. The application deadline is Jan. 15, 2010.

(Continued from page 1)

"We want to make sure Tennessee forest landowners know that there are cost share programs available, so they can use them to improve natural resources on their private working lands," said John Rissler, Acting State Conservationist for the NRCS in Tennessee. "Conservation practices help the land by making it more productive through improved water quantity and quality, air quality and wildlife habitat."

Private lands certification, carbon markets, biofuels initiatives and potential new tree planting programs present a myriad of forest management opportunities for private forest landowners. Many of the federal, state and private programs associated with these opportunities require forestlands be managed based on a tract (i.e. property) level, multi-resource forest management plan. Having a plan in place helps provide the landowner with a path to achieve their objectives and positions them to participate in other forest management programs.

The Tennessee Department of Agriculture Division of Forestry provides similar services with year-round sign-up through its Forest Stewardship Program. Landowners interested in either plan are advised to contact their local Division of Forestry area forester who will help them determine which plan is more appropriate.

PLANNING FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR PRIVATE FOREST LANDOWNERS

"Demand for multi-resource forest management plans is on the increase as landowners position themselves to take advantage of new opportunities to implement forest management on their properties," said State Forester Steve Scott. "Our Forest Stewardship Program has been providing this service for years, but we are seeking partnerships with other government agencies and the private sector to ensure the short term demand for multi-resource forest management plans can be met.

"NRCS's EQIP is one such example of how we hope to get more assistance to landowners to meet their individual objectives, which ultimately benefit their surrounding region through the multiple benefits forests provide to society."

More information on these and other forest land assistance programs can be found online <http://www.tn.nrcs.usda.gov/> or <http://www.tn.gov/agriculture/forestry/>, or by contacting your local TDA Division of Forestry office or NRCS District Conservationist office listed in the phone directory under state and federal government.



Looking Forward to 2010

By: Candace Dinwiddie, Tennessee Forestry Association

As Executive Director of the Tennessee Forestry Association, I wanted to take this opportunity to personally thank you for your commitment and continued support for our organization. I have worked at TFA in some capacity since 1987, and I have certainly seen plenty of ups and downs in our industry and the economics of our members, but never have any of us been a part of a downturn like we have seen in 2009.

Times have been tough, and things won't drastically improve overnight, but there does seem to be a bit of change in the air and maybe some brighter forecast in the future. I am an optimist, professionally and personally, and I tend to believe that surviving 2009 will strengthen all of us as we enter this next decade.

The TFA Officers, Board of Directors and staff endeavored to approach our plans and activities during 2009 with the idea of continuing the strong presence in the state that we have worked hard to perpetuate the past few years. Quite frankly, through the dedication, financial help, and volunteer efforts of our members in '09, TFA has tackled several projects and issues as well as emerging programs that could eventually grow and build our future interests in Tennessee.

Several 2009 membership highlights include:

- Unanimously passed a resolution that directed Tennessee Congressional members to only support federal legislation that defined biomass relative to including wood grown by Tennessee landowners. Resolution passed TN House & Senate with no opposition.
- TFA sponsored a hugely successful Tree Day & Legislative Reception in March. Legislators and staff received oak seedlings, mugs and visits from TFA members during the day. The early evening reception was attended by numerous legislators, legislative staff, Commissioners and representatives from the Governor's office.
- Website Changes (www.tnforestry.com) include a more "user friendly" format with the calendar updates, Master Loggerlist, events and issues posted almost daily.
- TFA is now on Facebook as well as Twitter. The website also includes an area for forum discussion, blogs and message postings by members.

- TFA held a well-attended, informational and even FUN annual convention at Pickwick Landing State Park during October. The location and events were budget-friendly but there was plenty to do and highly regarded speakers from across the south participated in the meeting.
- The Sustainable Forestry Initiative Committee, TFA members, Tree Farmers, and members of the Society of American Foresters joined together to build a Habitat for Humanity House in Nashville in September. The home included new building products manufactured by Huber Engineered Woods. The new homeowner was thrilled and very appreciative of the TFA workforce. Media coverage of the event was provided by the NBC affiliate in Nashville.
- Forestry Mutual was endorsed by TFA to write loggers workers comp. in Tennessee. Forestry Mutual provides top-notch safety and loss control support for our loggers and has already been effective in providing the training and expertise to help control risk factors involved with timber harvesting.
- The TFASWCG continues to offer competitively priced workers comp. coverage for our manufacturing members. Through the diligent efforts of the TFA/TFASWCG members, the loss ratio remains low thanks to the effective safety program.
- 2008-09 President Terry Porter appointed a Public Lands Committee to ensure that TFA provided the support and help to our agency/university partners who own/manage public lands throughout our state. The TFA website now includes information and details on public lands management, timber sale opportunities, recreation, hunting, mapping and other pertinent information on Tennessee's State and Federal public land holdings.
- Outdoor Underwriters, Inc. was also endorsed by TFA to offer landowner liability and hunting liability for our members. The policy is the same coverage as in the past as well as the staff handling the program. However, Outdoor Underwriters is offering an even greater level of personal service for their policy holders.

In 2009, TFA continued to provide training programs, meetings, outreach and legislative representation which enabled our members to keep informed and keep the expensive and unnecessary regulatory initiatives sponsored by the preservationist community from being introduced in the legislature. No doubt about it, '09 was hard on all of us, but TFA was able to survive while ensuring our members were involved and informed as we progress into 2010.

I can't help but believe 2010 will be a better and brighter year for our members and our association. There are several programs that TFA is already gearing up to help our members as needed to participate and learn about to meet present and future market needs. Information on producer sign-up for the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) is presently on the TFA website. Meetings will be held to provide more in-depth support to help our members interested in the BCAP program during 1st quarter, 2010.

TFA has already held two meetings of the Sawmill Certification Task Force. This task force is looking at possible certification programs for our manufacturing members facing pressure from foreign and domestic markets for a certified designation for their lumber or other products. A survey will be mailed by the TN Division of Forestry with support of TFA and UT to determine the need for this type certification for Tennessee sawmills and other hardwood manufacturers.

The Tennessee Tree Farm program and inspectors have always provided expert advice for sound management to our Tennessee forest landowners. Tree Farm has grown in its importance to both landowners and manufacturers as more requests for certified wood are made to both our hardwood and softwood manufacturing members. There is no cost for landowners to sign-up, and inspectors provide a management plan and follow-up for this land certification program that is available to both small and large private landowners.

As we join together and enter this next decade, I want to thank each of you for your membership in TFA. I also want to extend a very heartfelt note of appreciation to the TN Dept. of Agriculture, Ag Enhancement Fund which has provided help for our Master Logger program. Also, I sincerely appreciate the support provided by our University of Tennessee Extension Service and the Nashville staff, district and area foresters of the Tennessee Division of Forestry for the continued help both directly to our association and our members throughout the state.

Best wishes for 2010, and please call Dana, Lisa, L.M. or me when we can be of assistance to you. My email is cdinwiddie@tnforestry.com and direct phone line, 615 883-3832 ext. 12, cell: 615-969-9972.

Happy New Year!



Candace

2009 Tennessee Tree Farmer of the Year

By: Sammy Woodfin, International Paper

Tennessee's 2009 Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year

The Tennessee Tree Farm Committee is pleased to introduce you to Ms. Sharon Keen, Tennessee's 2009 Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year. This annual award recognizes Tree Farmers who are doing an outstanding job of forest and resource management as well as promoting the Tree Farm Program through action and example. The Keen Tree Farm is a working example of one person's dedication and love of nature, both trees and wildlife.

Sharon is a native Texan whose passion for the outdoors started at an early age. She spent several years building a love for horses before coming to the Volunteer State. A brutal vehicle accident nearly daimed her life. But, perhaps, it helped Sharon find and build on her inner strength. The recovery from the serious injuries would require a strong determination and that, coupled with her long-time passion for nature, resulted in a very diverse Tree Farm that has many stories to tell. And armed with her career as a journalist, Sharon is quite capable, and willing, to tell those stories to anyone who will listen.

The 204-acre farm is in West Tennessee, located in Ramer, just a few miles from the Mississippi state line in McNairy County. Sharon purchased the land in February of 2000 and sought immediate forestry assistance. By April of the following year, a written forest management plan was in place and being put to use. According to University of Tennessee Extension Forester David Mercker, "Sharon is a one-of-a-kind forest landowner – the type that is committed to very active forest management. She desires for every acre to be managed, and with great diversity." And, to that extent, she's been very successful. As you walk through the Tree Farm you will find even-aged and uneven-aged stands of both pine and hardwood. Twenty-eight (28) acres of bottomland fields have been afforested to hardwoods as part of the CRP program and ninety-four (94) acres on the upslope are in pine plantation. Some small group selection clearcuts have been strategically placed within an older sawtimber stand. And a new technique called "hardwood corridor thinning" has been completed on a mid-rotational hardwood stand. Hardwood corridor thinning offers a means of providing a modest income while actively managing the forest. The farm was enrolled in the Tree Farm program in 2003 and was runner up in this contest last year. Sharon's mom and horse riding partner manages a 500-acre Tree Farm nearby.

But trees and forestry are not Sharon's only interest. Wildlife and recreation carry equal weight. She has established two new wildlife food plots and a portion of the CRP program acreage went into wildlife habitat. A major creek bisects the farm and adds to the general diversity. Well-installed culverts and streamside management zones protect water quality. There are several roads and trails throughout the farm which are maintained as fire breaks, in addition, to providing access – an access that is utilized as running trails, hiking trails, management access and horseback trails. And, of course, hunters are drawn to the farm every fall. But, game animals are not the only benefactors from Sharon's efforts. She is also an avid birdwatcher and special plantings around the house accompanied with numerous bird feeders make for an entertaining show while resting on the front porch.

Sharon uses professional consulting foresters, as well as, the Tennessee Division of Forestry and the University of Tennessee Extension Service to assist her with forest management decisions. But, then she gives back to anyone interested in forestry. She is very active in the McNairy County Forestry Association and the Alcorn County Forestry Association (in Mississippi) by hosting forestry field days. In addition, she tours the UT forestry students and has been featured in the "Alabama Treasured Forest Magazine" in the fall of 2007 and the "tree farmer" magazine in the winter of 2008. It's that commitment to sound forestry and the many "sizes and shapes" it can be practiced, as well as, her desire to share it with others that make the Tennessee Forestry Association pleased to recognize Ms. Sharon Keen as the 2009 Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year.



Sharon Keen with her Mom Janice Keen

2009 Master Logger of the Year

By: Jay Wolfe, Hankins Forest Products, Inc.

Hankins Forest Products, Inc. and Miller Lumber Company would like to congratulate James and Scottie Robertson of Robertson Logging for the Tennessee Forestry Association Outstanding Logger Award for 2009. James is 62 years old and Scottie is 35 years old. James and wife, Rita, have been married 43 years. They have 3 children, Lori, Scottie and Jamie and six grandchildren. Scottie and wife, Angie, have 2 children, Zach and Whitney.



Left to Right: Jamie, James & Scottie Robertson

James was born into a logging family. His father would haul children in the community to school in his logging truck and then proceed with his day to haul logs and lumber until time to return and pick up the kids. He then would take all of the children back home from school in his logging truck. James started Robertson Logging in 1970 with Rita doing the loading. Scottie also has been logging since he was big enough to carry a saw. James has been allowing Scottie to manage more of the company business in order for Scottie to become person overseeing the family trade. Lori also assists at times in the logging industry by being the one who purchases machinery parts. Jamie is an Emergency Medical Technician in McNairy County and helps his dad and brother on the days he is not working as an EMT. James and Rita have raised their children to work hard. As the children grew up, they always followed the footsteps of their dad in the logging business. James and Rita see their children and grandchildren as great blessings from God. Because the family shares a tremendous love and respect for each other, the family logging business has been very successful.

James and Scottie are very active in the church activities at Chewalla Baptist Church. They help to sponsor the youth baseball program at Ramer, Tennessee and the baseball program at McNairy High School. They are members of TFA and are Tennessee Master Loggers and also have been certified through New Page Master Logger Program. They are strong supporters of Log-A-Load for Kids and are active members of the McNairy County Landowners Association. They participate in other forest-related activities such as field days and cutting demonstrations.

The Robertson harvest approximately 70,000 tons of wood each year. James and Scottie have eight employees who work in his harvesting operation. Robertson owns equipment consisting of a 724 Tigercat cutter, two 525 Cat skidders, one 518 cable skidder, 234 Tigercat loader and a D5N Cat dozer. They have a service truck on site to do any repair work on their equipment. For hauling their products to the mills, they have one 99 model Kenworth, 94 International, 89 Ford and two pull out trucks with eight log trailers equipped to haul different products to the mills. The Robertsons are proactive in checking with the mills on deliveries and specifications of product. Each product is harvested to requirements. On some tracts, they may have as much as seven different separations of product. They are always trying to get the landowner the most for their products. During a harvest, James and Scottie can tell you exactly how many loads of each product they have hauled.

Robertson reinvests in his company to ensure that his equipment is modern, which allows him the assurance of finishing any job he is asked to complete. They have an hourly maintenance program in place required by all employees. Every piece of equipment has daily check-offs, and serviced according to a set schedule. The appearance of his equipment testifies to his strict maintenance program followed by his crew.

The Robertsons are capable of clear cutting or selectively cutting a tract of timber. James and Scottie have also performed many essential pine-thinning jobs. Before a crew is moved onto a new job site, Scottie personally walks the property lines and locates his roads and logging decks. They follow the Best Management Practices of Tennessee guidelines on every tract they harvest. They are willing to go the extra mile with landowners and the procurement personnel with whom he contracts. Upon completion of the harvest, they repair the logging roads in which he used during the harvest and ensures correct water control. They also do a remarkable job in leaving buffers for the public view. When they say their job is complete, you know with confidence that all BMP's are performed and cleanup is done. Robertson Logging has performed many timber cuts in areas which were heavily populated with homes in cities around West Tennessee. They are known for their ability to cut large trees without damaging the value of that log. Their ability to log in low wet ground areas will fascinate any one.

James and Scottie enforce monthly safety meetings with their employees and also require they attend first aid classes on an annual basis. They mandate that all employees wear proper safety equipment at all times. Robertson Logging has maintained a good safety record during their logging career. James Robertson credits his accident free record much to the use of safe and modern logging equipment in their operation, along with continual training and employee awareness.

The Robertsons keep excellent accounting records. James' wife, Rita, plays a key role in the bookkeeping portion of the family business. James and Scottie have worked with their employees in allowing sick time, vacation time, and compensating their employees in many different other ways. They have met every insurance requirement, which includes workers' compensation, general liability and inland marine coverage for his equipment. James and Scottie have been self-employed as well as loggers for private companies throughout their logging years. They are sure to sign a written contract at the start of all harvesting jobs, protecting both themselves and the landowner. When purchasing a tract of timber, they use a local attorney to prepare a legal and binding timber deed.

James and Scottie Robertson are worthy and deserving of this award. They are honest men with high moral character and exemplify an outstanding work ethic. Most importantly, they work together as a family and exhibit Christian values. TFA is proud to honor the Robertsons as 2009 Master Loggers of the year.

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2009 Tennessee Project Learning Tree Happenings

By: Dave Walters, Tennessee Division of Forestry

PLT in Tennessee has completed another successful year. During 2009, facilitators conducted 26 workshops for 658 educators. Twelve of those workshops were for college students who will soon be classroom teachers. Our performance was right at the average number of workshops and people trained each year since PLT came to our state in 1985.

In addition to presenting quality workshops, Dr. Mary Ball of Carson-Newman College led a task force of educators who developed correlations of PLT activities to the new State education standards. These correlations are displayed on the "EETennessee.org" website for all educators to use. Mary also represented us at the national PLT conference in Indianapolis and continues to promote PLT.

Stacey Bryson and Dr. Cindi Smith-Walters were named as our Educator and Facilitator of the Year for their outstanding efforts in training educators and children. These women conducted excel-

lent workshops for Wilson county teachers and for the entire staff of Jasper Elementary school. Other outstanding facilitators who have been busy are Dr. Cheryl Hitchcock of MTSU and Dr. Leslie Suters of Tennessee Tech and Tamara Klingby II of Lipscomb Univ .

Workshops are currently being scheduled for 2010. The year looks to be busy as teachers seem to be finding PLT to be a refreshing way to improve test scores, meet state requirements and instill wonder in their students. Early Childhood education for pre-kindergarten – 3rd graders is blooming for PLT. There also seems to be a resurgence of interest in developing outdoor classrooms at local schools.

Our PLT team sincerely appreciates TFA members for helping their local schools by supporting outdoor classrooms, promoting PLT and acting as workshop facilitators.

Current Workshops Scheduled:

Location	Date
Chattanooga	Jan 5, 2010
Nashville, Bells Bend	Feb., 2010
Moss - Wright Park , Sumner County	March 2, 2010
Memphis Ag Center	April 23/24, 2010
MTSU	
Univ. of Memphis	
Lipscomb Univ	

For additional information about PLT contact the TFA office or Dave Walters 615-837-5470.

TFASWCG UPDATE

By: Mike Whitley, Tennessee Forestry Association Selective Worker's Compensation Group

As 2009 draws to an end, we continue to appreciate the relationships that we share with our members, TFA, and other partners. This past year we have continued to strengthen those relationships and the condition of the TFA Selective Workers' Compensation Group. TFASWCG is in excellent financial condition and remains to be a viable option for workers' compensation coverage to our membership. In 2009, our claims loss experience has continued to be very good. Because of our financial condition and favorable loss experience, we were able to reduce our rates five percent for the 2010 term. In addition, the five percent rate reduction should allow us to market and grow the membership in 2010.

We are hopeful that our successes will carry forward into 2010 as we face the current economic recession that affects our industry. There are signs that in 2010 our members may begin to experience a turnaround as the industry recovers. With the strengths of our membership, TFA, and our business partners, we are confident that TFASWCG will continue to be a valuable asset to our membership.

We thank you for your continued support. We at TFASWCG wish you all the best for a wonderful Holiday Season and a prosperous New Year.

Thank you,

Mike Whitley
Interim Director
TFASWCG

Tennessee Forestry Association

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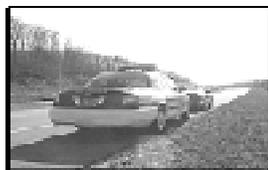
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Trooper Corner: By: THP Sergeant John Harmon



Federal DOT audits are on the "radar screen". Loggers could be affected by this initiative. The TN Dept. of Safety will enforce the federal audits by checking paperwork on drug testing, time records, and maintenance files. Paperwork will need to be orderly and accessible. Substantial fines can be levied if problems are found or records not correctly maintained. For more information or for help on compliance contact Sergeant Harmon at 800-305-2201, ext. 2312

Upcoming Master Logger Course

Counce, TN at PCA Training Center

Wed., Jan. 13th, Safety/OSHA

Wed., Jan., 20th, BMP's

Wed., Jan. 27th, First Aid/CPR

Wed., Feb. 3rd, Silviculture

Wed., Feb. 10th, Business Mgmt/Graduation

To Register please visit TFA's website at <http://www.tnforestry.com/Loggers/> and select Master Logger Course Sign-up Form from the expanded menu or call Dana at 615-883-3832

Don't Forget to Make That Important TFA PAC Contribution

TFA's PAC needs your help in order to remain active and strong. 2009 is a crucial election year in Tennessee. We need to make sure that incumbents and candidates that understand the benefits of managing our forests and the economic impact our industry and landowners provide the State of Tennessee are elected to the Tennessee General Assembly. Please mail your personal check or check from an LLC to the TFA PAC, P.O. Box 290693, Nashville, TN 37229.

MAKE SURE YOUR VOICE IS HEARD THROUGH TFA!!! Thank you in advance for your support.

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