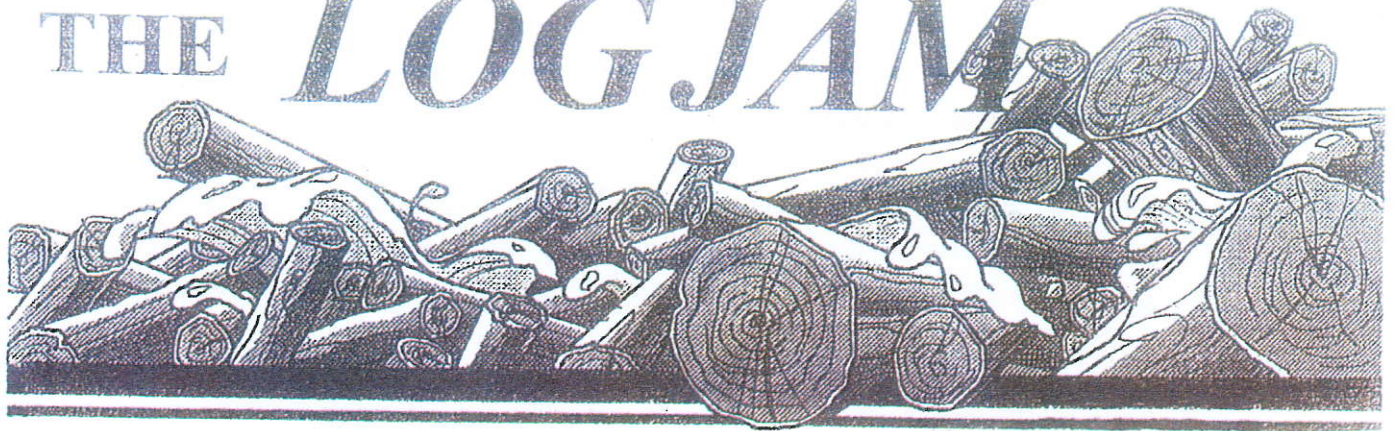


# THE LOGJAM



Published by the Woodlot Association of Alberta (WAA)

December 2014



It's that time

again

to

Wish all our

Members

Very Merry

**CHRISTMAS**

and

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**



## Our Mission Statement :

"The Woodlot Association of Alberta's purpose is to promote leadership in sustainable forest management by encouraging the development of private forest by increasing awareness of their inherent social, economic and environmental values."

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## 19<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

*Louise Horstman/Code*

This year's AGM, held on October 18 and 19<sup>th</sup> at the Forest Interpretive Centre in Whitecourt, was a very successful event, and many thanks to Jurgen Moll for doing most of the arrangements. The weather was beautiful, attendance was good, and the talks by invited speakers were informative and interesting. The two-day session interspersed guest speaker sessions, good food, and business sessions, making for a good mix of learning, eating and decision-making.

Laval Bergeron gave the President's report on the past year's activities. The WAA was represented in a number of agricultural and trade shows throughout the province, and thanks were expressed to all who worked at them, particularly Herb Cerezke and Jurgen Moll. On the subject of promotion, Pete Mills reported that our WAA website ([www.woodlot.org](http://www.woodlot.org)) gets about 130 visits per month, 75 percent of which are from within Alberta. The tour given by Larry and Chris Nofziger of Beaverlodge and Jurgen Moll's woodlot tour were cited as highlights of the year.

Jurgen reported on the progress, or lack thereof, regarding the possibility of woodlot leases on Crown land in the White Area. As requested by the ADM of Sustainable Resources, he submitted a description of how such a woodlot management arrangement would work; however, with the recent changes in government, there has been no further movement on this.

The Association's 2013/14 financial statement was kindly prepared by Cheri Vohs and explained by our Treasurer Bernice Cassady. Our bank account presently stands at \$29,000, most of which remains from a provincial government grant. As Bernice has completed the second year of her current term and was not standing for re-election, she was awarded a Lifetime Membership in the WAA for her outstanding service to the Society. The Board will greatly miss her thorough and dedicated work as Treasurer and Board member.

Another lifetime membership was also awarded to Ray Macsymec.

A new Board member was nominated and elected this year: Harry White from spruce Grove. Harry has been a long time member and also very active in the Fish & Game Association.

The Board of Directors elected for 2014/15 is:

Laval Bergeron  
Louise Horstman  
Jurgen Moll  
Herb Cerezke  
Larry Nofziger  
Harry Krawchuk  
Harry White



A resolution dealing with the timing of future AGMs was raised and passed. Since having our AGM in October can be difficult for farmers and problematic for members having to drive in bad weather, the resolution called for changing our AGM to mid-June. In addition to addressing the above problems, this will enable us to have field tours and outdoor demos along with the AGM. The Society's year-end will remain August 31.

Pete Mills reported on the work of the Canadian Federation of Woodlot Owners. The Silvicultural Investment plan is still being pursued with the federal government. Also a "Peri-urban Initiative" is being developed in conjunction with the Canadian Forest Service. This initiative is aimed at increasing the awareness of the importance of family-owned woodlots adjacent to urban municipalities.

AGM participants were treated to a talk and outdoor demonstration of a commercial drone that could be used for woodlot inventory or similar functions by Ellen Christopherson of Elevated Robotic Systems.

Jim Donaldson, founder of the Alberta Wood Waste Recycling Association, described the reuse that his Association is finding for many kinds of used wood such as old railroad ties, pallets, and biochar.

Mayor Maryann Chichak of the Town of Whitecourt spoke to us after dinner, describing some of the present facilities and future plans of the town.

Roy Schnelzeisen of the Alberta Conservation Association gave a presentation about the ACA's habitat retention agreements with private landowners, land securement, and conservation sites. (Of interest to anyone fighting Canada thistle, the ACA has introduced a weevil for thistle control: Contact Roy for details).

Donors and contributors to our AGM this year were: the Town of Whitecourt and Woodlands County, Millar Western, Alberta Newsprint, and Timberland Supply Co. of Edmonton. Our sincerest thanks to all of these for making our AGM most successful.

Bernice and Gerry Cassady gave an interesting talk and demo on a water filtration system which filters one pail at a time fit for drinking and cooking. Which they use at their woodlot cabin, it requires neither power or chemicals. For more info, call Bernice at 1-780-455-9727.

Herb Cerezke gave an update on the membership, He must be complimented for the outstanding work he has done to bring the membership list up to date.

This was one of the few times that the AGM broke-even and we did not have reach into our operational funds for it , and for all who did not attend you missed a good one this time.

WOW! Did winter come with a bang or what?

Since the last Logjam, a few things have happened. The biggest being the AGM. Although there was still room for more members to be attending, the ones there were treated with awesome presentations and great speakers. Good feedback, good discussions. Another good treatment that we got was the food, beverages and everything. Many thanks to Jurgen for doing most of the preparations.

As I am writing this report, the Board of Directors is still short of two people and the role of the treasurer is still open. The bookkeeping is done by Olson's Office Management in Beaverlodge, So, being the treasurer means the signing of checks and looking over Olson's-- Not too big of a job!!

Don't forget we have new gate signs, both the association's and the private property. Great looking signs!

The Association is looking for a "woodlot" to be visited. Next summer is open, but it doesn't have to be summer. Any season is good. If you have a woodlot, ideas, things you would like to share, you can contact me or other members and someone will be there to assist you.

With winter definitely being here, now is a good time to be cleaning up, burning old piles, doing firewood, preparing your ski trails, waxing your skis, getting out there and getting the best of it. *Have a great winter,*

---

### Foresters Battle Spread of Asian Long-Horned Beetle

WASHINGTON - Clear-cutting is being viewed as an effective way to contain the spread of the pesky and deadly Asian long-horned beetle. The beetles, along with the emerald ash borer, have wreaked environmental and economic devastation on North American hardwood trees.



Government and industry leaders across parts of the United States and Canada have had to resort to cutting down large swaths of trees in an effort to prevent the spread of insects like the Asian long-horned beetle. In towns like Worcester, MA, more than 34,000



trees have been removed in that city's effort to fight the pest. In some areas the tree removal has reduced the insects' presence to very small numbers. Although expensive, especially during tight budget years, the clear cutting method has been effective, with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in 2013 declaring areas of New York City and the state of New Jersey free of the infestation. In Worcester, the beetle population is down about 95 percent, according to the USDA.

Since its discovery in the United States in 1996, the Asian long horned beetle has destroyed tens of thousands of hardwood trees across several states. According to the USDA, the beetle has been the source of forestry destruction in Ohio, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, and Illinois. However, all states are at risk, the USDA warns. The beetle has also been found in Toronto, although in 2013 the Canadian Ministry of Agriculture declared Ontario to be free of the long horned beetle.

The beetle has so far been confined to primarily urban areas, but officials are worried about a possible spread into forested areas important to recreational and commercial interests. The *Wall Street Journal* reported that the North East State Foresters Association, which represents foresters in New York, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine, estimates those states generate more than \$33 billion in economic activity each year from forest products and recreation.



### **Beetle an Unwelcome Asian Import**

Forestry experts believe the beetle, which is native to China, Japan and Korea, came to North America and Europe on wooden packing material made using trees that the beetles had infested. The insect has no known natural predators and it threatens recreational areas, forests, and suburban and urban shade trees.

Adult beetles are most active during the summer and early fall. Throughout those months they can be seen on the tree or surrounding areas. During the winter, the larvae tunnel deep into and feed on the trees they infect.

Infected trees typically show dime-sized holes in the bark where the larvae have chewed their way out. Additionally there may be shallow scars on the tree bark, as well as signs of a sawdust-like material at the base of the tree, or on the branches. Trees will also show a loss of canopy and dead branches. Once a tree has been infected with the Asian long horned beetle, there is no remedy, other than cutting down the tree. Removing the tree could prevent the beetle from spreading to healthier neighboring trees.

The beetle is known to have infected more than a dozen different types of trees, including ash, birch, elm, maple, poplar, willow and mountain ash.

## Up Coming Events

Board of Directors - Teleconference - **January 26, 2015**  
**February 23, 2015**  
**March 30, 2015**  
**April 27, 2015**  
All calls are at 7pm

Board of Directors Meeting - March 7, 2015 - in Whitecourt

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## It pays to care – The Landowner Habitat Program

Roy Schmeizeisen

Just how fast is Alberta growing? In one single year, from January 1, 2012 to January 1, 2013, our population swelled 3% to 3.9 million—holding steady a population growth of about 100,000 people per year. We hit the 4 million mark on July 1, 2013.

More people, more money, more growth...and more space. A 2013 Stats Canada Study\* found that between 2000 and 2011, the development of settled areas in and around cities and towns increased by 3,158 km. Land converted into crops has increased by about 6.75 million acres since 1986! As much as Alberta's development has benefitted so many, some are not reaping the rewards of all this hard work. **Habitat loss is happening at an astounding rate, and it is our fish and wildlife that are feeling the pinch.**

As Alberta's infrastructure and industrial activities scramble to match our growth, we see further habitat loss, fragmentation, and degradation. With little recognition of ecological goods and services that habitats on private lands provide, there is simply little incentive for landowners to maintain them. Enter The Landowner Habitat Program. Put simply? It recognizes these goods and services. We provide term landowner habitat agreements of five, ten, 15 or 20 years, with a lump sum payment or annual payments of up to \$10 per acre.

The Landowner Habitat Program fosters habitat stewardship and positive landowner and visitor relationships on privately-held land. A term agreement with Alberta Conservation Association (ACA) compensates landowners who are willing to conserve wildlife habitat and provide reasonable foot access to recreational users. In 1986 the Alberta Fish and Wildlife Division used dedicated hunting and fishing levy funds to support the initiative (then known as the "Buck for Wildlife" program). It was transferred to ACA in 1997, when we became an independent not-for-profit organization directed to handle the distinctive program. A major part of ACA's mission is to offer recreational foot access in natural landscapes, fostering a connection to and appreciation for nature. We support hiking, photography and bird watching, and sustainable activities like foraging, fishing, and hunting.

The Landowner Habitat Program fosters positive interactions between landowners and potential visitors via the reasonable foot access clause. Landowners are of course free to control access on their land, but must provide fair access to recreational users who are polite, responsible and wish to access by foot. Habitat agreements are identified by a sign that recognizes the landowner's participation in the program. "Use Respect and Ask First" signage indicates the landowner and a contact phone number, found at all access points onto the land.

We currently manage 47 agreements—totalling 8,142 acres of conserved habitat. Funding is limited, and eligibility and payments vary based on how well the habitat fits with the criteria of the program and if exceptions outside of the usual provisions are desired. Aside from reasonable foot access, ACA looks at the number of acres that will be protected, the quality of the habitat present and the surrounding land use to determine the applications that are the best fit for the program.

As Alberta grows, we hope land conservation efforts do too. If you are interested in this program contact ACA, toll free, at 1-877-969-9091 or email us at [info@ab-conservation.com](mailto:info@ab-conservation.com).

*\*Measuring ecosystem goods and services study*



## Facts of Canada's Forests:

### Canada has:

348 million hectares of forest

153 million hectares of forest  
independently-certified  
as sustainably managed

8.6 million hectares of forest  
damaged by insects in 2012

4.2 million hectares of forest  
burned in forest fires in 2013

0.6 million hectares of forest  
harvested in 2012

0.05 million hectares of forest  
deforested in 2012

### Forest ownership:

94% are on public land, 90% provinces and territories, 2% Aboriginal Peoples  
2% Federal government, and 6% are on private lands

### Forest Benefits:

About 70% of Aboriginal Communities are located in forested areas

216,500 people are employed in the forest industry

More than 65% of Canadians get their water that largely originate in forests

Each 10% increase in tree cover in urban areas cool it by 1-degree celsius

In 2013 the forest industry's contribution was \$19.8 billion to Canada's GDP

About 2/3 of Canada's plants, animals and micro-organisms live in the forest

Of all the forests in the world Canada has 9% and 24% of the boreal forest

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## LET ME GROW LOVELY

*Karle Wilson Baker*

Let me grow lovely, growing old-  
So many fine things do;  
Laces, and ivory and gold,  
And silks need not be new;

And there is healing in old trees,  
Old streets a glamour hold;  
Why may not I, as well as these,  
Grow lovely, growing old?



## Some of England's Forest Facts

There are some interesting facts when looking at the Forest stats in the UK. These are that some 5000 years ago most of the UK was covered by Forest, and that by 1905 only some 4.7 % of the land was covered by Forest. But the bright light is that by 2014 the increase of Forest cover had increased to 12.9 % (of note is that all parks in the cities are included as forests) This is no small achievement as they were able to increase the hectares from a low of only 1,140,000 ha in 1905 to 3,138,000 ha in 2014 when one considers that much is on private land.

As to ownership some 73 % are privately owned.

For more information go to - <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd.9mbhds>

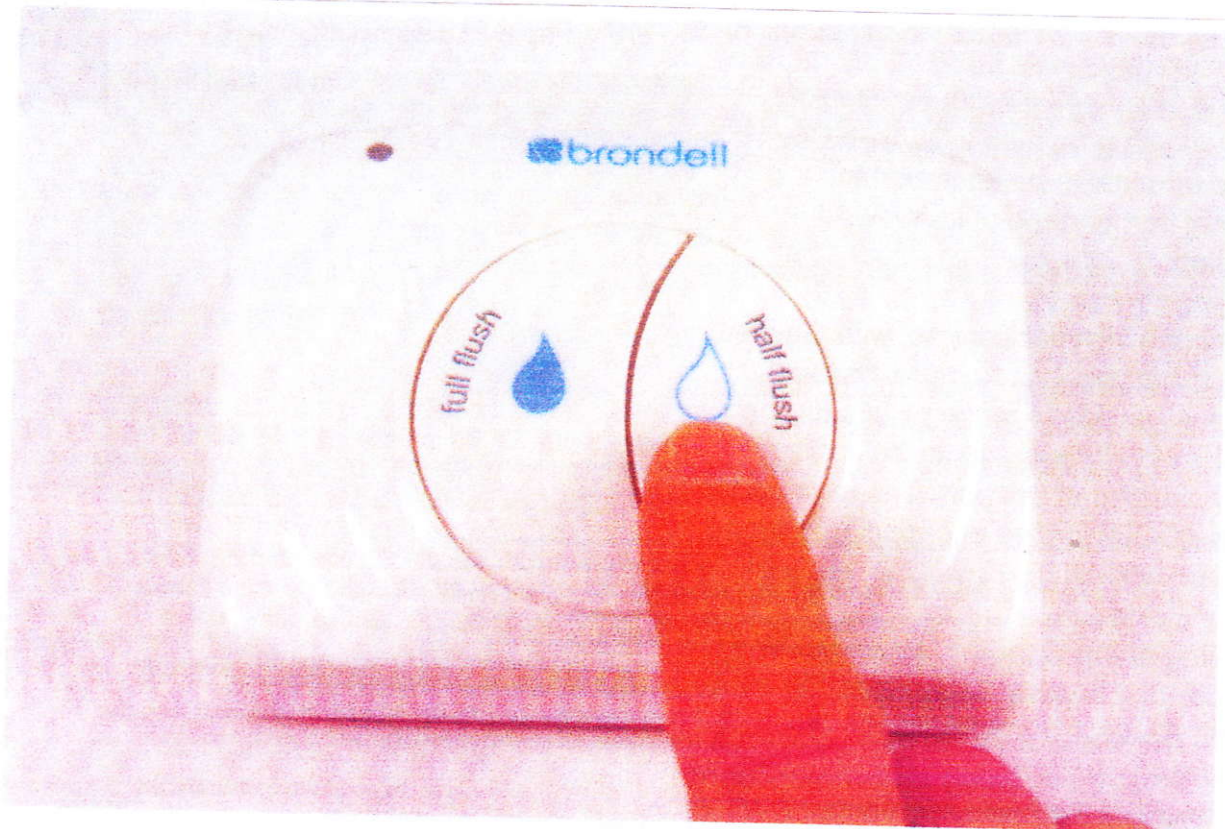
Some key points:

- The woodland area in the United Kingdom in 2014 is 3.1 million hectares: 1.4 million hectares (44%) are independently certified as sustainably managed.
- 13 thousand hectares of new woodland were created in the UK in 2013-14.
- 11 million green tonnes of UK roundwood (softwood and hardwood) were delivered to primary wood processors and others in 2013, representing a 7% increase from the previous year.
- Wood products imported into the UK in 2013 were valued at £6.7 billion and included 5.5 million cubic metres of sawnwood, 3.0 million cubic metres of wood-based panels, 5.0 million cubic metres of wood pellets and 5.9 million tonnes of paper.
- A total of 201 projects were registered under the Woodland Carbon Code at 30 June 2014, covering an area of 15.4 thousand hectares of woodland and projected to sequester 5.7 million tonnes of carbon dioxide.
- There were around 2,400 woodland fires in 2012-13, burning around 400 hectares of woodland.
- Around two thirds of the UK population had visited woodland in the last few years.
- The Annual Business Survey reported average employment in 2012 of 15 thousand in forestry and 26 thousand in primary wood processing.
- Gross Value added (GVA) in primary wood processing (sawmilling, panels and pulp & paper) was £1.63 billion in the UK in 2012. GVA in forestry was £0.31 billion.
- The UK was the third largest net importer (imports less exports) of forest products in 2012, behind China and Japan

*As a comparison 31.8 % of Germany is covered by forest, which are 5 meters, and does not include plantations of fruit trees, agroforestry, urban parks and gardens, 48 % are privately owned. -- France has 29% forest, and Finland has 73 % forest the highest in Europe.*



# Germans are "too good at conserving water" (what?!), says Wall Street journal



Is there such a thing as overdoing conservation?

Sometimes life is unfair. If we succeed in avoiding the worst of global warming by changing how we do things, such as by switching to clean energy sources and stopping deforestation, those who are against those measures will say: "See, nothing's happening, we did all this for nothing."

This backward way of looking at things is at the center of a recent Wall Street Journal *piece* that more or less tries to convince the reader that Germans are pointlessly frugal and *conserving water* too effectively. The author looks for all kinds of ways that this zealous conservation ethic can be a bad thing (some sewer pipes are too large and aren't getting enough wastewater!), rather than look at how it's a good thing that should be nurtured and used as an example for the rest of the world. If there are problems, it's better to solve those problems than to try to encourage people to increase waste (nobody's dying of thirst or unwashed, they just do what they need to do using a lot less water).



## Fledgling wood pellet maker preps for European exports

Budding wood pellet producer Rentech Inc. is counting on a new Quebec City marine terminal to be an important logistical cornerstone of its Wawa operation.

By way of a 15-year contract with Quebec Stevedoring, the Los Angeles-based company intends to move pellets through a dedicated storage and vessel loading facility situated at the port. The terminal boasts 80,000 tonnes of capacity for wood pellets.

Speaking at the CanBio Conference in Thunder Bay in early September, Steve Robert, Rentech's managing director in Canada, emphasized shipping is a vital component of the emerging biomass industry.

"(This) is the only dedicated port terminal in Eastern Canada that can really move pellets in really any significant proportion, and it's a \$25-million project in itself."

Roberts said even though the new terminal comes with a hefty price tag, in the long run it will help keep costs under control.

"(To get) the economies of scale that are required for an industrial pellet, you have to have dedicated ship loading."

The pellets moving through the terminal will originate at Rentech's plant near Wawa, a converted Weyerhaeuser OSB (oriented strandboard) mill. It's currently under construction and slated to be operational by the end of the year.



Rentech of California has signed a 15-year agreement with Quebec Stevedoring to help move its made-in-Wawa wood pellets from the Port of Quebec City to a large utility in the United Kingdom. Rentech is currently converting a former Weyerhaeuser OSB mill near Wawa with aims on manufacturing pellets in 2015.

### RELATED ARTICLES

- [Province issues licence to wood pellet maker](#)
- [Rentech drops woody jet fuel for wood pellets](#)
- [Wanted: Deep pocketed partner for jet fuel plant](#)
- [Jet fuel plant, 383 jobs slated for White River](#)



The Wawa plant will focus on fulfilling a 10-year contract to supply 400,000 tonnes of pellets annually to Drax Group, a United Kingdom-based electricity producer. Roberts said Drax's willingness to sign on the dotted line really helped things move forward.

"We have worked very hard (with Drax) to come up with long-term off-take agreements that are fairly unique in this space, that have been able to be the backstop of bank financing and building these projects."

As for getting the pellets to port, a journey of more than 1,500 kilometres, Rentech has an agreement with CN Rail.

When faced with the complexities of taking their product to an international market, Roberts said Rentech decided to bring in outside expertise: Singapore-based CWT Commodities, a company specializing in supply chain management.

"The level of sophistication required to get into these supply chains and manage these supply chains, to manage your rail cars, to manage when the lake window ends (St. Lawrence Seaway winter freeze-up) and when your boats arrive at port is a whole industry unto itself."

The challenge of shipping internationally stands in stark contrast to Rentech's smaller Northern Ontario project in Atikokan, a converted particle board mill that will produce wood pellets for Ontario Power Generation (OPG).

Rentech originally aimed to start production by summer's end, but pushed back the Atikokan launch date to October as some equipment had yet to be delivered.

That facility's fuel is destined for OPG's Atikokan Generating Station, the town's former coal-burner that underwent a \$170-million conversion to roast biomass instead.

Like Rentech's deal with Drax, the company has a 10-year supply contract with OPG to provide fuel. However, the amount is only 45,000 tonnes a year, just under half of the Atikokan plant's potential 100,000-tonne output.

Resolute Forest Products is the other pellet supplier.

According to Roberts, the two long-term contracts are especially important to Rentech as it hopes to eventually take its wood processing business public through an IPO in the next couple of years.

As for bringing the Atikokan and Wawa plants online almost simultaneously, he said it's been a tremendous amount of effort.

"I really have to hand it to everybody that's been involved. Everybody is going full tilt on our projects right now. Really, if I was going to summarize my experience of the past 15 to 16 months of putting these projects together, whatever you think it's going to take, multiply by two or three. There is no question there is an insane amount of work that goes into doing these."

## Woodlot Library

As you may recall in the March issue I told you that the CFS was discontinuing their library which included the woodlot portion of the library. We the WAA got the material and gave it to the local library in Blue Ridge. Most of the material has now been cataloged and can now be obtained via the TRAC library system. You can do all this through the internet as follows.

Go to - [www.tracpac.ab.ca](http://www.tracpac.ab.ca) - and scroll or type in the subject you are looking for. Then when you find the book you want you can order it right there but you **must have** a TRAC library card.

If you have a card you will have to fill out, the user name and the password.

For the **user name** - put in the numbers but leave out the spaces that are under the barcode on the library card.

For the **password** - put in the last four numbers of your telephone number be sure to use the same number that you gave when you got your library card.

The book that you have ordered will be sent to your local library, who will contact you when the book is in and give you five days to pick it up.

For those who do not have a TRAC library card can still make use of this web site, you can scan it for books and when you find one that you want contact your local library who will order it for you.

*This is a reprint which was in the September, 2013 issue,  
Just a reminder how to access the library.*

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Public libraries have been a mainstay of my life. They represent an individual's right to acquire knowledge; they are the sinews that bind civilized societies the world over. Without libraries, I would be a pauper, intellectually and spiritually.

*James A. Michner*



## Russia is Running Out of Forest

The Moscow Times reported that Russia's logging industries could face a lack of harvestable timber in 10 to 20 years.

This seems unfeasible that Russia, which holds a fifth of the world's forests, that it could run out of wood.

The problem is that they have harvested the easily accessible forests, which are being depleted. Their main reserves of timber are in Siberia, the Far East which are too costly for commercial harvesting due to hundreds and thousands of kilometers of roadless terrain.

Part of their problem lies in the extensive forest management practiced, where loggers clear a forest and then move on to another forest. Rather than an intensive forest management system where trees are replanted and forests are only partially harvested, allowing the forest to recover.

They do plant a lot as last year they planted some 8700 square kilometers, but do not maintain them, but an estimate is that up to 60% wither and die.

To switch to intensive forest management is massive and costly, estimated to run as high as 100 to 120 billion rubles (\$2.6 to \$3.1 billion)

Even Canada - Russia's closest comparison by type of forest has not completed the switch to intensive forest management, although it can better afford the delay, because it has larger reserves of commercially available forests than Russia has.

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### German Forest Service Uses Technology to Manage Sustainable Forests

Hessen-Forst Enterprise in Hessen, Germany, recently purchased 580 electronic notepads from Juniper Systems to manage the nearly 1.7 million acres of forests in Hessen. The Hessen-Forst Enterprise only cuts timber equal to the amount of growth the previous year. This requires knowing exactly which trees were cut down last, and which trees are up to be cut down next. They must also track the forests' annual growth, in order to know how much timber may be harvested each year. The forest service needed an efficient method of collecting and managing all of this and other data in order to maintain the sustainability of the forests. To manage this, Hessen-Forst Enterprise wanted a handheld with a display large enough to easily view their mapping programs, reliable GPS performance under heavy tree canopy, ruggedness, and long battery life. The company blog details how mobile data management can work in the forest.

<http://bit.ly/1qnJ3MG>

### Forest Products Industry Poised To Develop More Cutting Edge Innovations

The Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC) says Canada's forest companies are well positioned to develop new, innovative technologies by taking advantage of the renewed Investments in Forest Industry Innovation (IFIT) program. At a recent news conference, Minister of Natural Resources, Greg Rickford, invited forest companies to apply for funding from the \$90 million program for projects aimed at innovative commercial-scale technologies. He also announced that West Fraser will be receiving IFIT funds for its pulp operation in Hinton, Alberta to build Canada's first plant to recover lignin from its pulp production stream. Lignin is a natural substitute for petroleum-based chemicals and materials. It can be used in various innovative applications such as resins, fuels, water and air filtration, rubber additives, thermoplastics, pharmaceuticals, insulating foams and in 3-D printing. David Lindsay, President and CEO of FPAC, says the IFIT program will play an important role in reaching the Vision2020 transformation agenda for the forest products industry which has set ambitious goals including the generation of an additional \$20 billion in new products and new markets by the end of the decade.

[www.fpac.ca/vision2020](http://www.fpac.ca/vision2020)



# Birds, Bees and Trees

## Unlock Farm Transformation

### How a struggling cropping operation became a thriving grazing operation, with an assist from shelterbelts, wetlands and wild pollinators

To one degree or another, Alberta producers never farm the same way twice. They might change their crop rotation or herd numbers from year to year, build their production base with more land or tackle emerging challenges in the field.

Years ago Don Ruzicka looked at his farming operation and did not like what he saw. He decided to change, well, almost everything.

We moved in 1983 to the farm started by my grandfather and grandmother in 1909 says Ruzicka, who farms with his wife Marie near Killam. For years we farmed cattle and grain according to the conventional model. I bulldozed trees and wetlands to get more land but it was never enough. By 1995 I felt the writing was on the wall: an 800-acre farm was not going to be competitive, the way we were doing things.

For Ruzicka a course in holistic management provided the framework he'd been searching for, and he fundamentally changed his farming operation on several levels. Over the past 20 years, he's planted 60,000 trees, shrubs and bushes. His 800 acres of annual cropland has become 600 acres of organic alfalfa pasture with 200 acres of native prairie, wetlands and other wildlife habitat. He now pasture raises organic beef and poultry, and natural pork and provides custom grazing too.

#### Pollinators kickstart farm productivity

Over the years as Ruzicka planted more and more trees, he gradually noticed profound changes on the farm. Wild pollinators and other insects flourished. Bird populations and the number of different species, multiplied as their food source grew richer. Ruzicka also erected 240 birdhouses along the perimeter fence. Meanwhile, farm productivity increased dramatically, in part due to the activity of native pollinators in the field. This includes not just bees but wasps, butterflies, beetles and hummingbirds.

How many years of grazing do you normally expect to get from pasture? Five or six? Ruzicka asks. "All of our tame pasture here is 17 years old.

This past July, Ruzicka hosted 37 farmers, agronomists and researchers for a Trees and Bees Field Day, supported in part by Growing Forward. He toured visitors through his operation and explored the changes he'd made over the years. Experts in wild pollinators, agroforestry and woodlot management outlined the science behind Ruzicka 20 year farm transformation. This event was just one of a steady schedule of research projects and speaking presentations that he now maintains.

We're learning more and more about native pollinators," says Ruzicka" and we've tried to make our farm as pollinator-friendly as possible.

#### One farmer's framework for success

Can a mid-sized farm be economically sustainable? That's the question a soul-searching Alberta farmer asked himself back in 1995. Two decades later, if anything, the pressure to get big or get out has only increased. What is the best way forward?

As Ruzicka explains, the key for him was to listen to his farm's natural environment, work to protect and improve the environment and let this renewed resource fuel the sustainability of his business. This approach may not be for everyone, but it's changed Ruzicka farm-- and his life.

As farmers we have to understand how our farm ecology works and work with it, not against it," he says." Before 1995 I was working against it. I bulldozed a lot of trees and wetlands. I like to think I've put all those trees back, just not in the same places. I believe the most valuable practice we as farmers have is to work with nature and support nature.

To learn more about Don and Marie Ruzicka farming go to <[www.sunrisefarm.ca](http://www.sunrisefarm.ca)>



## What is a " Woodlot "

Webster's Dictionary defines a woodlot as : "**Woodlot - a piece of land on which trees are cultivated and cut**"

The term Woodlot is in common use in eastern Canada, whereas in western Canada it is used by few people. Why this is primarily because in the eastern Provinces there is privately owned forest land; ie.- PEI - 95% , NS - 68%, NB - 50%, of total forested land as compared to AB - 4%, B.C. - 3%.

Therefore it is quite evident that most Albertans have never heard or used the term woodlot. For when the media or others refer to Forests, they are speaking only about the 96% of forested land which is owned by the crown that is land leased out to large multi national corporations for the sole production of lumber, pulp, etc. Thus the 4% of private forested land as a woodlot are very seldom referred to.

Let us look at what a woodlot on private land really is. Webster is not wrong in stating it is "land on which trees are cultivated and cut" for all woodlots do indeed grow trees and at times harvest some.

But woodlots are much more than only the growing of trees.

They are a habitat for all forms of wildlife ranging from the very small animals such as squirrels and voles to the large moose, deer, elk, coyotes, plus a wide range of birds of all kinds.

They are a source of clean water as they retain and filter the water, plus reduce flooding by slowly releasing it, and aid in recharging the ground water aquifer.

They are a particularly valuable source of carbon sequestering.

They serve many as place for recreation and mental and physical health.

They are a source of a wide range of native berries from strawberries to saskatoons, and many different mushrooms.

They are a source of firewood for those who supplement their heating with a wood burning stove.

The list could go on and on but this is a taste of what private woodlots really are. If they are managed they can become an asset to any farm in particular in a largely predominantly agricultural area that has been cleared of its native forests.

*Therefore when asked "What a Woodlot Is ?" use this to explain that woodlots are more than just a patch of bush, and that they also benefit the communities bio-diversity.*

# Half of world's forest species at risk: UN

ROME: Half of the world's forest species are at risk from climate change and farming, the United Nations warned on Tuesday, as it called for "urgent action" to manage them better.

In its first global study of forest genetic resources, the UN's Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) said woodland was shrinking fastest in Brazil, Indonesia and Nigeria.

"Forests provide food, goods and services, which are essential to the survival and well-being of all humanity," the FAO's forestry director Eduardo Rojas-Briales said in a statement.

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"These benefits all rely on safeguarding the rich store of the world's forest genetic diversity, which is increasingly at risk

The report found that around half of the 8,000 reported species and subspecies were perceived as being endangered.

The ten countries that lost the most forest area between 1990 and 2010 were Brazil, Indonesia, Nigeria, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Democratic Republic of Congo, Myanmar, Bolivia, Venezuela and Australia, it said.

FAO said biodiversity boosted both the productivity and nutritional value of forest products like leafy vegetables, honey, fruits, seeds, nuts, roots, tubers and mushrooms.

Genetic diversity also protects forests from pests and ensures they can "adapt to changing environmental conditions, including those stemming from climate change", the FAO said.

The FAO called for more efforts to raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity and to combat invasive species, as well as the development of national seed programmes to ensure the availability of genetically-appropriate tree seeds.



## Classic contemporary wooden watches are made with lumber offcuts

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Wooden accessories often stand out, above their plastic counterparts, thanks to the natural grain and beauty of the wood. While ensuring that the wood is either sustainably harvested or resourcefully recycled is a big plus, it's also important to keep your greenwash radar on and alert. Creating wooden watches with recycled wood and backed with a "one-for-one" tree-planting program, [Analog Watch Co.](#) makes classic, contemporary-styled timepieces that apparently have the "first ever soft and flexible

The result of months of design experimentation, Analog Watch Co.'s "Carpenter" line of watches are made with lumber off-cuts, natural adhesives and come with recyclable packaging. There are a variety of styles, from dark, ebony-coloured woods, to russets and blonds -- with all of them being offered in either a minimalist watch face, or with hour markings.

In addition to using recycled wood, the company has also partnered with conservation nonprofit [Trees for the Future](#), implementing a "one-for-one" tree-planting program, where every watch purchased means a tree is re-planted.

Boosted by a hugely successful [Kickstarter](#) crowdfunding campaign that raised 735 percent of their original goal, the Philadelphia-based company's pieces have now been showcased at MoMA, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and elsewhere.

In a overly digital, plastic world, combining wood with analog time seems like a perfect match, bringing us back to simpler times. Prices start at USD \$149.99,

## MY WOODLOT

*Herman and Annette Stegehuis*

*“cut, burn, and plant trees for other objectives”*

When asked to write an article for “The Logjam” I was in a bit of a quandary. How could I possibly contribute anything of use or interest to all of you long-time woodlot operators? I am a recent woodlot owner, and not even a commercial operator at this point. I am in fact as much a woodlot operator as I am a farmer! A fellow Forestry Manager and friend told me once told me “unless you put on the large latex and bury your arm up a cow’s back end, you can’t call yourself a farmer!” I wonder what the rite of initiation might be for woodlot operators?

My experience is drawn from a life of working and playing in Alberta’s forests. The biggest part of my career was with the Alberta Forest Service (and the many other names of the Dept. that followed) as a Forest Officer, Forester, Senior Manager, and Director in the Wildfire Management Branch. The last 10 years of my career were to lead the integration of forestry and wildfire management, through oversight of the Provincial FireSmart and Prescribed Fire programs. I love to cut and burn! I also enjoy planting trees and doing stand tending. I would like to share my early woodlot experiences of choosing our quarter section, keeping cattle where they need to be, implementing FireSmart and controlled burning as well as trying to control invasive plant species. I will share with you my early experiences of planting, juvenile spacing, and stand tending.

We bought a beautiful quarter section of land in the Rochester / Tawatinaw area back in late 2008, a few years ahead of when I had planned to retire from Forestry. My wife Annette and I had been actively looking for land, dragging our three children along, much to their dismay. “How many places do we have to visit this weekend!” they would ask. I would explore properties on air photos, to make sure they had what we were looking for, before heading out. I learned a lot about screening criteria from Annette. “You would be happy with a keyhole cut out of a thick forest!” she would exclaim. Ya, well what’s wrong with that, I thought. Listening to Annette this time, really seemed to work. Her desire for a water feature, mixedwood forest and a view, along with my need for privacy and quiet, landed us on a very diverse little sanctuary that we call “Our Woodlot.” Our land is at the end of a township road, has three small pastures that total about 60 acres, a creek valley crossing through the quarter from SE to NW, and a mixedwood forest NE of the creek that has never been harvested nor managed for anything other than geophysical program access and exploration. We have seen plenty of wildlife, and most of my family are really enjoying the birds. The original owners built a cabin in the early 1970’s and brought in power, natural gas and drilled a well. Although the cabin was in need of attention we spent over 300 nights there over the first three years (our permanent residence was and still is in St. Albert).



After taking possession of the property we found over 300 cattle grazing on our land, on the pastures, in the creek and riparian areas, and even in the forested areas Northeast of the creek. I figured that I might find out who owns these cattle if I round them up and push them out through a little gate on the SW corner. Daughter Emily and I did the round up, apparently taking care of most of the cattle. Sure enough I got a phone call the following day. We came up with an agreement to continue grazing the next year, but restricting cattle to the pastures. I set up an automatic watering system at a beautiful dugout (built in a tributary to the main creek). My son and I fenced off the dugout and planted hundreds of trees. These trees had to be replaced the following year after the water system failed and the Rancher had to cut open the fence to water his cattle. Jeremy and I planted 300 two-year-old Lodgepole pine plugs. For a longer term solution I borrowed the cattle-rancher's dozer to dig a separate dugout in a more environmentally sound location. Despite the rough start, we now have a very good neighbourly relationship. The rent has covered all of the upgrades to the fences, gates, and other measures to keep the cattle where they should be. Grazing is also a great way to reduce the fire hazard in fine fuels. We are continuing each year to replace the old fencing with nice new materials which also helps to keep the cattle where they ought to be.

I gathered as many aerial photographs possible, to study this special piece of land. The Federal photography from the 1920's showed the results of a recent wildfire. The Provincial photos were even better showing when various disturbances or developments occurred over the decades. The people at the Air Photo Archives in the Great West Life Building were very helpful. If interested, have a look at their web page: <http://esrd.alberta.ca/forms-maps-services/air-photos/air-photo-products/default.aspx>.

A visit from Toso Botic, Woodlot Extension Specialist of Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development, helped to build an initial woodlot management plan. I was however, a bit pre-occupied with other objectives and "surprises" left by the previous landowner. One such surprise was the discovery of a thriving sea of Oxeye Daisy emerging the first spring after taking ownership! I really didn't notice them the previous fall when we first took possession. My neighbour mentioned that the lady of the house really liked her daisies, and cast seed purchased from a greenhouse! Hard to believe a reputable greenhouse would distribute noxious weed seeds, but regardless, the battle was on! My 26-gallon quad mounted herbicide tank and I were on the attack. The batch of "Restore" herbicide seemed to work, but at 1100 seeds per head these weeds are tenacious. I continue to tackle Oxeye Daisy and other noxious weeds every year.

FireSmart around the buildings and the quarter section was high on the priority list. Using the FireSmart concepts we have preached for so long with AFS, it was my turn to "walk the talk." I cut and piled brush and trees encroaching on that first 10 meter zone, and burned those piles after the first snow. Pruning and removal of dead and downed material from 10 to 30 meters followed. Firewood was moved under a



metal roof attached to the garage-shed. Siding was replaced with hardiplank, and so on. For more FireSmart information have a look at: <http://wildfire.alberta.ca/fire-smart/default.aspx>.

Just North of the cabin is a 2-acre pond. Lots of fine fuels (grass, shrubs, small trees) covered the hillside on the North side of the pond, with fuel wicks leading to the cabin. The Assistant Fire Chief in our County seemed surprised to hear me ask for a fire permit to burn off the hillside and the many piles we had created. "You want to burn the hillside why?" he asked. After explaining what I was after and giving him a little more confidence knowing my background, he asked if his crew could join me on the day of the burn. Of course I accepted, more hands make lighter work! I treated the burn like a wildfire suppression exercise, having the firefighters use my drip torch as the main containment tool (see photo). I overlooked one important detail ahead of the burn, failing to notify my neighbours! What a way to get introduced to the oldest fellow that was born and raised in the area. Eric came roaring up with his little truck, jumped out, ran to the top of the hill at the cabin, tripped and fell, rolling down the hill. Luckily he wasn't hurt, but he did harbour a head of steam. The poor Fire Chief was the first to meet his anger, and by the time I got around to that side of the pond, things were not going too well. I broke in on the conversation, admitted to missing the phone call protocol and walked with Eric a while to let him know what we were up to. I assured him that the fire would be extinguished by the end of the following day. We have since become friends and visit on a regular basis.

We have built trails that made use of all existing access. That's me in the photo, gathering firewood salvage from trail construction. We then hired a local mulcher to get rid of the stumps, so that we could easily maintain the trails with a lawn tractor. The trails help us to enjoy the property so much more and we now have anchor lines and barriers to help fight the next forest fire that threatens our property. Maintaining access to water sources in several areas, along with a cache of fire equipment such as a pump, hose and basic fire fighting tools means we are ready to take action. The most likely wildfire would be either a low to moderate intensity surface fire or spotting from wildfires in the natural areas to the east of us. Of course we would call 310-FIRE to report the wildfire first!

My woodlot is far from commercial. We have planted about 4000 trees (about half of those through the Woodlot Association woodlands employment program a few years ago), pruned young White spruce for clear wood, completed some juvenile spacing, and stand tended for not myself but future generations. Its not about revenue really, its about doing what we like to do and benefitting future generations. The work my son Jeremy and I have done to restore riparian areas have worked out very well. The Scots Pine has done really well (see photo), and I am surprised that the Deer have left them alone. They seem to eat the succulent Lodgepole seedlings as if they were candy! My oldest daughter Elice helped plant Siberian Larch, Blue spruce, and almost any species I could get a hold of for borrow pit restoration and beautification around the cabin area. I have started some



juvenile spacing (see photo). The White spruce seem to be responding very well with increased leader growth and more lateral branch development as well.

We look forward to many more years of being "new woodlot owner" enjoying the hands-on practice of forestry. As you can see, much of the activities so far are aimed at making our property a fun place for family, and aimed at protecting the property from wildfire.

If you have any questions feel free to call Herman at 780-222-4060.

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## **Editorial**

*Jurgen Moll*

Well another year is nearly over, this year the Woodlot Association has seen more changes than usual, in that. We lost two directors from the Board of Directors, namely. Pieter van der Schoot who had been a member on the board for some 18 years and served as President for one year, and Bernice Cassady who also was the Associations Treasurer. We thank them for their years of service to the Association.

On the positive side two members volunteered to serve on the board, who are Harry White and Elton Kauffman, both long time members of the Association. We welcome them to the board, and look forward to working with them.

Winter is here that is for sure, and I am looking forward to December 21 which is the shortest day of the year. No, it is not that I like darkness and little daylight, but because every day we get a few more moments of daylight there after and by February one can really notice it.

For all of you that take part in winter sports this is the best of times in particular when the days get a little longer, and one can stay out longer. It looks like there will be lots of snow so for ski-doers, cross-country skiers, and snowshoers that you can do in you own woodlot enjoy yourselves as most people don't have that opportunity.

I want to wish all of you a MERRY CHRISTMAS and a HAPPY NEW YEAR



Pictures of "Herman and Annette Stegehuis's" Woodlot



Herman Stegehuis gathering firewood salvage from trail construction.



Scots pine planted in a riparian zone for cattle damage reclamation.



White spruce juvenile spacing.



Hazard reduction burning with Westlock Fire Department.