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Society of American Foresters
Representing the Forestry Profession in Louisiana

CHAIR'S COMMENTS

by Tim Holland - 2015 Chair

Greetings LASAF members! I am excited about SAF and what 2015 holds for us. First, a little about myself. I was born and raised in Carthage, Texas. I graduated from Carthage High School in 1976 and went to Centenary College of Louisiana in Shreveport, 1976-1980, earning my B.A. in Religion. I then went to Louisiana Tech University in Ruston from 1980-1983, earning my B.S. in Forestry.

I began working for my father-in-law-to-be in May of 1980. I found myself in a unique situation of working in forestry while attending classes at LA Tech. I truly enjoyed my time at LA Tech and it was while I was a student at Tech that I joined SAF. I am proud to celebrate 31 years as a member of SAF this year. My wife and I reside in Shreveport. We have three grown sons, two reside also in Shreveport with their wives and our youngest lives in San Antonio, Texas.

What does the Society of American Foresters mean to you? Our membership numbers state-wide as well as nationally are declining. Last year at the National Convention in Salt Lake City, UT I sat in on the House Society of Delegates (HSD) and heard state after state report that their membership numbers were down. What is going on here?

The forest industry has no doubt had a rough ride

the last 10-15 years. I know in the "old" days when we had all the forest industry companies who employed many of our foresters, and the companies paid for SAF memberships – that has changed. We have a large number of graduate foresters in the state who are not members, many of them don't see the value of the SAF.



The SAF is our "professional society;" much like lawyers who must belong to the Bar Association and doctors who are members of the Medical Society, foresters should belong to the society which carries their name. Membership is however, not mandatory; it is only voluntary. I am proud to be a member of the SAF. Talk to foresters with whom you work or know professionally through your work association, ask them if they belong to SAF. Go to the SAF website and print out a membership form and give

them one. Tell them you will support them and mentor them while they become familiar with SAF.

Remember, the 2015 National Convention will be held in Baton Rouge, LA November 3-7. There will certainly be opportunities for our members to volunteer as we showcase our state. **We need our current members to be advocates for OUR society!**

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With Special Thanks to the 2015 Meeting Planning Committee

LASAF - Tim Holland, Eugene Austin, Fred Hagaman, Buck Vandersteen,
and Buddy VanHoof

OSAF - Matt Pelkki and Rod Will

TSAF - Carrie Smith, Cliff Sunda, Eric Taylor, Zaina Gates, and Mike Murphrey

Be sure to tell our sponsors and exhibitors how much you appreciate their support and for helping make our Annual Meeting such a great success!

SEAN McKAY - LASAF CHAIR ELECT FOR 2016

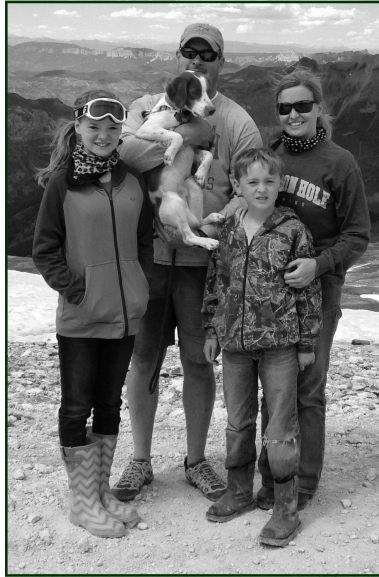
When Tim Holland contacted me about getting more involved with the LASAF, we discussed declining SAF membership in Louisiana and his desire to increase membership during his term as Chair. I could tell that he was very passionate about doing what he could to correct this decline and wanted to help out. I agree with Tim's belief that a strong state chapter is good for us all and think all foresters should desire to be members. As THE society for professional foresters, I believe that all foresters should feel an obligation to become and remain members. I am honored to be named Chair Elect and look forward to serving the Chapter in this position. I plan to assist Tim, the other committee members and our state membership in any way I can.

I was born and raised in the Shreveport area and have always lived in northwest Louisiana. My wife Jennifer and I live in Benton with our two children, Callie and Carter. When I am not working in the woods,

I enjoy competitive shooting sports and spending as much time as possible in the outdoors with family and friends (including a little bird dog named Cooper). I try to instill in my children and others an appreciation and respect for the outdoors, knowing that a short walk in the woods can provide more to a child than countless hours in front of a TV.

I completed the Forest Technology program at Panola College prior to enrolling in the School of Forestry at Louisiana Tech. I have basically spent my entire career on the consulting side of our profession. I worked for The Crawford Forestry Group for nearly 18 years, but recently left to start a new firm. As a consultant, I take great pride in providing professional forest and wildlife habitat management services to Ark-La-Tex land-

owners. I am a member of the Association of Consulting Foresters and a Registered Forester in Arkansas and Mississippi.



LASAF 2014 AWARDS

Outstanding Student (LSU) – Hayden Marshall Carter

Outstanding Student (La Tech) – Rodney McKay

Sparkplug Awards – Holly Morgan, William C. “Bill” Siegel, and

Steven K. Templin

Outstanding Leadership Award – Louis “Buddy” VanHoof

Distinguished Service to Forestry Award – Mark D. Gibson

Fellow – James “Dave” Haywood

MORE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SAGA OF THE NORTHERN LONG-EARED BAT

by Bill Siegel, Policy Chair

In the last issue of the Bayou Forester I discussed the controversy surrounding the Northern Long-Eared Bat and the implications for forest management and silviculture. I'll begin this article by recapping some of the significant points set out previously, followed by what has occurred since then.

The Northern Long-Eared Bat (NLEB) has an enormous range which encompasses 39 states, including Louisiana. After leaving hibernation in the spring, the NLEB uses more than 30 species of trees for roosting, including both pine and hardwoods. The sole threat to these bats is white-nose syndrome (WNS), a non-native fungal disease for which there is no cure. It has killed nearly six million bats, including the NLEB, since its discovery in 2006.

In October 2013, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) proposed to list the NLEB as an endangered species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). It is the first bat species to be proposed for listing. Following the listing proposal, the USFWS issued interim guidelines and proposed rules to protect the NLEB. If enacted, they would do little to help the NLEB recover since the only threat is the WNS. On the other hand, there would be a highly detrimental impact on private forest landowners, including many in Louisiana, severely limiting forest management and silvicultural activities. I discussed these potential forestry restrictions in detail in my last article.

Last June the USFWS gave a six month extension for the final listing determination and reopened the comment period through December 18, 2014.

I will now discuss the latest developments. On January 16 of this year, the comment period was once again reopened. This decision appears to have been made because of a multitude of comments received from forestry and conservation interests objecting to the original proposed rules and the listing of the NLEB as an endangered species.

In addition to seeking one final round of comments on the original proposal, the announcement also included a potential rule under Section 4(d) of the ESA that would exempt certain activities from being pro-

hibited – including forest management – if the USFWS concludes that the NLEB ultimately warrants a threatened rather than an endangered designation as originally proposed. Under Section 4(d), the USFWS has the discretion to issue regulations that are “necessary and advisable” for the conservation of a species. This broadly defined phrase gives the Agency the flexibility if it chooses to exempt the prohibition of certain activities that do not further the goal of conservation.

In this case, the USFWS is seeking comments on the proposed 4(d) rule so that it can be released simultaneously with the listing decision should the NLEB be listed as threatened rather than endangered. Unfortunately, 4(d) rules are optional and apply only to species listed as threatened. Without a 4(d) rule, threatened and endangered species receive exactly the same protections under the law.

The proposed 4(d) rule defines exempted forest management activities broadly with a partial, but not exhaustive, list designed to “maintain and manage forest ecosystems”. Included are silvicultural treatments, prescribed fire, invasive species control, wildlife openings and temporary roads.

The exemptions for forest management do have restrictions, however. To qualify, activities must: (1) occur more than 0.25 miles from a known, occupied hibernating cave or mine; (2) avoid cutting or destroying known, occupied maternity roost trees during the pup season (June 1 – July 31); and (3) avoid clearcuts within 0.25 miles of known, occupied maternity roost trees during the pup season.

In addition to these requirements, the USFWS has also stated that it does not consider “conversion of a mixed forest into an intensely managed monoculture pine plantation as forest management”.

Overall, the proposed 4(d) rule is a positive sign and certainly provides greater latitude to forest managers than would otherwise be the case. However, it still contains some challenges and unanswered questions. The final decision is expected some time this April. In all probability, it will certainly be followed by court challenges. Stay tuned.

LASAF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

by Fred Hagaman, Acting Secretary

Meeting was called to order at 10:07 a.m. by State Chair Tim L. Holland, CF. Present were Sean McKay, Daniel Bollich, Louis VanHoof III, Bill Ross, Fred Hagaman, Bill Wieger, Bill Siegel, Steve Templin, George Ramsey, Holly Morgan, Eugene Austin, Dave Haywood, Ray Newbold, Janet Tompkins (LFA), Belinda Stewart (LFA), and Buck Vandersteen (via phone). Minutes from the last meeting being the State Business Meeting held at the SAF Multi-State Conference, Texarkana, TX on January 28, 2015, were read and approved.

Chair Comments-We should apply efforts to increase membership by getting people to sign up to join SAF. We should ask every forester we meet if they are a member of SAF. There being brief discussion on why they are not members and that SAF is the only organization for forestry and natural resources professionals.

Steve Templin will no longer serve as Secretary of the LASAF Executive Committee. Praises were made to Steve for his service and dedication. He will need to devote more time to his work and company affairs in concession of his wide-ranging volunteer work. In that regard, the Executive Committee is in need of new faces, new people to be involved in the leadership roles of the LASAF.

Treasurer's Report-Belinda Stewart for Buck Vandersteen: Receipts to date totaled \$6,485.59, however they do not reflect all revenue from the Annual/Multi-State meeting. Disbursements year-to-date are \$7,336.91, most of which included Annual meeting expenses. The checking account balance as of 3/9/2015 is \$25,213.66 and the operating fund CD balance is \$14,019.54, total cash balance is \$39,233.20.

Eugene Austin moved to accept the Treasurer's report which was seconded by George Ramsey. The motion passed and the report was accepted. There is a request from LSU RNR for funding support of the biennial natural resources symposium.

Cypress Committee Update-The final draft of the report is out to stakeholders: natural resources organizations, government agencies, Universities, SAF and others for review and comment with a return request by the end of April. The Committee will meet sometime after April to review the comments, incorporate any changes and begin the final document. Further discussion included suggestions and requests that the Cypress issue and report be mentioned or summarized at the National Convention in Baton Rouge.

Investment Committee-Established at the annual meeting in Texarkana, the Investment Committee will investigate and review other options to invest LASAF funds. The Investment Committee will report back to the Executive Committee for direction and decisions.

Proposed Increases in Funding-A written proposal submitted by Dave Haywood to increase special support funding to traditionally supported programs. LASAF should increase funding for national convention travel, Forester's Fund, scholastic endowments, and program support in 2015. In discussion additionally each Student Chapter (LSU and La Tech) will receive \$1000.00 for national convention expenses. Total special support funding for 2015 will be increased \$2500.00 over 2014 funding. Eugene Austin moved to accept the proposal and was seconded by Bill Siegel, the motion passed.

Archives-No report

Chapter Chair Reports

North Louisiana: We will have our next meeting Tuesday, March 24, 2015, at the Red River NWR with a program on *Advances in Applied Tree Improvement*, presented by Dr. Josh Adams of Louisiana Tech Univ.

Pineywoods: We are averaging 40 participants at monthly meetings. January meeting at Toledo Bend included a presentation on *Making Connections: Community & Ecosystem Ecology in Louisiana's Forests & Beyond* by Dr. Jonathan A. Akin of Northwestern State Univ. A February meeting in Natchitoches included a presentation from the Natchitoches Parish Police Jury reporting on current progress.

Cenla: We will have its first meeting for the year soon and usually will have one per quarter.

Southeast: There was no meeting so far this year. Planning is ongoing for a spring meeting with CFE opportunity.

Southwest: Currently there is no established group. Discussion was made on the importance of re-establishing a chapter or have those members become part of an existing chapter group.

LA Tech Student: Currently we have 25 members all of whom plan on attending the 2015 Conclave to be held at Mississippi State Univ. The chapter has also received sponsorship in order to attend this year. Chapter bylaws will be updated this spring.

LSU Student: No report.

Louisiana Office of Forestry Report-Buck Vandersteen in attendance at the Louisiana Forestry Commission meeting reported an increase in FPP eligibility from \$10,000 to \$15,000. The state-operated tree nurseries will be closed and no longer operated by the Office of Forestry. There is interest from private industry to take over those nursery facilities.

National Convention-Planning and development continues for the 2015 event in November. Discussion was made to consider a keepsake to be given to convention participants at the Thursday

Meeting continues on p.7

RENEWABLE ENERGY POLICIES DRIVE PRODUCTION OF SOUTHERN WOOD PELLETS FOR BIOENERGY

by Rod Truesdell, Southern Research Station Communications

A new report by SRS scientists analyzes the effects of EU renewable energy policies on demand for southern forest products. A recently released study led by U.S. Forest Service scientists and published by the Forest Service's Southern Research Station (SRS) finds that policies in the European Union (EU) and elsewhere requiring the use of renewable and low greenhouse gas-emitting energy are driving demand for wood pellets used to generate bioenergy. This demand could provide new markets for U.S. timber exports, **increase wood prices, and lead to increases in forestland area.**

Karen Abt, research economist, SRS Forest Economics and Policy unit is the lead author of the report. "Southern forests and some northern forests as well, are being used to produce pellets for export to the EU," Abt said. **"Current and proposed production levels have the potential to increase prices, but may also lead to an increase in timberland area."**

Abt and her team modeled a 'business as usual' scenario which continued the current level of wood production and an alternative scenario which increased the production of wood bioenergy."

This alternative scenario allowed for continued bioenergy demands based on the most recent projections of wood consumption by pellet mills and other bioenergy producers. In the "business as usual" baseline scenario, the simulation showed timber demand and prices rising in the short term, but falling in all areas across the South by 2040. However, when Abt's team added the bioenergy component to the baseline, they saw a very different outcome, **"...the results indicate increased bioenergy demand could result in an in-**

crease in pine non-sawtimber prices," said Abt.

One might assume that increased demand for timber products and the associated boom in timber harvests would deplete southern forests. However, the study finds an increased demand for timber could mean just the opposite. In Abt's simulations, the baseline scenario, which does not account for additional bioenergy demand, saw forested land decrease by 2040. But in the simulations accounting for additional bioenergy needs, **there was actually an increase in the forest land base** over the same period, despite the increased harvests. As Abt points out, it's all about supplying the increased demand. "We know people plant more trees when prices go up," she said. **"We also know that they keep more natural forest as forest as prices go up."**

The EU's Renewable Energy Directive requires a 20 percent contribution from bioenergy to the energy use of all EU Member States by 2020. However, it is now clear the EU requirements will extend even longer and the percentage could increase, which likely means greater future markets for pellets.

Abt points out that there is much that is still unknown about the interactions among policy, economics, and forestry. This makes projections such as these inherently uncertain.

"There are studies underway on the effects of the Renewable Energy Directive on the sustainability of southern forests," Abt said. "If new requirements are adopted, this could affect use of southern forests for pellet production for export to the EU." Nevertheless, "All indications are that pellets from southern forests will meet the current EU requirements." **You can reach Karen Abt at kabt@fs.fed.us.**

Meeting from page 6 night social event. After further discussion, it was suggested that a metal doubloon embossed with the LASAF logo and SAF National Convention date be made with a maximum order of 1000 pieces not to exceed \$3.00 each or \$3000 total cost. Holly Morgan moved to accept the proposed suggestion and it was seconded by Ray Newbold. The motion passed.

Membership-Current total membership for the State is 249, of which 185 have renewed membership for 2015. There was a net increase of nine in February, 5 which are transfers.

Newsletter-The first quarter 2015 edition is being developed and expected to go out at the end of March. At any time, content may be sent to Dave Haywood, Editor.

Emerging Issues-The emerald ash borer has been located in north Louisiana and expected to move throughout the state. The EPA is trying to limit aerial emissions outside of urban areas potentially hampering Rx fire use.

"High Value Conservation Forestry" is a new term

sometimes being used by the furniture manufacturing industry. It is vaguely defined, but could possibly lead to a "self-certification" that is outside the realm of established, known certification systems including SFI and FSC.

Policy-Last year LASAF expanded the timber tax position statement making it much stronger in regard to timber income tax. The revised position needs to be updated in the LASAF action plan. A request is to be made for Bill Wiegner to present a request for better membership services on SAF policy matters at House Society of Delegates .

Education-A research project being conducted at LSU is looking at tree growth rates and is in need of volunteer assistance. Contact Nate Salmon at LSU-Alexandria. Forestry Awareness planning is beginning and the program will start in the upcoming summer months.

The THEO class this year and will be an accredited program, which will make it eligible for Pell grants for financial aid. Participants will be awarded a Technician's certificate upon graduation. There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION!

Several of you have out-of-date mail and email addresses with national SAF. Their mailing list is our only source of information for contacting you. Please update your information as soon as possible. It is very simple. Go to the national web page at <http://www.safnet.org/> and click on "profile" in the upper right-hand side of the page. Enter your id and password. Select "My Account" and click on "update my profile". You will be able to change your information in less than a minute.



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