

N.C. Forest Stewardship News



**N.C. Forest Stewardship Program Newsletter
N.C. Forest Service - NCDA & CS**



Forest Stewardship Plans—Are You an Active or Certified Landowner?

By Jason Wade



Pictured: Sign received by landowner whose property became a “Certified” Stewardship Forest (Outstanding Woodland Steward, OWLS)

One of the major tenants of active, sustainable forest management is to periodically update your current forest management plan. Nothing is ever static for very long, especially forest ecosystems. This may also be the case for your property, your land and your forests. A storm can hit and damage your valuable woodlands; it can be an unseasonably dry year limiting forest timber production; and, insects or diseases can impact your woods. For these reasons, you should keep your forest management plan updated and active.

Are you actively managing your woodlands? The Forest Stewardship program requires landowners to have an up-to-date forest stewardship management plan to maintain “active” status in the program. You must be “active” to become certified. Forest stewardship plans are typically written for a 10-year period or longer. It is a good rule of thumb to meet with either a professional forestry consultant or your NCFS county ranger to look at your property and review your current forest stewardship management plan every 5-7 years. This way, you stay engaged with your woodland, resource professionals and will remain in active status, striving toward the goal of becoming certified.

Are you a certified Outstanding Woodland Steward? In North Carolina, if you are actively managing your woodlands and are following your forest stewardship management plan, you can become certified as an Outstanding Woodland Steward (OWLS).

As a certified Outstanding Woodland Steward, you receive a certificate for your active forest stewardship as well as a Forest Stewardship sign, with a birdhouse and post included, to proudly display on your property, demonstrating sound stewardship management in North Carolina.

But, being an Outstanding Woodland Steward is more than just checking a few boxes and getting a sign. Being an OWLS is actively engaging with your land and forests to promote sustainable forestry and land stewardship in the state of North Carolina!

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Stewardship Coordinator's Corner

By Ron Myers

Happy Trails Les Hunter!

In late February, Forest Stewardship Coordinator Les Hunter retired from the N.C. Forest Service after serving 16 years. When you find a job that aligns with your passion, you will generally have a rewarding career. Les has a love for the outdoors and has always loved to be in the woods or hunting. During autumn, he loved to sit in a deer stand somewhere to connect with nature. He always shared his adventures with his co-workers, and you could write a book based on his trials or forays across the state. Oftentimes he would share some of his stories or adventures in the Stewardship Coordinator's Corner feature in this newsletter.

Les was responsible for overseeing both the NCFs Forest Stewardship program (FSP) and the Forest Legacy Program. Our Forest Stewardship program currently has 1,292 active stewardship plans that cover 184,176 acres. Of this total, about 293 stewardship plans have been prepared by private consultants with the remaining 999 plans having been prepared by NCFs personnel.



Pictured: Past Forest Stewardship Coordinator Mark Megalos presenting Les Hunter with his own sign with well wishes from his friends and co-workers.

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Wildlife in NC

Armadillos in North Carolina!

By Jason Wade

Historically, armadillos have been native to Central and South America, but according to the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC), armadillos have been sighted in North Carolina.

In 2007, the NCWRC received the first confirmed sighting of a nine-banded armadillo in Macon County. Over the last 12 years, the NCWRC has received more than 170 reports in 46 counties of armadillos being present in North Carolina, with 27 of those reports being confirmed sightings. These confirmed sightings stretch from Cherokee to Dare counties and suggest that the natural range for the armadillo is expanding, according to Colleen Olfenbittel, the Commission's black bear and furbearer biologist.

"Whether armadillos continue spreading beyond their current range will be largely determined by climate," said Olfenbittel. "Mild winter temperature conditions are good for armadillos. Since they lack thick insulation and must dig for most foods, freezing conditions can cause them to starve or freeze to death. However, North Carolina is experiencing fewer longer stretches of below-freezing weather, which is allowing armadillos to expand northward."



Pictured: The nine-banded armadillo. Photo Credit: Jay Butfiloski

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By Ron Myers

Events: Northampton County Forestry Association Celebrates 50th Year

On Tuesday Feb. 25, 2020 a group of 175 forest landowners, local officials, forest product companies, loggers, forestry consultants and others came together for their 50th annual meeting in Northampton County, North Carolina. What a milestone for any group or association to achieve such longevity! The meeting was hosted by the Northampton County Forestry Association in cooperation with N.C. Forest Service County Ranger Rodney Black and his staff.

The county forestry association has a group of officers that they elect, and the annual meeting is an opportunity for the group to receive updates on forestry programs or issues, to receive updates from their N.C. Forest Service county personnel who are working with landowners, to receive updates from forestry sponsors, and to recognize an outstanding forest landowner of the year for Northampton County.

A county forestry association is valuable for bringing a community together to promote the importance and value of forestry, forestry companies and sound forest management. At this meeting, landowners visited informational exhibits, talked one-on-one with each other and spoke with other forestry professionals or companies. The Northampton County Forestry Association has been a model of success for other forest landowner associations trying to become established. The association's sustained efforts are a testament to their members and others who support their mission.



Photo: 50th Anniversary Meeting of Northampton County Forestry Association

Wildlife in NC

Armadillos in North Carolina! Continued...

The NCWRC is asking the public to help by reporting any sightings of nine-banded armadillos to the agency. Anyone who spots an armadillo in the wild is encouraged to upload and share their photos via the [NC Armadillo](#) project, which launched May 17, 2019, on the free online platform iNaturalist. Volunteers can upload their photos via a computer at [iNaturalist.org](#), or they can download the free iNaturalist app, which is available for iPhone and Android. Volunteers who want to report observations but do not want to use iNaturalist can send their armadillo observations to armadillo@ncwildlife.org. Information in the email should include:

- A photo of the armadillo
- When it was observed (date and time)
- The location where it was observed (GPS coordinates are best, but a detailed location description is acceptable.)

People

Carrie H. McCullen — Turnbull Creek Educational State Forest, Forest Supervisor

By Jason Wade



Pictured: Carrie H. McCullen; Forest Supervisor, TCESF

Carrie H. McCullen is the new forest supervisor at Turnbull Creek Educational State Forest. She began this position in August 2019. Turnbull Creek is a part of the N.C. Forest Service Educational State Forest (ESF) system. It is one of seven ESFs in North Carolina, and it is designed to teach the public, especially school children, about forest ecosystems and different aspects of forestry in our state. Turnbull Creek is in Bladen County, amongst numerous “Carolina Bays,” and has several exhibits and walking trails available for public recreation. Turnbull Creek ESF is about 890 acres, with about 60 different stands on the forest. The forest is open to the public from mid-March through mid-November, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. It is open Saturday by reservation only and is closed on Sundays. <https://www.ncesf.org/turnbull.html>

FSP News: You are the new Forest Supervisor for Turnbull Creek ESF. What previous experiences brought you to your current position with the N.C. Forest Service?

CHM: Before taking the position of Forest Supervisor, I was the Educational Ranger at Turnbull Creek ESF for four years. Before that, I worked as an intern with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission in Bladen County, working specifically with the Cooperative Upland Restoration and Enhancement (CURE) program. Before that, I worked with a natural heritage agency in Virginia, sharpening my skills on invasive species

eradication. I graduated from North Carolina State University in 2007 with degrees in Zoology and Biology.

FSP News: As the new Forest Supervisor at Turnbull Creek ESF, what are some of your areas of focus for management on the forest?

CHM: We have a multifaceted management approach here at Turnbull Creek ESF. Besides educational outreach to the public, our next largest goal is timber production and the management of the forest for producing harvestable timber. We are a “receipts-based” forest, meaning that all income made from timber sales on the forest is the source for our operational budget. That means for us to be operational and provide these great educational programs to the public we must engage in sustainable, active forest management. Not only do we harvest timber, but we also offer contracts for pine straw raking on the forest. Recreation is a large management goal for Turnbull Creek ESF. At present, we are collaborating with the Mountains-to-Sea group and are making plans to bring that trail through Turnbull Creek ESF, in order to help engage the public by making them more aware of the educational and recreational opportunities available here at Turnbull Creek ESF.

Wildlife habitat management is another big goal on the forest. We participate in the North Carolina Birding Trail and invite the public to take part in bird watching on the forest. We also manage for the Red Cockaded woodpecker, a threatened and endangered species in North Carolina. In collaboration with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, we have a couple of clusters of these birds, and several nest trees on our forest. We tailor our forest management activities to help provide good habitat for these populations in our area. Longleaf pine restoration is another goal at Turnbull Creek ESF. We have been focusing on restoring longleaf pine in areas where it was found historically on the forest. Currently, we have replanted longleaf in some areas that were formerly slash and loblolly pine mixtures that have been sustainably harvested. Prescribed burning is a large part of our

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People Continued...

Carrie H. McCullen Interview

active forest management program here at Turnbull Creek ESF. We are in the process of updating our management plan to encompass all these areas of focus for future management. Through multiuse management, sustainable forestry and sound stewardship, Turnbull Creek ESF serves as a demonstration forest for landowners, helping them visualize how they can be successful with their own property goals while being financially achievable.

FSP News: What kind of educational outreach programs does Turnbull Creek ESF provide to the public?

CHM: We have many different and exciting workshops and classes at Turnbull Creek ESF. We offer educational classes for all ages. We take part in providing “Smokey Bear” classes, geared toward younger school children. We have a class on papermaking, located over in our forest products exhibit. We have a naval stores exhibit that teaches the important cultural history of North Carolina’s first major industry which included the gathering of lumber, the production of tar and pitch, turpentine and rosin from longleaf pine trees. We have a fire control exhibit where we talk to students about the weather aspect of fire control.

We have a trail system where we provide information about forest ecosystems and wildlife predator and prey species and how they interact with the ecosystem. In collaboration with NCFs district staff, we participate in workshops for landowners to show our management practices on the forest and how landowners can have a balance of longleaf and loblolly pine on the same property. We participate in Project Learning Tree for educators, which is a program that provides credit hours toward environmental education certification. There is a class coming up in the fall for Project Learning Tree, sometime around September. We also are starting to put out a quarterly newsletter!

FSP News: Where can your newsletter be found?

CHM: You can go to the North Carolina Educational State Forest website (www.ncesf.org) and at the top of the page there is a “Turnbull Creek” tab. If you click on that tab, you will land on the website for Turnbull Creek ESF. The newsletter can be found in the “News” tab.

FSP News: How can folks interested in setting up educational classes get in touch with you?

CHM: You can email us at Turnbull Creek ESF, turnbullcreekesf.ncfs@ncagr.gov, or give us a call at (910) 588-4161, or come to the main office at 4803 Sweet Home Church Road, Elizabethtown, NC 28337. main office at 4803 Sweet Home Church Road, Elizabethtown, NC 28337

Practices: Regeneration Methods

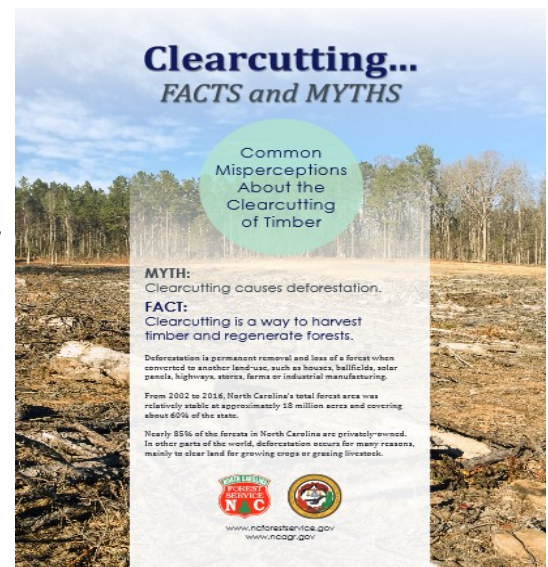
By Tom Gerow

Clearcutting Timber: Common Misperceptions

Recently, the N.C. Forest Service published an educational pamphlet on the practice of clearcutting and the common misperceptions surrounding this common forestry practice. This publication touches on the history of logging, the science of forestry used today in the industry, forest renewal, economic factors of clearcutting, and facts and myths associated with clearcutting and logging in North Carolina.

In general, there is a negative perception associated with the practice of clearcutting, and the N.C. Forest Service would like to help summarize some common myths and facts. Clearcutting is a regeneration tool that foresters use to harvest timber from the land, preparing the land for the next generation of timber to be grown. Clearcutting is not deforestation. If done properly, clearcutting is sustainable forestry that is good for the environment.

For more information, you can find this publication at <https://www.ncforestservice.gov/publications/FM0313.pdf>.



New clearcutting pamphlet available!

Happy Trails Les Hunter! (Continued...)



Pictured: Les standing next to a spruce pine tree in South Carolina during a field tour at a national Forest Stewardship program meeting

Our Forest Legacy Program has administered \$19.45 million in program funding on 18 tracts of land, totaling 11,668 acres of conservation easement protection or fee simple acquisition for conservation benefit. Autumn was always a time when Les would travel outdoors to these tracts to monitor and ensure that stewardship principles and forest legacy requirements are being met.

Les wore many hats during his tenure as the FSP Coordinator. He has served on the Plant Conservation board of directors and the N.C. Tree Farm board of directors. Les was a big supporter of leveraging forest stewardship funding for several conservation groups and organizations, and he liked to attend meetings where he could interact with landowners to promote our NCFS programs and services.

More than anything, Les will be remembered for being a devoted family man and having a servant's heart. "A servant's heart does willingly all things; for it's pleased to see all the blessings it brings." (Excerpt from a poem by Deborah Plemmons, 2009).

Enjoy your next adventure, Les Hunter and Happy Trails!

Events: ForestHer NC Workshops

By Jaimee Cappelletti

In 2019, I had the opportunity to attend two ForestHer NC workshops. What an awesome opportunity to see resource professionals and landowners (mostly women) interact and learn. I experienced more joy, eagerness to learn and empowerment than I could have ever imagined from these landowners. I felt immensely proud to be included in the group of resource professionals offering knowledge to these landowners. So, you may find yourself wondering exactly what a ForestHer NC workshop is.

Created in 2019, ForestHer NC is an outreach initiative providing educational workshops for women landowners. Multiple natural resource partners across North Carolina, including the N.C. Forest Service, provide an opportunity for women landowners to come together with other women landowners who may share the same property management approach or interests. These workshops were designed to offer an opportunity for new landowners to engage with experienced landowners and all types of resource professionals about a variety of forest management topics.



Pictured: Landowners attend ForestHer NC workshop in Kinston

ForestHer NC holds a series of six workshops across the state in the Coastal Plain, Piedmont, and Mountain regions of North Carolina. The first two workshops were held in August 2019 and November 2019. Upcoming workshops will include a field tour of a North Carolina Tree Farm and discussions about enjoying your woods and protecting your woodlands.

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Events: ForestHer Continued...

Previous ForestHer NC Workshop Statistics:

Four hundred and ninety-nine landowners attended the first two ForestHer NC workshops held in 2019. 91% female attendance rate and 95% average satisfaction rate

An online survey given at the workshops offers an opportunity for participants to supply feedback to agency hosts. Here are a few responses that were provided during the feedback portion of these workshops.

“A perfect combination of science, philosophy and technical perspectives, and interpersonal interactions.”

“This workshop was enlightening, inspiring and empowering!”

“Wish I had attended this workshop before I had my timber cut.”

“Now I know what I don't know. Great overview of these topics.”

To learn more about ForestHer NC and upcoming workshops, feel free to join the email list (foresthernc@gmail.com). Beyond ForestHer NC, there are many other opportunities geared toward women landowners and women in the outdoors. We encourage you to explore any program that might be right for you. Check out the blog below for more information.

<http://info.ncagr.gov/blog/2019/12/11/foresters-for-foresther-why-ncfs-supports-a-new-educational-initiative-for-landowner>

Outstanding Woodland Stewards (OWLS)

January 1, 2020 – April 1, 2020

<u>Name</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Region</u>
Buster Sykes Farm	Alamance	Piedmont
Karen & Allen Plaster	Jones	Coastal

Upcoming Events:

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
Forest Health Landowner Workshop	Summer 2020 –TBD	TBD
Prescribed Fire Council Annual Meeting	Aug. 12-13, 2020	Morganton
ForestHer NC Workshop—Protecting Your Woodlands	Aug. 13, 2020	Pittsboro
ForestHer NC Workshop—Protecting Your Woodlands	Aug. 20, 2020	Kinston
ForestHer NC Workshop—Protecting Your Woodlands	Aug. 27, 2020	Morganton
<u>2020</u> North Carolina Forestry Association Annual Meeting	Oct. 7-9, 2020	Asheville
<u>2020</u> Annual Forest Stewardship Landowner Meeting	Fall 2020—TBD	TBD
13 th Biennial Longleaf Conference	Oct. 20-23, 2020	Wilmington