



# The Voice for Illinois Forests

*To act on issues that impact rural and community forests and to promote forestry in Illinois*

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and more....

## **It's here on the World Wide Web...**

IFA Web site  
[www.ilforestry.org](http://www.ilforestry.org)

IFA has a "Wiki" ...  
<http://illinoisforestry.pbwiki.com>

## **President's Remarks**

*Ray Herman, IFA President*

As I began this article, I was writing from the Conservation Tent at the Farm Progress Show. Occasionally, I was asked a question or two about our organization, or why it's so hard to get help from their district foresters. (Not a surprise to most of us, considering the foresters' work load.)

IFA Vice President J.B. Gates and I actually signed up three new IFA members that day. Lots of folks picked up brochures and membership forms. IFA Secretary Dave Gillespie thought about 250 forms were taken during the three days of the show. We already have ideas of how we would improve our booth in the future. It is interesting to note how quickly our "freebie" pencils are being depleted. I think we will need to stock a much larger supply if we do this again two years from now. Maybe a drawing for a free membership each day would get more people to stop by, pick up our brochure, and consider membership.

Little by little, IFA is becoming known. I am hopeful we can make our goal of 600 members by year's end. Dave informs me that we've got over 400 members again. Perhaps our assistance in helping IDNR with their certification for Forest Management Plan implementation is providing a side benefit as we are enclosing an IFA brochure and membership form in the same envelope.

I really have two requests to make of each of you. The first is asking you to sincerely try to attend our annual meeting on October 19 and 20 at Rend Lake Resort. Information about the meeting was mailed to you recently. If you can, please attend at least one day to support your association and meet other members from around the state. Secondly, I ask you to consider sending words of "thanks" to two board members who have resigned their present "high paying" (NOT!) positions from the Board, effective at the Annual Meeting: Bob Sloan, IFA's Treasurer and ever-diligent forestry proponent, and Dan Price, Director-at-Large from southern Illinois. You will elect their replacements at the Annual Meeting. The meeting will give you another opportunity to say thanks.

I do hope to see many of you there!

## **Mark Your Calendars!!**

**IFA 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting**  
**October 19-20, 2007**  
**Rend Lake Resort and Conference Center**

see page 7 for schedule

## Calendar of Events 2007/08

### Oct. 9 – 11

Central States Forest Soils Workshop  
Field tours highlighting forest soils, climate, and geology as it relates to white oak  
Carbondale, IL  
618/978-0814

### Oct. 11 – 14

National Tree Farmer Convention  
Networking, tours, and presentations for forest landowners  
Madison, WI  
715/252-2001

### Oct. 12

McCulley Heritage Farm Forestry Field Day  
Forest management, establishment, and utilization topics  
Kampsville, IL  
217/285-4114

### Oct. 19-20

IL Forestry Association Annual Meeting  
Business meeting, legislative updates, carbon credit program, & field tours  
Rend Lake Resort, IL  
618/949-3698

### Oct. 20

Forestry Field Day  
Management practices and tour  
Jim Willert Farm  
Malta, IL  
309/788-0419

### Oct. 27

Woodlands and Wildlife Workshop  
Management practices and tour  
Tom Blasdel Farm  
Wayne County, IL  
618/943-2621, x 4

### April 8-11, 2008

2008 National Forest Landowners Conference  
Intercontinental Hotel  
Chicago, IL  
Topics: Carbon Trading & Ecosystem Services, Current Trends in Land and Wood Prices, New Market Technologies, Hardwood Markets, Taxation  
Register online at:  
[www.forestlandowners.com](http://www.forestlandowners.com)

### April 18

Forest Management Practices Workshop  
Focus on carbon sequestration  
Chestnut Mountain Ski Resort  
815/625-3854

## Secretary's Report

*Dave Gillespie, IFA Secretary*

The number of IFA members keeps growing with membership at 410 as of September 5. I attribute the steady growth in the last couple of months to IFA helping the IDNR Division of Forest Resources to send out the annual certification letters to IL Forestry Development Act participants.

Due to retirements within the Division and a lack of funds to fill vacant positions, IFDA renewal letters had not been sent out for a number of years. As a service to IDNR, the Division, and the IFDA program, the IFA volunteered to do the mailing. This agreement has given IFA the opportunity to provide information about our organization to forest landowners in Illinois. In addition to the IFDA renewal letter, they receive our brochure and a letter from IFA President Ray Herman that discusses some of the recent accomplishments of the IFA, asks the recipients to examine the brochure, and encourages them to fill out the membership form and become a "Voice for Illinois Forests." When the project is complete, some 10,000 people will have received the IFA message. A special thanks and a pat on the back goes to Sarah Dillman, who has done the bulk of work.

Mark your calendars and plan to attend the IFA Second Annual Meeting at Rend Lake Resort on October 19 and 20, 2007. Our Region 4 program committee has worked hard to plan a great meeting agenda (see page 7) in a beautiful setting on the shores of Rend Lake. I worked for many years in southern Illinois and camped and fished at Rend Lake. It is one of the most beautiful places in that part of the State. I suggest planning a fall vacation around the Annual Meeting. See the fall colors, fish, boat, and if you play golf, Rend Lake has some great courses. Fellowship with other IFA members is part of being the "A Voice for Illinois Forests".

You have, no doubt, noticed that this issue of the IFA newsletter is in color. Approval was given for the purchase of a color copier at the last Board meeting. Thanks to Sarah Dillman's comparison shopping ability, we got a great deal on an HP 2605DN for \$500.00. Thanks also goes to Rich Nichols and the Association of Illinois SWCDs. Since the copier is located in their office, the AISWCD paid half of the cost and will benefit with IFA in the form of high quality publications and sharing of maintenance costs. Progress--don't you just love it?

## Finance Committee Report

*J. B. Gates, Finance Committee Chair*

IFA has a balance on hand of \$19,096.04. We thank those who have renewed their membership and hope that those who have not yet sent in their 2007 dues will do so soon. The Association is only as strong as its membership. When we talk with legislators, they always want to know how many members we have. We are gaining every day but still have long way to go to be a strong Voice for Illinois Forests. Give a membership application to neighbors, family, or friends who have an interest in forestry. For copies of the application, call Sarah at 217 744 3414, or email [sarah.dillman@aiswcd.org](mailto:sarah.dillman@aiswcd.org) or [jb@gates-farms.com](mailto:jb@gates-farms.com). The best way to grow is to keep planting seeds along the way. You have many contacts--just reach out to them and ask them to be a member. And, think outside of the woods!

Please send your annual meeting reservations to Joe Newcomb ASAP to help the planning committee make this a great meeting. If you have a question, email Joe at [jnewcomb2@juno.com](mailto:jnewcomb2@juno.com), or call him at 618/265-3286. The committee has worked hard to put together a fine program, so give Joe, Stephanie, and Dan a big thanks with your reservation form. Also if you have topics you would like presented in a regional workshop, write them on the bottom of the form. And don't forget to indicate the committee you would be willing to serve on. It takes everyone working together to make the Association strong.

## From the Legislative Committee

*Dr. Susan Romano, Legislative Committee Chair*

On August 2, 2007, Senate Bill 17, an amendment to the property tax code, was sent to Governor Blagojevich. The following synopsis statements are quoted from [www.ilga.gov](http://www.ilga.gov) bill status for SB0017.

1. "Provides that unimproved land of 5 acres or more that is subject to a conservation management plan is valued at 5% of its fair cash value."
2. "Provides that, beginning with the 2007 assessment year, wooded land that is owned by the taxpayer on October 1, 2007, must be assessed at the same level as its 2006 assessment level until the land is sold or otherwise transferred."
3. "The special valuation for managed land does not apply to land used for nature preserves."
4. "Sets forth preferential assessment procedures for wooded acreage that was classified as farmland during the 2006 assessment year. Provides that the preferential assessment continues until the property is transferred or no longer qualifies as wooded acreage. Provides that the preferential assessment does not apply to property within Cook County."
5. "Deletes provisions concerning the assessment of other wooded land that is not managed land" (considered in an earlier version of the bill).

The Governor has 60 days to sign or veto the bill, or if he chooses to do neither, the bill becomes law after 60 days. We should know by October 8.

As IFA forges ahead with our legislative pursuits, we are working diligently on revisions and new position statements. These will be presented at our 2nd Annual Meeting in October.

## IFA Legislative Action Plan

*Paula Purdue, IFA Lobbyist*

*(To be completed by IFA members before the 2008 Legislative General Assembly)*

### Thank all legislators who voted for SB

**17.** Office visits are generally the best, but phone calls, letters, or email will work also. Before sending emails, make sure that your legislative office utilizes email. Some legislators are very email savvy while others are not. Remember that you have two legislators--a senator and a representative. Be sure to thank both of them. If you are not sure who your legislator is, go to [www.votesmart.org](http://www.votesmart.org). When you thank the legislator, be sure to share that you are an IFA member and why you supported SB 17. Legislators receive many complaints and few thank-yous. IFA will develop a positive image with legislators if we start out with thank-yous first!

### Invite your legislators to visit your forested areas.

We ought to make sure that certain legislators who can be of assistance, visit the areas that do not have forestry personnel. We need to plan these events when the legislators have had a few weeks to recover from the budget mess.

### Invite legislators to join you at the events you are developing.

Legislators are interested in their constituents' issues. If legislators can not join you for the whole day, make sure they know they are welcome for whatever time they can eek out. When legislators join you, make sure you introduce them to all in attendance and thank the legislators for taking time out of their busy day to join you.

**Grow the forestry caucus.** The more folks (voters) who are interested in an issue the more interest a legislator will have. Illinois is made up of downstate (outstate), suburbia, and Chicago. All of these areas have forested acreage, which is very good. But we have not gotten all areas of the state to be members of IFA. As IFA grows in membership throughout the state AND works to develop a broad caucus, our political power will grow and favorable legislation will be easier to obtain.

**Do you have a passion for trees and forestry?**

**Are you interested in serving on a regional committee?**

**Contact an IFA officer today to find out how you can help!**

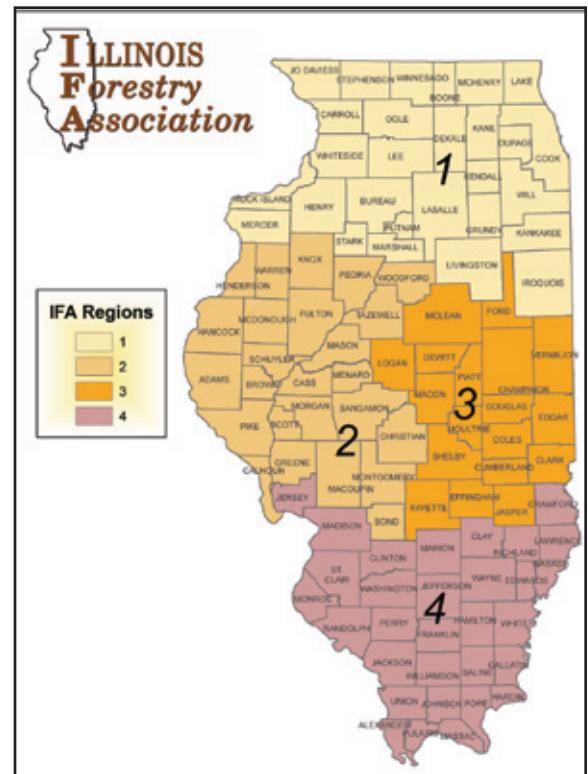
## More on Legislation

Kurt Bobsin, IFA Technical Advisor

Despite the overriding focus on state budget legislation and related priorities, the woodland assessment issue was addressed in SB17. It now awaits the Governor's signature. Once enacted, it will create a special valuation of managed land provision to provide a level of property tax relief for landowners who want to conserve their woodlands, prairie, wetlands, or vacant and undeveloped land. Forest landowners who are currently enrolled in the IL Division of Forest Resources' FDA program will continue to receive tax assessment benefits under farmland assessment rules. This agricultural assessment differs from the assessment valuation outlined in SB17 in that it is based on soil productivity rather than property values.

Other bills that IFA has been interested in are summarized in the table below. IFA members are encouraged to express their views to

their IFA regional directors and to your legislators, bill sponsors, and the chairperson of the committee in which the piece of legislation is being considered. **Reminder:** Visit the IFA Web site for information about General Assembly actions and how to contact your state and federal legislators. Get involved in forestry issues that matter to you!



Bill #	Description	Bill Status
HB1635	Creates Illegally Logged Wood Ban--prohibits sale of illegally logged wood in Illinois	Passed House Senate Rules 5/28/07
HB1638	Creates Prescribed Burning Act--addresses liability issues regarding landowners conducting prescribed burns on their own property; limits liability due to negligence to actual damage or injury	Signed 8/13/07
HB1677	Amends IL Finance Authority Act to include Conservation Projects--conservation projects defined as those that create or expand open space OR reduce energy usage through efficiency measures; conservation projects eligible for low interest loans and other financing	House Rules Committee 3/23/07
HB3613	Creates Conservation Acquisition & Resource Program Enhancement Act--creates an income tax check-off fund to permanently protect conservation land	House Rules Committee 4/30/07
HB3669	Amends State Finance Act & requires transfers from the General Revenue Fund (GRF) equal to IL Forestry Development Fund, Open Space Lands Acquisition Fund, Natural Areas Acquisition Fund and Conservation 2000 Fund equal to amounts transferred from those funds into GRF during FY 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2007	House Rules Committee 3/23/07
SB 0017	Amends Property Tax Code concerning the assessment of timberland--details yet to be determined pending the draft of legislation (expected this week)	Sent to Governor 8/2/07
SB 0281	Amends State Forest Act--provides that revenue from sale of timber under State Forest Act be deposited into the Forestry Development Fund instead of Wildlife and Fish Fund	Signed 8/17/07
SB 1385	Amends the State Finance Act requiring transfer of funds into Audit Expense Fund--Forestry Development Fund will be excluded if passed.	Signed 8/28/07
SB 1617	Creates Emerald Ash Borer Revolving Loan Program & Fund--provides low-interest or zero-interest loans to local units of government for replanting trees within the EAB quarantine areas	Signed 9/4/07



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## **HARRY POTTER BECOMES FOREST FRIENDLY**

Della Moen, Earth Team Volunteer,  
NRCS/Stephenson Soil and Water  
Conservation District

In 2003, Raincoast Books printed Canadian editions of *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* on 100% post-consumer recycled, processed chlorine free paper and fiber, saving trees, water, and energy and reducing solid waste and greenhouse gases.

Harry Potter series author J. K. Rowling said, "The forest at Hogwarts is home to magical creatures like unicorns and centaurs. Because the Canadian editions are printed on Ancient Forest Friendly paper, Harry Potter books are helping to save magnificent forests in the 'muggle' world, the home of magical animals

such as orangutans, wolves, and bears. It is a good idea to respect ancient trees, especially if they have a temper like the 'Whomping Willow'."

For the final book in the series, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, 16 publishing houses worldwide committed to using recycled, or ancient forest friendly, paper. "Scholastic announced that all 12 million copies of the first printing will be on 30 percent post-consumer waste fiber, 65 percent of which is certified by the Forest Stewardship Council as procured through responsible forest management," reports Jessica Goldberg for E Magazine. "The 100,000 copies of the deluxe edition will be printed on 100 percent recycled paper. Every reprint of the series will, from this point on, be printed on a minimum of 30 percent recycled paper."

About 16,700 tons of paper are needed to fill Scholastic's order, according to Goldberg. "By switching to recycled paper, just the English-language editions of the final book alone will save: 197,000 trees, an area 2.5 times the size of New York's Central Park...72,074,421 gallons of water, enough to fill 218 Olympic sized pools...17,364,063 pounds of green house gas emissions, equal to taking 1,577 cars off the road for a year...9,255,366 pounds of solid waste, which is the weight of 4,999 fully-grown elephants...137,609 million BTUs of electricity, enough energy to power 1,512 homes for a year and equivalent to the energy in 154 million lightning bolts."

## From Region 4

Joe Newcomb and Stephanie Brown, Directors

Twenty-two people, including IFA President Ray Herman, attended the Region 4 summer workshop on the "ABC's of Carbon Credits for Forest Landowners" at Morello's Pizza in Harrisburg, IL, on July 19, 2007. Mike Plumer, Natural Resources Advisor,

U of I Extension, Carbondale, started the meeting off with an overview of the carbon cycle. IFA Region 3 Director Rollie Spaniol gave step-by-step instructions on how he sold carbon credits from his Coles County

farm and displayed a copy of his first annual check. Bill Schleizer of The Delta Institute gave a very informative and helpful summary of the process used in marketing carbon credits on the Chicago Climate Exchange. Four land use practices qualify for sale of carbon credits: conservation tillage (no-till), grass plantings (after 1/1/99), tree plantings (after 1/1/90), and methane digesters (after 1/1/99).



From left: Bill Schleizer, Rollie Spaniol, Ray Herman, and Art Herron.



(From right) Jackie Ital, Resource Conservationist, Saline County Soil and Water Conservation District; Bill Schleizer, Delta Institute; and Chris Mitchel, Resource Conservationist, Hamilton County SWCD helping IFA member Art Herron fill out the forms to apply for carbon credit payment on his farm in Pope County.

For more information, visit [www.deltacarbon.com](http://www.deltacarbon.com), write to The Delta Institute, 53 West Jackson Blvd., Suite 230, Chicago, IL 60604, or call (312) 554 1909. You may also contact Bill Schleizer at [wschleizer@delta-institute.org](mailto:wschleizer@delta-institute.org).

## Conservation Field Day

Eighty people participated in a Conservation Field Day on August 22, 2007, in Crawford County to learn about successful application of conservation practices and the latest from the General Assembly regarding agricultural issues.

Field Day participants met in Palestine, IL, at 8:30 am for maps and an overview of the three field sites. Field tours began at 9:00 am and again after lunch at 1:00 pm.

On the Don Knoblett Farm, participants saw a strip tillage demonstration. The Ray Herman Farm tour featured practices included in an active forestry management plan and a portable saw mill in action. At the JPS Farms, participants learned about a successful grass-fed beef operation.

The Crawford County Soil and Water Conservation District, LaMotte Creek Watershed Planning Committee, and IFA hosted the event, which was highlighted by legislative updates during the luncheon.



IFA member Zel Adams (right) demonstrating the Woodmizer on the Herman Farm at the LaMotte Creek Watershed Conservation Field Day in Palestine.



Clint Patterson, IDNR District Forester, addressed four participants at the Conservation Field Day.

# IFA Second Annual Meeting

## Rend Lake Resort and Conference Center Program

**Registration** fee is \$60.00 made payable to IFA. Please mail your registration to Joe Newcomb, 585 County Road 1050 E, Norris City, IL 62869.

Resort lodging fees range from \$91.00 to \$132.00 per night for either a room overlooking the lake, a cabin, or a hotel room. For resort reservations, call 800/633-3341.

Additional lodging is available in nearby Mt. Vernon and Benton.

### Friday, October 19

12:30 pm Registration  
1:30 pm Welcome  
2:00 pm Illinois Forests  
2:40 pm Break  
3:00 pm Latest Developments in:  
Woodland Tax Assessment  
Cost Share Opportunity  
Carbon Credits Program Status  
Forest Health Update  
4:30 pm Adjourn  
6:00 pm Icebreaker  
Exhibits  
Dinner  
Business Meeting  
Awards  
Live Auction  
9:00 pm Adjourn

### Saturday, October 20

7:30 am Breakfast  
8:30 am IFA Top 10 List Roundtable  
Discussion  
10:00 am Break  
10:20 am Next Steps  
11:20 am Closing Remarks –  
President Ray Herman  
11:30 am Depart on Field Trip  
– District Forester Dave  
Johnson  
12:00 pm Picnic Lunch  
4:00 pm Tour Ends

### Region 1 Report

Mary Duff and Debbie Jones,  
Directors

**A tour of Heartbilt Homes** took place near Stockton, IL, on August 11. Heartbilt Homes is a log home manufacturer, located just east of Stockton on U.S. Highway 20, which cuts and shapes square cants of kiln-dried wood into interlocking logs to create custom designed homes. The manufacturing plant features a state-of-the-art five-head planer/molder which can mold the logs into several different profiles and sizes. A variety of saws cut the molded logs into the lengths needed for a specific home. The logs are then transported to the construction site where the basic log shell can be erected by a crew of three men in as little as two eight-hour days. A model home at the manufacturing facility was shown at the end of the plant tour. More information about Heartbilt Homes is available at [www.heartbilthomes.com](http://www.heartbilthomes.com).

### The 2nd Annual Forestry

**Management Workshop**, hosted by Interstate Resource Conservation and Development Council (RC&D), was conducted on August 22, 2007, at Loud Thunder Forest Preserve in Illinois City. The workshop featured vendors and breakout sessions on tree identification, wildlife woodland

habitat, crop tree management, legal issues related to timber harvest and sales, pest control, new plantation management, GPS, forestry tax assessment, federal and state programs, and timber harvest. IFA staffed an information booth at the workshop.

IFA staffed a display at the **Annual Tree Farm Meeting** in Dix, IL, on September 8. Over 60 people participated.

### IFA Treasurer and Region 1 member

**Bob Sloan** offers the following report on acorns in his neck of the woods: "Had a call for acorns but finding good ones is very scarce; virtually no good red oak; white oak is very scarce and only about 25% viable; swamp white oak not so scarce but again large percentage of floaters. Have been looking for butternut but have found only one tree with a few nuts."

We are **planning workshops** in conjunction with the Will-So. Cook and Kane-Dupage SWCDs.

**From Debbie**--Besides being a big fan of woodlands, I am rather fond of food, perhaps a bit too fond lately. Nevertheless, I have found that these two interests often blend well together. This season I plan to gather highbush cranberries on a woodland walk and make Highbush Cranberry Sauce. I found this great recipe in a used book on edible wild plants. It makes 1.5 pints.

Ingredients: 4 cups of highbush cranberries (*viburnum trilobum*), with large stems cut off and small stems cut short---2 tablespoons of water---juice of 1 lemon---rind of 1 lemon, grated---3/4 cup superfine sugar---1/2 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg---1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

Wash and drain cranberries. Boil water, lemon juice, and berries at medium-high heat, then lower heat and simmer for 15 minutes until the berries pop open. Stir occasionally so the berries don't stick to the bottom of the pan. Remove and push berries through a food mill or sieve with a wooden spoon to remove seeds and stems. Add remaining ingredients. Return to low heat and stir until the sugar melts. Refrigerate, then warm slightly over low heat before serving.

By the way, if you can't find the wild ones or don't have the time or interest, you can use regular fresh cranberries in an equal amount. It's great with turkey!



## Members Voices

Welcome to this new regular column established to offer members the opportunity to share ideas and concerns with the membership and with the IFA Board. Are we working on critical issues? Are we missing some important opportunities to be a true "Voice for Illinois Forests"? Good or bad, let us know. Our newsletter is published quarterly. Send short, concise comments to [betty.joubert@il.usda.gov](mailto:betty.joubert@il.usda.gov) or call toll-free 800/585-6043, ext 4.

### Get In The Game?

*Mark Brown, District Forester*

*IL Department of Natural Resources*

As an IFA benefit, I have been receiving the National Wild Turkey Federation's magazine, "Get in the Game". The fall/winter 2007 edition provides advice to bow hunters about managing shrubs and trees to improve deer harvest opportunities. The article titled, "Fruit and Nut Stand" touts the virtues of planting or enhancing certain plants that deer will find appealing. Sounds reasonable. As I read on, I realized that two of these are known to be non-native, invasive species that are extremely harmful to forest ecosystems throughout Illinois. One, in particular, could serve as the poster child for why invasive exotics are one of the worst environmental problems facing Illinois landowners.

The worst offender mentioned in the article is honeysuckle. Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*), is a semi-woody, nearly evergreen, climbing vine that was imported from Asia in the mid-1800's. It thrives in a variety of habitats, climbs into tree canopies, and creates a carpet on the forest floor that can quickly displace native vegetation through dense shading or strangulation.

The bush honeysuckles, including Tartarian, Morrow's, Belle, and Amur, are shrub like and grow to heights of 2 to 20 feet. Although there are native honeysuckle plants, it would be safe to assume that all honeysuckle with a bushy growth are non-native. Bush honeysuckles have a broad tolerance to a variety of moisture regimes and habitats. They are very shade tolerant and can grow under low light conditions. Once established in the woods, they will soon dominate and choke out or prevent the establishment of the next oak-hickory forest as well as many important native plants that occur on the forest floor.

Last but not least is sawtooth oak (*Quercus accutissima*), which is reported to produce seed at an early age and of a size that appeals to turkey and deer. Sawtooth oak is also of Asian origin and is reported to be invasive. Foresters have been wary of this one for years. Could it become a problem on the landscape? Until we have the definitive answer on this one, we should take a lesson from the historical perspective with exotic plants in Illinois and err on the side of caution. In other words, don't plant it!

The NWTF has done a lot of fine work and is to be commended. However, it

is important for landowners to realize that by introducing or cultivating plants that are known invaders into forest ecosystems, they are headed for an exhaustive and expensive eradication program. Once these aggressive plants become established, getting rid of them can be...well, let's just say that despite our best efforts, we have not gotten rid of one yet!

It's 2007, and in my opinion, we should be well beyond this discussion. Let's finally put this search for exotic plants that will fulfill wildlife habitat needs to rest. It is unnecessary and the price tag is ultimately too high. The IDNR spends tens of thousands of dollars and hundreds of man hours yearly in an attempt to control plants that invade Illinois forests, prairies, and wetlands. Many native shrubs and trees are available to meet landowner wildlife habitat goals. One advantage of belonging to IFA is being able to network with conservation professionals and landowners with similar interests and experiences. Use those contacts if you need some information about this subject. We need a better land stewardship mind-set that should not include the planting of damaging invasive and exotic plants. That would be a much better way for folks to 'get in the game'.

### Illinois Forestry Association

A non-profit, tax-exempt organization under IRS 501(c)3

### Networking--Forming Alliances Ray Herman, IFA President

Many IFA members received a letter recently from Kent Adams, Regional Wildlife Biologist with the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) in Illinois, offering assistance in developing a wildlife management plan. This opportunity is free choice on your part, based on your interest. While not solicited by IFA, I hope many of you take advantage of this offer to broaden the scope of managing your property to include wildlife aspects consistent with your overall interests and goals for your forest land. Kent and I recently met to discuss ways that NWTF and IFA might jointly work together. This appears to be one way. I hope to explore other ways to work together for the good of our members with this group and with others.



## Consider CRP for Wildlife

Betty Joubert, RC&D Coordinator,  
USDA-Natural Resources  
Conservation Service

Forest landowners who also own cropland may want to consider USDA Farm Service Agency's (FSA) Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) to improve water quality, control soil erosion, and enhance wildlife habitat. CRP is a voluntary program that helps agricultural producers safeguard environmentally sensitive land by planting long-term, resource-conserving cover. In return, FSA provides participants with rental payments, cost-share assistance, and financial incentives depending on eligibility of the land and of the practices enrolled in the program.

Environmentally desirable land devoted to certain conservation practices may be enrolled in CRP at any time under continuous sign-up. Offers are automatically accepted provided the land and producer meet certain eligibility requirements. Offers for continuous sign-up are not subject to competitive bidding. Continuous sign-up contracts are 10 to 15 years in duration.

The land must be eligible and suitable for any of the following conservation practices:

- Riparian buffers
- Wildlife habitat buffers
- Wetland buffers
- Filter strips
- Wetland restoration
- Grass waterways
- Shelterbelts
- Living snow fences
- Contour grass strips
- Salt tolerant vegetation
- Shallow water areas for wildlife.

For more information about CRP continuous sign-up, contact your local FSA office or visit FSA's Web site at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/>.

## EQIP Forest Management Incentive

Kathy McTighe, Forester, USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service

In 2007, USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) introduced a new incentive through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) to encourage landowners to get a forest management plan developed. The incentive payment of \$400 was designed to defray some of the cost of hiring a professional forester to write the plan. Currently, 1,005 landowners have signed contracts to get a plan written for their property with a total of 51,700 acres, averaging around 51 acres in size.

Illinois Department of Natural Resources Forestry Division is assisting NRCS by reviewing and certifying these forest management plans. Once a management plan is developed, the forest owners could be in position to apply for EQIP funding to implement all or parts of the plan. Landowners with a certified forest management plan may also enroll certain qualifying acres under the Illinois Forest Development Act (FDA) Program. The Illinois FDA Program assists landowners with technical aspects of forest management and wood production, and may provide cost sharing assistance in implementation of practices approved in a forest management plan.

NRCS is offering this \$400 incentive again in 2008. Applications for the 2008 EQIP are accepted year round. To be considered for funding, EQIP applicants need to meet eligibility requirements and know what land they want to enroll into the program. The initial cut off for selecting applications for funding has been set at October 19th and November 30th, 2007. The primary focus of this special project incentive is to help landowners develop effective management plans and manage their forested acres. Because the sign up is continuous, now is the time to visit with your local NRCS field office and apply.

## Forestry Seminars on the Internet

Cornell University's ForestConnect offers a Webcast seminar series for private forest landowners, foresters, and forest enthusiasts. Webcasts use standard Internet connections to allow participants to enjoy live presentations in the comfort of their home, public library, or local office. Webcasts take place on the third Wednesday of each month at noon and again at 7:00 pm. Each presentation is about 30 minutes with time for questions. Participants must pre-register at <http://www.ForestConnect.info>.

Webcasts are targeted to the New York and Northeast audience but will interest most forest owners.

Topics and dates:

- Oct. 17--Creating Vernal Pools for Wildlife (tentative)
- Nov. 21--Natural Regeneration in Your Hardwood Forest
- Dec. 19--Don't Degrade Your Woodlot

## IFA Gear Available

Here's another opportunity to be a "Voice for Illinois Forests"... proudly wear the IFA logo! Shirts cost \$16.00, and hats are \$10.00. Shirts are available in a variety of sizes and colors. Contact Secretary Dave Gillespie (modeling the new shirt and cap) for IFA gear at [dandgisp@aol.com](mailto:dandgisp@aol.com).

