



# 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!

## **Message from the President**

*By Mike McMahan*



On the morning after our annual meeting, as the responsibilities of my new role as your President began to sink in, I remember thinking, "Let the games begin!" In the days since, I have really come to appreciate the leadership that already exists within IFA. Not only are the individuals who make up the Board of Directors long-standing volunteers who give freely of their time and talents year after year, but more importantly, they are "team players."

With this backdrop, IFA has had several years to discuss and reflect on the many things we want to accomplish as an organization. I can remember when I was a high-school student involved in sports, my car, my studies and my social life. My mother lovingly said "Mike, you have 49 irons in the fire – the ONLY way you will make any progress is to pick some and focus. If you finish only one at the end of the day, you will have 48 irons in the fire. That is called "progress." This is my personal starting point for IFA.

We developed five goals over the last few years. In consultation with the Executive Committee, our Executive Director presented a streamlined planning process to the Board in mid-November. The plan calls for the work on each goal to be led by a state-wide committee, downplaying the regional focus that has produced mixed results for us in the past. The process includes some planning tools to help committees set priorities and decide what tasks to pursue.

The plan was well received. We have a special meeting scheduled for mid-December to get some of the details lined out as we move forward. We are asking everyone to reflect on their personal interests and talents, and then volunteer for the appropriate committee(s) and/or tasks. The idea is simple – people who WANT to do something as a volunteer perform far better than those who are assigned a role, but lack the skills or interest necessary to do a good job.

As we move forward, we need a few more people to take on simple tasks, volunteer on a committee, or perhaps even join the board. If you have special skills like clerical, accounting, computer, marketing – or political contacts at any level in Illinois – please reach out and offer to lend a hand. As the size of our team grows, so will the level of our success.

We will never get to where we have "zero" irons in the fire – we all understand that. But, with your help, we will be able to look back at 2015 and be proud of what we did.

Thank you so much for this opportunity to serve. I am truly humbled by your trust and support.

**IFA Web site**

[www.ilforestry.org](http://www.ilforestry.org)

## Executive Director Notes

by Stephanie Brown

### Pardon Our Dust



You see it, then you hear it. The bright yellow caution tape, construction equipment, jackhammers, power tools. Sometimes you even feel

the vibration as you enter a business in the midst of remodeling. Loyal customers put up with the interruption because they realize that improvements are intended to make things better for everyone in the long run.

In membership organizations, efforts to engage volunteers and build new programs may cause a temporary shift in priorities while "construction" is underway. It is hard to see, hear, or feel the improvements that are incubating behind the scenes - efforts designed to improve the services offered to current as well as future members.

The average IFA member probably hasn't noticed, but we have been quietly laying the groundwork for a stronger and more sustainable association. As your Executive Director, I'm the contractor on this job, hired by the Board to apply my best skills to the mix. In my toolkit, I bring grant writing, program development, and non-profit leadership experience that can serve the organization well.

Our approach is simple. Make the best possible use of our limited resources to build an organization that more efficiently and effectively addresses our mission and related goals. We have developed a plan, and we're in the process of getting our team organized to carry it out. Each volunteer will contribute what they do best, and step by step, we will move IFA forward.

We wouldn't be in the position to make these improvements if it wasn't for the hard fought accomplishments of our past and present board members and technical advisors. Getting a non-

profit organization like IFA established is no small task. It is a huge challenge to recruit and retain members while simultaneously developing the capacity to serve, while also addressing a broad mission. The journey hasn't been without its setbacks, but look how far our volunteer-driven IFA has come! We remain determined to honor the good intentions of our founders.

There are several ways you can help, the most basic being to maintain your membership. Member dues support the bulk of our operating expenses. In fact, we ultimately need many more IFA members to make ends meet – thus the renewed focus on growing our suite of programs to attract and serve a larger audience.

It will take some time, so please be patient. Volunteer for a task that you feel comfortable doing. You might even consider a tax-deductible financial contribution to help us serve you better.

As we prepare for the exciting year ahead, know that we are grateful for your membership. Your support makes a huge difference to our small organization. We are thankful for the ongoing service and dedication of our faithful volunteers. Lastly, we heartily appreciate those who have demonstrated their confidence in IFA through life memberships and donations. Although we are (still) a work in progress, we are most definitely open for business!

Sincere Wishes for a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

## Secretary Comments

by Dave Gillespie

At our recent Annual Meeting/Conference (if you missed it, you missed a good one) I was talking with an IFA member who wanted to know which species of wood burns best in her fireplace. I recalled a poem I had in my files that would answer that question and, after the meeting, sent it to her.

I thought I would share it with all of you.

Beechwood fires are bright and clear  
If the logs are kept a year.  
Chestnuts only good, they say,  
If for long it's laid away.  
Birch and fir logs burn too fast,  
Blaze up bright but do not last.  
Elmwood burns like graveyard mold;  
E'en the very flames are cold.  
Poplar gives a bitter smoke,  
Fills your eyes and make you choke.  
Applewood still scent your room,  
With an incense like perfume.  
Oak and maple, if dry and old,  
Keep away the winter cold.  
But Ash wood wet and Ash wood dry,  
A king shall warm his slippers by.  
-Anon.

This also seems timely concerning the impending infestation of the Emerald Ash Borer.

*P.S.*

Part of my job is to facilitate the work of our committees and many helpers along the way. I have a special goal to make it easier for people just like you to join the team. If you'd like to help out, give me a call or shoot me an email, and we can talk about it. If you're willing, and we have a task that fits your interests, then by all means let's plan on it. If it doesn't work out, then at least we have had a meaningful exchange. No strings attached! I look forward to hearing from you.

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## IFA 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

### A Taste of the Forest

by Kurt Bobsin - IFA Technical Advisor

It was a blend of business and pleasure as those in attendance were able to connect with each other while enjoying the merchandise and special attractions at Scheels Sporting Goods in Springfield, host of this year's annual meeting. The Region 2 planning committee did a great job of bringing in speakers and presenters for Friday's business meeting. Their planning skills were very evident on Saturday with the beautiful fall weather that was the backdrop to a visit of the Ralph Winch sawmill and a tour of Jim & Sue Hynes' Tree Farm in nearby Pleasant Plains.

The inside program this year was particularly noteworthy as two of IFA's partner organizations were represented. Director Marc Miller, Director of the IL Department of Natural Resources, reported on the latest development within the Division of Forest Resources. He thanked IFA for their efforts on behalf of forestry in the state and encouraged the group to stay engaged to garner support for resources that would benefit the agency and the Division of Forestry. State Conservationist, Ivan Dozier, from USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service highlighted his agency's accomplishments. He also discussed opportunities for advancing conservation and forestry through the latest programs being delivered through the 2014 Farm Bill. Gwen Kolb, State Coordinator for the US Fish & Wildlife Service's *Partners for Fish & Wildlife* program gave a colorful and informative talk on the work and funding opportunities landowners have for implementing forestry practices through her staff.

Following the evening dinner, Dr. James Veselenak, retired professor from the University of Illinois, gave a presentation entitled *Fungi from the Forest*. Through a series of slides and anecdotal stories, he informed and entertained the group with information about how to identify mushrooms, the ecological importance these organisms play in the forest and most importantly, how to choose and eat these delicacies without a visit to the doctor or the morgue!



Saturday morning was sunny and pleasant as the groups headed off to two locations for a day in the field. Ralph Winch hosted one of the stops and demonstrated sawing techniques on his Wood Mizer portable sawmill.

Jay Hayek provided instruction on how to take care of your chainsaw by keeping your chainsaw sharpened. He navigated through the intricacies of understanding terms like pitch, depth, raker, gullet and tooth.



Jim and Sue Hynes welcomed the group to their Tree Farm where the tour featured several experts on various topics.

Carol Bryant explained how to grow Shitake mushrooms beginning with inoculating oak logs with spores. This is a *Taste of the Forest* that should be experienced.



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Stacy Lindemann, National Wild Turkey Federation (above), and Dan Schmoker, Consulting Forester (below) tag teamed and led the group into the woods for discussions on managing the forest for wildlife, controlling invasive species and tree identification.



This annual meeting is always memorable, provides a way for members to connect and helps support the Association financially through a silent auction. Plans are already underway for next year's event that will be held in conjunction with the IL Tree Farm program's field tour featuring Outstanding Tree Farmers of the Year, Tony & Jill Kreke of Effingham. Plan to be there!

## IFA Responds to Federal Proposals Affecting Private Lands

Two separate federal proposals inviting public comment have drawn the attention of the Illinois Forestry Association. Either proposal could potentially interfere with professionally-guided forest management and/or other conservation-oriented practices planned by our member landowners.

### Proposed Definition of "Waters of the United States" Under the Clean Water Act

The proposed rule would appear to provide the opportunity for the Army Corps of Engineers and/or the Environmental Protection Agency to interpret any water body, through the term "significant nexus," as 'waters of the United States.' All tributaries and all waters adjacent to such tributaries would, for the first time, be jurisdictional. Routine activities on private property could fall subject to an onerous federal permitting process.

Although EPA's chief administrator has stated, "The bottom line is if you didn't need a permit before this proposed rule, you won't need one when it's finalized," we are skeptical because it all depends on how the rule is applied. Permitting requirements could increase, and/or Supreme Court decisions could expand jurisdictions at a later point in time.

The majority of the IFA Board concluded that in its current form, the proposed rule was confusing, had too much potential to increase regulation, and would do little to "clarify" waters of the United States. Formal comments were submitted, accordingly.

### Proposed Listing of the Northern Long-Eared Bat (NLEB) as an Endangered Species

IFA is in the process of responding to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's proposal to list the northern long-eared bat (NLEB) as an endangered species, citing concurrence with comments submitted by the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, the Southern Group of State Foresters, and the Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters.

The proposed listing has serious implications for our members because of the broad geographic range of this particular species of bat. It could significantly compromise and/or interfere with efforts to manage forests anywhere in Illinois.

Our position is that normal forest management activities provide population level benefits that far outweigh potential harm to individual bats. Maintaining healthy forested ecosystems provides suitable habitat that benefits the population across its entire range.

## Tree Grower's Creed

Let's care for trees where they live!  
Trees care for wildlife where they live.  
Trees hold the soil where it lies.  
Trees catch rain drops where they fall.  
Trees convert CO<sub>2</sub> to the air we breathe.  
Trees give us shade, solitude, and wood products.  
Caring for trees just seems like the right thing to do.

*Joe L. Newcomb  
2013 IFA Annual Meeting*



## Forestry Council Approves Projects

by Stephanie Brown, Executive Director



The Illinois Forestry Association was awarded two small grants totaling \$5948 at the September meeting of the Illinois Forestry Development Council.

The **Profiles in Forestry** project (\$5000) focuses on a longstanding problem – the lack of a popular and accurate understanding of forestry. A collection of short photo stories will provide a new form of evidence that is visually compelling and easily understood. These mini forestry profiles will be useful individually, in sequence, or as a complete collection, depending on the media, the point to be made, and/or the attention span of the target audience.

The project is designed to overcome misperceptions about what forestry is, what foresters do, and what landowners can accomplish when they work with a professional forester. Forestry's impact on the landscape has been grossly underestimated and too narrowly associated with the single practice of timber harvesting. IDNR Forest Resources statistics have been shared, the Forestry Council has produced lengthy reports, and still these misperceptions linger.

This lack of a more complete understanding severely limits growth in the forestry sector. Currently within IDNR there is much pressure to find sources other than general revenue fund to financially support each division; although forest management greatly enhances fish and wildlife habitat, there is resistance to the notion of applying what appear to be ample sources of funding to the Division of Forest Resources. Instead, there is a stubbornly held perception that forestry is solely focused on cutting timber. Telling them hasn't worked, so perhaps we can show them.

Beyond IDNR, there are benefits of a better informed General Assembly. This project should be particularly useful in reaching busy policy makers with easily digestible information presented in a visually compelling way.

An important side benefit for IFA is the potential for growing our membership to be a more effective voice for forestry in IL. Consider the premise that few forest landowners think of themselves as "forest landowners." They are landowners with a variety of interests and cover types on their land. To help them appreciate the range of activity encompassed by forestry is to help them see its relevance to their interests and concerns.

At IFA, forestry is our middle name. It is an ongoing challenge to reach and bring into the fold new landowners who relate to who we are, what we do, and why they should be a part of it. Short photos stories containing mini-profiles of what forestry is all about should help overcome misperceptions and have much broader appeal than words alone.

Beyond the value of the photo stories for use in marketing, this project offers IFA the travel support needed to get around the state to meet directly with foresters and members. We also hope to meet key landowners that have yet to join IFA or get involved in any way. Through this project, we look forward to helping foresters get the credit they so richly deserve for their many and varied accomplishments.

The Forestry Council also granted funding for a project called **Across the Miles: Facilitating Long Distance Forestry Communication in IL** (\$948). Funding will secure the software license needed to continue hosting webinars and video conference meetings for another year. The funding will allow IFA to present online educational programming and host committee meetings while saving participants the expense and time involved in traveling.

### Find IFA on Facebook!

Members and their loved ones who use Facebook are urged to "Like" and "Share" the new Illinois Forestry Association page, as well as our occasional posts. This doesn't replace any of our regular forms of member communication, but is intended as an enhancement. It offers a new way for people within and outside IFA to learn about forestry and our association. Our success depends entirely on the extent to which members are willing to share, so thanks in advance for helping to grow our audience!

Check it out!

[www.facebook.com/ILForestry](http://www.facebook.com/ILForestry)



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!

### Illinois Forestry Association

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

## Restoring Illinois' Mighty Oak Forests

by Tracy Boutelle Fidler

Take a walk in your nearest forest, lie on your back and tell me whether you see sky or branches overhead. While each forest is unique, most Illinois forests share one unfortunate similarity: They are shady.

It wasn't always this way.

Illinois' forests once sported wildflowers and grasses, thanks to a more open structure that let the sun shine into them. Butterflies, bees and other insects loved these plants, and birds, bats and other small critters loved eating *them*. In this sunny place, the mighty oak thrived. Oaks, you see, require a lot of light. Remove the light, and you (eventually) remove the oaks.

"We're worried about the loss of oaks. You don't see many young oaks trees," said Eric Holzmüller, a forest ecologist at Southern Illinois University who has been studying what trees make up the region's forests and how that composition is changing over time.



Wildflowers such as the Tephrosia virginiana thrive in open forest environments: Photo by Chris Benda

### An impending crisis?

In virtually every forest in the Eastern United States, scientists have tracked a shift towards trees that tolerate shade. Within these forest discussions, Illinois holds an unfortunate place: Its southwestern forests are on track to become the first place in North America where oaks lose dominance. Scientists call this transition mesophication.

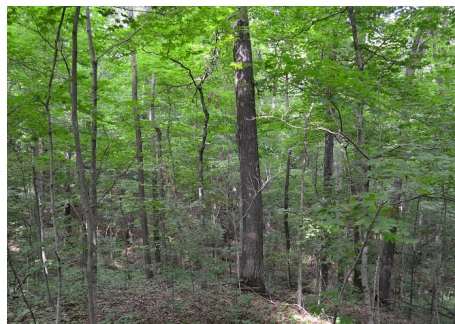
Once shade-loving trees get a foothold, they make the forest moister and cooler, essentially changing the climate of the forest. Leaves and wood on the forest floor begin retaining more moisture, which limits fire on the landscape. Over time, a self-perpetuating cycle is created where these shade-loving trees gradually change the forest to suit them — not oaks or the other plants that thrived in this fire-dependent environment.

Scientists are sounding the alarm about this transition. An article in *Forestry Matters* calls it an "impending crisis," saying: "We feel strongly that the risk of losing large components of the eastern oak forest is real, and the potential consequences to the timber industry and wildlife populations will be dire."

### Restoring Illinois' oak woodlands

Illinois forests are a mosaic of glades, barrens, open oak woodlands, closed oak woodlands, upland forests, bottomland forests, swamps and more. The differences between each community type are subtle — and can seem academic to the average forest lover. For example, the tree canopy cover in a closed oak woodland spans between 50 and 80 percent of the sky, while an open oak woodland canopy covers 20 to 50 percent.

Restoration efforts in the state are targeting areas that should be more open, such as woodlands. Prescribed fire, which is a fire conducted by natural resource professionals under specific conditions, and selective tree removal are two management techniques that can create a more open forest.



Above: A typical closed canopy forest. Photo by Chris Benda; Right: A sunnier forest. Photo by Tracy Boutelle Fidler.

"Everybody thinks that you don't disturb the forest," said Larry Heggemann, who works with the Central Hardwoods Joint Venture to raise awareness about the changes taking place in eastern U.S. forests and how those changes affect wildlife. "The highest challenge that we have is convincing people that having disturbance in a forest is a good thing."

### Check it out!

From Northern Illinois' Lake County Forest Preserves to south central Illinois' Forbes State Park, there are places in the state where forest landowners can assess woodland management for themselves. One new project is at Southern Illinois' Trail of Tears State Forest. There, a demonstration project will assess what combination and timing of forest actions would have the best, most immediate effects. It will examine whether prescribed fire should come before or after any cutting in the forest, as well as specific cutting techniques, including selectively harvesting trees and thinning the middle canopy.

"We can highlight the changes that are going on, while also having a discussion about forest management techniques," said David Allen, a forester with Illinois Department of Natural Resources who has been leading the effort.

Because the demonstration project will assess these different treatments, it will be like a one-stop shop for landowners who are interested in improving management on their forested lands.

Interested in learning more? Like Southern Illinois Forest Management on Facebook. Follow Soil Forests on Twitter. Or, visit Lake County Forest Preserves' Woodland Habitat Restoration Project's web site at <http://www.lcfpd.org/woodlands/>.





## Opinions & Commentary Walnuts & Acorns

by Lee M. Rife



By the time that you read this, leaves will have all fallen from the deciduous trees, except from some species of oak, notably pin oak, and coniferous trees will have shed their needles, except for new growth and for the most part their cones. Perhaps the first snowfall in your area has already occurred. Welcome to winter, although winter is less welcome as your writer becomes older. Uncle Arthur is very much alive and well during this season of low temperatures.

Still there are a number of activities that can be undertaken outdoors in the forest. Timber stand improvement activities, checking the forest floor for erosion and planning how to control it, or just taking a camera to get pictures of wildlife all come to mind. If you have a wood stove or fireplace, there is always firewood to be cut and stacked. Please remember that all firewood needs to be "seasoned" to prevent creosote build up.

Last, but not least, winter is the time to gather information. If you are planning a harvest, find a workshop or similar event concerning how to treat timber for tax purposes. Also, you might consider doing a "Game of Logging" course when it is offered. There are always events about non-timber harvest activities such as making maple syrup and making various items from deer antlers. (*note: this is legal as long as the skull is not attached*).

## "The History of Conservation in Illinois"

(Installment # 10)

By: Dave Gillespie, Secretary

This account of the history of conservation in Illinois was written by Joseph P. Schavilje in 1941. This installment begins where the ninth installment ended.

Mr. Woods, after becoming settled on a small prairie in what is now Edwards County, made a short survey of the country around these prairies. He mentions the fact that the buffalos which used to frequent the prairies have moved north and west to the larger prairies as the country became settled. Even the reduction in the number of deer was noticed between 1818 and 1820. He states that the woods and the prairies contain the following wild animals, "bears, wolves, panthers, wildcats, foxes, opossums, raccoons, ground hogs, ground squirrels, tree or common squirrels, deer, buffalos, elks, otters, pole cats and rabbits." The following reptiles are mentioned, "rattlesnakes, copperheads, black, garter, and water snakes." Of the birds he speaks of the "turkeys, turkey buzzards, prairie fowls, quails, pigeons, doves, wild geese, wild ducks, wood-cocks, snipes, blackbirds, mocking birds, red birds, yellow birds, humming birds, whippoorwill, blue jays, parakeets, larks, woodpeckers, and black martins."

(To be continued in the next issue of "The IFA Newsletter".)

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## Forestry Cost-Sharing Available

If you have a forest management plan containing practices that are scheduled or past due for implementation, now is the time to contact your consultant or IDNR District Forester. Funding is currently available to share the cost of certain forest management practices, particularly those recommended following a timber harvest. Landowners who have harvested timber and paid the 4 % harvest fee receive priority for the available funds.

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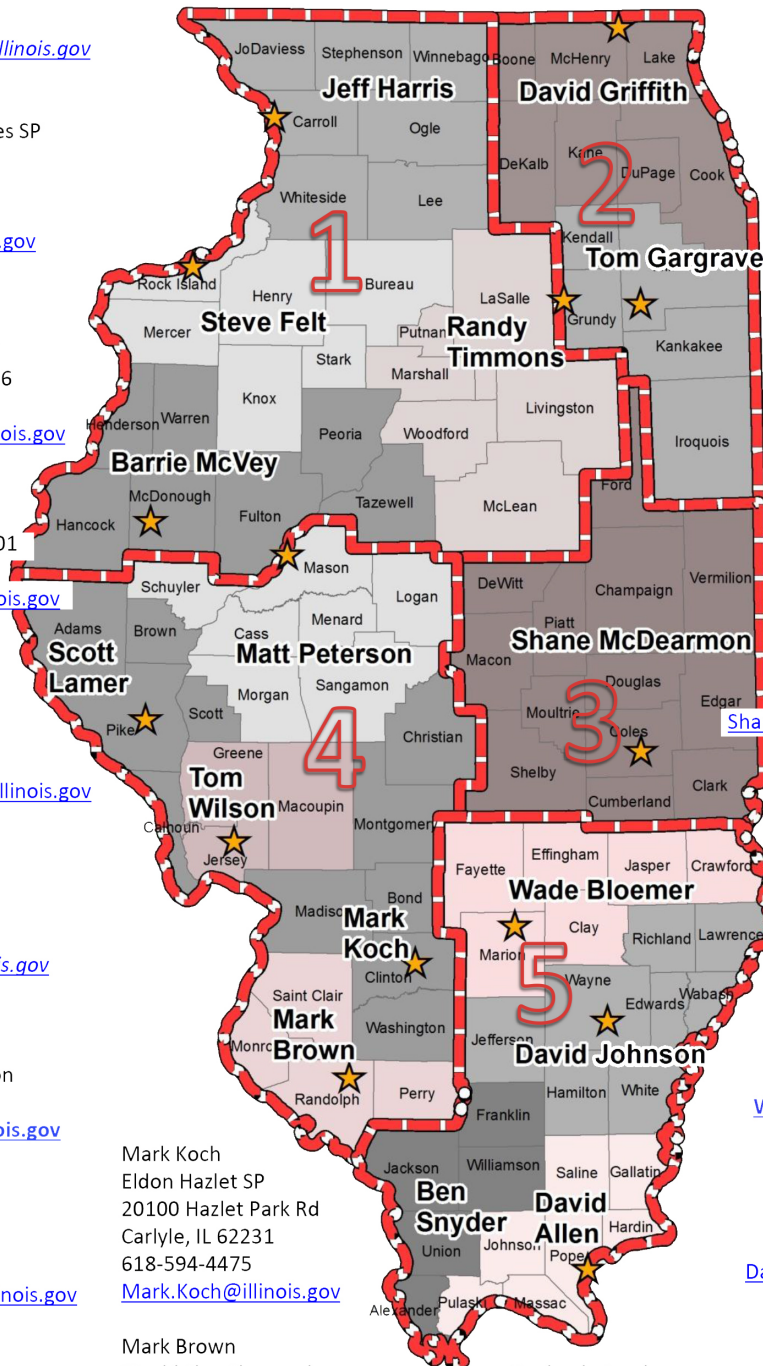
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## ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE EXPANDS STATE EMERALD ASH BORER QUARANTINE

***Boundaries now include 61 of  
Illinois' 102 counties***

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – Twelve counties have been added to Illinois' emerald ash borer (EAB) quarantine, the state Department of Agriculture announced today.

The new additions to the boundaries include seven counties where the tree-killing beetle was identified for the first time this year and five that are considered to be at risk of infestation. "Those five counties – Christian, Franklin, Fulton, Jefferson and Mason – do not have a confirmed detection," EAB program manager Scott Schirmer said. "Each, however, is bordered by at least two counties that do and could benefit by implementing quarantine rules, which are intended to prevent the spread of the beetle through the movement of potentially-infested items like firewood."

The seven, new EAB discoveries were made in Logan, Menard, Peoria, Perry, Sangamon, Tazewell and Williamson counties. With their addition, as well as the addition of the five "at risk" counties, the quarantine now covers 61 of Illinois' 102 counties. Specifically, it prohibits the removal of the following items:

- The emerald ash borer in any living stage of development.
- Ash trees of any size.
- Ash limbs and branches.
- Any cut, non-coniferous firewood.
- Bark from ash trees and wood chips larger than one inch from ash trees.
- Ash logs and lumber with either the bark or the outer one-inch of sapwood, or both, attached.
- Any item made from or containing the wood of the ash tree that is capable of spreading the emerald ash borer.
- Any other article, product or means of conveyance determined by the IDOA to present a risk of spreading the beetle infestation.



The emerald ash borer is a small, metallic-green beetle native to Asia. Its larvae burrow into the bark of ash trees, causing the trees to starve and eventually die. Since the first detection of the pest near Detroit, Mich., in 2002, it has killed more than 250 million ash trees.

The beetle often is difficult to detect, especially in newly-infested trees. Signs of infestation include thinning and yellowing leaves, D-shaped holes in the bark of the trunk or branches and basal shoots. Anyone who suspects an ash tree has been infested should contact their county Extension office, their village forester or the Illinois Department of Agriculture.

In addition to the 12 new counties, EAB quarantine also includes Boone, Bureau, Carroll, Champaign, Clark, Coles, Cook, Cumberland, DeKalb, DeWitt, Douglas, DuPage, Edgar, Effingham, Fayette, Ford, Grundy, Henderson, Henry, Iroquois, Jo Daviess, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Knox, Lake, LaSalle, Lee, Livingston, Macon, Marion, Marshall, McHenry, McLean, Mercer, Moultrie, Ogle, Piatt, Putnam, Rock Island, Shelby, Stark, Stephenson, Vermilion, Warren, Whiteside, Will, Winnebago and Woodford counties.

The full quarantine order, which takes effect immediately, and other information about the EAB program can be found on the internet at [www.IllinoisEAB.com](http://www.IllinoisEAB.com).

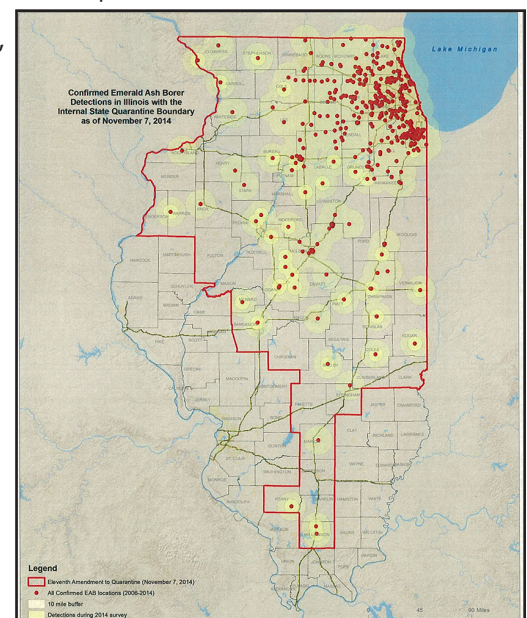
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## Forestry Advice is Twofold

*by Paul Deizman, IDNR, technical advisor*

1. Assume your ash trees are going to die. If a harvesting opportunity is viable, cut all or most of the merchantable ash trees.
2. Update your management plan to meet your ownership goals and remember that forests are managed as "stands", or compartments, of similar forest types, physical/natural conditions and or composition. Upland forests generally have 5% ash trees (usually white) mixed with other hardwoods and their death will affect the forest negligibly and actually create additional "snags" for wildlife. Bottomland forests can be 30% or greater ash trees (generally green) and, though the forest stand will recover, a significant change may be present in some stands. For example, in some bottomland forests, the thinning of ash trees will be beneficial to the growth of the residual stand. In other forests, the loss of ash trees may greatly affect regeneration and future stand growth. Bottomland stands are especially important to evaluate. The forester will note and picture the stand without ash trees and make recommendations on what to do before or after they die.

Map of EAB Status in Illinois



## Just Some Basic Firewood Tips

by Jay C. Hayek, Extension Forester

Most everyone enjoys the ambience and warmth of a fire on a chilly fall night or on a cold winter day – I know I do! Due to the simple fact that this is a newsletter article and not a dissertation about firewood, I just wanted to throw out a couple basic comments about firewood. No, this article won't make you any smarter; however, it might make you more inclined to research the topic in a bit more detail down the road.

### Splitting Firewood

Call me old school (or stupid), but I enjoy splitting my campfire wood the old fashion way – with an axe! No, I don't use a maul, nor do I use metal splitting wedges. My firewood-slaughtering weapon of choice is a Fiskars splitting axe. The Fiskars line of axes are super lightweight, super strong, and unbelievably sharp! Believe me, you'll never go back to a maul and wedges after you see and use a Fiskars. One word of caution: watch your toes and feet because these axes are freakishly sharp!

However, if you're one of those clever intellectual types (definitely not me) who like to work smarter rather than harder, then I would encourage the use of a hydraulic log splitter. Hydraulic log splitters generally come in four flavors: manual, electric, gas, and PTO-driven. They can be rented for the weekend or purchased outright. I would definitely opt for a hydraulic log splitter (gas version) over the tried and true axe if I required a significant volume of wood and if my time were a precious commodity.

### Seasoning Firewood

The primary purpose of seasoning firewood is to reduce the moisture content in the wood in order to promote efficient heating and to maximize BTUs. Firewood in excess of 20-percent moisture content requires more heat to drive-off the excess water contained in wood fiber and cells.

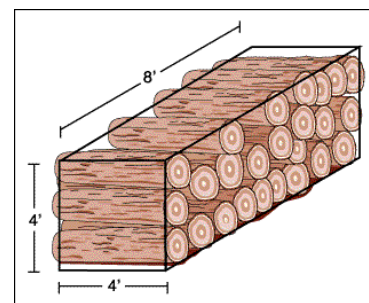
Firewood cut from live trees generally requires 6-10 months of seasoning, whereas firewood cut from dead trees can be utilized much more quickly due to the simple fact that Mother Nature's natural seasoning process has likely already progressed to the point of immediate to near immediate use as firewood. Properly seasoned firewood tends to be slightly grey w/ numerous end-checks.

### Storing Firewood

If you're going to go through all the effort of splitting and stacking your firewood, it would behoove you to pile the fruits of your labor in a suitable location that is relatively dry with plenty of air circulation. Exposure to the sun (west, south, or southwest aspect) is also beneficial. A dedicated storage shed, lean-to, mini high-tunnel, or even a simple tarp and a pallet can help keep your firewood dry for immediate use. Some people just like to elevate their firewood off the ground and let the sun and wind do their thing – that's fine too!

### Buying Firewood

A fair number of US states have legal measures for selling firewood; unfortunately, Illinois is not one of those states. States with legal measures for the sale of firewood are required to specifically state the actual volume (in cubic feet) of firewood for sale. The



sale of firewood using non-volume terminology such as face cord, rick, and truckload are illegal in those states due to the simple fact that such terms lack a volume-based definition.

For example, a standard full cord, by definition, is a neat stack of wood with the following dimensions: 4' wide x 4' high x 8' long (128 cubic feet of wood, bark, and air space). The useable volume of wood based on a standard full cord generally ranges from 80-90 cubic feet. In comparison, a face cord does not have a legal volume definition, nor does a rick or a truckload. I mention this simple little fact because here in Illinois, it is "Buyer Beware." Don't get burned (hah, firewood humor) buying firewood without knowing the exact volume, species, and quality of wood you're actually paying for and receiving.

For more information on firewood, please visit the University of Illinois Extension firewood website: <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/firewood/>

**Table 1.** General firewood ratings for some common Illinois tree species.

| General Rating | Common Name   |
|----------------|---|
| Excellent      | Apple, ash, beech, black locust, hawthorn, hickory, honeylocust, ironwood, oak, Osage-orange (hedge), persimmon, and sugar maple. |
| Good           | Black cherry, black walnut, hackberry, Kentucky coffeetree, red maple, river birch, and sycamore.                                 |
| Fair-Poor      | American elm, basswood, boxelder, buckeye, catalpa, cottonwood, silver maple, sweetgum, willow, and yellow-poplar.                |



## Purple Paint Means “No Trespassing”

by John Gunter

Owners of farm and forest land frequently face problems with trespassers on their property. Absentee owners, in particular, are confronted with the problem; especially if they own highly desirable hunting ground. At times the trespass is accidental, such as when boundary lines are not well defined. It's a bigger problem when the trespass is intentional. A few examples include game poaching, teenage and young adult partying, trash dumping, ATV rutting, timber theft, marijuana growing, and meth production. While no law will bring trespassing to a virtual halt, Public Act 97-0477 (the Purple Paint Law) helps serve notice to potential trespassers. Unfortunately, the Act has not been well-publicized and most people are unaware of it.

Public Act 97-0477 became law when the Governor signed the Act on August 22, 2011. Instead of the requirement to fence or post “No trespassing” signs, landowners can choose to mark property lines with a series of purple (paint) marks on trees or posts.

The purple marks must be **either:**

*A vertical line of at least 8 inches in length. The bottom of the mark shall be between 3 and 5 feet high. Each mark shall be no more than 100 feet from another such mark and be readily visible to any person approaching the property.*

**Or**

*A post capped or otherwise marked on at least its top 2 inches. The bottom of the cap or mark shall be between 3 feet and 5 feet 6 inches high. Posts so marked shall be no more than 36 feet apart and be readily visible to any person approaching the property.*

*Trespassing on property so marked constitutes a Class B misdemeanor, except when a person trespasses using a motor vehicle if the marked area is an orchard; an enclosed area containing livestock; a barn or other agricultural building containing livestock; or a field that is used or capable of being used for growing crops. Such trespassing constitutes a Class A misdemeanor.*

For 16 months following the passage of Public Act 97-0477, landowners using purple paint marks were required to post appropriate signage at the main entrance to the property. Though no longer a requirement, such signage is still a good idea. The Illinois Forestry Association, the originating proponent of the law, has purple paint signs for sale. Visit the IFA website at [www.ilforestry.org](http://www.ilforestry.org) to place an order.

Just as “Good fences make good neighbors,” boundary lines marked with purple paint encourage respect for private property rights.

The author, John E. Gunter, is a Hamilton County landowner, and former President of the Illinois Forestry Association



Photo by John Gunter



### Purple Paint Sign Order Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

# of Signs \_\_\_\_\_ X \$12 (Member Price) \_\_\_\_\_

# of Signs \_\_\_\_\_ X \$18 (Non-Member Price) \_\_\_\_\_

Shipping & Handling \_\_\_\_\_

Total \_\_\_\_\_

Shipping:

1 sign - \$8.00, 2 signs - \$9.00, 3 signs - \$9.00,  
4 Signs - \$10.00, 5 Signs - \$11.00

➡ Orders in excess of 5 signs must be shipped in two mailers

➡ Check or Money Order made out to  
Illinois Forestry Association

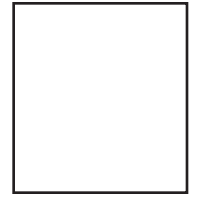
➡ Signs are shipped via US Postal Service

➡ Invoice will be included with signs

Mail Order Form to:

Stan Sipp  
Director, Region 3  
PO Box 111  
Mansfield, IL 61854

Illinois Forestry Association  
P.O. 224  
Chatham, IL 62629-0224



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### **Upcoming Events**

#### ***December 12*** (1:00 PM - 2:00 PM) - Webinar: Forest Botanicals For Profit

Eric Burkhart, faculty instructor at Pennsylvania State University, will share insights from his studies and involvement with native plant species on eastern US forestlands that are wild harvested for the domestic and international plant trade. Quality-control, profitability, and sustainability within this industry will be discussed. Sponsored by the American Tree Farm System.

To register: <https://cc.readytalk.com/cc/s/registrations/new?cid=1z19u5ew41ny>