

CUMBERLAND COUNTY FORESTRY NEWS

Fall 2005



NEW FOREST CONSERVATION GROUP FORMS TO HELP PRIVATE LANDOWNERS

The **NORTH CAROLINA WOODLAND OWNERS ASSOCIATION (NCWOA)** is a newly-formed organization dedicated to advancing the interests of private landowners within our state. The NCWOA affirms the private property rights of landowners including their right to manage and harvest their woodlands in an economically, ecologically and socially responsible manner. To that end, the NCWOA vigorously encourages the practice of forestry as a means of helping landowners realize greater income, more wildlife, cleaner water, fewer wildfires and healthier forests.

North Carolina possesses significant and valuable natural resources found on over 18 million acres of woodland. Private woodland owners own or control approximately three-quarters of this land, or some 14 million acres. In addition to providing natural beauty and wildlife habitat, these forests contribute much to the overall health and economic well-being of our state and her people.

In the last decade, however, North Carolina has lost more than one million acres of woodland and open space to development and urban sprawl. To increase public awareness of the importance of our woodlands to our state, the NC Division of Forest Resources and the NC Cooperative Extension Service, in collaboration with the NCWOA and other conservation groups, will soon present three (3) regional working forests summits for landowners and others interested in our environment. The summits will focus on strategies for retaining forestland in rapidly urbanizing areas as well as income, estate and property taxes. More details will follow in the days ahead as plans for the summits are finalized.

The NCWOA is affiliated with the National Woodland Owners Association and annual dues are \$15.

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I hope you find this newsletter helpful and informative. If you have ideas or suggestions for future issue, please call or stop by the office. I always welcome your feedback!

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Hunting Leases—What You Should Consider

Hunting leases can be a good way to earn extra income from your forestland to pay property taxes. For non-resident landowners, this can provide you with some peace of mind by having someone to look after your property in your absence. However, hunting leases can create huge liability problems for landowners without insurance.

In the past, North Carolina recognized three classes of land users: trespassers, licensees, and invitees, now only two classes are recognized: trespassers and invitees. Each of these classes of land users presents varying degrees of liability to the landowner. The best way to reduce your liability to trespass is to post your land with adequate signs, and reduce the attraction of ponds to youth by fencing.

For invitees such as hunters, civic groups, youth groups, and recreation groups; you should consider liability insurance. Most of the policies available average about \$0.28 per acre and give you coverage up to a million dollars. Some insurance providers require membership with the sponsoring organization. Some examples include: Forest Landowners Association and the NC Forestry Association. It is also important to notify potential land users with information concerning dangerous areas on your property, on-going logging operation locations, and other potentially dangerous situations.

For more information, please contact me at (910) 321-6875 or visit the NCSU Extension Forestry Website at <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/nreos/forest/>



Liability insurance should be factored into the hunting lease for the landowners protection

Fertilization of Longleaf Pine For Pinestraw Production

Pinestraw production in Cumberland County is becoming big business. The increased number of landscaping companies and increased population are driving pinestraw production up. Over time, the raking of pinestraw from the forest floor depletes the soil of nutrients such as nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, calcium, and magnesium that would normally be replaced by the decomposing needles.

Research in North Carolina has shown that fertilization has increased the dry weight of longleaf pinestraw from 25 to 40 percent over unfertilized plots by the second growing season following application. Diameter growth of the trees has also increased up to 49% during the second growing season after application. This can be viewed as a two-fold return on your investment of fertilization.

Due to increasing costs of commercial fertilizers and the potential to damage longleaf pine by over-fertilization, soil and tissue sampling should be used to determine the adequate amount of nutrients needed at 6-7 year intervals. Tissue samples should be taken in the dormant season (usually January or February). One dominant tree should be sampled for every 10 acres and the sample should be one lateral branch from the top third of the crown (typically accomplished using a shotgun or rifle). Fifty to one hundred fully mature needles from the first flush of the previous growing season should be removed from the branch. The samples can be sent to the NCDA lab in Raleigh for analysis.

“Over time, the raking of pinestraw from the forest floor depletes the soil of nutrients”

Once the samples are analyzed and recommendations are given, there is a wide variety of fertilizers to choose from. You should be able to match a blended fertilizer with the recommended ratio of N,P,K from the analysis. The **maximum** recommended single application rates for longleaf are: 100 lbs./acre of N, 25 lbs./ac of P, and 50 lbs./ac of K. Applications should be made in the spring to maximize plant uptake.

Planting Wildlife Food Plots

Wildlife food plots are excellent for attracting wildlife and to supplement them throughout the summer and winter months. However, wildlife plots alone are not enough to support wildlife. Sound forest management such as thinning, burning, crop tree management, and stream side management zones should be the landowner's first priority for wildlife management. This provides various types of wildlife food, protection, and travel lanes throughout the property.

There are several ways food plots can be created at a low cost. Use existing forest trails, fire breaks, and open areas to plant food plots. Treat food plots the same as an agricultural crop. Soil testing should be done prior to land preparation in order to determine the right amount of lime and fertilize to amend the soil which will save money on food plots in the long run. Incorporate the lime six months before planting in order to raise the pH up to the desired level. Most of our Cumberland County forest soils will be more acidic than forage crops desire. Discing and cultipacking should be considered when planting food plots especially for small seed forages such as clover. Getting good seed to soil contact through cultipacking will increase germination rates of clovers where the recommended planting depth is only 1/4 inch deep. Larger seeded forages such as wheat and oats can be drilled or lightly disced in.



Food plots are excellent for attracting wildlife and to supplement them throughout the summer and winter months.

Consider the species of wildlife you want to attract when deciding on the forages to plant. Many of the forages listed for whitetail deer are great for wild turkey as well. Warm-season plots for uplands could include: iron-clay cowpeas, Quail Haven re-seeding soybeans, lablab, and peredovik sunflowers from mid-April through early June. For bottomland warm-season plots plant: American jointvetch, alyceclover, rape, and buckwheat. Cool-season annual mixture for upland sites include: crimson clover, arrowleaf clover along with oats, rye, or wheat. This mixture is close to foolproof and is adapted to a wide range of sites. A cool-season perennial mixture for dryer sites could include: alfalfa, red clover, chicory, birdsfoot trefoil, and oats or wheat. However, alfalfa can have problems with alfalfa weevil and is very sensitive to nutrient deficiencies. For hunters, a plot of oats is always a low cost way to attract deer in the fall and winter months. Warm and cool season mixtures can be planted in the same areas to give wildlife more foraging opportunities.



Wild turkeys will use the warm-season plots as “bugging grounds.” These plots usually harbor an abundance of insects which are a critical component to the diet of turkey poults in the summer. Cool-season plots will be used heavily by wild turkeys in late winter when hard mast crops begin to disappear. Whenever turkeys and quail are a primary consideration, wheat should be considered over oats in forage mixtures listed for deer.

Perennial grasses such as fescue, timothy, and orchardgrass should never be considered in food plots and should be managed and eliminated through herbicide applications. There are many choices for herbicides and recommendations differ for different forage mixtures.

This is only a brief overview of the many options for food plot establishment and management. For more information please contact me at 321-6875 or consult the University of Tennessee Extension publication PB1743 “Growing and Managing Successful Food Plots for Wildlife in the Mid-South at: <http://www.utextension.utk.edu/publications/pbfiles/PB1743.pdf>

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Upcoming Events

- **October 26, 2005**
Forest Landbird Legacy Program (FLLP) and Forest Landbird Management Training
Four Oaks, NC
<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/nreos/forest/feop/Agenda2005/fllp.pdf>, or contact [FEOP](mailto:FEOP@ces.ncsu.edu) 919-515-9563

6.0 CFEs have been approved. Space preference will be given to stewardship foresters until October 10.
- **December 7-8, 2005**
Forest Inventory
Raleigh, NC
More information to be announced or contact [FEOP](mailto:FEOP@ces.ncsu.edu) 919-515-9563

Forestry Issues Series

Extension Forestry and the Forestry & Environmental Outreach Program (FEOP) is pleased to present the Forestry Issues Forum series, a continuing education series for landowners and natural resource professionals. The video teleconference series allows attendees to actively participate with speakers and other participants from across the state. Each teleconference program will apply for Continuing Forestry Education credits.

- November 9, 2005 - [Current Issues in Forest Policy](#)
- January 11, 2006 - Restoration of Shortleaf Pine in NC
- February 8, 2006 - Forestry Tax Update
- April 12, 2006 - Urban Tree Ordinances
- May 10, 2006 - The Potential for Biomass Energy in NC
- June 14, 2006 - Wood Products Update

For further information please contact the [Forestry & Environmental Outreach Program](#) at 919-515-3184 or Extension Forestry at 919-515-5638