

Committee Name:
Assembly Committee – Rural Affairs and Forestry
(AC–RAF)

Appointments

99hr_AC–RAF_Appt_pt00

Committee Hearings

99hr_AC–RAF_CH_pt00

Committee Reports

99hr_AC–RAF_CR_pt00

Clearinghouse Rules

99hr_AC–RAF_CRule_99–

Executive Sessions

99hr_AC–RAF_ES_pt00

Hearing Records

99hr_ab0000

99hr_sb0000

Misc.

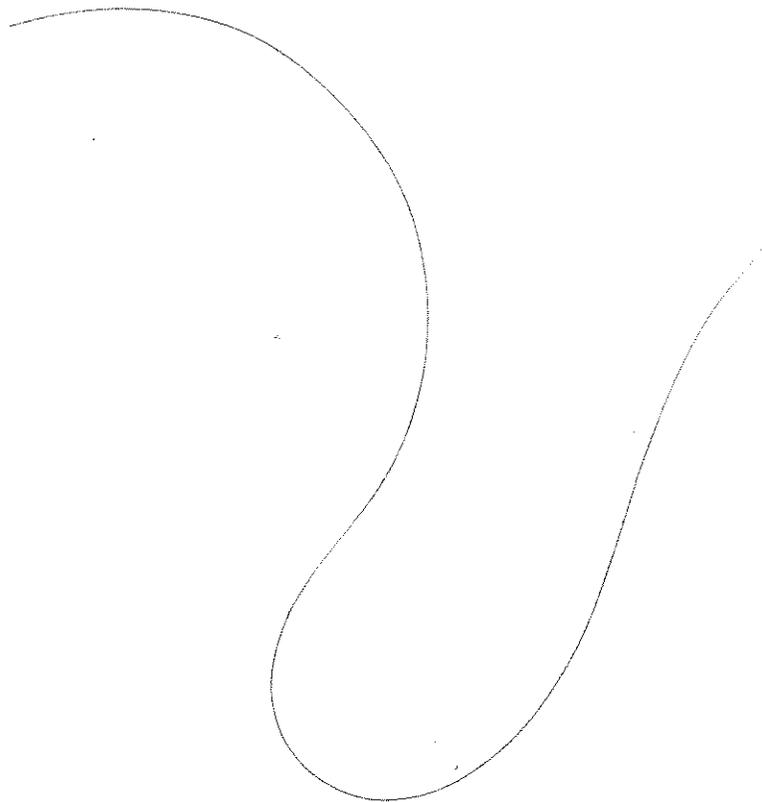
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Record of Committee Proceedings

99hr_AC–RAF_RCP_pt00

8-21-00

LAONA Forestry Mtg



**Forestry Grants
Progress Report
August 21, 2000**

Rosemary K. Mahoney
Executive Director
Cooperative Development Services Fund, Inc.

- **Six cooperatives assisted**
 - ✓ **Sustainable Woods Cooperative – Sauk, Iowa and Richland Counties**
 - ✓ **Hiawatha Sustainable Woods Cooperative – Buffalo and Trempeleau Counties**
 - ✓ **The Living Forest Cooperative – Bayfield and Ashland Counties**
 - ✓ **Kickapoo Wood Cooperative – Vernon, Monroe, Richland and Crawford Counties**
 - ✓ **Forest Stewardship Cooperative – Barron County**
 - ✓ **Wisconsin Family Forests – Portage County**

- **Two new cooperatives incorporated and in membership recruitment phase**
 - ✓ **The Living Forest Cooperative**
 - ✓ **Kickapoo Wood Cooperative**

- **Two cooperatives assisted with capitalization plans and start-up**
 - ✓ **Sustainable Woods Cooperative – 120 founding members; 12,000 acres**
 - ✓ **Hiawatha Sustainable Woods Cooperative – 57 members; 5,000 acres**

- **Cooperative development also supported by two grants from USDA and from various local and national foundations.**

- **Forestry Cooperative Conference planning: October 13 and 14, 2000**
 - ✓ **Manual and other informational materials in development**
 - ✓ **Video on forestry cooperatives in production – supported by a grant from Wood Miser.**
 - ✓ **Targeted towards DNR officials, landowners, resource and conversation professionals, extension professionals**
 - ✓ **Co-funded by grants from Wisconsin DNR and MSI Insurance Foundation**

- **Forest management education programs underway by all cooperatives.**
- **Forest management plans being prepared by two cooperatives.**
- **Important support and cooperation with Wisconsin DNR.**

CDS

**Cooperative
Development
Services**

CDS

**Cooperative
Development
Services**

ROSEMARY K. MAHONEY
Executive Director

608-258-4391 • FAX 608-258-4394

30 W. Mifflin St., Suite 401 • Madison, WI 53703
e-mail: romahoney@msn.com

Membership Form

Cut & Send

- Woodland Owners Share \$100
(First 25 members receive charter status)
- Sponsor Membership \$25
- Other
(please specify) _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

A one time Woodland Owners share of \$100 will jump start LFC and reserve you a place in line for the management, marketing, and processing services that will be offered by LFC.

Join us as a charter member to help develop LFC and reserve access to first available services!

For more information write, e-mail, or call:

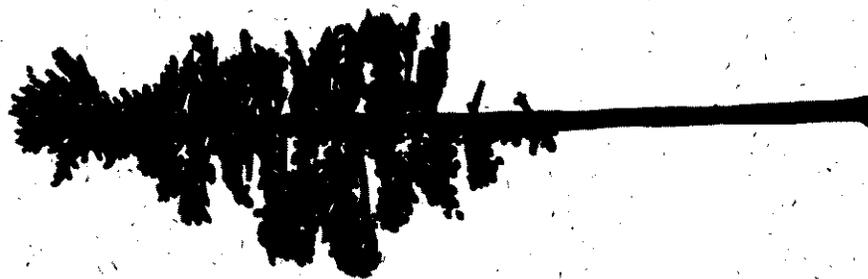
Address:
Living Forest Cooperative
P.O. Box 1202
Bayfield, WI 54814

e-mail:
livfor@cheqnet.net

Call:
Carl - (715) 373-2889
Dave - (715) 779-5206
Dan - (715) 742-3206



The Living Forest Cooperative
P.O. Box 1202
Bayfield, WI 54814



The Living Forest Cooperative

P.O. Box 1202
Bayfield, WI 54814
livfor@cheqnet.net

U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #318
Ashland, WI 54806

The Living Forest Coop is a for-profit corporation registered with the state of Wisconsin

Introduction

The decades of logging have tremendously affected the forests of northern Wisconsin. Logging has removed more than 99% of the great virgin forests from the eastern half of the continent and still proceeds at a rapid rate in the West. With this in mind, the Living Forest Cooperative was incorporated in the spring of 2000. Our goal, as a cooperatively owned business, is to restore the forest to ecological stability while producing high quality value-added products, and improving the local economy.

Does the cooperative model work?

In the spring of 1998 the Sustainable Woods Cooperative (SWC) was founded in southern Wisconsin. Currently SWC has about 100 members and over 15,000 acres of forested land. The members of SWC collectively own over 70 million board feet (bf). SWC has been successful in cutting out the middleman and producing quality wood flooring from its own timber. The individual forest owners have full control of their own lands, which they would not have if contracting with a timber company.

Would joining a cooperative benefit me?

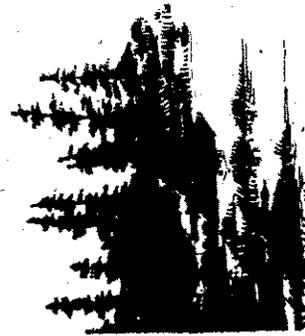
There are many benefits of joining a forestry cooperative. First and foremost, owners would get full value for everything that is harvested from their land. All of the middlemen are cut out so the profits are higher than normal timber sales. The most important benefit is that together, as a cooperative, we can help create a stable local economy where our woodland community and human community can profit together.

OUR MISSION

The Living Forest Cooperative is a bioregional timber management, processing, and marketing enterprise based in the Chequamegon Bay area. We work for the economic, aesthetic, and ecological health of our community forest lands.

OUR GOALS

- ◆ To educate landowners and loggers to manage forests sustainably.
- ◆ To provide a responsible, member-owned and controlled means for forest owners to manage, harvest, process, and market their timber.
- ◆ To assist co-op members in receiving the highest value for their forest products.
- ◆ To have each co-op member certify their forestlands as "well managed" by the FSC Principles and Criteria.



We Believe...

- ◆ in business that supports the local economy by producing certified value-added products from the forests in our area by using sustainable forestry practices.
- ◆ in forestry practices that provide for a healthy, diverse forest; enhance the natural environment; consider the visual impacts of harvesting; and promote recreation and tourism.
- ◆ in stewardship plans that take into account the capabilities of the land, biodiversity, responsible ownership, and the health of watersheds to the benefit of our lakes and streams.
- ◆ that the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Principles and Criteria provide sound guidance and a viable alternative to landowners, foresters, and loggers working to protect and improve the long-term health of our woodlands.
- ◆ that a local forestry cooperative committed to educating landowners about sustainable forestry practices is the most effective means of improving privately owned woodlands and restoring them to health and productivity.

Our Mission

The Sustainable Woods Cooperative is a forest management, processing, and marketing cooperative of private, non-commercial woodland owners. Our mission is to maximize the long-term aesthetic, ecological, and economic benefits from our area forests by means of environmentally responsible forestry practices, landowner and consumer education, and local manufacturing of value-added Forest Stewardship Council-certified wood products.

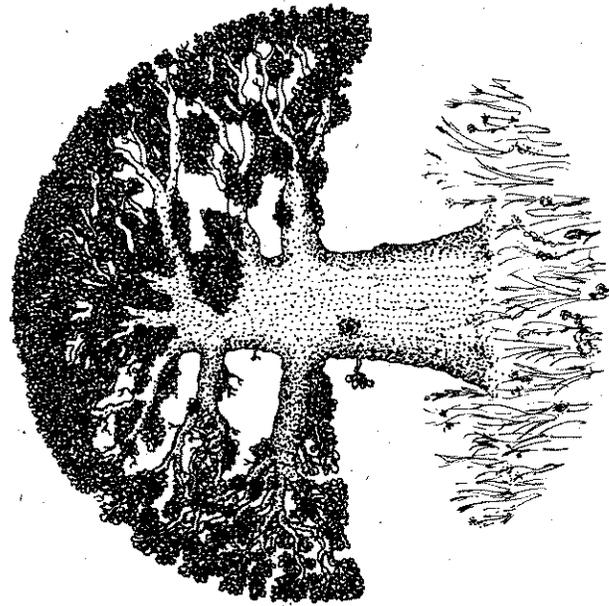
We Believe... that healthy forests and natural lands are essential to the health of the planet and all of its resident species, and that landowners and forest managers have both the opportunity and the responsibility to nurture and maintain these lands for future generations.

- ◆ We believe that "Sustainable Forestry" must protect and restore the biological diversity of our woodlands, preserve air and water quality, and stay within the ecological carrying-capacity of the land.
- ◆ We believe that Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and SmartWood Certification standards provide sound guidance to landowners, foresters, and loggers working to protect and improve the long-term health of our woodlands.
- ◆ We believe that managing appropriate "non-tree" species enhances the aesthetic, ecological, and recreational value of our woods.
- ◆ We believe that a local forestry cooperative committed to educating landowners about sustainable forestry practices is the most effective means of improving privately owned woodlands and restoring them to health and productivity.
- ◆ We believe that a local forestry cooperative strengthens the local economy by maximizing the economic return to the landowner from his or her forest resources.

Sustainable Woods Cooperative

Meeting the highest standards for socially and environmentally responsible community forestry.

P.O. Box 430
Spring Green, WI 53588
(608) 588-9163
swc@mhtc.net



Sustainable Woods Cooperative
P.O. Box 430
Spring Green, WI 53588

What is Sustainable Forestry?

These days there's almost no one in the forestry business who isn't claiming to be "sustainable." So what does it mean? Planting as many or more trees than you harvest? Hardly.

Sustainable is part of our name. So you can be sure we know what it means: protecting the long term health and productivity of your woodlands. How? *By ensuring that the forest is regenerated, that its biological diversity is conserved, that air and water quality are preserved, and that the natural processes of the forest are protected and maintained.*

Will Certified Woods

SWC's forest resource managers are SmartWood certified under guidelines approved by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). Together with chain-of-custody certification, this means that every product coming out of a SWC member's well-managed woodland—whether firewood, custom sawn hardwoods, or finished flooring—can be labeled and marketed as a certified product.

Consumers and producers alike have learned that socially desirable ends are often best achieved when appeals to conscience are combined with market-based incentives. With every purchase of a certified forest product, consumers create just such a market-based incentive for forest owners to manage their land to a higher standard.

How does the Cooperative work

Each co-op member has the opportunity to be involved in every step of the resource management process: from timber stand improvement and habitat restoration to the manufacture and marketing of the finished, value-added wood product.

The value-added dimension benefits the landowner, the local economy, and the forest ecosystem. Even the harvesting of low-grade wood—the cost of which would normally be prohibitive—can be made affordable through creative product development and marketing.

With new jobs being created both in the woods as well as in the workshop, cooperatives can generate and distribute considerable local wealth. Co-op members take pride in knowing that they are being good stewards of their land while contributing to the economic and social well-being of their local communities.

Member Services

Forestry*

- Timber stand improvement
- Management plans coordination
- Reforestation assistance
- Timber sale administration
- Complete harvest management and supervision
- Hauling of trees to the sort yard

* Services available through SWC's consulting resource professionals: Timbergreen Forestry and Clark Forestry.

Ecology*

- Ecological assessments & species inventories
- Restoring natural communities and habitats
 - Prescribed fire management
 - Prairie and savanna restoration assistance
 - Exotic/invasive species control
- Documenting the history of the land and its uses
- Developing non-timber specialty forest products

* Services available through SWC's consulting resource professionals: Bison Belly Futures.

Marketing

- Ongoing market research
- Developing local & regional markets for certified wood
- Contracting manufacturers of value-added wood products
- Markets for non-timber specialty forest products
- Processing members' "own-use" custom orders (by contract)
- Wholesale, retail, and discount sales

Education

- Ecology field trips
- Forest owner field days
- Naturalist newsletters
- Workshops & roundtables on forestry, ecology, marketing, business development
- Lodge training and certification (FISTA & GOL)

Clip & Mail

Please fill out however much you wish to, then clip and mail to SWC at the address on the brochure cover. Thanks!

PLEASE SEND ME:

- information about becoming a member of SWC
- information about SWC products & marketing
- information about SWC acreage & market stock
- a complimentary issue of the SWC newsletter(s):
 - SWC Communicator (business-side news)
 - Naturalist Newsletter (ecology oriented)

PLEASE ADD ME TO:

- mailing list for workshops and field trips
- volunteer list for workdays

I'D LIKE TO:

- subscribe to newsletters (\$25/yr. for both newsletters; published quarterly)
- pay my \$100 membership fee
- make a donation in the amount of _____
- offer a skill, talent, or loan of equipment: _____
- have someone at SWC give me a call
- other: _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Phones: _____ (h) _____ (w)

e-mail _____

location of property _____

natural acres (don't include building, crop, or pasture acres) _____

Board Feats — A Note from Your Directors

By Tom Thieding, SWC Board President

The Sustainable Woods Cooperative is off and running. It's been an exciting two months since the SWC's annual meeting and member equity drive kick-off. Thanks to your positive response and investment in our new venture, we're very hopeful of creating a new model for forest management and wood product marketing in Wisconsin and the U.S.

Required Membership Investment—One of the most frequently asked questions from landowners contemplating whether to continue their membership in SWC is "Why am I required to purchase Acreage Stock to keep my membership in the cooperative?" Here are two quick, solid answers:

First, it is now time for the SWC to move ahead, and it can only do so with people who are strongly committed to the effort. During the feasibility study time, we all were waiting to see just what direction, if any, the SWC might take. As of the annual meeting, our direction is clear. It is now time to "fish or cut bait."

Second, the SWC Board, like any new cooperative board, requires a substantial investment by members in order to leverage debt financing so that the Co-op can begin operations. The Cooperative is not the local library board, it is a serious business venture needing adequate operating and capital equity.

Where do we go from here?

Construction of our solar kiln begins December 4th. Wood for poles has been donated by Greg Beirne. Lending your hand in this work day will reduce our labor costs for the project. The first dried wood from the solar kiln will be available in June. (See article, below.)

Wood sawing and drying. Beginning this winter, the SWC will have the first wood from members' lands sawed and placed in the kiln for drying.

Sales of wood and products. After the SWC has an inventory, it can begin selling wood and arranging for contracted processed wood products.

Management of cooperative. In January, the SWC will



A Newsletter for the Members and Friends of
Sustainable Woods Cooperative

Volume 2 No.4

December, 1999

conduct an employment search to hire a manager for the Cooperative.

Building construction. When adequate funding has been secured, the Cooperative will construct a warehouse with an office as our headquarters and retail outlet.

Forest management. With two certified foresters, Fred Clark and Jim Birkemeier, members can arrange to have sustainable management plans developed to meet their goals.

Education. Gigi La Budde will coordinate several workshops in the new year to provide you with information on ecology, forest specialty products, and forest management.

Kiln Raising Party December 4th

All hands are welcome as we gather to raise a solar cycle kiln: the first building on the new SWC site on Highway 14 in Lone Rock (across from the Amoco station). We may also be processing some firewood. Lunch will be served; we'd appreciate any dish you can bring to pass. There will be a modest, sustainable bonfire — safely constructed — along with good holiday cheer and beverages. Children with adult supervision are welcome.

Dress to work outside, but be prepared to shed layers as you warm up. Bring hammers and nail pouches, if you can. Volunteers from the Atwood Community Center will honor us with their presence and hard work.

We'll meet from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Any contribution of time and labor that you can make will be most welcome. It's important that we have some idea of numbers, so if you think you'll be attending, or you'd like more information, please call Michael Alexander, right away, at (608) 546-6683.

Membership News Update

ACREAGE STOCK DEADLINE EXTENDED

The SWC Board is extending the deadline for charter members—those who paid \$100 in the past for membership—to return their Acreage Stock registration and payment. The new deadline is December 31, 1999. After this date, even charter members will have to pay a \$100 membership fee and their Acreage Stock to be considered legal members: precisely the same conditions that will apply to new members.

MEMBERS ARE ALSO CUSTOMERS

SWC members will be important customers for SmartWood certified wood through the Cooperative. Please keep us in mind as a source of wood for woodworking projects, crafts, or home building and remodeling.

And, if you've ever planned to put in a new hardwood floor, let us know right away. The larger order we can put together for milling, the cheaper our costs... and yours!

And don't forget to refer others to the Co-op. Product price lists are now being developed and will be made available once our inventory is established.

ROUNDWOOD PAYMENT POLICY

Members wanting to process and have wood sold through the SWC will be paid according to scale and grade of the wood delivered to the Co-op, using average market prices provided by the DNR. Members will receive a payment agreement from the Co-op listing the scale and grades of logs and prices, and will be paid within 12 months. This system will allow SWC to begin marketing wood and developing an income stream. Members are not obligated to sell their wood through the Co-op, and may place bids on their trees to be harvested.

HARVESTING? CONTACT SWC FOR MARKET STOCK

If your management plan recommends a wood harvest in the next three years, please contact the SWC to arrange for the purchase of Market Stock to secure your place in line for the processing and marketing of your wood. Market Stock is sold in \$100 shares representing 1000 board feet of estimated harvest. The Market Stock helps front some of the operating costs of the Co-op, helps it control its inventory and flow of wood, and makes a commitment for the Co-op to sell the wood at the best and highest market it can.

Notes From The (Marketing) Frontier

What I love about doing market research and development for the SWC is that it is frontier work. Reviewing the past few issues of the Co-op's newsletter, I was reminded of this by the repeated references to Co-op members as "pioneers."

Thank you, brave pioneers! Your work has enabled me to be at the forefront of a new and exciting marketing frontier. In the old frontier we clear-cut and moved on. In the new frontier we harvest selectively and enrich our land, our county, our state, our country, our Earth. I am pleased to report that I see lots of "territory" out there and, on behalf of the Co-op, I have begun to stake out "ground" (market share).

Although I was hired to do "market research," it has quickly become "market research and development." When I talk to people about SWC's unique mission and resources, they get excited too, and start telling me about their needs for wood.

Last weekend, by happenstance, I stopped into a major landscape supplier in Madison to buy a few tulip bulbs. I noticed that they had an array of wood products from Kentucky. When I talked with their buyer about SWC and the possibility of supplying these same products, she responded warmly, and said: "As long as it is competitively priced, I'd prefer to buy these products from Wisconsin."

With the help of Steve Stevenson, Kent Prather, Michael Alexander, and others in the Co-op's marketing group, as well as guidance from E.G. Nadeau and support from Jim Birkemeier, Michael Whaley, Rowie Symon-Roske and many others, I have been involved in building relationships, developing new markets and continuously promoting SWC. My work, which began in mid-October, includes these results:

- Sale of 200 board feet of red oak to Outpost Natural Foods

for wine racks in its new store in Milwaukee.

- Sale outlet for SWC firewood at Williamson Street Grocery Cooperative in Madison.
- A request from the Prairie Crossing builder for a display so he can better help us sell our flooring.
- Interest expressed by a log home builder to do a "pilot" floor with SWC.
- A preliminary conversation with a Parade of Homes "green" builder to do a floor for him.
- A "green light" from the Madison School District to research the possibility of using SWC wood for Madison's new school.
- Interest expressed by a woodworking retail outlet with three stores in the state to sell SWC wood.
- A busy Madison woodworker who needs trim (now!) for an oak archway, and will take a look at SWC boards next week, with the idea of switching to SWC as his source for wood.
- An article on SWC, published in *Eastside News*, and slated to run in the Green Building Alliance newsletter, and another article on SWC and its firewood for the Williamson Street Cooperative Reader.

Interested members can get a more complete and detailed report when I present my "initial research findings" to the Board at its meeting on December 1st. —Ellen Rulseh

Editor's note: Ellen Rulseh has developed marketing plans and promotional materials for environmental and land conservation groups in New York City and on Long Island. Most recently she assisted Madison's Williamson Street Cooperative, a \$4 million business, in developing a marketing plan for its new store. Ellen was born in Madison, grew up in Milwaukee, and graduated from UW-Madison. After living happily for a decade in New York, she has, also happily, returned "home".

"A La Recherche des Arbres Perdus" * The American Chestnut

"No tree has brought more real joy to boys and girls and grown folks than the Chestnut." 1927

"And gone the harvest of nuts, that stuffed our Thanksgiving turkey and warmed our hearts and fingers at the vendor's corner." 1940

The American Chestnut (*Castanea dentata*) was once the reigning monarch of eastern American forest trees. In the colonizing and settling of America by European immigrants and their descendants, the Chestnut provided wood for railroad ties, barns and fences, house-framing, fuel, and furniture, and tannin for leather processing. Attaining a height of 100 feet or more, with trunks 4-10 feet in diameter, open-grown Chestnuts were often spared the axe because the beauty of their spreading branches and broad, rounded crowns made them a beloved part of the American landscape.



*A Remembrance of Trees Past

American Chestnuts were also prized for their delicious nuts; considered much superior to the Old World Chestnuts in both sweetness and flavor. Maturing a crop of nuts every year, the Chestnut provided a dependable source of mast for wildlife. Unlike the oaks and beech, whose blossoms are often killed by late freezes, the Chestnut doesn't bloom until June or early July, long after any danger of frost is past.

Now, alas, the American Chestnut is but a memory. About 1904, a fatal blight struck this native species, caused by a foreign fungus brought to this country on the imported Chinese Chestnut. From the time it was first detected on the grounds of the New York Zoological Park, it spread with sickening rapidity. This fungus, *Endothia parasitica*, has no intermediate host—its spores are carried from tree to tree by the wind. Quarantine lines were futile. Large sums of state and federal money were appropriated for control efforts, but in vain. In the course of a few decades, the premier tree of American forests stretching from the Atlantic seaboard to the Mississippi River was all but exterminated from its range by this deadly bark disease.

The disappearance of the American Chestnut marked the passing of a way of life. It also, for good or ill, marked the end of our dependence on a single tree species to fill so many needs.

We learn our lessons slowly. Our naive notions about the limitlessness and resiliency of our natural resources have been given way to new-found understandings about the fragility and complexity of natural systems and their susceptibility to unforeseen influences and manipulation.

P.S. A small planting of young American Chestnuts is located in the Spring Green area. Contact Gigi if you'd like to visit.

Ecology Field Trip to Sharpen ID Skills
Saturday, Dec. 11th, 1:00-3:30pm; Black Hawk Ridge

Ever wonder where detectives go in winter? Wherever the most clues are! And in Wisconsin that means: into the woods! You, too, can become a winter detective and learn the tricks for using bark, leaf scars, buds, branch form, and fruits as clues for the identification of the trees and shrubs in your woods.

Winter is the ideal time to get more intimately acquainted with your land. Summer's impenetrable thickets—and swarms of mosquitoes!—have given way to broader vistas, and one can easily stray from deer trails and paths to explore the newly revealed terrain.

Developing a "hands-on" ability to identify winter trees and shrubs is both fun and rewarding. You'll be better able to answer questions like: What will my woods be like in 10 or 25 years? How well will my woods withstand unforeseen natural occurrences? Are there any species here that could become future problems? Which species should I encourage, discourage, or introduce?

Participants will receive a LANDOWNER'S TREE & SHRUB CHECKLIST that can be used to inventory their own land. There will be hot beverages and goodies after the hike. Snow will not deter us—bring skis, if you like!

The field trip is open to SWC members and friends. Children and guests are welcome. The cost is \$5.00 per membership unit (e.g. couples, families, or members with guests).

The field trip will be led by Brad Hutnik of Clark Forestry and Gigi La Budde of Bison Belly Futures. *To reserve your place, leave a message, no later than December 8th, with Rowie at 588-9163 or Gigi at 588-2048.*

Directions to Black Hawk Ridge

From Madison: State Hwy 12 north to County Hwy Y; take Y west to State Hwy 78; take 78 south, past the G.A.R. historical marker, to the second parking area on the left.

From Spring Green: go east on U.S. Hwy 14 to State Hwy 78, 1 mile east of Mazomanie; take 78 north about 5 miles to the parking area one-eighth mile past the gated entrance on Wachter Road.

At Home in Lone Rock

With more than 90 charter members filing for membership and making their Acreage Stock investment, the Cooperative has been able to purchase 4.5 acres of industrial land on the north side of Highway 14 in Lone Rock. The \$80,000 parcel was underwritten by a \$40,000 Tax Increment Finance (TIF) grant from the village to increase the village's tax base. It's great to have this kind of community support: support we intend to repay with new jobs and a variety of business and community partnerships.

SWC Board Meeting Schedule, Policy

The SWC Board of Directors is now holding its meetings the first Wednesday of each month, alternating between Spring Green and Madison. SWC members and others who wish to attend may do so with prior approval or at the invitation of Board members. If you have a need to address the Board at one of its meetings, please contact Tom Thieding, Board President, at 608-836-5709.

Newsletter Available to Non-members

If you choose not to join the Co-op but would like to receive the SWC newsletters—both the Communicator as well as the soon-to-be debuted "Naturalist Newsletter" (it will sport a snappier title)—please send a \$35 subscription fee to the SWC. The SWC Board of Directors will be updating its membership rolls in January.

SWC Board Directory

Tom Thieding	6325 Briarcliff Lane Middleton 53562 — (608) 836-5709 h.— 828-5709 w.
Barbara Morford	S11691 Badger Road Spring Green 53588 — (608) 544-2965
Steven Spiro	S7261 Lake Road Hillpoint 53937 — (608) 986-2210 h.—986-2120 w.
Steve Stevenson	1915 Adams Madison 53711 — (608) 256-5847 h. — 262-5202 w.
Michael Alexander	4620A Dawn Road Plain 53577 — (608) 546-6683
Russ Moody	5300 Arrowhead Drive Monona 53716 — (608) 222-0225
Kent Prather	S11273 Paulus Road Spring Green, WI 53588 — (608) 588-7778
Greg Beirne	8155 Peterson Road Arena, WI 53503 — (608) 753-2090

SWC Staff (part-time positions)

Kent Prather	Interim General Manager
Rowie Symon-Roske	Administrative Assistant (608) 588-9163 w. — 588-2769 h.

SWC Resource Professionals

Jim Birkemeier	Timbergreen Forestry S11463 Soeldner Road Spring Green, WI 53588	ph. (608) 588-7342 tmbgrm@execpc.com
Fred Clark	Clark Forestry P.O. Box 88 Baraboo, WI 53913	ph. (608) 356-2801 fax (608) 356-2403 fclark@clarkforestry.com
Gigi La Budde	Bison Belly Futures S11793 Hazelnut Road Spring Green, WI 53588	ph. (608) 588-2048 bbf@mhtc.net

Calendar: December 1999 & January 2000

Dec. 1 (Wed.) 6:45 pm	SWC Board of Directors Meeting — Farm Bureau Building, Middleton. Persons wishing to visit or address the meeting are asked to contact Tom Thieding in advance.
Dec. 4 (Sat.) 11:00 am-4:00 pm (See article, page 1)	Kiln Raising Work Day & Party — SWC property, U.S. Highway 14, Lone Rock.
Dec. 11 (Sat.) 1:00-3:30 pm	"Winter Botanizing" — Tree & Shrub Identification Field Trip — Join Brad Hutnik and Gigi La Budde at Black Hawk Ridge. (See article, page three)
Jan. 5 (Wed.) 6:45 pm	SWC Board of Directors Meeting — Spring Green General Store & Cafe. Persons wishing to visit or address the meeting are asked to contact Tom Thieding in advance.



Hiawatha Sustainable Woods Cooperative

Quarterly Publication - Summer 1999

"Environmentally Responsible Forestry"

Membership Spotlight

Ron and LaMay Nybroten

(Editors' Note: Each quarter, a name is drawn randomly from the membership list for this feature.)

Describe where you live: Although we live in New Glarus, Wis., we also own 100 acres in Ettrick Twp, Trempealeau County one-quarter mile east of the little crossroads community of Hegg, and have a vacation home there.

We started with five acres of woodland in 1982, then put in well and septic and by 1984 had built a log house from a kit. In 1997 we added about 80 acres of woodland and 15 acres of cropland.

What do you like to do with your time? LaMay works as a reading specialist in the New Glarus Elementary School, serves on the city Library Board and Intergenerational Board. She also takes courses in lay theology and is an avid reader, mostly of books by spirituality writers.

Ron is a member of the clergy in New Glarus and in his spare time enjoys photography, hand loading ammunition and firing high-power rifles, hunting and flight simulation on computer. He's also building a data base on ancestry.

Both would love to have more time to be at the vacation property and plan to upgrade the flora environment there. They plan to put in hiking trails, plant fruit trees as well as ornamentals and shade trees.

Why did you join HSWC? We were impressed with the informational meeting held in fall '98 and since we had a lot of blow down that summer, we were looking for answers for cleaning up the downed timber and reclaiming as much of the lumber as possible.

We saw first-hand in Germany in June '98 how successful sustainable woods management worked. We saw the contrast between the forests there and here, and knew that America deserved a lot better than what it had been served at the hands of profit-centered, short-sighted philosophy of corporate logging. We want profit, of course, from our investment but not at the expense of the environment now or to the detriment of future generations.

We joined HSWC because we agree with its approach to sustainable wood practices and because we very much believe that we are to be good stewards of the gifts our Creator has endowed to us.

What do you hope to learn/gain through HSWC and its members? We have already benefited a great deal with help and guidance from specialists in HSWC such as John Stettler, Karen Stettler and Jim Beeman. Jim has been particularly helpful, going far out of his way to make sure that reclamation is on schedule. He has spent a great deal of time on our property guiding and performing manual labor as well and thanks to his planning and expertise, we now have logs waiting to be sawed into lumber and dried.

We can't attend meetings and field days as often as we'd like, so we are thankful for the quality informational materials and newsletters that keep up to date on activities and future plans. We believe HSWC will lead us to a better tomorrow with an enhanced natural ecology. ♣



A simple home-made "cruise stick" uses a dowel rod and a penny embedded near the end to determine the size of "keeper trees" for selective timber cutting.

Cruisin' the timber

(Editors' Note: "A Walk in the Woods" was the May 15 field day presentation held at the property of Rod and Mary Hoesley. Presenter Chuck Ouimette, an HSWC member and consulting forester, has bachelor's and master's degrees in forestry from the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point. His discussion covered basic forestry principles including "timber cruise" techniques, marking guidance (selective cut) value appreciation, and seed stock. He wrote the following summary of the presentation.)

By Chuck Ouimette

"A Walk in the Woods," sponsored by the HSWC Educational Committee and hosted by Rod and Mary Hoesley, just south of Fountain City, Wis., began at their lovely home, an A-frame which they built that overlooks the Mississippi River near their 200 acres of woodland.

The land is a beautiful site with black walnut groves nestled among a mixed northern hardwood cover type. Three black walnut sites (mixed with some other species) were identified and visited by the group of about 25 landowners, members and guests of HSWC.

The introduction included discussion of the history of the area, forest "succession," general differentiations of "old growth" vs. today's "managed" timberland, and basic forest measurements.

The typical old growth northern hardwood forest was probably a "patchwork quilt" of different aged stands, with associated species or groups, depending on their individual histories, resulting from fire, blow down and other natural disasters. These disturbances could result in establishment of "pioneer" species (regeneration needs mostly open sunlight to survive) in these open areas, and eventually evolving through and being replaced by "climax species" (regeneration able to survive in shade).

Due to "intra-canopy" protection from the wind, which is typical of crowded unmanaged forests, the trees in those stands had no physiological incentive to develop wide growth rings and probably were tall, fairly cylindrical, and

(continued on Page 2)

President's Message**Nearing 50 members; securing site; obtaining funds . . .****By John Stettler, President**

As our membership nears 50 landowners, the continuing interest and requests for information continue to generate enthusiasm for our co-op. I sense the excitement building as we make the final selection of a site to begin our operations. That will initiate a number of specific actions such as:

- hiring administrative and operations personnel to work on the site
- contracting professional loggers, foresters, ecology experts
- marketing initiatives, including the regular communication with the membership.

One of our goals will have HSWC employees and contractors developing cross-training/understanding of all roles within the cooperative. This will involve the landowner as well because knowledge will be a key element to successful achievement of our mission as an environmentally responsible business.

If you are interested in working with the Cooperative, please submit a description and resume for consideration. As we prepare to advertise for positions, you may know of the interest and skills of others. During our start up period, we will hire interim personnel who will also be eligible for permanent employment.

Some of the funding for the technical assistance comes from the Community Forest Resource Center in Minneapolis (a newly formed, non-profit agency launched by the IATP) and the Cooperative Development Services. Several recent grant application including the Experiment

in Rural Cooperation through the University of Minnesota would partially apply to operational expenses.

Funds from low-interest economic development loans through our local Wisconsin electric cooperative and its supplier, Dairyland Power Cooperative, have been tentatively approved. Other funding from financial institutions awaits the securing of a site for operations. The equity portion of the investment by the membership and stewardship plan for the woodlands will be discussed with each member starting in August. Plans will be made for the amount of harvest by each landowner/member.

We continue to work closely with SWC in Spring Green because of our similarities even though their size nearly doubles us. They have just purchased a site for building their operation.

As a result of our contracted value-added wood project in Winona, HSWC has dried red oak that has been sawn, dried and milled to S3S (three sides) and will be sold. Other species are in the air-dry process. Please let us know of any interested contacts as we continually develop local and national niche markets.

My apology to those of you who tried to attend our last board meeting, but we had to reschedule at the last minute due to site evaluation process. **Our next board meeting will be on schedule Tuesday, Aug. 17 at 5:45 p.m. at Holzinger Lodge in Winona.** Call if you need directions.

Thank you for your patience and your continuing interest as we move forward to the next phase!

--- John ♣



Hiawatha Sustainable Woods Cooperative

P.O. Box 248
Fountain City, WI 54629
(608) 687-8193 or 687-8430

The HSWC Quarterly is the official publication for members and subscribers featuring articles of interest, feature stories, issues concerning sustainable woodland management, and news of the industry. Subscriptions are free to HSWC members.

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Submit articles or letters for consideration, or advertising requests, to the editors at HSWC Quarterly, RR 4 - Box 94, Winona, MN 55987-9418 or Email to:

zzuehlke@means.net
phone (507) 643-6367

OR Email to: karenstettler@hotmail.com
phone/fax (608) 687-8430

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Timber cruisin'

From page ONE

possibly had fairly small crown ratios (sunlight only shined on the top of the canopy thus providing less production of sugars for development and survival). Competition in that old-growth forest was very intense. There was a "war" going on, we just couldn't hear it. However, the battle could be seen, and sensed, all you had to do was look at the canopy.

Many of the present-day managed hardwood forests have been "selectively cut" to residual stocking levels which "release" the uncut trees and still maintain the site in a healthy hardwood regeneration environment. These "leave" stems no longer enjoy the "muffling" effect of intra-canopy protection from air movement due to overcrowding. Instead they are subjected to increased physiological stress from breezes. Less energy is expended toward height because direct sunlight struck a higher percentage of the living canopy. This provided a greater "factory" for growth which could now be expended toward stronger roots and larger diameters -- all in response to the wind -- and thinning.

Our approach of removing the "worst first" results in residual trees which are the best quality and have the greatest chance to move, through time, to higher product and value classes. These stems also provide the best opportunity of genetically superior stock for future generations. The stand's future resides in the best trees -- not the worst ones!

For this event, a "cruise stick" was made using a dowel rod and a penny for an angle gauge. (A limited number of cruise sticks and a handout on basic forest measurements are available from Karen Stettler, Education Committee Chair.)

Basically the approach allows a landowner to develop a fundamental idea of volumes/products available on their land. More detailed landowner appraisals should be available in the future from HSWC.

Basic marking guides were also discussed (and are included in the handout) with the most important aspect being that stands are trying to "mark themselves" -- if only we learn to recognize that. Again, the "worst first" philosophy was discussed stressing the obvious benefits for future stands, and their owners.

Our "Walk in the Woods" was enhanced and made more educational by Rod Hoesley who helped identify wildflowers and other plants, and shared the history of his land and the area. Mary Hoesley served a delightful lunch. ♣

Chuck Ouimette has 25 years of forestry experience. He and his son, Rich Ouimette, own and operate a portable mill and do custom sawing as well as other related timber services.



**Hiawatha Sustainable Woods
Cooperative**

PO Box 248 ♦ Fountain City, WI 54629
♦ (608) 687-8193 or 687-8430

Educational Field Day

Open to the public !

Aug. 28, 1999

9 a.m. - noon

Prairie Exploration

Chris Matson, president of the Coulee Region Prairie Enthusiasts, and Tony Brown, HSWC Board member, will share their knowledge of plant identification, prairie management, invasive species, and oak savannas.

The site is along Homer Road in Winona, near the Whetstone Salvage sign. (Park along the road and hike to the top of the bluff to the "goat prairie" owned by HSWC members William and Marsha Chaffee.)

Appropriate clothing and footwear for hiking is suggested - steep incline could also be muddy.

For more information, contact:

Michelle Huling-Halverson (608) 687-8632



**Hiawatha Sustainable Woods
Cooperative**

PO Box 248 ♦ Fountain City, WI 54629
♦ (608) 687-8193 or 687-8430

Informational Meeting

Open to the public !

Sept. 14, 1999

7 p.m.

Membership Information

**Holzinger Lodge
(Winona)**

Board members, officers, and committee members will conduct an informational session for woodland owners interested in learning more about joining the new venture into environmentally responsible forestry and how value-added manufacturing of wood products can benefit the landowner.

**If unable to attend,
call for informational mailing:
Karen Stettler - (608) 687-8430**

"Help Wanted" - Apply Here

Hiawatha Sustainable Woods Cooperative will be looking to fill at least two interim positions in the start-up operation.

General Manager

Applicants should have experience in accounting/finance, managerial expertise, and PC proficiency. Responsibilities include all aspects of starting a new business dealing with sustainable woods management "from forest to finished product."

For a full job description call (608) 687-8430, or send a letter of interest and resume to:

HSWC, P.O. Box 248, Fountain City, WI 54629

Administrative Assistant

This position will be responsible for providing administrative, office and clerical support for operations, sales, and marketing for the main office. Duties will also include telephone work, billing and record keeping, and correspondence.

For a full job description call (608) 687-8430, or send a letter of interest and resume to:

HSWC, P.O. Box 248, Fountain City, WI 54629

Get ready for fall (tree) planting -- now!

From mid-August to mid-October is one of the two best times to plant evergreens. The other is spring. Plant soon and the evergreens will have time to develop a vigorous root system before the ground freezes and makes it difficult for the roots to take up the water the plant needs all through the year. Water generously to get them through the rest of the warm days.

The same holds true for lilac bushes. Plant them up through mid-October or before the ground freezes. Buy nursery stock or dig up young well-rooted shoots from around your own bushes. Select a well-drained site in a sunny location. They will grow in shade but tend to become undesirably tall and do not flower well. Set the plant two or three inches deeper than it grew before. Make the hole large enough to accept all roots without crowding. Fertilize each spring until they begin to flower.

This time of year nursery stock will go on sale and it's a good time to choose trees and shrubs for their fall colors as they will soon be "turning." You should be able to plant anything purchased in late summer or early fall right away. Young trees or shrubs that show good color in the nursery can be expected to continue this trait as long as they live, with proper attention and care. ♣

- Popular Science Almanac for Home Owners

Education/PR Committees

Got any good shots???

We are beginning to assemble a multi-media presentation to be used at such events as the Sept. 14 informational meeting.

If you have any photographs or slides that would help tell the "HSWC story," we would appreciate the opportunity to borrow them and make copies.

For example, if you have some photos of your land that show a nice variety of tree stand, or orchards, or even just "scenery" that involves wildlife like birds, deer, etc., or other woodland products like mushrooms, honey, ginseng, etc., could we please have a look at them for possible inclusion?

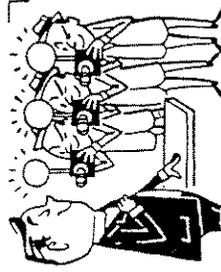
Other interesting photos might include logging or sawing operations. Also if you have any photos of "end products" that depict our "forest to finished product" theme, we'd like to see those also.

Please mail any photos to:

Karen Stettler
S. 2490 Schaffner Valley Rd.
Fountain City, WI 54629
(608) 687-8430

OR:

Julie Zuehlke
RR 4 - Box 94
Winona, MN 55987-9418
(507) 643-6367



We will take extremely good care of them and make reprints, returning the originals to you unharmed. Call if you have questions or other ideas for us.

Thank you! ♣

Fair Game (County Fair, that is!)

The Marketing/Finance Committee, with help from the PR Committee, prepared a "temporary" display for the Trempealeau County Fair and several Board Members (Craig Nilsson, Jim Beeman, and Rod Hoesley) along with Kyle Zuehlke manned the booth at various times to answer questions and hand out materials.

We also had a sign-up sheet where interested persons could request more information if no one was attending our booth.

If you know of someone who would like to receive information about the Hiawatha Sustainable Woods Cooperative, including a membership application, call, write, or Email to Karen Stettler (info in box above).

Her Email is: karenstettler@hotmail.com or you can contact Julie Zuehlke (info above) or Email her here: zzuehlke@means.net ♣

Ecology Corner

They might be "pretty" but watch out . . . they're trouble!

By Gigi La Budde, Ecologist
(SWC - Spring Green)

An increasing number of invasive non-native plants are spelling TROUBLE in the woodlands of members. If ignored, they may spell DISASTER.

By shading native vegetation, these plants can dominate the forest floor in just a few years, drastically altering the appearance and diversity of your forest.

Once established, these plants are difficult to control, so it pays to become acquainted with these species and regularly monitor your woods. Early spring and late fall are usually the best times to check as these very opportunistic species tend to "green up" earlier -- and keep their leaves later -- than native species.

Forest floors disturbed by either grazing or poor logging practices provide easy targets for invasive plants. Most susceptible are forest

and trail edges as well as waterway borders.

Garlic mustard, an invasive herb introduced from Europe, is rapidly establishing itself in southwestern Wisconsin, especially in Iowa county. A biennial with white (not yellow) flowers, it spreads easily, reproduces rapidly and carpets the ground even in once high-quality woodlands. Just a few years after a seed finds its way into your forest, the population of garlic mustard can explode into dense beds that shade indigenous plants. The worst kicker is that the seeds are viable for seven years!

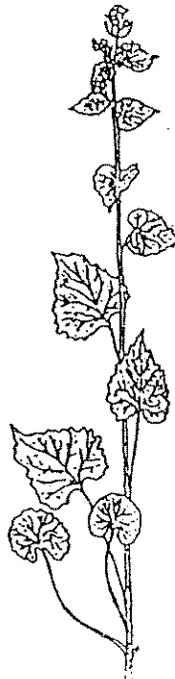
Buckthorn (both glossy and common) and the non-native **bush honeysuckles** increasingly dominate many of the forest mid-stories in southern Wisconsin. They leaf out in early spring before the canopy trees leaf out, blocking the sunlight that woodland wildflowers need. In addition to suppressing wildflowers, these invasives can also prevent the regeneration of native trees.

Autumn olive, **multiflora rose**, and **black locust** are other woodland invaders that should be of concern to landowners. (It's interesting to note that all three of these species were recommended by the Dept. of Agriculture to private landowners for wildlife food, cover and erosion control!)

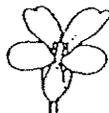
Where can I go from here? SWC and other organizations such as the Nature Conservancy and The Prairie Enthusiasts organize volunteer work days to cut brush and remove invasive plants. Participating in these efforts can give you hands-on experience in learning the plants and what controls work best on a given site. An extremely useful publication -- most of the above information was adapted from it -- is the *Wisconsin Manual of Control Recommendation for Ecologically Invasive Plants* available for \$3 from the WDNR at (608) 266-7012. It provides complete management information as well as plant identification details. ♣



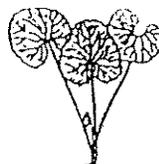
HONEYSUCKLE



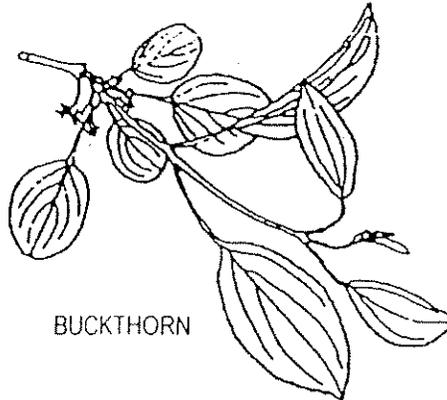
GARLIC MUSTARD



flower
(white)



1st year rosette



BUCKTHORN



MULTIFLORA ROSE

Move along these shades In gentleness of heart, With gentle hand
Touch - - for there is a spirit in the woods.
-- William Wordsworth (1770-1850) in "Nutting" (1800)



HSWC Calendar



Aug. 17, 1999

Board meeting, 5:45 p.m., Holzinger Lodge, Winona

Aug. 28

Field Day, "Prairie Exploration" 9 a.m. to noon at William and Marsha Chaffee property in Homer. (Details inside)

Sept. 14

Informational Meeting, Holzinger Lodge, Winona 7 p.m. (Educ./PR Committees meet at 6 p.m.)

Sept. 21

Board meeting, 5:45 p.m., Holzinger Lodge, Winona

Oct. 30

Field Day - "Christmas Trees"

Mission Statement

Hiawatha Sustainable Woods Cooperative (HSWC) is a timber management, processing, and marketing cooperative of local forest owners. HSWC's purpose is to maximize the long-term aesthetic, ecological, economic, and recreational benefits from our area forest resource. HSWC achieves this through environmentally responsible forestry which includes: education; professionally trained foresters and loggers; locally-based, value-added manufacturing of wood products; and third-party certification of sustainable forestry practices by the Forest Stewardship Council.

Activity Notes

Several upcoming events present great opportunities for HSWC members AND guests!

The Field Day "Prairie Exploration" Aug. 28 will be fun and interesting - please note the location and that there is a fairly steep climb up to the goat prairie location. Get out the hiking boots!

While the Informational Meeting Sept. 14 aims at spreading the word about HSWC and recruiting for HSWC, members should plan to attend as a way of re-connecting with others and hearing new developments in the works. We can also use plenty of "ambassadors" at this function!

The Oct. 30 Field Day will also serve as a "social." This will prep us for the holidays and provide a holiday get-together. Topics tentatively planned include Christmas trees, nursery stock, and a forest bird study in progress nearby. That event will be at the property of Tom & Toni McMillin near Kellogg, Minn.

Mark your calendars now for all these events, and remember that Board meetings are open to members and prospective members.



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Sustainable Woods Cooperative to encourage sustainable forestry

By Bob Kliebenstein

Regional Editor

SPRING GREEN — More income for landowners from well-managed forests is the goal of the Sustainable Woods Cooperative.

Creating the cooperative has been a joint effort between Wisconsin landowners and the University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives.

Among the co-op's proponents are Jim Birkemeier of Timbergreen Forestry, Spring Green, and Mike Neta of Green Bay, a logger contracted by the Menominee Indians to harvest trees on their land.

Mr. Birkemeier said the cooperative seeks to provide value-added income for landowners selling timber. It is modeled after Swedish timber cooperatives, many of which have existed since the 1930s.

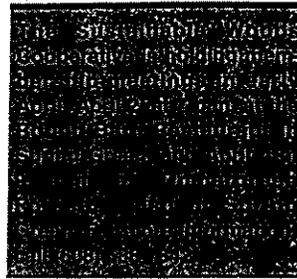
A similar cooperative operates in Michigan's Upper Peninsula for pulpwood production, he added.

Sustainable forestry can net top dollar for Wisconsin hardwoods, Mr. Birkemeier said, noting "our forests are more valuable for wood trim, flooring and veneer products."

Cooperative members would be "smart wood certified" (SWC) to ensure that forests are managed sustainably. Timbergreen staff are the first in the Lake States Region to receive SWC designation, Mr. Birkemeier said. SWC standards are set by the Forest Stewardship Council and Rain Forest Alliance, Mr. Neta said.

The Sustainable Woods Cooperative will utilize both low- and high-grade lumber. Low grade lumber, used primarily for pulpwood, would subsidize the cooperative, Mr. Neta said.

High-grade lumber from hardwoods would be sawed, dried and finished at coopera-



tive member mills.

Landowners will receive 75 percent of additional revenue from value-added lumber. Twenty-five percent would go toward administrative costs for the cooperative, Mr. Neta said.

The cooperative is seeking sources to cut and finish timber.

"We hope by fall to have a network of privately owned mills to be part of the cooperative," Mr. Birkemeier said.

He believes the cooperative will improve landowner trust of timber buyers, some of whom have "exploited" forest owners.

"This is the root of most bad experiences. People are turned off to managing timber and skeptical about investing time or money in forestry," he said.

The cooperative will stress using horses for logging to minimize environmental damage. Mechanical skidders will be allowed, if operators are trained properly.

"We would like to have 12 crews of horse loggers by next winter," Mr. Birkemeier said.

The cooperative hopes to generate more money for loggers and landowners.

"Good forestry needs well-paid loggers," Mr. Birkemeier said. "In the past loggers and landowners have been on the short end of the (financial) stick. The cooperative will turn that around."

Mr. Neta said the cooperative will encourage more loggers to practice sustainable forestry.

"Half the battle is finding

qualified loggers to do sustainable logging," he said. "(Cooperative members) will look at trees on an individual basis, not as a 40-acre lot. We will take what the forest gives us and find the best market for landowners.

"We must educate people about sustainable forestry. The forests won't be around forever and we need to sustain them. This is a new concept."

Interest in sustainable forestry has been fueled by rapid changes in land ownership in Wisconsin and by more people discovering the value of timber.

"A lot of landowners are not aware of the value of their woodlots," Mr. Neta said.

Mr. Neta and Mr. Birkemeier said the Sustainable Woods Cooperative could become a model for others to follow.

"This is bright hope for private land owners," Mr. Birkemeier said. "We want this area to be an example for others to follow. We have not been doing a good job managing our forests and people are looking for something new — this is something new."

The Sustainable Woods Cooperative is holding membership meetings April 2 and April 4. Business begins with a 7 p.m. meeting April 2 at the Round Barn Restaurant, Spring Green. Speakers will be present to discuss the cooperative.

The meeting resumes April 4 at Timbergreen Forestry at 9 a.m. with continued discussion about building the cooperative.

Business moves to the woods after lunch when landowners can learn about sustainable forestry.

Timbergreen Forestry is located at S11478 Soeldner Road, Spring Green.

For more information about the Sustainable Woods Cooperative or the meeting, call (608) 588-7342.

Landowners form co-op to sustain forestry

by Jean Berns Jones

'Sustainable forestry' is a new term catching on around the country, but it is not a new concept.

The managing of timber for long term economic and environmental benefits has always been good, sound practice.

But for various reasons—low timber prices, poor treatment on loggers and timber buyers, harvested land in an unmanaged condition—many landowners haven't properly managed their timber.

In search of an alternative way to manage their forests, over 100 area landowners have formed the Sustainable Woods Cooperative (SWC) based in Spring Green. With nearly 10,000 acres involved in Iowa County, it is the county's largest landowner.

The SWC is a management, processing, and marketing cooperative with the goal of maximizing the long term aesthetic, ecological and economic benefits from the area's timber resource.

The plan to accomplish this through environmentally responsible forestry practices, sustained yield harvesting and locally based value-added manufacturing of Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified wood products.

As part of a Sustainable Forestry Tour hosted by the SWC last week, an Amish logging crew demonstrated low-impact logging by adding oak trees out of the way on Talliesin grounds in Spring Green.

Amish loggers from Loganville hooked heavy logs to two well-disciplined draft horses and pulled them along the old woodland trail, leaving hardly a trace.

"The SWC takes a whole new approach to sustainable management on private forest land," said co-op member Jim Birkemeier. "We're re-writing forestry right now."

Birkemeier is a graduate of UW's Natural Resources program and has 22 years of professional forestry experience, including management of the Timbergreen Farms



Clemens and Ken Yoder (l-r), Amish loggers from Loganville, demonstrate logging the old-fashioned way as they use draft horses to skid oak trees out of the forest.



The Birkemeier of Timbergreen Farms explains the importance of sustainable forestry to a tour of visitors on the Timbergreen Farms. (l-r) Ken and Clemens Yoder and their horses.

premium hardwoods sawmill operation in Spring Green.

"From the landowner's view, we're going to do things just the opposite of what they're used to; we're going to take the worst trees first."

The tour drew people from several parts of the country, including a busload from Minnesota. The Great Lakes region has 2 million acres involved in certified sustainable forestry programs.

It included a visit to the cathedral forest of the Menominee Tribe in northern Wisconsin, which has been consciously managed for 145 years.

In the Spring Green area, it stopped at the SWC's largest member, the 5,000-acre Marshall Erdman farm, where sustainable forestry has been practiced for over a decade.

Its final stop was at Timbergreen Farm, owned by Birkemeier just north of Spring Green, where trial runs of logs from SWC timber harvests are being processed into flooring and millwork.

The Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation and Talliesin Preservation commission are among the newest members of the SWC. Their 700 acres was recently joined with other area lands in salvaging large, storm damaged oak trees.

According to Juli Aulick, director of the Talliesin Preservation Commission, Talliesin's participation was accelerated by the calamity of their famous Tea Circle Oaks' toppling last August. She sees SWC membership as a "win-win" situation.

"It offers good, responsible land ownership with an ecological perspective and a

"Increasingly, the quality and quantity of many of the world's forests are being diminished. Now, more than ever, there is a pressing need to protect forests from over-cutting and mismanagement and to conserve forests for future generations to use and enjoy."

Forest Stewardship Council U.S.

chance for us to at least break even, if not make money, on the resource," she said.

Traditionally, the timber industry has worked to minimize the price paid to forest owners and maximize the speed in harvesting the good trees, Birkemeier said.

Individually, forest owners have no power in an unfair market situation. They are often confused by differing opinions from foresters, and feel they have little control over a timber harvest on their own

land.

"Because of this situation, SWC claims, the forest resource has been undervalued, over harvested for windfall profits, ignored, mismanaged, fragmented, and scattered with new houses.

Forest owners see there is a lot of money to be made in the timber industry. But when they compare the value of manufactured wood products to the price a forest owner is paid for their standing trees, they are shocked.

"The trees were grown on their land for decades or even centuries, yet in a few moments of effort, the industry makes many times more money than they've owned for the timber."

"According to SWC, this disparity between the growers of timber products and the wood processing industry is a tremendous discouragement to forest management on private land. Why should landowners manage timber when they are the only step in the process that is not rewarded fairly?"

These frustrations are why sustainable forestry cooperatives are being formed.

Some new factors have entered the timber industry equation—such as increasing global demand for quality products, growing concern for environmental health, con-

sumer appreciation for wood products that come from sustainably managed forests, and international standards guaranteeing "sustainable credentials" of wood products.

Landowners join the co-op by paying a membership fee and per hour for site visits and a management plan.

The plan is done in accordance with the Forest Stewardship Council, an international accrediting audit whose "green" label assures consumers that the products came from an environmentally responsible, well managed forest system. Timbergreen Farm and SWC are the first private forest lands in the Midwest to achieve this global certification.

According to SWC, surveys show a significant percentage of consumers are willing to pay a 5-10% premium on real certified wood products from sustainably managed forests.

Trained crews harvest on a regular basis, using horse teams and other low-impact methods whenever possible, for minimal disturbance of the site.

The co-op combines logs from several members' harvest to create truckload quantities. Low grade wood is sold and higher grade lumber enters the SWC's manufacturing operation for solar-kiln drying and value-added processing (flooring, millwork, architectural grade lumber, etc.)

Ultimately, the value-added

products are sold through the co-op. All members are not required to sell their timber through SWC.

In the opinion of Senas Dale Schultz who was on the tour, the kind of management Birkemeier advocates is a good thing.

"The future of our wood depends on enlightened, long term thinking," he said. "I'm the co-op people credit for being self critical. In recent years we haven't done enough to protect forests and preserve them."

"I believe that the SWC is a good thing for the future of the Midwest. It's a good thing for the people who care about the environment."

"The way I look at it, doing this won't make any more money in my lifetime, but I'm doing it for the Amish and for the future."

One of the advantages of sustainable forestry is that it encourages multiple use of woodlands. The conservation harvesting methods let people continue to hike, hunt, enjoy the flowers and wildlife.

"We have to correct for the problems of past mismanagement," Birkemeier said. "When rewarded properly for their efforts, forest owners will likely choose to manage their resource in an aggressive and future-oriented manner."

Note: More information on the SWC process is at www.ecpe.com/timbergreen.

New co-op to aid woodland owners

FOUNTAIN CITY — In Fountain City, there is strength in numbers. Or there will be — if people like Jim Beeman and John Stettler have their way.

The men would like to see the Hiawatha Sustainable Wood Cooperative become a reality. In the planning stages, the cooperative would be based in Fountain City or Winona, Minn. It would initially include woodland owners from Buffalo and Pipestone counties in Minnesota and the Winona area in Minnesota.

An organizational meeting for the cooperative is set for Sept. 2 p.m. at the Riverview Inn in Fountain City, Minn.

Basically it's a cooperative that will allow timber owners to pool their resources and gain more value," said Mr. Beeman, president of Beeman Forest Products located in Fountain City.

The Hiawatha cooperative would provide many outlets for wood, including marketing, processing and even sawmills, Mr. Beeman said. This would provide great economic opportunity. Woodland owner John Stettler agreed.

"I see farmers around here that own a lot of woodland, and we don't treat woodland as excess land we don't do anything with," Stettler said. "I look at this cooperative as a way for the owner to obtain some value from his woodland."

In addition to the economic benefits, the cooperative would help members with a sustainable management plan for their woodlands. Members would agree on a plan that fits their individual



photo by Anthony Slaby

Forest managers

Jim Beeman, left, and John Stettler are members of the Hiawatha Sustainable Woods Cooperative steering committee. The cooperative would help landowners receive the most compensation for their product while following a sustainable management plan.

needs. Landowners would determine what their wood is used for, when it is harvested, and would make other important decisions.

The cooperative would be committed to this sustainable forest philosophy. Logging would begin with the poorest wood first and then would continue with the sustainable management plan.

The wood processed from the cooperative would be certified sustainable from an organization such as Smartwood.

"Smartwood-certified means it came from a managed plant," Mr. Beeman said. "And it goes all the way back to the original landowner. It's called maintaining the chain of custody."

"The consumer knows that when he sees the Smartwood stamp on (the product) that that means that (product) is certified

as coming from a sustainably managed woodlot."

Smartwood is an independent program of the Rainforest Alliance and is accredited by the Forest Stewardship Council for forest management certification.

The idea for the Hiawatha cooperative began in April after the men learned about a similar cooperative being formed in Spring Green. Jim Birkemeier, a founding member of that organization, is an adviser for the beginning Hiawatha cooperative.

"There is a lot of cooperation already," Mr. Stettler said. "Everybody is working toward the same end result. You just naturally get together."

After landowners come into the cooperative, a feasibility study and a financing/business plan would be completed. Actual pro-

duction could begin soon after, Mr. Beeman said.

Blow-downs and damage from this summer's storms are another reason for wood owners' concern and is incentive to get started, Mr. Stettler said.

Mr. Beeman said cooperatives are able to keep more money in the operation than other businesses.

"The laborers and the workers get paid but there is nobody taking the profit off the top," he said. "I see that as a way to compete big time."

"People want to see co-ops go," Mr. Stettler said. "They want to see a cooperative effort."

Both men said that cooperative members could feel good about their wood management practices. Mr. Beeman said that Beeman Forest Products Ltd. could make more money clear-cutting like other logging businesses, so the co-op will not provide him with an economic windfall.

"The benefit (for me) is that I would be knowing that I'm part of something that's doing something I think that's way above what's going on in the industry," Mr. Beeman said.

"You have to try to look at the forest for more than just the money and the board feet. Look at it in terms of the biodiversity, and so many other things, the aesthetics, the hunting, the trails."

Mr. Beeman and Mr. Stettler said they are confident in the future of the cooperative for everyone involved.

"The sky's the limit, it's all there," Mr. Beeman said. "The resource is there, the equipment is there. The pieces are all there, it's just a matter of putting them all together on a larger scale."

Mr. Beeman can be reached at (608) 687-8193.

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News of careers, finances and industry

Monday, July 20, 1998



SAM SKEMP, a retired physician, is part of a group working to establish a timber management, marketing and processing cooperative in the area. Skemp hopes to apply sustainable forestry methods on his timberland southeast of La Crosse.

Desk: Member of the Tribune staff

Timber co-op taking root

By STEVE CAHALAN
Tribune business editor

Sam Skemp is intrigued by the idea of sustainable forestry and efforts to organize two southwestern Wisconsin timber management and wood marketing cooperatives that would promote the concept and provide a processing and marketing outlet.

In fact, the retired La Crosse physician is on the steering committee of the proposed Hiawatha Sustainable Woods Cooperative, which is being discussed primarily by woodland owners in Buffalo and Trempealeau counties, as well as Winona County, Minn. Its sawmill probably would be in the Fountain City, Wis., or Winona areas.

The Hiawatha co-op isn't a certainty, Skemp said last week on his farm southeast of La Crosse. At this point, he said, "This is just a dream. The T's haven't been crossed, and the I's haven't been dotted."

But, Skemp said, "Based on what I've seen so far and heard from Jim Birkemeier (a Spring Green, Wis., man who is organizing the Sustainable Woods Cooperative), it interests me.

"There's a lot of information I don't have yet," Skemp said. "But if things turn out the way he says, the way we'd like, I would think there would be a lot of interest among other landowners in getting into a co-op."

"I'm 100 percent for what they're trying to do," Skemp said. "I'm personally selling timber from my own land, and I'd like to see other people do the same."

CO-OP CONFAB

■ **WHAT:** Anyone interested in the proposed Hiawatha Sustainable Woods Cooperative is invited to an informational meeting at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 2, at the Riverport Inn in Winona, Minn.

■ **WHO:** Jim Beeman of Beeman Forest Products near Fountain City, Wis., is heading efforts to organize the timber management and wood marketing cooperative. He has been in frequent contact with Jim Birkemeier of Spring Green, Wis., who has organized a similar co-op, the Sustainable Woods Cooperative.

■ **MORE INFO:** Call Beeman at (608) 687-8193 or Birkemeier at (608) 588-7342.

ly have hardwood trees such as red oak, white oak, birch, elm, basswood, cherry and aspen.

He likes the idea of sustainable forestry, something he has read about in the past couple years. And he likes the idea of getting a higher price for his timber.

Prices of desirable hardwoods have been increasing in Wisconsin as the supply decreases, Birkemeier said. He manages his family's Timbergreen Farms hardwood sawmill operation in Spring Green, and said his family has been practicing sustainable forestry for about 10 years.

Sustainable forestry means never harvesting more than the forest can produce, Birkemeier said. Initially, he said, "We leave the good trees for the future and harvest the poor-quality ones," giving the good trees less competition for water and sunlight and more room to grow.

Through careful harvesting at a rate less than the annual growth, Birkemeier said, the quantity of trees on his family's farm has grown from 22,000 board feet in 1988 to 44,000 board feet today. With the

volume has doubled, he said, the value has soared due to better quality and higher prices.

Another 10 years of growth is still needed to build Timbergreen's forest to the family's goal of 1 million board feet, Birkemeier said. Then, sustained-yield harvesting can remove 40,000 board feet every year indefinitely, while maintaining 1 million board feet of timber into the future.

Timbergreen Farm has been certified by the international Smart Wood program, which promotes sustainable forest management and environmentally friendly practices in line with Forest Stewardship Council standards. FSC has established standards for certifying responsible forest management and accredits organizations such as Smart Wood to certify compliance with its standards.

Sustainable Woods Cooperative so far has about 110 charter members, primarily within 50 miles of Spring Green, who will be certified by Smart Wood after they develop certified management plans. The co-op will process and market their wood

products as certified, which Birkemeier said will bring a higher price for the wood. "We'll use existing sawmills this year," Birkemeier said, but the co-op's goal is to own and operate a sawmill near Spring Green.

"We hope to have a good start-up for the fall harvest season," he said of the new co-op. But "it'll take several years to really get this up to full speed."

The Hiawatha co-op isn't as far along. "It's really in its embryonic stage," said Jim Beeman, an independent logger and sawmill operator near Fountain City, Wis., who is heading efforts to organize that co-op. "We've had one steering committee meeting. It's just getting started."

But Beeman said the Hiawatha co-op could be operating as soon as this fall and might build a sawmill this fall, probably in the Fountain City or Winona areas. The co-op also might have a mobile sawmill or contract with independently owned sawmills in other areas, he said.

Hiawatha hasn't started signing up charter members, Beeman said. But anyone interested in the Hiawatha co-op is invited to an informational meeting Sept. 2 in Winona.

Hiawatha members probably would be in the Smart Wood certification program, Beeman said.

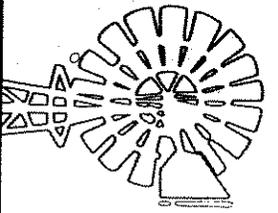
"I think it's totally feasible," Beeman said of the co-op.

"There's numbers of companies around here that are very successful," he said. "But they're doing it corporate-America style. We are just using the co-op format, which is a more democratic format."



Thursday, January 13, 2000

Country Living



Chiseled Edge makes furniture that lasts

◆ Mike Schluender uses native woods, eschews mass production

By Gary Gunderson
Agri News staff writer

BROWERVILLE, Minn. — Mike Schluender doesn't like what he sees in most furniture stores these days.

Low wood quality and often questionable workmanship is common in most furniture sold today, he said, probably because major manufacturers must mass produce their products.

Schluender makes his observations with a trained eye. He's not just a critic of the modern furniture industry, but a throwback of sorts who is trying to build quality furniture one leg, arm rest and bevel at a time.

His shop, the Chiseled Edge, has been making furniture the old-fashioned way for the past seven years. He custom builds furniture to a customer's specifications, but most of the pieces he makes have styling right from the 19th century.

Many of the pieces he builds feature such old styles as leg bottoms that look like animals' feet, arm rests with growing lions and mahai bench backs with highly stylized carved dragons.

Bur oak is his favorite

In another old-fashioned twist, most of the wood he uses comes from local sources in central and northern Minnesota. His preferred wood is bur oak because he likes its looks, hardness and durability.

He likes to make furniture that

lasts, he said. The only drawback to bur oak is it's so hard it dulls his cutting and shaping tools quickly. Cutting tools too dull to cut bur oak are often sharp enough for red oak, he said.

Schluender, 48, grew up on a dairy and beef farm near Osakis. He first became interested in woodworking in high school, and after that he set up a shop in his garage. He built furniture while employed in construction-related jobs, such as laying wooden floors.

About two years ago, he bought the old Land O' Lakes office and procurement building in downtown Browerville and started building furniture full time. "I grew out of the garage," he said, "and I did the real estate agent to find a building, for cheap."

Building fills up

The building soon filled with machinery, enough equipment to turn raw pieces of wood into furniture for customers from across the United States and a few in Europe. Schluender owns a kiln to dry wood to roughly 7 percent moisture, so about the only part of the business he's not a part of is cutting down trees.

He recently added a 45-year-old molder, at a cost of \$30,000, that makes wood strip and plank flooring, molding and other trim pieces, Schluender said. Much of the raw material for the furniture and flooring may come from members of a new local cooperative he and others are trying to form, Headwaters Forestry Co-op.

"The cooperative hopes to increase the value of members' trees through value-added processing," Schluender said. Todd County and surrounding areas

have a good supply of quality trees, but the resource is typically underutilized or sold to companies out of the area, costing the region jobs and income, he said.

Most of the furniture he sells is from custom orders, mostly through word-of-mouth advertising, he said. He makes some furniture that's sold in a small local shop, but a growing part of his business is selling through Lightfare, a furniture showroom in Woodbury. His daughter, Erika Schluender, works there as a lighting sales associate. Most of his customers are well-heeled people, typically from the Twin Cities, who want furniture that's higher quality and of a different style than is available in most stores, Schluender said. These people are willing to pay what it costs to build furniture made from solid wood with joints that won't collapse for generations, if ever.

Many want repairs

He also repairs furniture, but he's trying to phase out this side of the business, mainly because of the high prices he has to charge. But he understands why people want old furniture repaired, and not only just for sentimental reasons. He said new mass-produced pieces are often low quality yet costly in stores. This is often because the best American hardwood, pine and fir, is exported raw to Europe and Asia, where people are willing to pay high prices.

This is one case where they really don't make 'em like they used to, he said.

"Some people would rather spend \$50 to fix an old chair than spend \$100 on a new chair that will fall apart in two years," Schluender said.



Agri News photo by Gary Gunderson
Mike Schluender at work in his furniture shop in downtown Browerville, Minn. His shop, the Chiseled Edge, has been making furniture the old-fashioned way for the past seven years.



Planting trees, managing forests could produce new wealth for Todd County

Forestry/From 1A

"Planting trees is like sending a message in a bottle," said forester and sawmill operator Greg Nolan of rural Browerville. "Forestry takes time. Think of trees as living machines. They produce clean air, clean water, timber, recreational opportunities and hope for future generations."

Nolan makes his living cutting down trees, but he does it in a sustainable manner and a good share of his business, Snowy Pines Reforestation, which he operates with his wife, Marcia, and children Moriah, Cheyenne, Forest and Sonoma, involves planting trees.

Much of Todd County was once covered by vast hardwood and pine forests, which were systematically destroyed by lumbermen. The timber was clear cut, selling out the future for short term profits.

Nolan believes that Todd County can once again foster a strong timber industry and that industry can be sustained for generations by managing the forests.

He said, "I am trying to teach people about the potential of the forests around here. People are poor and having a tough time making things work out financially. Forestry is one way to be organic, take care of the resources and make money."

Nolan said in the past forests have been used as resources that provided short term economic returns. He noted that Todd County lost over half of its native forests to intense logging in the late 1800's and early 1900's.

He feels that by planting sensitive areas to trees and planting wind breaks around farmhouses, buildings and farm fields that it will not only stop soil erosion, lower energy costs, but provide trees for future harvest. He noted that combining trees and agriculture produces better yields of annual crops, halts soil erosion and allows the land to retain water better. He said the trees become a living snowfence, reserving the melting snow for the fields.

Nolan said agri-forestry is a new concept. He noted that traditionally trees

were thought of as being in the way of farmers and they were removed.

He added, "People are beginning to see the light about the short and long term benefits of trees."

Nolan said one thing that has worked against agri-forestry is that it was the policy of the United States government in the 1950's and 1960's to entice farmers to clear for land for production agriculture.

He said the pendulum is swinging the other way now and even the government is aware of the need for conservation.

Nolan stated that in the last 100 years more than half the topsoil in the upper midwest has been lost to erosion. That wind and water erosion of soil occurred because the trees were stripped off the land and the prairie was plowed under.

The forester is taking his case for tree planting, agri-forestry and conservation directly to the people. Nolan believes that talking to people one-on-one is a far better way to initiate change, than spending his time lobbying lawmakers.

Nolan and his family have conducted many tours at Snowy Pines Reforestation. They conducted a forestry tour in early June and will do another tour Sunday, Aug. 30.

He uses their land as an example of the short and long term benefits of a managed forest. When Greg and Marcia bought their land a couple of decades ago, a DNR forester estimated they owned 20,000 board feet of lumber. They could have cleared the land and taken a quick profit. Instead, they have managed the forest, made a living from it and through careful selection of the trees they cut, now have 65,000 board feet of lumber on the place.

Nolan said people need to look at the forests as a long term investment and take the money from the present and invest it in the future.

He said, "We are putting money back into the land and building the forest."

Forestry/12A

The forests we have in Todd County are not being utilized anywhere near their potential. If we could get beautiful forests in place, we would see huge profits. There are also forests here now that could be better utilized.

Nolan stressed that managing forests is not an easy thing and it takes time, energy, money and know-how. He is willing to share what he has learned over the years on how to make trees grow bigger and faster.

He said the main thing is to keep the number of trees per acre down so they have room to grow.

He said in the 25 years it takes to develop a pine plantation, people can make money in the short term by selling the thinnings as Christmas trees.

He noted that several pine plantations have been planted in the country and they aren't making money yet, but their owners will be making a lot of money, once those trees are big enough to produce pine boards.

Said Nolan, "Some people see this as pie-in-the-sky, but in the near future--

25 to 30 years, people with foresight will be making a bunch of money off their forests.

He conceded that most people don't think of 25 to 30 years as the near future, but stated, "You have to think like a forester and we think in terms of 80 to 100 year rotations.

Nolan said trees are planted 600 to 800 per acre and the end harvest is about 100 trees per acre. He said that is a very long term rotation, but people will make money on the thinnings, short term.

Nolan said many of Todd County's newest landowners are very interested in trees as a crop. He said many of them are people who have a full time job and now have purchased a farm, just to live in the country or come up on weekends. He said they don't have time for an annual crop and are looking at forestry as an investment.

Nolan doesn't expect farmers to plant their entire fields to trees, but he would like to see more of the sensitive areas planted to trees. He said planting the sensitive areas to trees will return dividends over and over. He said trees will improve water quality, clean the air and produce oxygen, enhance recreational opportunities, improve the environment in general and produce timber.

He said one way to see a fast return would be if there was a wind break around every rural home in the county. He said home owners would see a decrease in energy costs with a wind break.

"People could spend \$500 on a wind-break and that would be paid back in 10 years and would continue to save the property owner money for decades," he stated.

Part of Nolan's reforestation plan is to plant pine trees 1,000 to the acre. He plans to harvest 80 percent of the trees for sale as Christmas trees, then allow the remaining trees to grow into a magnificent forest of timber-sized trees.

Nolan said people who have attended the tours have been receptive and interested. He said many farmers are interested in diversifying and trees are one way to do that.

He suggested that anyone thinking of investing in the forestry business get professional help. He said, "Managing hardwood trees is not a simple thing. When it comes to logging, grading and

selling the trees, you can't do it on your own and get a fair price."

Nolan is also one of the driving forces behind the formation of a wood cooperative in the county. The cooperative hopes to sell certified wood and set up a plant to manufacture flooring and v-groove paneling.

Getting certification means that the wood used in the end products is grown in a sustainable and environmentally friendly manner.

Everything in the chain needs to be certified, from the forest operation to the sawmill to the carpenters.

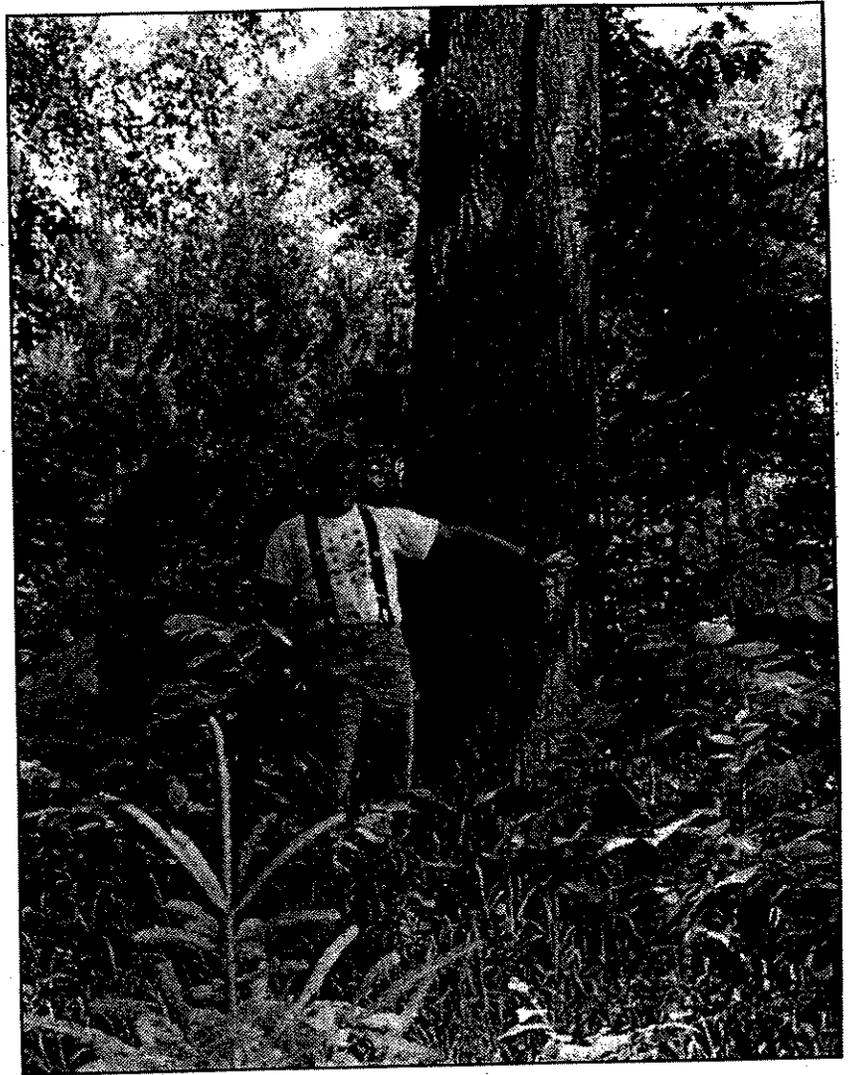
Nolan would like to form a cooperative of landowners, who would produce and market certified wood and wood products. But he added, "Before we start, we have to make sure that something is out there at the end of the pipeline. We need to know there is a market for "smart wood" before we start. We want a return on our investment."

The group is working through "Smart Wood" and the "Forest Stewardship Council U.S." to gain certification.

Nolan got involved in the project because he wrote about a certified wood cooperative in the Long Prairie River Stewardship River Plan and was encouraged by certification groups to get something going in Todd County.

Nolan said more and more home owners are interested in covering their walls and floors with wood and he wants the cooperative to tap into that lucrative housing market. He would also love to see some of the local wood used to create affordable housing in the county. He said creating high quality, affordable housing would be "doing something good for this community".

For information on sustainable forestry or upcoming tours, contact Nolan at (320) 594-6317.



Greg Nolan and a timber-size white pine.

Natural resources could drive economic growth in county now and in the future

Editor's Note: Greg Nolan of Snowy Pines Reforestation is planning a series of articles on natural resources in Todd County and the economic opportunities they provide. His first article (below) is about forestry. Nolan is a member of the Todd County Comprehensive Planning Committee and he feels the editorial pages of local newspapers are a good place for citizens to let their feelings about development of the county be known. He invites people to submit letters or articles on what they want Todd County to look like in 20 years. Letters and articles may be submitted to the Long Prairie Leader, Box 479, Long Prairie, MN 56347.

People who want more information about the comprehensive planning process may call the Todd County Planning and Zoning office (320) 732-4420 to be placed on the committee's mailing list.

A \$3,000 tree

By Greg Nolan

I recently worked with a land owner in Turtle Creek Township who had a tree hanging over his house. It was a white pine that had begun to break apart from exposure to high winds.

This white pine was established about the time the house was built in 1914 and may have been planted in the front yard to break the wind. For over 80 years the tree had been a friend to the occupants of the house—kids climbed in it, the whispering winds had lulled home owners to sleep on breezy evenings and the beauty the tree brought the homesite instilled a sense of pride in the owners.

The current owners of the house had taken their time deciding if the tree should be cut down. The decision was a hard one; they had lived with this tree since the late 1940's when they came to Turtle Creek. But, from the looks of things, it was just a matter of time before the tree would be in pieces on the ground or worse yet, on the house.

The owners called me because I run a small sawmill, and at times pay for yard trees. Most yard trees don't make money for land owners because of the risks involved in cutting them and also the fact that there are so many nails in yard trees. Saw millers do not like to cut through nails, it wrecks the cutting edge and can cause damage to the body of the saw.

Harry, the land owner, was a special individual, and his tree was a nice sized white pine (28 inches in diameter) so we struck a deal. I scaled the tree at 700 board feet (a board foot is one inch thick and one foot square) and I figured with a nice butt log the tree was worth 20 cents a board foot or \$140.

As I said earlier, there were kids that climbed this tree, and as grown men they fessed up to the possibility of a few nails being pounded into the tree during a ladder building project. I made them promise it was only a few nails and deducted enough from the price I paid to cover some damage to my saw. We settled on a price of \$100 with Harry being in charge of running the winch that would pull the tree away from the house. We had a couple of

hundred feet of cable so he could sit in his truck, out of harms way.

Some people thought I was crazy for paying \$100 for a single tree, standing in a front yard no less, but I had standing orders for the white pine lumber (I always do) and I could see things working out monetarily. There was some risk involved, but that is just part of the game of lumbering.

The tree was cut down with Harry's help and that went without a hitch, other than I found out later, Harry's wife was pretty upset about the cutting of the tree. She was going to miss her old friend.

The logs were loaded and transported to the mill and the milling went well. We got over 100 board feet of high grade lumber from the butt log and over 650 board feet of siding grade pine. We also got one pre-nailed stud. The siding sold for close to \$400 and the high grade lumber sold for over \$100. The grand total was over \$500. Not bad for a problem tree.

The high grade lumber went to a craftsman who made shelving units and small benches and tables using plywood forms which makes his job very simple. He once told me for every dollar in wood he buys from me, he sells \$10 worth of crafts.

The man who bought the siding paid sales tax on it, then he paid a carpenter to put it on his house who paid income tax on the money he earned. When the house is finished the owner will pay real estate taxes for years to come.

I have seen this economic multiplier effect over and over again in my sawmill business. The United States

Department of Commerce keeps figures on these kinds of things. The forest economist from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources recently sent me information that showed for every \$1 in stumpage (standing trees) we grow, we have the potential to see around \$30 in economic

Trees/15A



White pines used to dominate the landscape in northern Todd County and were the basis of a strong timber industry. Forester Greg Nolan sees a bright future for sustainable forestry in the county.

Trees/From 4A

activity in our community. Thus Harry's \$100 white pine could have been worth as much as \$3000 to our community.

Todd County has over 600,000 acres with approximately 100,000 acres classified as commercial forest. You could grow about 100 of these \$100 white pines to the acre. Not that we would want white pine trees on all of Todd County's forest land, but oaks, basswood, Norway pine, maple and even aspen turned into finished products can have enormous economic benefits for the county.

Harry made over \$1 a year for every year his tree was alive, the community has the potential to make 30 times that.

Nolan submitted the following recommendations that are part of the "Long Prairie River Plan: The Citizen's Vision".

--Make forestry a bigger part of our economy. Add value to wood before it leaves our watershed. Making cabinets or wood duck houses or anything that adds value will bring jobs and money to our watershed.

--Land owners who own forests should have more information on the value of their woods. Community forestry should be initiated by local foresters, tree planters and/or sawmill operations. An organization that brought together land owners, forestry know how, and wood marketing savvy to form a wood products cooperative would be one approach. Control of these operations should be in the hands of local people.

--Wood is a renewable, reusable, and recyclable resource. Community forestry should concentrate on the sustainable marketing approach to add value to the wood products they sell and the watershed they live in.

--Any sale of standing trees should be done with a forestry consultant's advice. They can give advice on everything from planting to harvest, and can develop a plan of action for the landowner.

Snowy Pines is a family run business with over 20 years of experience. They have been in central Minnesota since the early 1980's and have been actively involved in helping the community care for the forest resources we have.



Gee, Haw... Logger Joe Chavez uses a horse to skid logs out of a woods on the George Siemon farm. Chavez's skills are a key part of the new Kickapoo Wood Cooperative's efforts toward low-impact logging. (Photo by Michael Bailey)

Vernon County Broadcaster " 4/10/2000, Cover.

New wood co-op offers alternative to large-scale logging operations

by Michael Bailey

Most owners of wooded lots don't spend much time thinking about their trees. Other than perhaps gathering firewood a few times a year, many landowners don't think about their woods at all.

Except, of course, when it's time to sell the trees for logs. Then the owners are usually forced to make a choice between income or aesthetics.

Large-scale logging companies are rarely interested in a lot unless they can harvest all the valuable timber in one logging operation. This often leaves the woods torn up and looking like a war zone. The landowner gets one check and no more income from the land for another 50 years or so.

A group of people in Vernon County is attempting to change that situation by offering owners of wooded lots, both large and small, a steady income while retaining the beauty of the land.

The Kickapoo Wood Cooperative, like the newly emerging buds on the trees around us, is just beginning to spring to life.

One of the techniques this new co-op emphasizes is low-impact logging: carefully felling the trees to be harvested and usually skidding them out with horses.

Ben Hansen, one of the co-op founders, described a cut the co-op recently did for a county landowner.

"When we were done, you couldn't even tell we had been there," said Hansen.

Besides keeping the beauty of the land, Hansen said the Kickapoo Wood Co-op can offer a system of sustainable forestry where the landowner receives an income every year, plus has more valuable wooded lands.

According to Chuck Driscoll, a second founder of the new co-op, another main thrust is to put more money in the landowners' pockets by delivering a better price for the trees than the stumpage price.

The Kickapoo Wood Co-op is modeled after the successful Sustainable Woods Co-op in Spring Green started by forester Jim Birkemeier. A central component of that co-op is providing members with more income than they would otherwise receive.

According to a book by Birkemeier on sustainable forestry, cutting the trees into lumber and marketing it directly to consumers can multiply the value of standing timber by ten times or more and keep that money in the local community.

Birkemeier built a solar-

heated kiln to dry lumber for the Spring Green Co-op. He said customers came from as far as 1,000 miles away to buy at the co-op because woodworkers claim that wood dried in a solar kiln finishes better.

The Kickapoo Wood Cooperative also has plans to build a solar-kiln, Driscoll said, but more members are needed first. He added that since sustainably-managed forests can provide a regular income and maintain a higher property value, owners of wooded lots of any size could profit from co-op membership.

"The co-op will provide the forest owner with the opportunity to harvest small amounts of timber on a regular basis—from the dying and deformed trees to the more desirable species—in order to provide a steady, planned income," Driscoll said.

Similar to standards set for organic foods, timber harvested by proper sustainable standards can be certified by the Forest Stewardship Council, an independent, nonprofit organization.

Driscoll said FSC certified lumber products can bring higher prices because many consumers are willing to pay a premium for the knowledge that they are contributing to

sustainable forestry.

Following the example of the Spring Green Co-op, the Kickapoo group plans to add value to the raw timber by milling it into flooring, siding and other products. The co-op would then funnel those products back to its members.

Hansen said co-op members will also enjoy the benefits of advice from trained foresters which lets them get the most out of their woodlands. He pointed out, for instance, that some species of trees, like aspen, are often overlooked and actually can provide income if harvested and marketed properly.

Driscoll said the sharing of expertise and experience that comes with membership will allow members to realize much greater value from their wood lots, whether they are 10 acres or 200 acres.

The Kickapoo Wood Co-op is still at the grass roots level, but a serious effort to increase membership will soon be under way.

A meeting for anyone interested in the Kickapoo Wood Co-op is scheduled for Monday, April 10 at 7 p.m. in the boardroom of the Vernon County Courthouse Annex in Viroqua.

Cooperatives today

New forestry co-ops under way

Nearly 150 people from many parts of the state have been working together to form two new forestry cooperatives in southwestern Wisconsin. Not only are these people bringing innovative cooperative approaches to private woodlot management and marketing, but they are pioneering a new forestry-management system for private landowners in Wisconsin.

The Sustainable Woods Cooperative, based in Spring Green, Wisconsin, and the Hiawatha Sustainable Woods Cooperative in Fountain City are using forestry-management practices that are independently certified to meet standards for sustainability. That means woodlots enrolled in the cooperatives will be judiciously thinned by taking poorer timber first, using equipment that minimizes harm to trees left standing. Growth of higher-value timber will thereby be enhanced, with the ultimate goal being annual harvests that will reduce the volume of timber in a forest by no more than it gained since the last harvest—the “sustainability” of the woodland crop.

By using such practices, these landowners have joined with forest owners and managers around the world working to ensure that our forests remain healthy and strong, and that they help protect existing ecosystems. Through the co-ops, members hope to generate a steady income, and in cases where farmer-landowners are seeing limited returns on their conventional crops, the extra money will be most welcome.

As envisioned, the two new cooperatives will provide certified sustainable forestry-management plans to each woodlot owner-member, harvesting of trees from woodlots, processing to

John Stettler, an organizer of the Hiawatha Sustainable Woods Co-op, meets with CDS Executive Director Rosemary Mahoney prior to the co-op's incorporation. Stettler is also past president of Buffalo Electric Co-op.



At a woodlot that is part of the Sustainable Woods Co-op of Spring Green, workers eye a stand of trees for possible thinning while felled timber is removed by a non-intrusive method—horsepower.

enhance the value of the wood and timber products, and marketing for members of the cooperative. Cooperative Development Services (CDS) consultants E.G. Nadeau, Mary Myers, and Steve Wolfe, all of Madison, have been working closely with local co-op leaders and consulting foresters to develop the business and marketing plans for the two cooperatives.

Members of the Sustainable Woods Cooperative in Spring Green have pioneered this initiative, beginning their efforts to form a cooperative in January 1998. The co-op has been incorporated and currently has 125 members with nearly 20,000 acres of forested land in the cooperative. Members expect to begin marketing products through the co-op early next year.

Farther west, woodlot owners incorporated the Hiawatha Sustainable Woods Cooperative in August 1998. That cooperative currently has 20 members from both Wisconsin and Minnesota. Hiawatha leaders are working closely with leaders of the Spring Green co-op to jointly develop business and marketing strategies.

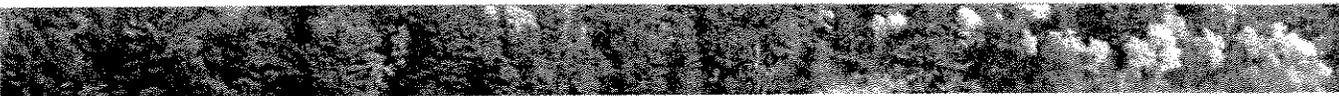
—Rosemary Mahoney,
CDS executive director

Both cooperatives continue to seek and enroll new members. If you are interested in learning more about these cooperative efforts, please contact:

Cooperative Development Services
30 W. Mifflin St., Suite 401
Madison, WI 53703
608/258-4396

Sustainable Woods Cooperative
Jim Birkemeier
511578 Soeldner Rd.
Spring Green, WI 53588
Tel: 608/588-7342

Hiawatha Sustainable Woods Co-op
John Stettler
S. 2490 Schaffner Valley Rd.
Fountain City, WI 54629
608/687-8430



Steps for Forming a Sustainable Forestry Cooperative

by E.G. Nadeau, Phillip Guillery and Jody Padgham
December 23, 1999

Co-ops are different from for-profit businesses that are owned by one or more investors whose intent is to make a profit by selling goods and services to other businesses and individuals. Co-ops are also distinct from non-profit organizations which are intended to provide educational, charitable and other services and must reinvest any profits they make in their own operations or donate them to other non-profits or to government agencies.

This brochure focuses on sustainable forestry cooperatives that are owned and controlled by woodland owners.

Cooperatives are businesses that are owned and democratically controlled by the people who use their services.

These forestry co-ops can:

- Provide reliable information about woodland management.
- Develop environmentally responsible woodland management plans certified by the Forest Stewardship Council.
- Provide consultation and training for protecting and restoring wildlife habitats and bio-diversity.
- Provide forest management assistance and training in areas such as timber stand improvement, logging safety, habitat restoration and tree planting services.
- Make educational materials and opportunities available to co-op members.
- Provide assistance in harvest planning, implementation and monitoring.
- Develop manufactured, value-added wood products.
- Market timber and other forest products through the co-op.
- Find and develop markets for timber and other forest products.

There are ten main steps in forming a forestry cooperative. Note that these steps are not a "recipe." Every co-op charts its own path from the idea stage to an operating business. The following steps are intended to be helpful guidelines, not rules.

1. Establish a Steering Committee

In some cases, a group of people who share an idea for a cooperative forms a steering committee and develops a plan and a timetable for researching and developing a co-op. In other cases, an initial organizing group convenes a meeting of potential co-op members to test out the level of interest in the co-op idea. A steering committee is usually comprised of five to ten people, and is formed from participants in this meeting.

Although the steering committee is not a formal board of directors, it makes sense for it to operate in a somewhat formal manner. Traditional positions on a board include a chair (or a rotating chair), a secretary and a treasurer (or one person willing to play both roles), to record minutes of meetings, keep track of other actions taken by the group, and to handle finances. Additional people can take more general or specific roles.



2. Initiate Fundraising

Raising small amounts of money from potential co-op members and others can help the steering committee begin to develop the co-op. Several forestry co-ops have raised funds through \$100 non-refundable, "charter membership" fees. In this early stage, membership fundraising can:

- Cover initial costs for mailings, phone calls, travel expenses, legal fees, feasibility research, etc.
- Serve as "matching funds" for grants from foundations and government programs. Member support shows funders that people are serious about developing a co-op.

These funds should be raised with a disclaimer stating that their purpose is to determine the feasibility of forming a co-op and that charter members will not necessarily receive any direct benefits from their membership fees.





3. Draft Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws

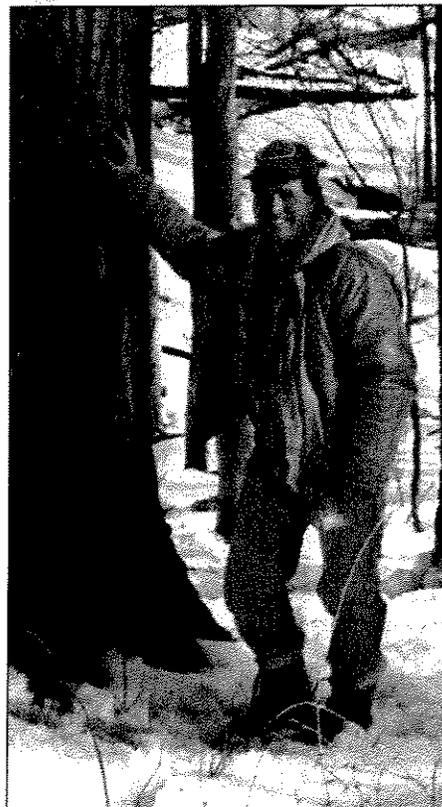
In order to conduct business, a cooperative has to be incorporated under the appropriate state statute. Most states have statutes specifically for cooperatives. Others have more general corporate statutes. We have examples of bylaws and articles of incorporation available on request. The steering committee should select legal counsel to draft or review the articles of incorporation and bylaws. When the co-op is incorporated, the steering committee becomes an "interim board of directors."

- The *articles of incorporation* describe the kind and scope of the cooperative's business and must be filed with the secretary of state. There is a small fee — usually less than \$100 — for filing.
- The *bylaws* are an internal document that describes the basic method of operation of the co-op (who can be members, how the board of directors and officers are elected, how decisions are made by the board and members, etc.) A co-op can start out with very basic interim bylaws and refine them after the business plan has been developed.

It may seem odd to incorporate a co-op before the steering committee is even sure that all the necessary pieces are there to get the co-op launched. Why not wait until the business plan is completed and the decision to launch the cooperative has been made? The steering committee's decision to incorporate early on is based on their consideration of several questions:

- Is the co-op planning to raise funds prior to completion of the business plan?
- Are there grant and loan programs to which the steering committee is interested in applying that require the co-op to be incorporated?
- Are some of the steering committee members concerned about legal liability issues that would be lessened if the co-op were incorporated?

If these issues are of concern to the steering committee, the co-op should incorporate before the business plan is completed.



4. Recruit Members

Laying the groundwork for the co-op's membership base needs to begin from the time the steering committee first meets. Many newly forming co-ops:

- hold meetings for potential members;
- sponsor forestry events such as "walks in the woods" to learn about responsible forestry, low-impact harvesting or safety concerns;
- conduct surveys;
- mail organizing updates; and
- collect charter membership fees.

All of these activities provide a good indication of the level of interest in the co-op and keep people informed about the development process. Thus, when the time comes to make a long-term commitment, members will be ready to act without a lot of last-minute promotion and education.

5. Conduct a Feasibility Study

The purpose of a feasibility study is to examine critical opportunities and obstacles that might make or break the formation of the cooperative. The steering committee should either conduct a feasibility study itself or work with a consultant to carry out the study. Feasibility studies can vary from a brief review of the pros and cons of proceeding with the co-op to a detailed analysis.

The critical issues to be reviewed in a feasibility study include:

- the number and interest level of potential members;
- market issues (Can the co-op get better prices, better quality or better services than potential members currently get through other means?);
- operating costs; and
- availability of financing.

If insurmountable obstacles are discovered in the feasibility study, the development of the cooperative can be abandoned or shelved before too much time or money has been expended.

Feasibility studies can range from very low cost to several thousand dollars. Local or state governments or foundations may provide financial or technical assistance in carrying out a feasibility study. Initial payments by potential co-op members may also be used to help cover the cost of a feasibility study.

6. Prepare a Business Plan

If the feasibility study results are favorable, the steering committee carries out or commissions a detailed business plan. The business plan serves two primary purposes:

- to provide a blueprint for the development and initial operation of the co-op; and
- to provide supporting documentation for potential members, financial institutions and other investors.

A typical business plan includes:

- an executive summary;
- a description of the company;
- a market analysis;
- a marketing and sales plan;
- a description of the organizational structure and key personnel; and
- a financial analysis.

7. Hold a General Membership Meeting

The first general membership meeting is convened when the steering committee decides that enough members have joined the co-op and the business planning process is far enough along so that members can decide whether it makes sense to pursue the long term development of the co-op. The first general membership meeting often takes place six months to a year after the formation of the steering committee. At this meeting, the members:

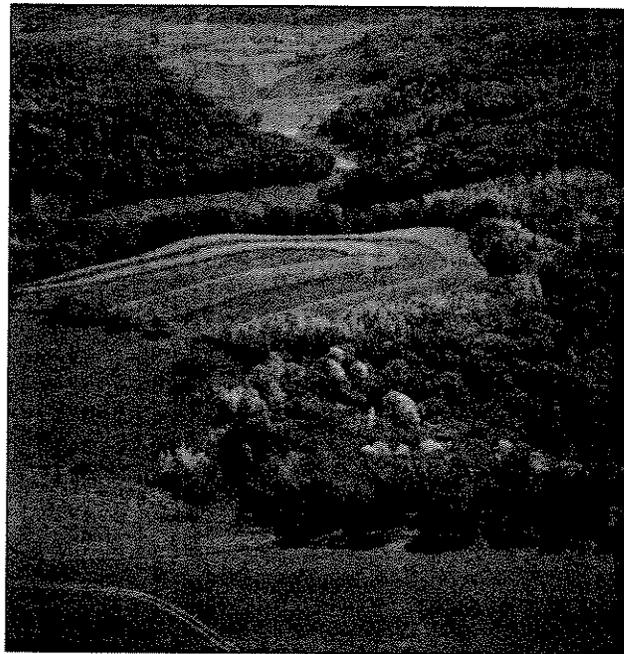
- vote on the co-op's bylaws;
- elect a board of directors;
- vote on a plan for the development of the co-op; and
- conduct other business.

This meeting marks the transition from a steering committee and an interim set of bylaws to a formally elected board and formally approved bylaws.

8. Secure Financing

Cooperatives vary greatly in the amount of capital they need to begin operating. The business plan should include the amount and type of financing needed by the co-op and a strategy for getting it. The board of directors and its advisors are responsible for implementing this strategy. Virtually all co-ops require some level of member financing, usually in the form of stock purchases or membership fees. Member financing not only provides equity for the co-op, it also provides a financial base that makes other investors, particularly banks, feel more secure in investing their funds in the co-op.

In addition to equity from members, most co-ops need to borrow money to get started and to maintain their operations. Loans can come from banks and other financial institutions (including several national banks for cooperatives that have federal charters specifically to provide such loans). Other loan sources are members, local, state and federal government programs, and various private for-profit and non-profit organizations.



9. Recruit Personnel

The recruitment of personnel is normally listed as the last step in the co-op formation process because the co-op is not a definite "go" until the necessary financing has been lined up. However, some co-op start-ups identify key potential personnel much earlier in the process, for example in the feasibility study or business planning stages. One or more key persons can be hired as consultants at an early stage, sometimes with the intent that they will work for the co-op once it is formally established. This approach also has the effect of making investors feel more comfortable about financing the co-op because proposed management staff have been identified. For some lenders, competent management is the most important thing they look at in making a loan decision.

10. Begin the Operation of the Cooperative

With financing and key personnel in place, the co-op is ready to carry out its business plan. Remember that the business plan is not a rigid set of rules that should be adhered to "no matter what." It is a tool to help the cooperative start up and operate effectively. If key financial resource or marketing issues change, the business plan should be adapted accordingly. Business planning is a process.





Conclusion

The ten steps in forming a co-op listed above are intended to provide a general overview of the co-op organizing process. Remember that the start-up of each co-op is unique so the steps outlined here should not be used as a rigid blueprint, but rather as a set of suggestions to be adapted as needed.

It is often useful to seek out professional assistance in forming a cooperative. Cooperative developers, legal counsel, financial experts and forestry professionals can save a steering committee time and help it to avoid costly mistakes.

Cooperative Development Services and the Community Forestry Resource Center have established a partnership agreement to assist woodland owners in the Upper Midwest to form sustainable forestry cooperatives. The University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives has also agreed to provide educational and development services to forestry co-ops in Wisconsin. We have grant funds that allow us to provide early stage assistance free of charge. We can also help woodland owners to identify public and private sources of technical and financial assistance. In addition, we provide assistance with all phases of the co-op development process on a fee-for-service basis.

For further information, please contact:

E.G. Nadeau (608-258-4393) at Cooperative Development Services,
Phillip Guillery (612-870-3456) at Community Forestry Resource Center
Jody Padgham (608-262-0705) at the University of Wisconsin
Center for Cooperatives.



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COMMUNITY FORESTRY CONNECTIONS

FALL 1999

Welcome from Philip Guillery and the CFRC

Welcome to the premier issue of *COMMUNITY FORESTRY CONNECTIONS*, the newsletter of the Community Forestry Resource Center. This newsletter strives to inform woodland owners about innovations in cooperation and about responsible forest management.

COMMUNITY FORESTRY CONNECTIONS is free-of-charge to the people who make up one of the most exciting new movements in North America—landowners working together to add value to their forests through cooperation, certification, and ecologically appropriate management, and to capture more of the final price of their products.

In this inaugural issue you will find a profile of Jim Birke-meier of Timbergreen Forestry, an excerpt from forester Peter Bundy's new book, a lesson in building cooperatives by E.G. Nadeau of Cooperative Development Services, details about solar kilns, and an essay on ecology from Gigi La Budde. Just as important, you will find news of forest-owner groups around the continent who work to promote

profitable, responsible forestry.

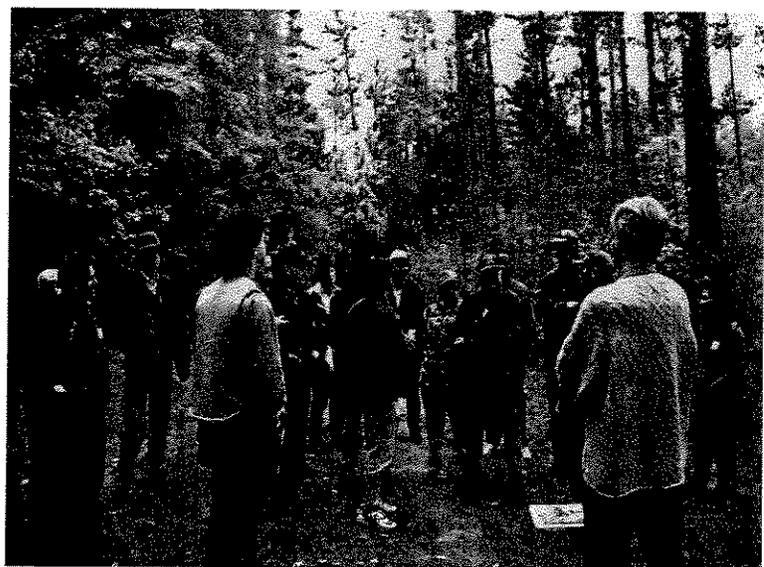
Every season we will feature new profiles. Also look for articles on marketing and logging, and for down-to-earth, useful information on manag-

ing your forest in cooperation with your neighbors. If the idea of cooperation appeals to you, contact the CFRC.

This newsletter is for the people in one of the most exciting movements in North America—woodland owners working together to add value to their forests.

To make *COMMUNITY FORESTRY CONNECTIONS* a success, we need your help. Think of it as a way

COMMUNITY FORESTRY CONNECTIONS is available at www.forestrycenter.org, or contact us at 612-870-3407 or forestrycenter@iatp.org. Thanks!



COMMUNITY FORESTRY RESOURCE CENTER

Community Forestry Connections seeks to inform and encourage the long-term health and prosperity of small, privately owned woodlots, their owners, and their communities.

CFC is published quarterly by the Community Forestry Resource Center, a nonprofit organization created by the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy.

The CFRC extends its gratitude for financial support to the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, The Laird Norton Endowment Foundation, and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund.



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Cooperation 101

The Many Paths of Cooperation

By E.G. Nadeau, Cooperative Development Services

Priate forest owners with anywhere from a few to several thousand acres are finding that working together is a good way to manage their forests well and, at the same time, generate some income from them.

Groups of small and medium size woodland owners can receive a number of benefits from the economies of size that cooperatives provide. These include:

- > Screening and training of loggers and foresters to make sure they will enhance the value of members' forests;
- > Joint ownership of sort yards, buildings, and processing equipment to turn logs into high-value products; and
- > A combined volume and variety of wood products that can receive good prices in the market place.

There are also less tangible benefits from cooperation, including sharing of information among members; work parties on each other's land to clear brush, burn, and replant prairies; and other activities.

Forming a cooperative is one way for forest owners to work together in the management of their woodlands and the processing and marketing of wood. There are a variety of other ways:

Landowners can get together informally to share in-

formation and help out with each others' woodland management.

Forest owners can form associations that provide educational programs and assist in screening and hiring foresters and loggers.

Landowners can form partnerships or limited liability companies that may not have one-member-one-vote provisions like cooperatives but do provide economies of size.

Regardless of the specific ways in which forest owners choose to cooperate, one thing is very clear. The vast majority of small- and medium-size forest owners will have much better-managed woods and will be able to realize a better return from their forest products by working together rather than trying to go it alone.

Next issue, "What exactly is a cooperative and how is one formed?"

E.G. Nadeau works with Cooperative Development Services of Madison, Wisc., a nonprofit corporation founded in 1986 to provide business-development and planning services to cooperatives and communities. Contact Nadeau or Rosemary Mahoney at CDS, 30 West Mifflin St., Suite 401, Madison, WI 53703; 608-258-4396, fax 608-258-4394.

Portraits from Our Woods

Jim Birkemeier spent 15 years looking for a way to make sustainable forestry commercially viable on small woodlots. Now he's hit . . .

Birkemeier's Jackpot

Jim Birkemeier was a recently graduated forester in the late '70s when he got frustrated with the usual way of harvesting trees. "We can't continue to slaughter our timber like there's no tomorrow," he realized.

About the same time, some disease-killed oaks on his family woodlot—200 acres overlooking the Wisconsin River valley—needed salvage.

Birkemeier selected trees individually and logged lightly with a farm tractor and winch. Then he bought a sawmill, built a solar-powered kiln, and made a business out of lumber and flooring from the family farm.

Every year he would also try a new strategy for expanding his low-impact logging methods to a commercial scale.

"My brain is like a slot machine,"

Birkemeier explains, "I've got all these thoughts spinning around. When they stop, they usually don't make any sense. So I put in another quarter and spin 'em again.

"When the timber cooperative, value-added processing, and FSC-certified forestry all came together, I saw Jackpot!"

Birkemeier describes certification as a tremendous education and encouragement, but a tremendous task as well. It's expensive, requires considerable education, and demands a long-term sense of discipline. What Birkemeier figured out is that value-added processing and a co-op make it work.

Most certified forests sell raw logs; certification gets them perhaps a 10 percent premium. "Ten percent of the stumpage price. Big deal. That's never gonna' work around here," according to Birkemeier. He's seen the price of Midwestern hardwood vary 200 percent from buyer to buyer.

But the Sustainable Woods Cooperative that Birkemeier helped create deals in finished lumber

and millwork, already valued at 10 times the raw logs, and *then* looks for the premium the certified label brings. "If we get a premium at the retail end, that's huge," says Birkemeier.

The co-op makes the task of certification possible for its small-scale landowners. "Our goal is to take this huge volume of science, regulation, and wisdom and boil it down to common sense basic principles. Individual landowners become certified by agreeing to follow the program. We have a staff and a large block of property, and we can spread the cost over many thousands of acres."

Along with being a forester certified by the Forest Stewardship Council, Birkemeier wears four other hats in his woods. "The sawmiller in me wants just the good trees,"

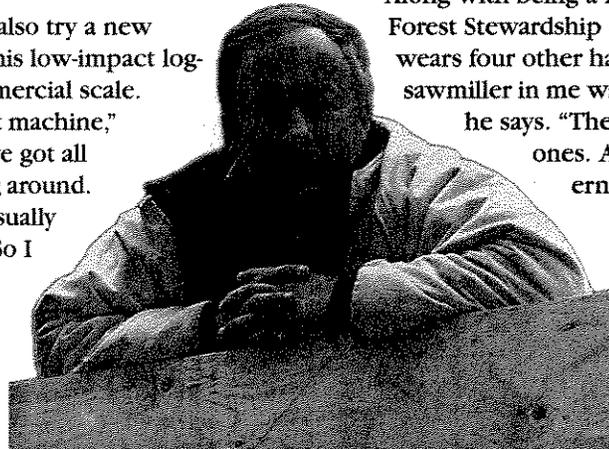
he says. "The logger wants the easy ones. And the guy with the government hat wants me to fill out the paper work."

But the landowner hat, he explains, is the one that lets him see the future. Birkemeier and family are turning 200 acres of oak, walnut, and cherry into a permanent trust with annual dividends. They bought the place in 1973. It had been cut over twice, grazed,

and burnt. In '76 they counted 350,000 board feet, about \$14,000 worth. Careful harvests since then have grossed 400,000 board feet and a quarter-million dollars.

"Our management plan describes another 12 years of light improvement harvesting," says Birkemeier. "By 2010 we will have a million board feet. From there, we can harvest 40,000 board feet per year forever." —Phil Norcross

Jim Birkemeier, Timbergreen Forestry, S11478 Soeldner Rd., Spring Green, WI 53588; 608-588-7342, tmbrgrn@execpc.com, www.execpc.com/timbergreen



ACROSS THE FOREST LANDSCAPE:

Sustainable Woods Cooperative

The Sustainable Woods Cooperative has grown to 150 members and close to 20,000 acres of forest. SWC members have been developing forest management plans with assistance from Timbergreen Forestry and Clark Forestry, both SmartWood certified companies. St. Mary's University, Winona, Minn., has been helping SWC develop a geographic information system for landscape-level issues.

The co-op has supplied an "eco-housing" development, Prairie Crossings in northern Illinois, with wood flooring for a model home. SWC has also been working on ways to raise capital for a sort yard, solar kilns, and possible retail space. Financing will come from a local tax program meant to help communities improve industrial sites, a county loan program, bank loans, and members' contributions.

On September 15, SWC kicked off a new membership structure that allows members to buy stock options to help capitalize the cooperative's operations. Options include membership with voting privileges, rights to market and process, and limited public stock.

SWC, Box 430, Spring Green, WI 53588; swc@mlhc.net



Hiawatha Sustainable Woods Cooperative

The nearly 50 members of the Hiawatha Sustainable Woods Cooperative have thousands of board feet of storm-damaged timber. Their urgent search for a sort yard, kilns, and processing equipment has been fruitful.

The HSWC has tentative approval for loans through the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative, Dairyland Power Cooperative, and Farm Credit Services, and it is starting a capital campaign through its membership. A harvest of red oak has been donated to the cooperative for value-added processing and sale. HSWC will use its capital for purchasing a sort yard and equipment, for marketing initiatives, and for administrative personnel, loggers, foresters, and ecology professionals. HSWC continues its landowner workshops and information sharing with scheduled "walks in the woods" and training.

HSWC, Box 248, Fountain City, WI 54629; 608-687-8193

Maine Low-Impact Forestry Project

The Maine Low-Impact Forestry Project was launched by the Hancock County Planning Commission "to encourage a long-term management perspective; a view of the forest as an ecosystem; less destructive logging practices; high-value markets for products harvested using low-impact methods; management for multiple objectives, including social and community values; and productivity of the forest, broadly defined." Participants

Vermont Family Forests

Vermont Family Forests was certified by the SmartWood program in 1998. It recently provided 70,000 board feet for a building made entirely of certified wood at Middlebury College in Vermont. VFF is currently developing a for-profit company that will negotiate contracts with loggers, sawyers, and mills, while VFF members will retain control of their product until it is sold. The goal is to pay VFF members twice the stumpage value, and to pay loggers a premium for doing a good job in the forest. VFF also considers providing kiln drying. The primary product it plans for is wood flooring, sold in all of New England under the VFF brand.

VFF, c/o David Brynn, 1590 Route 7 S., Middlebury, VT 05753; 802-388-4969.

include loggers, foresters, and woodlot owners. MLIFP recognizes the difficulty loggers have doing low-damage work and still being competitive. MLIFP's goals are to educate loggers, foresters, and woodlot owners about alternatives. It is also investigating the feasibility of a timber cooperative.

MLIFP, 395 State St., Ellsworth, ME 04605; 207-667-7131, hcpc@acadia.net, www.acadia.net/hcpc/home.html

DEVELOPMENTS IN COOPERATION

Wisconsin Family Forests

Wisconsin Family Forests, an association modeled after Vermont Family Forests, has 87 members in Deerfield Township. Its goal is to create separate alliances in all 18 townships of Waushara County. WFF's message to members is "You all have something to offer the community by managing your forests well. We can be your roadmap."

Foresters work with WFF to create management plans, or modify existing ones, to qualify for FSC certification. For people who fear losing control over their land, the WFF offers an alternative to state-sponsored management. WFF offers absentee owners a neighborly, trust-based option, and creates better relationships among neighbors. By bringing landowners together, WFF hopes to reduce costs by combining small harvests. It is looking at cost sharing for other tasks as well.

WFF, Martin Pionke, chair, 715-249-5406; Box 99, Hancock WI 54943

Residents' Committee to Protect the Adirondacks

The Residents' Committee to Protect the Adirondacks monitors water-quality, protects and acquires land, and helps rural community development. It is organizing a sustainable woods cooperative in the Adirondack Park in northern New York.

RCPA is working to become an accredited certifying organization under SmartWood's Resource Managers Program. It hopes to hire a forester and begin organization of the first co-op in fall '99.

RCPA, Peter Bauer, dir., Box 27, North Creek, NY 12853; 518-251-4257

Long Prairie/Central Minnesota

Family forest owners in Todd County, Minn., are investigating the feasibility of a cooperative, and they are working with a consultant, Masconomo Forestry, to develop management plans and offer FSC certification. Cabinet maker Mike Schluender's company, Chiseled Edge, is chain-of-custody certified by SmartWood. The forest owners are working with the CFRC to get a small sawmill in the region c-o-c certified as well.

Greg Nolan, Snowy Pines Reforestation, Rt. 3, Box 95, Browerville, MN 56438; 320-594-6397

White Earth Land Recovery Project

The White Earth Land Recovery Project in northern Minnesota looks to develop a forestry cooperative open to all landowners within the White Earth Reservation. With public agencies, it is working on a habitat classification system. It will soon have its 1,200 acres of forest assessed by SmartWood. WELRP hopes to be the first to produce

certified timber and maple syrup. Then it will look at the feasibility of a cooperative of family forest owners. CFRC assists with these steps and with marketing strategies for the products of WELRP's "Native Harvest" company.

White Earth Land Recovery Project, Box 327, White Earth, MN 56591; 218-755-3205, fax 218-751-0561

Ontario Woodlot Association

In Ontario, 80 percent of the forested land is owned by the Crown, but the remaining 20 percent, generally in the southern hardwood regions, is the most productive and diverse. OWA formed six years ago as a nonprofit, grass-roots organization. It serves 1,500 woodlot owners, sawmill operators, forestry consultants, and contrac-

tors. Local chapters sponsor such activities as tree planting and harvest work. The umbrella OWA focuses on advocacy and policy issues. A primary accomplishment is having lobbied to change the property tax structure. In the past, many woodlots were taxed as "residential property," a tremendous burden to their owners. With the help of

other organizations, OWA convinced the government to allow tax relief to forest owners with approved management plans. Now, four years after the tax change, over 1.3 million acres are under management plans.

Lynn McIntyre, Eastern Ontario Model Forest, Box 211, Kemptville, ON K0G1J0; 613-258-8241, fax 613-258-3920



The Art of Silviculture

An excerpt from *Finding the Forest*, a new book by Peter P. Bundy

The art and science of silviculture is, first of all, an understanding of the complex natural processes by which forests grow, mature and decay. Some call this forest ecology. Certainly foresters, before we can prescribe plans or treatments for some desired future condition, need to observe how nature works. Silviculture, however, does not stop at observational ecology. It takes an active hand in shaping the forest of the future. We participate in the process and influence the course of events. We experiment.

In tending our forests, we need the artistic vision at least as much as the scientific one.

Some of the things we try don't work very well. Then we try other things until we find some course of action that provides greater benefits to more people and to the health of the forest as a whole. This is the basis of stewardship. It is both an art and a science.

In traditional forestry circles I hear a good deal about the scientific part of this equation. What is the current annual increment (the growth rate) of red pine? How much calcium does the root system of aspen uptake and where is it stored? What is the ratio of red oak advance regeneration height growth to seedling height growth? These are important questions, and the pursuit of answers is worth the time-consuming measurements and calculations. Often, however, this occurs in the more rarefied arena of research, where regression equations and statistical significance are the measures of success. Many scientific studies, however, are limited by the questions that are asked. If we don't ask the right questions, the answers may be meaningless.

Here is where the artist is sorely needed in forestry. The artist sees the landscape in a different light and asks different, more difficult questions.

The artist has the vision to see possibilities for the future forest. It is the artist who is able to synthesize past information in new ways, to experiment with different techniques of growing and tending trees and to offer new solutions to old problems.

In tending our forests, we need the artistic vision at least as much as the scientific one, perhaps more. We need it more not because it is more important than the scientific view, but because, in forestry it has largely been neglected. We need to encourage foresters to try new solutions, to ask more questions, in short, to be more creative.

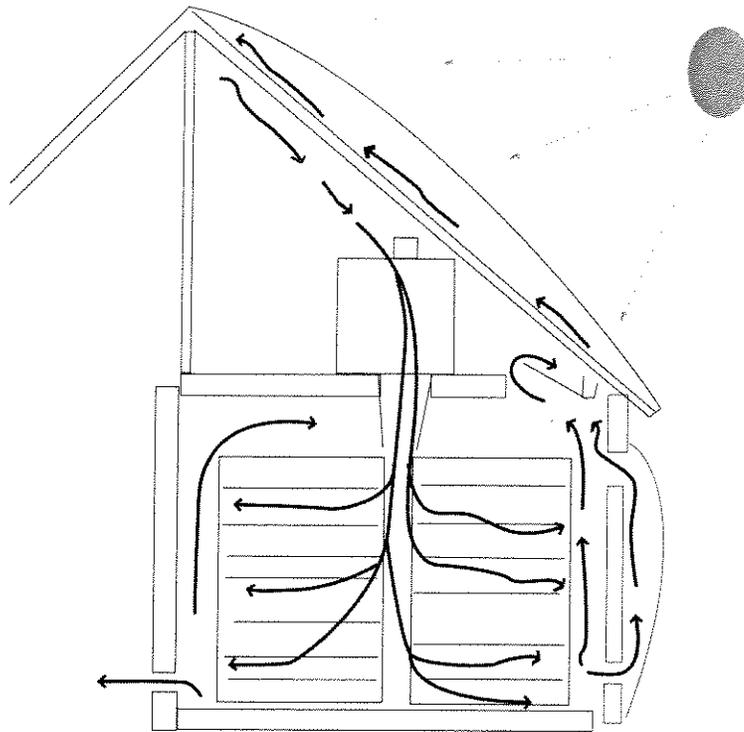
The artist notices shapes and patterns in the landscape and tries to make sense of them. The artist merely observes and is able to pause and watch and synthesize.

The artist notices shapes and patterns in the landscape and tries to make sense of them.

What happened to the acorns that fell from these trees last fall? Why are these red oak seedlings so numerous in this small cove when there are none 100 yards to the north? Where did the blister rust disease enter this tree and why didn't it affect its neighboring pine?

The art and science of silviculture offers a method to integrate the artistic and scientific worlds, to integrate the subjective with the objective. Through integration we reach for new solutions for the future forests of our planet.

From Finding the Forest by Peter P. Bundy, 1999. Bundy runs Masconomo Forestry, a consulting company that was recently assessed by FSC for certification as a resource manager, 101 West Main St., Crosby, MN, 56441; 218-546-7626



Timbergreen Solar Cycle Kilns

The solar cycle kiln is the first step in the value-added process. It creates lumber reserves and net-worth for a co-op or individual. You might even say it's an extension of trees standing in the forest.

Stephen Taylor, professional engineer and member of Vermont Family Forests, has studied all types of kilns in the U.S. and Canada and recently published his findings.* He identified the Timbergreen Solar Cycle, Jim Birkemeier's creation, as one of the most flexible, economical, practical, and simple kilns available today.

Taylor has since built his own solar cycle kiln for use by the Vermont Family Forests.

"Resource Efficient Wood Drying Kilns," VFF, Middlebury, VT, 1999.

Key features of a Timbergreen Solar Cycle Kiln

- Separate chambers for pre-drying, then kiln-drying, without moving the stickered piles of lumber.
- Sliding doors and an adjustable duct system to create four separate kiln chambers.
- A single set of fans to provide air movement through the solar collector and lumber pile.
- A large collector surface relative to the size of each kiln charge, effectively concentrating the solar energy.
- Space for processing and storage on the north side of the kiln.
- Production capacity of 35 MBF/year.
- Cost of materials, \$7,000; labor, \$7,000.
- Operating costs, \$161/MBF, comparable to a large commercial kiln.
- Suitable for a moderately sized charge of 3.5 thousand board feet (MBF), allowing considerable flexibility of species and lumber thickness. Rather than sawing 10 MBF of a single species and thickness to fill a chamber, an operator can fill one chamber with 3.5 MBF of one species, and another with something else.



**Looking
Beneath
the Trees: The Forest as a Community**

By Gigi La Budde

Plants do not stand alone. Virtually all plants growing in nature are members of communities, networks of intimately associated organisms. Although the forest is defined as a site occupied by trees, it is the lesser plants, together with the feathered and furred creatures and the multitude of tiny beings dwelling above and below the ground surface, that create the forest ecosystem. It is the interaction of living and nonliving entities that creates that which we call "woodlands."

But the true test of a forest's health is discovered in the smallest details. We must look not only to the green canopy above our heads, but to the shrub layer before us, to the ground layer and the forest floor beneath us, and to what is going on below the soil surface. Consider the smallest of the forest's inhabitants. Little-known mycorrhizal fungi inhabit the roots of most trees, wildflowers, and other herbaceous plants. These fungi help the host

plant to increase water and nutrient uptake, disease resistance, and soil toxicity tolerance. Some even produce substances that promote the growth of the host plant. We shouldn't refer to these fungi as "small": the length of fungal hyphae under a single tree would wrap around the equator five times!

Or take the *collembolans* for example, minute, wingless, insect-like creatures. They flourish in moist, cool humus and leaf mold, but their range spans arctic as well as tropical zones. The "grazers" of the forest floor, their constant browsing of leaf litter, pollen, fungi, spores, and lichens increases community diversity and stability by opening channels through which energy can flow.

La Budde operates the consulting firm Bison Belly Futures, S11793 Hazelnut Rd., Spring Green, WI 53588; 608-588-2048, bbf@mhtc.net.



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COMMUNITY FORESTRY CONNECTIONS

WINTER/SPRING 2000

The First Continental Congress: Cooperative Initiatives for Family Forests

Blue Mountain Center, November 4 to 6, 1999, Blue Mountain Lake, New York

In the beautiful Adirondacks, with a light covering of snow, organizers and visionaries gathered to share the spirit of community forestry and cooperative initiatives for family forestry. The meeting, called "the First Continental Congress," was organized by the Community Forestry Resource Center and the Citizens' Committee For the Protection of the Adirondacks. Participants came from across the U.S. and Canada to the Blue



Phil Guillery, CFRC, speaking to landowners

Blue Mountain Principles

We work cooperatively as small, local groups to cultivate family forests, respond to community needs, and for the economic, social, and ecological benefit of our communities.

We base our actions on the principles of cooperation, and we are open to various models and means of meeting our goals.

We implement management practices which protect and maintain the ecological integrity of the forest as a whole and for future generations.

We use third-party certification to monitor our efforts and emphasize the difference between our work and non-certifiable forestry.

We provide training and education to empower woodland owners and all those involved, and through this effort we promote safety and job creation in the local community.

We recognize the need to internalize all costs and implement full-cost accounting, and we recognize the benefit of local forest product production and value-added networks.

Mountain Center in New York. Common visions were the focal point of the meeting. Participants shared experiences and wove a framework for communication, collaboration and outreach with each other.

The meeting began with an informal evening session to introduce and initiate discussions, followed by a day of tours with local landowners and then the formal start of the congress. The hard work of the congress included a day spent defining and detailing the issues and solutions the members see in their efforts.

While the groups were from different regions and had diverse missions, they found common issues associated with improving management of private forest land. Many discussions revolved around landowner involvement in sustainable forest management, development of rural economies,

continued page 6

COMMUNITY FORESTRY RESOURCE CENTER

Community Forestry Connections seeks to inform and encourage the long-term health and prosperity of small, privately owned woodlots, their owners, and their communities.

CFC is published quarterly by the Community Forestry Resource Center, a nonprofit organization created by the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy.

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Cooperation 101

What is a Cooperative? How is one Formed?

By E.G. Nadeau,
Cooperative Development Services

A formal definition of a cooperative is "a business owned and democratically controlled by the people who use its services." Key differences between cooperatives and for-profit corporations are "one person, one vote" decision-making and profits distributed to members on the basis of how much business they do with the cooperative, rather than on how much stock they own in it.

It's pretty simple to incorporate a cooperative. In Wisconsin,

steering committee to draft by-laws, raise funds, study feasibility, create a business plan, and make recommendations to the broader group. The members then vote on a plan of action and elect a board of directors to replace the informal steering committee.

Two large hurdles remain before a cooperative becomes operational: Securing adequate financing from members, banks, and other lenders in order to hire staff and purchase land, buildings, and equipment. And

Cooperative: A business owned and democratically controlled by the people who use its services.

for example, five people interested in forming a cooperative fill out one- or two-page "articles of incorporation" and file them with the county register of deeds or the secretary of state and pay an incorporation fee of maybe \$50. An attorney to help with the process might cost an additional \$100 or \$200.

The more difficult part is organizing and financing a co-op. Usually, a founding group selects a



hiring a general manager with the right skills to oversee the co-op's operations and market its products at a profit.

It usually takes a year or more to go from the initial organizing meetings to the start-up of operations.

E.G. Nadeau works with Cooperative Development Services of Madison, Wisc., a nonprofit corporation that provides business-development services to cooperatives and communities: CDS, 30 W. Mifflin St., ste 401, Madison, WI 53703; 608-258-4396.

The Hiawatha Sustainable Woods Cooperative Collaboration and Education for the Community

Along the Mississippi River in scenic southwest Wisconsin and southeast Minnesota, the Hiawatha Sustainable Woods Cooperative (HSWC) was formed in August 1998 by a group that had been in touch with the Sustainable Woods Cooperative in Spring Green, Wisconsin, and liked the idea. The HSWC has faced a number of challenges and great opportunities, such as a significant amount of timber in its area being blown down in storms during 1998. The cooperative immediately had a potentially huge source of timber to market. The challenge was harvesting it before it lost its value and finding kilns to dry it. Thanks to the cooperative's leadership, 78,000 board feet of blowdown timber was salvaged off of John, Mary, and Karen Stettlers' land. Some of it is now molding and trim in the new Holiday Inn in Winona, Minnesota.

The Stettler family, founding members of HSWC, owns forestland near the Mississippi River in Wis-

consin. John now serves as the HSWC board president. Karen Stettler, who did much of the initial organizing work as an interim board member, describes her motives this way: "Including people who are actually in the woods logging, with those

doing the work sawing, and with the landowners, creates a team that can achieve more working together than by separating the parts. For me, the co-op makes sense, because on our own, on our farm, we don't have the ability to do all these things by ourselves. Sustainable management is what initially attracted me to the co-op and the whole project. That is the overall umbrella for all that follows."

"Taking into consideration the value-added processing and cooperative marketing that makes it come together, the return value is there for the good management," John adds. "It is also satisfying to be able to work with other landowners to help them accomplish other goals for their land and the environment."

HSWC has invested its initial energy into landowner education about forest management, logging, and ecology. Its education events have been integral to bringing landowners a better understanding about the forest and the services that will ultimately benefit the



*Training is important for loggers, foresters, ecologists,
and landowners so they can work together.*

consin. John now serves as the HSWC board president. Karen Stettler, who did much of the initial organizing work as an interim board member, describes her motives this way: "Including people who are actually in the woods logging, with those

landowner and the larger community. As Karen points out, "Training is important for loggers, foresters, ecologists, and landowners so they can work together."

continued page 6

ACROSS THE FOREST LANDSCAPE:

Sustainable Woods Cooperative

The Sustainable Woods Cooperative is sawing its first sustainably managed wood to be dried in a state-of-the-art solar kiln on its new property in Lone Rock, Wisconsin. With the help of dozens of SWC members, the 100-by-30-foot kiln was constructed using black locust beams and aspen siding from members' trees. The first boards should be dried and ready for use early this summer.

The cooperative has started some small-scale sales of certified kiln-dried lumber and is selling its "Twice Warm Wood" firewood at the Williamson Street Cooperative in Madison. Several area home builders have expressed interest in conducting a pilot project for wood flooring from the co-op.

Two area foresters have received SmartWood certification and are writing sustainable forest management plans for 80 members. The co-op will conduct educational programs throughout the year to provide members with information on how to manage their forests in a long-term, well-rounded manner.

SWC, Box 430, Spring Green, WI 53588; 608-588-9163; swe@mhtc.net



Northern Wisconsin Wood Cooperative

Nearly 25 landowners, wood workers, and others from three Lake Superior counties of Wisconsin have attended two informational meetings on wood cooperatives. Participants in the discussion are intrigued by the prospect of the first certified forest in their region. A steering committee has begun formation of a cooperative in Bayfield, Ashland, and Iron counties. Its six members include forestland owners, a Wood Mizer sawyer, two cabinet makers, and a builder. They started by considering "Steps in Forming a Sustainable Forestry Cooperative," by E.G. Nadeau of Cooperative Development Services, Jody Padgham of the Center for Cooperatives at the University of Wisconsin, and Philip Guillery of the CFRC.

Bob Brander, 715-873-2988, brander@win.bright.net

Kickapoo Wood Cooperative

A new cooperative is emerging in the driftless region of Wisconsin. The Kickapoo Wood Cooperative seeks "To provide sustainable forestry education, management, and marketing services to the residents of the Kickapoo Valley and neighboring watersheds." The cooperative is applying for funds from the Kickapoo Valley Reforestation Fund and is negotiating a technical assistance agreement with Cooperative Development Services, the Center for Cooperatives at the University of Wisconsin, and the CFRC.

Ben Hanson, 608-889-2585; Jody Padgham, 608-232-7705

Wisconsin Family Forests

Wisconsin Family Forests-Deerfield Alliance is built on the simple ideas that "We should know our neighbors. We should be concerned about how we use our land and how we leave it for future generations. We should be concerned about the high property taxes that force some of us to fragment our property, which creates urban sprawl."

WFF is not a big formal organization with a lot of money, but we think we have a good idea. We hope all the townships in Waushara County might someday have WFF alliances. If we get 1000 to 2000 supporters and members, we can help our town and county officials maintain a strong and healthy community—a sustainable community.

Most importantly, we believe we need to listen and learn from each other at the grass-roots level. I am happy to report that we are at 116 members, plus many more people showing interest. We have recruited a new forester, Brad Hutnik of Clark Forestry. We have a grant writer working with us, Lyle Nauman, a retired University of Wisconsin wildlife professor. We continue our neighbor-to-neighbor "Walk's in the Woods" and meetings.

WFF-DA, Martin Pionke, interim president, 715-249-5406, www.1wisconsin.com/familyforest

PHOTO: COURTESY OF WISCONSIN FAMILY FORESTS

DEVELOPMENTS IN COOPERATION

Hiawatha Sustainable Woods Cooperative

With over 50 members and 5,000 acres of woodland, the HSWC has been performing harvest, process, market, and capital development roles.

Landowners have been harvesting wind-damaged, downed timber. Some of it was processed through a cooperative operation loan. The first sale, after milling by another HSWC member, became baseboards and door frames in a new local Holiday Inn.

HSWC is selling S3S lumber to builders and high schools. Rough sawn wood in a variety of species is air dried and available for sale after a short time in the kiln.

By mid-February we will select a permanent site for operation in the Galesville-Blair area of western Wisconsin. We'll transport logs to that site by mid-March. Financing, equity, and processing are under discussion with members and lenders.

Education, through field days and publications, continues to be a major focus of the HSWC. Several crews have completed training in timber harvesting, and more training is planned. Stewardship plans and the certification process are underway. We are inspired by the support we get from those dedicated to our mission.

John Stettler, HSWC, 608-687-8430,
jstett@reconnect.com

Massachusetts Family Forests

The forest community in Massachusetts is organizing to address forest management, economic development, and protection and enhancement of natural resources. Located in the Berkshire hills of western Massachusetts, MFF enjoys support from the University of Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Forest Stewardship Program, Hilltown Community Development Corporation (CDC), and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management. Interest has also come from timber harvesters, mill owners, and consulting foresters—making this a well-rounded effort.

Preliminary survey results provided by the U. of Mass. and the Hilltown CDC demonstrate a need and interest for a supply of locally grown, certified wood.

Since October, we have been organizing a value-added forest landowner cooperative. MFF has also applied for a federal grant to help fund further analysis of the wood-user survey, review and upgrade of land management plans, and educational workshops. Committees are addressing three issues: how to organize the cooperative, what resources we have, and what product might we produce.

MFF has benefited greatly from information and advice from other cooperatives. We look forward to sharing information and support with the forest cooperative movement.

MFF, c/o Paul Cantanzaro,
+13 532-6872, paul.cantanzaro@state.ma.us

Western Upper Peninsula Forest Improvement District

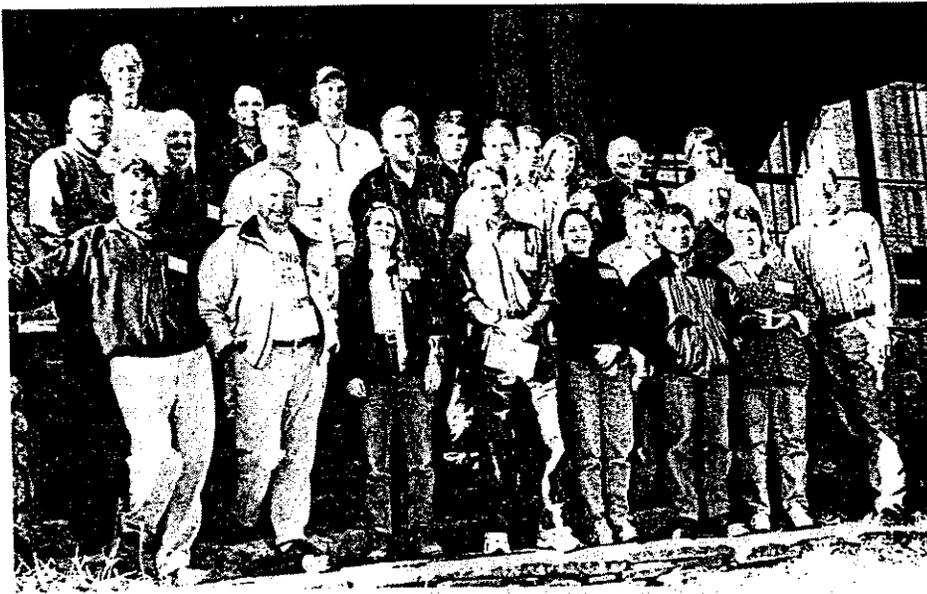
The Michigan legislature created WUPFID to encourage both public and private forest-land owners to pool their resources to create a forest cooperative. The goal is to improve the management and utilization of member forest lands in a manner that provides for sustainable development of the forest resources for present and future generations.

The WUPFID is a member-driven organization with a board of directors and a day-to-day operation team. It provides members with individualized management plans, a log storage and sorting facility, and marketing.

At the beginning of 1999, WUPFID had 160,000 acres enrolled by 860 private, nonindustrial woodlot owners, municipalities, and counties. WUPFID averages 70 timber sales per year. The sales have generated \$4.66 million in stumpage payments to landowners.

Dick Bohlin, Gogebic County Forester, 906 663-4687





This group of 23 represented community and family forestry groups in the Northeast and Upper Midwest at the First Continental Congress.

Blue Mountain, from page 1 and the role of certification. One result of the meeting was the drafting of common principles for the groups, listed at right.

Proceedings of the meeting are being distributed to those who attended the meeting; they are also posted on our website (www.forestrycenter.org) and provided upon request. The intention of the proceedings is to capture the energy and re-

sult of the congress in a useful format to assist those working in this effort. The proceedings include materials donated by the congress participants regarding their particular efforts. Because initiatives for family forests are ever-changing and improving, the proceedings will serve as a primer and first-step resource for those interested in a better understanding of the path that has been built.

Hiawatha, from page 3

During the initial stages of HSWC's development, there were many questions about Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification. However, as the group learned more, it realized the value of certification and made it part of the HSWC mission. Karen explains: "Certification is critical, and third-party certification is the way to go. Every landowner who is part of the cooperative should be certified. It gives validity to the process and our product. Down the road, there will be added economic gain, but for myself, now, just knowing the wood is harvested and processed in a certified manner is important."

"With regards to certification," John adds, "when members decide to certify their woodland, it means that future timber buyers will need to consider more landowner issues than they did previously. Landowners with their minds set on good forest management, education, and certification are the start, the tip of the iceberg."

The cooperative is able to assist members in other ways, too. For example, HSWC supported a

member whose timber was cut by a trespassing logging company. The company's initial compensation offer was increased and the issue settled satisfactorily with the involvement of the cooperative leadership.

There is a long-term educational benefit of engaging a cohesive and consistent group of people in working towards common goals. "Learning about forestry management, certification, harvesting, and processing is a great benefit the co-op can provide," says Karen. "The landowner initially is dependent, but in the long run the landowner's knowledge will increase by being involved in the process. Along with the forester and the ecologist, the interest of the landowner is an on-going relationship with overall goals that are developed in the forest stewardship plan."

"There is a lot of excitement on the part of our Longdale Farm for progressing in this challenging venture. Also exciting is to know of other models that are working. We are committed to doing our part, along with the efforts and support of many, to help HSWC achieve its mission."

The CFRC Marketing Vision

Our marketing focuses on making customers our partners in building sustainable rural communities

Community-based forestry operations, sustained rural economic development, and marketing certified forest products are not a normal combination from a traditional marketing perspective. But at the Community Forestry Resource Center these elements are at the core of our marketing program. The program is designed to produce tangible benefits to community-based forestry operations by developing marketing systems for certified timber and non-timber forest products.

Marketing is understood in a variety of ways—as advertising, sales, promotion, publicity, distribution, or packaging. It is clearly more than just passing objects from seller to buyer. Dr. Jean Mater, et al., in their 1992 publication *Marketing Forest Products*, point out that “marketing recognizes that people don’t buy a product or service; they buy expectations or solutions to their problems. Filling these expectations is what marketing is all about.” The American Marketing Association calls its work “the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of *ideas*, goods, and services.”

At CFRC, marketing is an important tool in the development of self-sustaining and responsible economic systems. This concept involves not only products and markets but also developing sustainable communities and regions by supporting the organizations and individuals that belong to them.

To put it in different words, we are not in the business of simply moving products from production lines to consumers. In our view, failure to develop and manage marketing systems to meet broader goals can render the success of a product in the market meaningless.

Though generating sales for landowner cooperatives and associations is a key component of our marketing program, our marketing of certified forest products focuses on building systems to educate, attract, and keep customers, and on making them partners in building sustainable rural communities and regions. Our challenge lies in integrating intangible attributes into the final physical product, communicating them to consumers effectively, and creating systems to sustain and improve consumers’ engagement in land and forest stewardship.

CFRC’s Marketing Update

The marketing program at CFRC concentrates on supporting community-based, FSC-certified operations. The following areas continue to be priorities for the year 2000:

- ◊ Chiseled Edge, Browerville, Minnesota, Mike Schluender, owner, was recently chain-of-custody certified. The first of its projects was production of a wooden coffee display unit placed at the Mississippi Market in Saint Paul.
- ◊ The coffee display unit holds brochures for educating consumers on forest certification and the certified, community-based forest products of the Upper Midwest.
- ◊ Snowy Pines, a sawmill in Browerville, Minnesota, Greg Nolan, owner, supplies Chiseled Edge. It has also been certified. The CFRC provided support for chain of custody certification for the Sustainable Woods Cooperative in Spring Green, Wisconsin.
- ◊ Frogtown Puzzle Company, Saint Paul, Minnesota, recently became certified with assistance from the CFRC. It produces three-dimensional wooden puzzles and a wide array of laser-engraved wood products.



- ◊ A partnership has been established with Frogtown Puzzle Company to investigate the feasibility of a certified wood distribution center. Based in the company’s facilities in Saint Paul, the center would serve such markets as cabinet makers, woodworkers, do-it-yourselfers, home owners, and small-scale builders.
- ◊ Coordination with SmartWood, the Certified Forests Products Council, and the FSC is underway for communication and marketing activities in the Great Lakes region to reach a broader range of consumers.

Jumpin' Snow Soot!

By Gigi La Budde

Have you ever come across a patch of "sooty" snow while on a winter walk in the woods?

And as you bent down to take a closer look, that sooty patch was moving? You've discovered snow fleas, or *Achorutes nivicolus*.

Few insects attempt the monarch butterfly's ambitious migration south for the winter. Most of our northern insects protect themselves from winter's chill by sheltering under leaves, in tree-bark crannies, below ground, or in deep water. But careful observation will reward you with an abundance of exceptions. Snow fleas are one. Close inspection of that sooty patch of snow will reveal thousands of these tiny creatures: primitive wingless insects that scavenge vegetable matter on the soil surface.

Active at near-freezing temperatures, snow fleas may appear in large numbers on the snow's surface. They possess a remarkable leaping apparatus

on the underside of their abdomens that enables them to catapult several inches into the air.

Found throughout the world from the Arctic to Antarctic, snow fleas belong to the family of springtails, and are closely related to the oldest insect fossils known.

Seldom noticed, but by no means uncommon, snow fleas deserve a more compelling name. The Latin roots for the scientific name *Achorutes nivicolus* can help us: *achor* means scurf or dandruff; *achoreut* is dancer. *Nivis* is snow. How about "Scurfy Snowy Dandruff Dancer"? There! Latin can be fun!

Achorutes nivicolus,
or "Scurfy Snowy Dandruff Dancer"



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