

Women and Their Woods

Information for Women Forest Landowners in Pennsylvania
Issue 5, Spring 2012

Working with Natural Resource Professionals

Cecile Stelter, District Forester, PA DCNR

The idea of working with a natural resource professional can be an intimidating prospect. Myriad questions may have entered your mind when someone suggested that you need to “Hire a forester,” or “Get help from a professional.” Where in the world do you start?



Forest inventory with a DCNR Service Forester.

Probably one of the most important features in hiring a professional is that you need to be comfortable with the person you hire – you’re going to be working closely with them. You need to feel you can easily convey your values, goals and objectives about your forestland and know that they not only understand, but are working with you to enhance and promote them. There are many sources that can help you find available natural resource professionals: your local forest landowner organizations, other forest landowners, and PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resource Service Foresters are just a few places to begin your search. Talking with other woodland owners will not only help you compile a list of professional contacts, but will help you frame the questions you want to ask. Once you have some names, contact all of them and chose the person who will work best with you. Ask for references. Ask for referrals from other forest landowners – peers can tell you things that agency personnel cannot.

You should expect the professional you hire has both the formal education, and the technical knowledge and skills to work on your property. They should know the local conditions and issues, and should also be able to provide you with a sense of how your property fits into the larger landscape. They should be willing to share their experience of what has or hasn’t

...Continued on page 3

The Women and Their Woods program is administered by Penn State Forest Resources Extension and the Delaware Highlands Conservancy with support from the Pennsylvania Forest Stewardship Program, US Forest Service at Grey Towers, and PA DCNR Department of Conservation and Recreation.

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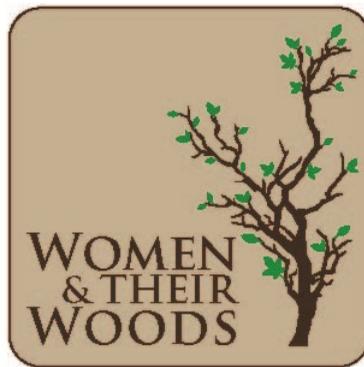
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Throughout our region, women are increasingly responsible for the stewardship of private forestlands. Women landowners require accurate information and relevant knowledge about available options for managing their properties.

Women and Their Woods is a dynamic, fun, and informative program that teaches women to effectively care for their lands. Women and Their Woods emphasizes conservation stewardship and the value of intact forestlands and instills in women landowners a sense of confidence in their abilities to meet the challenges of forestland ownership. knowledge about the value of intact forest land.

We hope you find this newsletter helpful. Please contact us for further information on how to be involved.

We need your Email Address!

Like so many other conservation minded organizations, we are hope to conserve resources by communicating with you through e-mail.

Please send your email to conserve@delawarehighlands.org and specify if you would like to receive our mailings electronically or continue to receive hard copies in the mail.

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worked in your surroundings and demonstrate their connections to other resource professionals and sources of information.

Don't expect your resource professional to make your decisions for you, or to create something out of resources that may not be available on your property. They can and should provide options for you based on the resources that are available and the expectations that you have articulated to them. **To better prepare yourself to work with a natural resource professional consider the following :**

- **Know what is important to you about your forestland beforehand: Why do you own it? What do you like? What's your favorite thing about it?**
- **Write everything down --- to protect you and the professional.**
- **Ask about money and associated costs --- this is a business arrangement.**
- **Clearly articulate your expectations and don't hesitate to voice concerns: You are the voice for your land. Make sure you're heard.**
- **Ask questions and ask for regular updates.**
- **Be realistic --- a forest doesn't grow in a day.**

Not unlike your favorite recipe, with the right ingredients, in the right amounts, at the right time, your efforts will be rewarded by a properly and sustainably managed forest that you will be able to enjoy for years to come!



Cecile M. Stelter is a District Forester in the Pennsylvania DCNR, Bureau of Forestry and manages the Cornplanter Forest District in Warren, PA. She is involved with many natural resource organizations including local landowner groups (WOCAN & NWPWA), the Pennsylvania Forestry Association (PFA), the Society of American Foresters (SAF) and has experience working for the U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service.



A network of forest landowners and professionals working together to cultivate women's connections to and care of healthy forests.



<http://extension.psu.edu/womenandtheirwoods>

NEW! Women and Their Woods Brochure Available Online

To help others get involved with the Women and Their Woods program, visit the website to download and print/email the informative brochure:

**[http://extension.psu.edu/
womenandtheirwoods](http://extension.psu.edu/womenandtheirwoods)**

Hard copies also available, contact Amanda Subjin. Phone: 570-226-3164 or email: conserve@delawarehighlands.org

Fun on the Run

By Elizabeth Mills, PA Forest Steward, Lancaster County

What could possibly be more captivating and romantic than “curtains and fountains of roses?” As the delighted character squealed in the children’s classic *The Secret Garden*, so I squealed upon seeing curtains of white roses rising to the tree tops when I visited my boyfriend’s property. Well, five years later I’m married to that man and I can tell you nothing is more rewarding than destroying those same roses. Let me explain.

Things are sometimes very different from how they first appear. Education and “enlightenment” have a lot to do with our perspective; I have been learning about the problems our Pennsylvania woodlands face. Some think the woods are timeless--our grandchildren will enjoy them just as our fathers and grandfathers did before us: hunting, hiking and enjoying the wildlife. Nice sentiment, but in order for the woods to continue being there for future generations, we must battle now. Our forests are under siege.

The towering rose curtain I mistook for “enchanted” is practically Enemy Number One. What was once seen as hardy rose root stock and introduced widely in this country in the 1800s has now proliferated to become

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one of the worst invasive plant problems of our PA woodlands--multiflora rose. Its fast-growing, tangly vines wrap around trees and cover vast areas of land, preventing sunlight from reaching the forest floor for new tree seedlings to germinate and preventing saplings from growing to maturity.



One of the invasive thickets the Mills are working to reclaim. Mile-a-minute covers multiflora rose and Ailanthus trees. Oriental bittersweet can be seen too.

Multiflora rose is not the only invader to threaten our forests here in Pennsylvania. Escaped Japanese barberry, oriental bittersweet, and so-called burning bushes and butterfly bushes from our yards are cropping up everywhere and adding to the degradation of our grandfathers' forests. Other major problems are Japanese stilt grass and Mile-a-Minute weed. Unlike native species of plants, these have virtually no checks in the wild – except you and me.

Here's where the fun comes in. My husband and I arm ourselves – and you can too – to cut and eliminate re-growth

of multi-flora rose and other invasive plants. Every tree freed and every proper square foot of sunlight restored increases the potential for regeneration of Penn's Woods and helps secure the forestlands for lucrative timber harvests and happy hunting grounds for the future. Eliminating these intruders will also give our many beautiful wild flowers room to return and flourish.

What else should be done? Other actions you and I can take include removing invasive plants from our yards so that birds and the wind don't spread them. Get educated, and then get armed! 70% of Pennsylvania's woodlands are owned by individuals like you and me. If each of us, one acre at a time, release properties from the stranglehold of these invasive species, we will be well on our way to restoring and preserving our most beautiful natural resource. Join a Woodland Owners Association in your county and call a State Forester to get started. We are all busy; but take it from me and my husband, carving out time to save our property is necessary, important, and fun – even on the run.

Managing a Family Forest

by Janet Olver

In January 1990 my husband Craig and I purchased 566 acres of forest land in northern Wayne County with an additional two acres purchased in 2004 for a private access road to the tree farm. We immediately put a conservation easement on the property with The Nature Conservancy to protect it from ever being developed. Craig started to do TSI (timber stand improvement) and continued this practice for the next five years, completing 500 acres in 2005. During the winter my daughter Tara and I worked whenever possible helping Craig with the harvesting, taking out the poorest trees to give the more valuable trees room to grow. We became certified as a Tree Farm on June 1, 1991 with the American Tree Farm System and certified as a Forest Stewardship owner on September 30, 1994 with the PA Bureau of Forestry. Our primary management goal has always been to grow and harvest high quality forest products in an ecologically sound manner.

The property has over eight miles of forest roads with 115 water bars installed on these trails to prevent soil erosion. All the roads have signs with road names. In the years 1995, 1996, 2007, 2008, and 2010 we had our woods sprayed to prevent defoliation by the eastern and forest tent caterpillars. So far we've completed thirty acres of invasive plant control (barberry and multi-flora rose). We've leased the tree farm to the Gravity Hunting Club (twenty-five members) for population control of deer, turkey, and bear.

I can say with confidence that family involvement on the property is absolutely a must. Everything we do on our tree farm includes Tara. We've worked together to make it a success, but we also combined fun things with the work: sometimes just having a bonfire, or riding the ATV over the woods roads, or going down to the Delaware River to watch the bald eagles. Tara grew up with the tree farm and developed the same love of the land that her Dad and I have. Today at twenty-four she has a definite sense of her own self-worth and her work ethic is commendable. Craig and I know that she will do her best to take care of the tree farm after we're gone. We've given her the knowledge and the tools to carry on our legacy, and we believe she will.



Craig, Tara, and Janet Olver manage the award-winning Tall Timber Tree Farm in Wayne County, PA.

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Women and Their Woods

Upcoming Events

April 20 & 21, 2012 - Spring Field Event



Join women forest landowners in Bradford County, PA for a hands-on look at invasive plants control, cost share plans, and small scale logging. The cost to attend is \$25. Space is limited. Please register by April 1 with Amanda Subjin at the Delaware Highlands Conservancy. Phone: 570-226-3164 or Email: conserve@delawarehighlands.org.

September 27 through 30, 2012 - Educational Retreat and Training

Women forest landowners from across the state of Pennsylvania and the surrounding region are invited to attend an educational retreat to learn more about managing their forestland and connecting with other forest landowners. The retreat will be held at Camp Susque north of Trout Run, Lycoming County, PA in the scenic Pennsylvania Wilds. Space at the retreat is limited. The cost per attendee will be \$130 and includes lodging for three nights, three meals and snacks each day, and meeting materials and resources. If you would like more information about the retreat or to receive an application to attend, please contact Allyson Muth at Penn State University. Phone: 814-865-3208 or Email: abm173@psu.edu.



You can find more information about the Women and Their Woods program online at
<http://extension.psu.edu/womenandtheirwoods>

...Continued from page 6

After becoming actively involved in the American Tree Farm System in 1991, and then winning the State Tree Farm of the Year award in 2007 and Regional Tree Farm award in 2008, I felt my self-confidence soaring. Along with Craig, I became involved with the PA State Tree Farm Committee and The American Tree Farm System's National Leaderships Grasstops Advocacy Program. Last May we were asked by the American Forest Foundation to come to Washington, DC to meet with members of the House and Senate and explain the various issues facing land owners. I would never have dreamed that I could ever be capable of such a task.

A few years ago I was invited by the Delaware Highlands Conservancy to come to a program entitled Women and Their Woods. To be honest, I really didn't see what I could possibly contribute to this group, but I thought it would be interesting and worthwhile to attend. Over the past few years I have met so many amazing women, women who are taking on the management of their own woodlands. Last October I participated in a retreat in Trout Run, PA. Never have I learned so much in such a short time. I came home so energized and excited that my family was sure I was an imposter and not the wife and mother they were accustomed to! I just want to tell all the other women out there, regardless of age, the sky is the limit. I know I have an advantage being married to a forester, but you have great resources of information that you can avail yourselves of. Believe me, if I can do it, you can too!

INSIDE

- Working with Professionals
- Upcoming Events
- Managing a Family Forest
- Fun on the Run

Women and Their Woods Newsletter



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