

20th Annual Fall Forestry Field Day

When it comes to managing woodlands, nothing is quite as inspiring as witnessing tree planting, wildlife and forest stand improvement projects first-hand. Each property offers some unique set of problems and each landowner seems to have some innovative method they've created to address them.

This holds true for John and Karen Buchanan's Tree Farm, the location of the 2014 Fall Forestry Field Day scheduled for October 16th. The Buchanan's Tree Farm is located about 3 miles southwest of Valley Falls in northeast Kansas. Named by the Kansas Forestry Association as the Kansas 2014 Agroforestry Award winners, the Buchanan's Tree Farm exhibits one of the most successful agroforestry alley cropping practices in the state.

The most common and traditional agroforestry practices in Kansas tend to be shelterbelts and riparian buffers. However, the Buchanan's have established an alley cropping system that enables them to produce hay crops while growing potentially high-value trees. This was accomplished by planting oaks, black walnut, pecan and even black cherry at a wide 25 foot by 25 foot spacing allowing the harvesting of native grass hay crops between tree rows. The advantage of an alley-cropping system is the annual income produced while long range forest products are growing. Perhaps as important are the conservation and wildlife benefits the system also creates.

What is unique to the Buchanan Tree Farm is the level of detail and attention associated with site preparation, tree planting, fertilization, weed and grass control, and other follow-up maintenance that makes alley cropping successful. Meticulous record keeping for each tree is documented and mapped with a geo-spatial reference point that identifies the location of each tree.

The details of the alley cropping system will be shared by John and a variety of foresters, wildlife biologists and natural resource professionals. Concurrent educational sessions will include such topics as:

- Site preparation for successful tree plantings

- Tree planting techniques

- Controlling weeds and grass

- Fertilizing new tree plantings

- Establishing native grass and other crops in an alley cropping system

- The economic benefits of alley cropping

- What does a healthy woodland look like?

John and Karen have also done an impressive job removing eastern red cedar and other woodies from their grasslands and releasing black walnut from other competing trees in their native woodlands.

A catered lunch will be offered as part of the \$12.00 registration fee. Following lunch the field day will move to the US Army Corp of Engineer's wildlife area on the northwest shores of Perry Lake. The afternoon sessions will include topics on the issues of the sedimentation of Perry Lake and other reservoirs, water quality and quantity issues facing the state, activities of local watershed groups to address the problem, wildlife food plot establishment and quail habitat management.

The program will also include the presentation of the 2014 Forest Stewardship Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year Award to Frank Martin. The Martin Tree Farm, located in Leavenworth County, has been certified green by the American Tree Farm System for the last 35 years! Frank is specifically being recognized for tree planting and forest stand improvement practices adjacent to Stranger Creek and other parts of the farm.

Registration may be accomplished by sending a \$12.00 check to the Kansas Forest Service at 2610 Claflin RD, Manhattan, KS 66502, and writing "Fall Forestry Field Day" in the memo line. A brochure of the event is available on the web at www.kansasforests.org, by clicking on news and events in the left margin and calendar of events. A direct mailing will be sent out sometime in late September.

Additional questions may directed to Bob Atchison at 785-532-3310 or atchison@ksu.edu.