



Julie Pal listens as Micha Miller explains tree harvesting

Warren Teacher Learns Forestry Conservation

Julie Pal, eighth grade science teacher at Warren Junior High School, attended the Teachers' Conservation Institute at the Piney Woods Conservation Center, near Broaddus. Julie was one of twenty-nine teachers from across the state to take advantage of the July 8-13 session. The Tyler County Forest Landowners Association awarded Julie Pal a full scholarship.

The Teachers' Conservation Institute, sponsored by the Texas Forestry Association, is a professional development workshop that uses the forest to teach conservation to Texas' teachers. The workshop focuses on the environmental, economic, and social well being that comes through scientific stewardship. The Texas Forestry Association coordinates the foresters, educators, natural resource conservationists and industry professionals that lead the diverse activities.

On the fourth day of this weeklong session, the teachers were instructed in the techniques, equipment, regulations and costs associated with harvesting trees. Trees are harvested in rows to minimize damage to the standing trees that are retained for further growth and later harvesting. The teachers traveled to a 125-acre tree farm that Micha Miller's ten-member logging crew was thinning for the first time. Miller, a Broaddus native who discovered early that he enjoys harvesting trees and formed his own logging company, was eager to answer all the teachers' questions.

Forestry conservation practices are designed to ensure that future generations will have the abundant forests that we enjoy today. The Texas Forestry Association is leading the implementation of sustainable forest stewardship initiatives in Texas by encouraging landowners to reforest following the final harvest and to have a management plan that accounts for water quality, wildlife habitat, and soil conservation.

Like many Southeast Texas natives, Julie Pal has seen the logging trucks on the roads and the final products such as lumber and oriented strand board (OSB). After a week at the Piney Woods Conservation Center, Julie shared that she now has an understanding of forest management techniques such as timber thinning and the extensive (and expensive) types of equipment required to harvest the timber. Julie reflected, "I was not aware of how devastating all these weeks of heavy rain really affected privately owned logging companies."

The Tyler County Forest Landowners Association is honored to support teachers in Tyler County while promoting the benefits of forestry to the area. The Tyler County Forest Landowners Association is a non profit organization whose objectives include educating landowners about good forest management and harvesting practices, and keeping landowners up to date on matters affecting timberland operations, taxes and legislative actions.