

Tyler County Forest Landowner Association

Regular Meeting Minutes

Saturday, April 10, 2010 - 9:30am

In Attendance: Twenty-one members and visitors -- including Charles Zimmerman (President), Jack Clark (Vice President), Bill Tetley (Treasurer), Betty Zimmerman (Secretary), and Directors Hugh Hales, Rick Huffman, and Sarah Reinemeyer. The meeting was held at the Tyler County Extension Office, 201 Willow Street, Woodville, Texas.

Charles Zimmerman welcomed the attendees, recognized the officers present and introduced the speakers.

- **Hap Hachtel**, Consulting Forester from Mt. Enterprise, presented “From Harvest to Planting – Site Preparation with Consideration for Stacked Tree Farm Income.”



- History. In the 1800's, a Mississippian wrote in a letter that the land west of Nacogdoches, Texas was “piney barrens.” The huge pine trees were dominant, allowing for wagons to travel through them on any number of trails. There were not enough hardwood trees for fence posts. By 1913, a Yale professor looking for a dozen identical 40-acre tracks was unable to do so. People settled along the rivers and in towns owned by companies. During the depression, the US Forest Service purchased lands to keep the mills running. In the 1950's, farmers were letting their cotton fields return to forests. As cultivated fields they returned to almost pure pine. During this period the Soil Conservation Service (today's NRCS) started a program called the Soil Bank program which assisted many farmers in planting their fields to pine.
- Regeneration. If a cultivated field is left unattended, it will regenerate to a pine forest. If a pasture is left unattended, it will regenerate to a mixed forest of pines and hardwoods. If cutover land is left unattended, it will regenerate to a hardwood forest with some pines. Forests destroyed by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita would have regenerated to pine if they had been allowed to burn as they would have if man was not present to stop the wildfires that would have occurred. The hurricanes happened on a dry year which caused more damage and also would have resulted in more severe fires if allowed to burn. The burns would have been Mother Nature's site preparation for the future pine forest.
- Site Preparation. Timber is a crop; soil is a resource. Site preparation is not about looks; it is to control unwanted plants with the most cost effective approach.

1. Push, pile, burn, plant. This was common from the 1930's until the better herbicides were developed in the 1980's and 1990's. Yaupon survives because the roots live. If debris is pushed and piled but not burned, sweetgum trees will flourish.
 2. Chop and burn the debris -- and then plant. The normal chopper was a rolling drum of approximately 7 to 10 tons that was pulled by a large dozer. LeTourneau made self-propelled models of 40 and 80 tons. Hap has seen a 40-ton model. Today, chippers are available that facilitate leaving the chips on the ground unburned.
 3. Apply herbicides. Select an appropriate herbicide. For example, Arsenal herbicide does not harm pine, yaupon, briars or red buds.
 - If harvest is before the end of May, apply appropriate herbicide in the summer and plant in the winter.
 - If harvest is after June, delay herbicide and planting until the following year. If harvest is after June and you plant the same year, the seedlings will compete with other vegetation. The only herbicide to use in the fall is Arsenal because it will not harm the seedlings. However, it also will not harm the yaupon when applied in the fall.
- Last Thinning. During the last thinning before the final harvest, plan for the next planting. Decide where to raise pine and where to raise hardwood. During the thinning, eliminate hardwood except for the areas where you want to raise it. Following Streamside Management Zone (SMZ) best practices, keep all trees including pines along the streams. The best soil is along the streams. There is tremendous liability when burning underbrush. The state of Texas places the liability on the burn contractor; hence, most individuals do not get the burn done and should choose to use herbicides.
 - Stacked Income. In addition to the tree crop, opportunities for tree farm income include hunting leases, straw baling, mushrooms, Christmas Trees, fruits and berries, agri-forestry, firewood, RV park, farm stay, birding, and petroleum. Farm stays are becoming popular with people who want to enjoy the county experience for a few days or a few weeks.
 - **Gary Calkins**, Texas Parks and Wildlife District leader from Jasper, presented "Wildlife Food Plots" and an update on Bears.



- Timber and wildlife management are complimentary. Sixty-six percent of wildlife habitat in the US is on private land. Eighty percent of wildlife in the US is on those private lands. Need to determine objective for wildlife: hunting, viewing or managing.
 1. Feeders. Feeders usually contain corn, which is low in protein and high in carbohydrates. A large variety of wildlife will come to a corn feeder – including some that you may not wish to feed; for example, crows.
 2. Openings. Wildlife openings provide supplemental forage for wildlife and are better than feeders. Small, irregular shaped openings will attract more wildlife than large, square openings. Areas that are easily used for wildlife openings include right-of-ways, log sets, fire lanes, and roadsides.
 3. Warm vs. Cool Season Plots. Determine if you want to supplement warm (late summer) or cool (spring) foraging. Plots for late summer foraging should be planted in the spring and it is best to use bottom land in our area. Plots for spring forage should be planted in the fall and both bottom and uplands can be used. You may choose to split the opening between warm and cool plots.
 4. Cool Season Plants. Cool season plants include Austrian winter peas, Crimson clover, arrowleaf clover, Louisiana S1 clover (perennial)*, Elbon rye, and oats. Rye grass is green and pretty, but not good food for wildlife. Rye grass can be mixed with other plants to assist with moisture and soil retention.
 5. Warm Season Plants. Warm season plants include Lespendeza, Iron Clay cow peas (purple hull peas), American jointvetch*, Alyce clover, chickory, and browntop millet.
 6. Deer “Ice Cream.” Plants that deer prefer include Carolina jasmine, Alabama supplejack, green briar, sassafras, St. Peterswort and blackberry. They also like water oak, common sweetleaf, flowering dogwood, cross vine and American beauty.
 7. Yaupon. While most tree farmers consider yaupon a nuisance undergrowth, if mowed and fertilized seasonally, it provides good forage for deer.
- Bears. There are four or five bears resident in Red River and Bowie Counties. There have been some sightings in Newton County and in Pineland. They are probably male cubs who have been kicked out by the sow and are roaming in search of a new home. If the males do not find a young sow, they return home; i.e. back to Louisiana.

Charles Zimmerman called the business meeting to order. The minutes from the March meeting were distributed. Bill Tetley moved the March Regular Meeting minutes be approved as published; Fred Reinemeyer seconded the motion and it carried.

Bill Tetley presented the treasurer’s report which lists 113 paid members which includes 17 new members and 2 reinstated members. There is a balance of \$5,639.80 in the treasury.

Sarah Reinemeyer, webmaster, reported TCFLOA <http://tcforest.org/> website activity. The Web Information and Statistics are as follows:

- TCFORREST.ORG – As of February, our website was one year old.
- Frequently accessed – Join page, Events page, and the Jan. 2010 board meeting information are the most frequently hit.
- Countries accessing the site - Mostly USA. Next for March and April was Russia.
- Users – quite a few hits from education sites. Mostly tamu.edu. Quite a few hits came directly to our tcforest.org address which probably means that they are members and have a bookmark set-up to go directly to our site...which is good.

Betty Zimmerman, Co-Chairman of the Education Committee, reported that TCFLOA scholarship applications for TFA's Teacher Conservation Institute have been delivered to all the schools in Tyler County. No scholarship applications have been received for the 2010 sessions.

Charles Zimmerman announced that the Nominating Committee will be meeting to draft a list of nominations for TCFLOA officers and directors. Per the by-laws, this will be Charles' last year as president.

The next TCFLOA general meeting is Saturday, September 11, 2010.

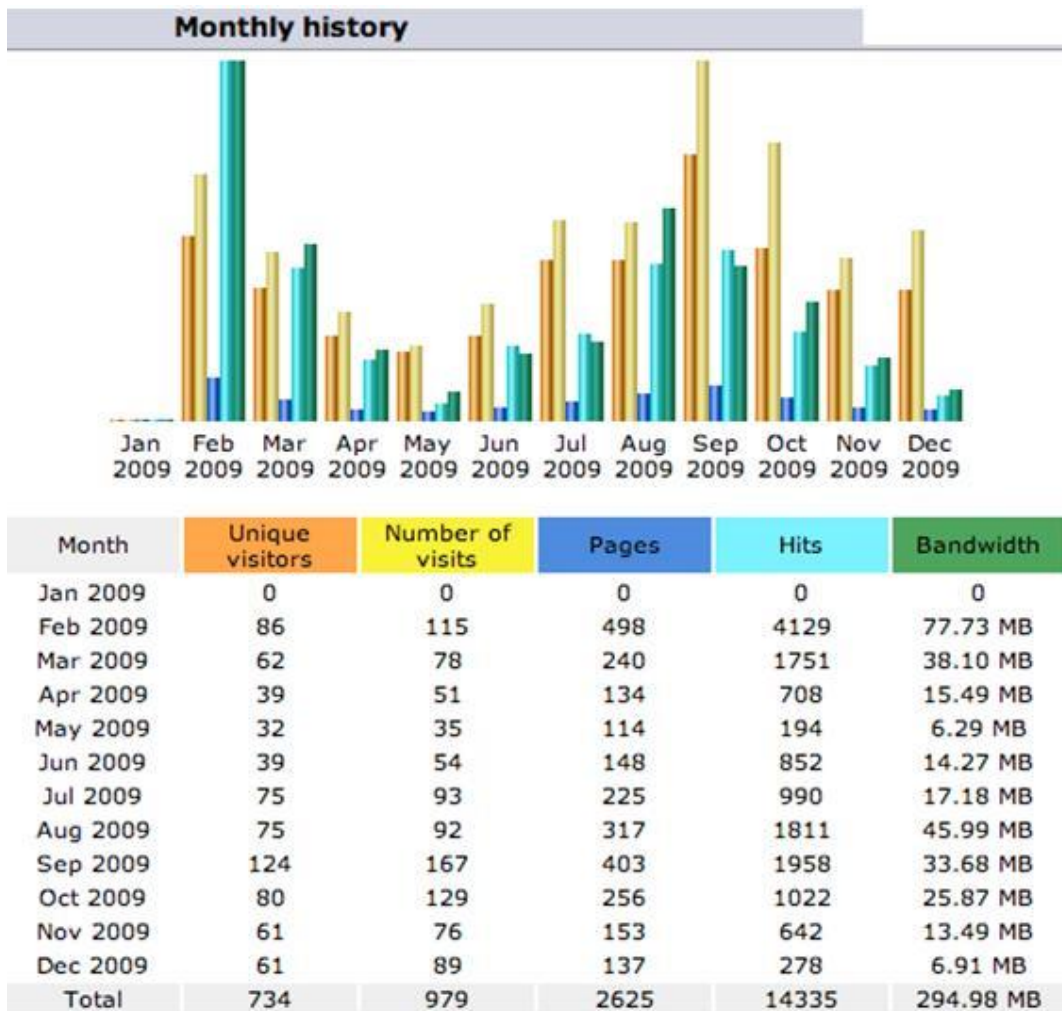
There was no new business. Charles Zimmerman adjourned the meeting.

Jack Clark blessed the meal. Attendees enjoyed the bar-b-q lunch and personal networking. Several members traveled to Jack Clark's home to view his neighbor's tree farm. The trees had been planted as seedlings on row beds. One member's account of the tour is as follows: The tree farm trip was interesting to try to walk through, as the hills were a foot and a half or higher. Some could be traversed by stepping from hill to hill, but that did not always work. The trees around the borders were not as tall as the ones towards the middle which seems to me a common trait no matter the type of farm. Jack said it had to do with fly over fertilization. Some of the trees seemed much taller than what I expected for the age of the tree. We discussed this as a group as it was sort of amazing. Only speculation as to why.

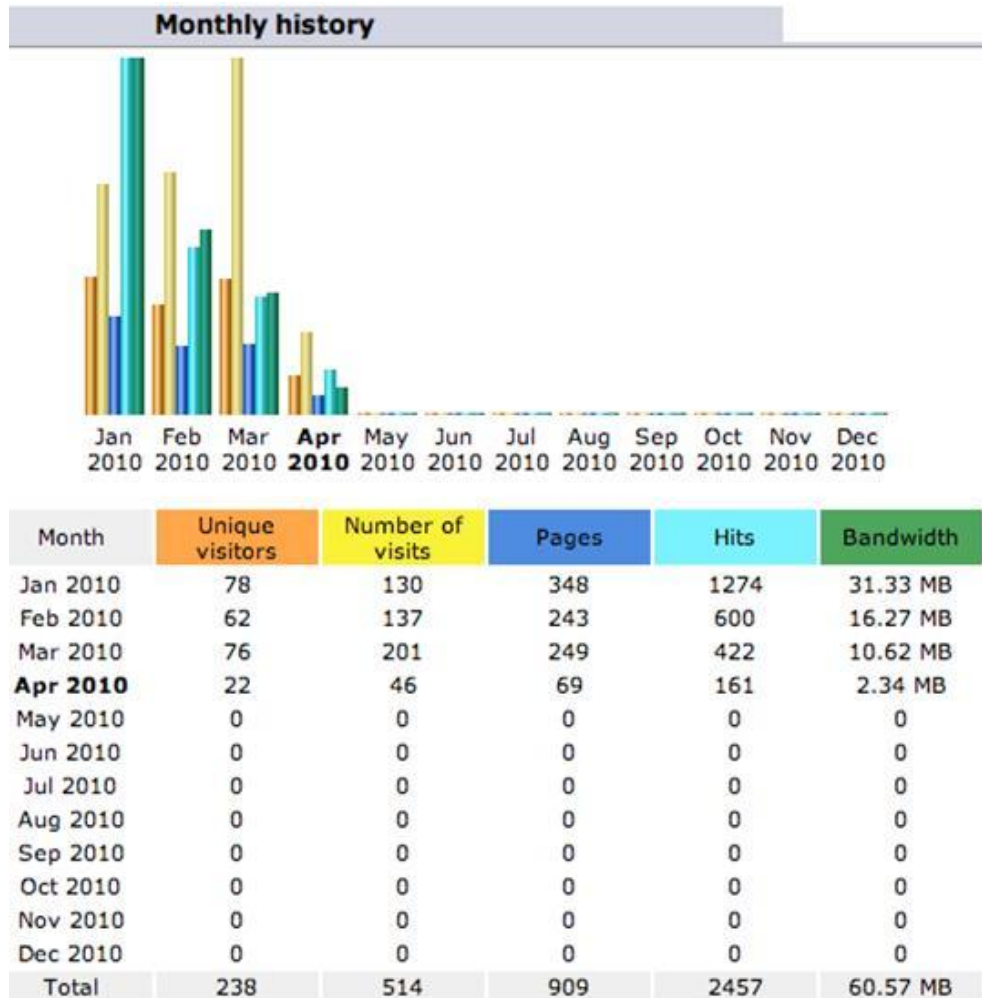
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Website Statistics:

- Website 2009 Summary – Note we launched the site in February hence no statistics for January. Also, these statistics have been filtered by eliminating any web searching robots, such as, those used by search engines to propagate their databases.



- Website 2010 Summary



- Website Search Key Phrases – Seeing searches for Black Bears, Purple Paint laws, hunting leases, landowners association, nonprofit organization, Tyler County landowners, timber buyers, and scholarship application for forestry.