

# Northeast Texas Forest Landowner Association Newsletter

Quarter I 2017

## Next Meeting

**Date:** Saturday  
June 10

**Time:** 10 am (Tentative)

**Place:** Hurliman Farm  
Tx Hwy 11 Cason

## Inside

**Legislative Update**

**Tips for Managing Your Wildlife**

**Wildlife and Southern Forests**

**Market Report**

**Prescribed Burning Fact Sheet**

**Calendar of Events**

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## Management Tip

*Don't forget to inspect your firelines before the beginning of the spring prescribed burning season!!*

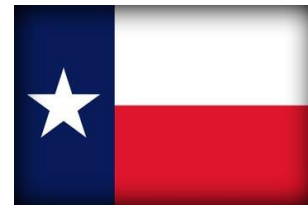


## Legislative Update

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## Committee Appointments:

House Committee Assignments for East Texas Legislative members absent from last week's update:

- Rep. John Raney - Vice-Chair of the House Higher Education Committee and also serves on the House Appropriations and House Administration Committees
- Rep. Dade Phelan - Vice-Chair of the House Natural Resources Committee and also serves on the House Appropriations and House Calendars Committees. He was also appointed to the House Select Committee on Texas Ports, Innovation & Infrastructure.
- Rep. Jay Dean - will serve on the House Appropriations, House Investments & Financial Services, and the House Local & Consent Calendars Committees.
- Rep. Cole Hefner - will serve on the House Criminal Jurisprudence and Pensions Committees.

## House Appropriations Subcommittees:

- Articles I (General Government), IV (Judiciary), and V (Public Safety and Criminal Justice) Chair: Longoria, Vice: Miller, Capriglione, Cospers, and Rose
- Article II (Health and Human Services) Chair: Davis, Vice: Greg Bonnen, Dukes, Munoz, Roberts, Sheffield, and Wu
- Article III (Education) Chair: Ashby, Vice: Giddings, Mary Gonzalez, Howard, Koop, Raney, and Van Deaver
- Articles VI (Natural Resources), VII (Business and Economic Development), and VIII (Regulatory) Chair: Larry Gonzales, Vice: Walle, Dean, Perez, Phelan, Rodriguez, and Simmons

## Budget Transparency and Reform Committee

Chair: Capriglione, Vice: Howard, Roberts, Simmons, and Walle

## Bills:

Senator Schwertner, Senator Kolkhorst and Senator Nichols have filed the following Eminent Domain bills that address the rights of property owners:

- SB 627, by Schwertner - this bill addresses the property owner's rights to the examination or survey of property by an entity with Eminent Domain authority. Bill authors include: Senators Schwertner, Birdwell, Burton, Creighton, Hall, Huffines, Kolkhorst, Nichols, Seliger, Zaffirini. SB 627 has been referred to the Senate Committee on State Affairs.

*Cont. on Page 2*

## ***Five Tips for Managing Deer on Your Property***

Whether you own small or large acreage there are some simple things you can do better manage the deer population and other wildlife on your property. These five simple tips can help you better manage your wildlife as well as your forestland in general.

**Run Game Camera Surveys** – This is a great way to see what’s on your property, from deer and turkeys to predators and, unfortunately, any poachers or trespassers who might be slipping in. Game camera technology today is vastly improved and depending on your budget you can get high-dollar cameras with wireless capability and HD video or the basic models that provide black-white or color images. You don’t have to have a dozen cameras, three or four placed across your property can provide a tremendous amount of information about the deer and wildlife on your property as well as other activities that may be occurring.

**Plan a Prescribed Burn** – This is great way to help restore the soil, promote tree growth, remove built-up leaf litter and generate new vegetation. You should contact a certified prescribed burner to help you with your property and ensure it’s done in a safe manner achieving your management objectives. You can contact your local Texas A&M Forest Service office for help finding certified vendors and should contact them if you are conducting a burn at any time.

**Tree Trimming, Thinning and Hinge Cutting** - If possible, you may want to consider thinning your woods of undesirable trees or others in order to open the canopy, provide sunlight to the floor allowing some mast-bearing trees, herbaceous plants and forbs to grow and thrive. Thinning will help not only keep your forest healthy but also allow a buffet of desirable food sources to establish and grow supporting multiple wildlife species.

**Food Plots and Fruit Trees** - Not everyone has the land, money or time to plant big food plots, that’s just a given and completely understandable. However, it doesn’t mean you can’t plant some smaller plots such as “throw and grow” plots. It’ll take some work to get rid of the existing vegetation and till up the dirt. Another option is planting fruit trees which are native to your area and can handle the local climate. Obviously growing trees will take time but eventually they will produce fruit feeding local wildlife and you!!

**Don’t Just Sit There** - If you’re truly interested in doing something, then do it. Figure out a way to make some improvements, even small ones, and then get to work.

## **Websites of Interest**



**Texas A&M Forest Service Information Portal**

<http://www.texasforestinfo.com>

**National Timber Tax Website**

<http://www.timbertax.org/>

**Become a TFA Member Today!!!**

<http://texasforestry.org>

***American Forest Foundation and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Partner to Restore Wildlife Habitat and Support Southern Forests***

***American Forest Foundation, [www.forestfoundation.org](http://www.forestfoundation.org)***

***National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, [www.nfwf.org](http://www.nfwf.org)***

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and the American Forest Foundation (AFF) recently announced the launch of the *Southern Woods for At-Risk Wildlife Partnership*, which will help Southern family forest owners protect at-risk wildlife, while at the same time encouraging sustainable wood production. Through the partnership, AFF and NFWF have committed to providing \$7.5 million in grant funding over the next seven years, to collaborative projects in important geographies that help family forest owners manage for wildlife. This new grant funding is the largest part of AFF's \$11 million initiative in the South to provide tools and resources to help family forest landowners with the stewardship of their lands.

Southern forests, rivers and streams are some of the most biologically diverse in the world. But, due to historical trends and present day pressures that have effected this forested ecosystem, there are 224 forest-dependent fish and wildlife species in the South already listed as threatened or endangered, with an additional 293 species petitioned or under review by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Southeast Regional office for possible listing under the Endangered Species Act.

The South is also the wood "basket" for the country. Nearly 60 percent of the wood harvested in the U.S. comes from the Southeast, which also equates to more than 16 percent of the commercial wood produced for the entire global market.

"Our Southern forests are key to providing both wildlife habitat and wood supplies for Americans," said Tom Martin, President and CEO of the American Forest Foundation. "Family landowners, who own nearly 60 percent of the forest land in the South, want to manage and help at-risk wildlife. And what's more, our recent analysis shows that managing for wood and wildlife go hand-in-hand. We are excited to launch this new partnership with NFWF that will bring new resources and support to help families accomplish both objectives on the land."

"Our work in the South has reinforced the importance of private landowner conservation, so we very much welcome this opportunity to join with the American Forest Foundation to launch the Southern Woods for At-Risk Wildlife Partnership," said Jeff Trandahl, executive director and CEO of NFWF. "NFWF's experience building public-private partnerships, when combined with AFF's existing relationships with family landowners, expertise with developing data-driven landowner engagement strategies, and commitment to building sustained capacity, will enable a more effective and lasting approach to restoring fish and wildlife while keeping working forests working across the southeastern United States."

To view the entire report please visit <https://www.forestfoundation.org/family-forest-owners-solution-at-risk-wildlife>.

## Legislative Cont.

### Bills:

- SB 628, by Schwertner - this bill establishes actual progress for the purpose of determining the right to repurchase real property from a condemning entity. Bill authors include: Senators Schwertner, Birdwell, Barton, Campbell, Creighton, Hall, Huffines, Kolkhost, Nichols, Zaffirini. SB 628 has been referred to the Senate Committee on State Affairs.
- SB 555, by Kolkhorst - this bill addresses the entry of real property under a claim of an entity with Eminent Domain authority; and provides for a criminal penalty. This bill has been referred to the Senate Committee on State Affairs.

Senator Kolkhorst also filed last week three Eminent Domain bills that are being supported by the "Texans For Property Rights" Coalition. TFA is a member of this coalition.

- SB 740, by Kolkhorst - this bill addresses the acquisition of property by an entity with Eminent Domain authority. Senator Birdwell is a co-author.
- SB 741, by Kolkhorst - this bill addresses the compensation to a property owner for property acquired by an entity with Eminent Domain authority. Senator Birdwell is a co-author.
- SB 742, by Kolkhorst - this bill lists the requirements for a bona fide offer for the acquisition of property by an entity with Eminent Domain authority. Senator Birdwell is a co-author.
- SB 786, by Nichols - this bill addresses the use of Eminent Domain to take private property for recreational purposes.

Note: This is not a complete listing of the Eminent Domain bills and with the House Committees now appointed you can expect to see House bills addressing this issue to be filed over the next couple of weeks.

You can read these bills and follow the progress of the legislature during the session by going to: [www.capitol.state.tx.us](http://www.capitol.state.tx.us).

## Market Report, Nov/Dec, 2016



Product	Statewide Ave. Price		Previous Ave. Price		Price/Ton Difference
	Weight	Volume	Weight	Volume	
Pine-Sawlogs	\$25.73/ton	\$200.61/mbf	\$24.34/ton	\$207.99/mbf	+6%
Pine-Pulpwood	\$8.87/ton	\$23.85/cord	\$9.14/ton	\$24.60/cord	-3%
Pine-Chip'n'Saw	\$13.06/ton	\$35.27/cord	\$14.13/ton	\$38.16/cord	-8%
Mixed Hardwood-Sawlogs	\$40.98/ton	\$373.66/mbf	\$38.08/ton	\$370.12/mbf	+8%
Hardwood-Pulpwood	\$10.46/ton	\$29.34/cord	\$10.48/ton	\$29.44/cord	0%

*Texas Timber Price Trends* is a bimonthly publication reporting average prices paid for standing timber in Texas. *This report is intended only as a guide to general price levels.* It should not be used to judge the fair market value of a specific timber sale, which may vary considerably due to many factors. It is recommended that you use the services of a professional consulting forester in managing any timber sale. Important factors affecting timber prices include the type, quality and volume of timber for sale, accessibility, distance to mills/markets, weather conditions, economy/market conditions, who is handling the sale or is buying the timber, and contract requirements by the landowner. The complete Texas Timber Price Trends can be viewed at <http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/timberpricetrends>.

## ***Prescribed Burning Fact Sheet***

***Texas A&M Forest Service***

<http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/forestmanagementinformationsheets>

Fire has shaped the environment of Texas for thousands of years, and in many cases, wildlife have adapted to habitat conditions created by fire. With the help of Native American Texas Indians, it is estimated that some of the East Texas pine forests used to burn every two to three years. However, it is now often the case that land in East Texas has gone without such fire for decades. Careful introduction and management of fire by way of prescribed burning can benefit the land. It is likely that prescribed burning can help landowners accomplish many of the objectives they have set for their land.

Prescribed burning has the ability to encourage pine and reduce hardwoods and shrubs in East Texas uplands bringing both an individual stand and ecosystem back to historic and pre-historic conditions. This has been shown to benefit many game, non-game and rare animal species. However, the benefit to landowners can be better long-term economic return, increased opportunities for recreation, better aesthetics, and reduced risk from uncontrolled wildfire.

### Benefits:

- Controls low quality hardwoods and shrubs that compete with pines.
- Prepares sites for future tree planting or natural regeneration.
- Increases sunlight to forest floor, producing more grass, flowering annuals plants and seeds for wildlife.
- Improves visibility and access for marking and harvesting timber.
- Most nutrients are returned to the soil in a more readily available form for plants
- Increases edge effects many species use when seeking travel routes, feeding spots or shelter.
- Improves visibility and access for forest recreation.
- May be used in combination with chemical or mechanical treatments to often enhance the results.

In understory burning, fire intensity must be carefully controlled. It must be adequate to consume unwanted dead brush and litter, and to either kill or to only renew the understory vegetation, depending upon the objective, while not intense enough to kill or damage the overstory pines. Although southern yellow pines have thick bark with good insulating qualities, the roots and the growing tips of the pines are always vulnerable to hot fire. Low to moderate flame heights and a steady wind within the stand are often desired to keep heat from rising into the crowns. Cooler temperatures also allow more heat to be generated at flame level before killing temperatures are reached in the tree canopy. Generally, needle scorch up to one-third of the crown will cause little damage or loss of growth. Adequate moisture in the uppermost layer of soil is also needed to prevent fire from roasting the fine roots, which feed and support the trees. This moisture is critical in previously unburned stands as the fine roots may have grown up into the above-ground pine litter. In controlling fire intensity, fuel loading, fuel moisture, temperature, relative humidity, wind, and burning technique must all be considered. Various burning techniques are used to get the fire intensity needed in a particular stand with the weather conditions existing that day.

Prescribed burning should always be done by a certified burn vendor. An acceptable burning plan should first be formulated with appropriate documentation prior to conducting the burn. This plan should detail all information regarding the planned prescribed fire and should be followed as closely as possible. Fuel dryness, wind speed and direction, humidity, topography, fuels, and smoke management all play a part in conducting a safe and successful burn. Tree mortality and wildfire escape can occur in cases of high fire intensity. Before a prescribed burn is conducted, neighbors, the local fire department and the Texas A&M Forest Service should be informed.

To view or download the entire fact sheet as well as other regarding forest management please visit <http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/forestmanagementinformationsheets>

## *Calendar of Events*

**February 28 – March 1, 2017 – Texas Forestry Association Board of Directors Meeting and Forestry Day at the State Capitol, Austin, TX.** The two day spring meeting will include a Board of Directors meeting the afternoon of February 28, Breakfast with legislative members on March 1 and a seedling giveaway at the Capitol at 9:00 a.m. Contact the TFA office or visit their website for meeting registration information and agenda.

**March 3, 2017 – Tax Webinar for the 2016 filing season, Dr. Linda Wang.** Dr. Wang is the National Timber Tax Specialist with USDA Forest Service and serves to provide leadership on forest tax policy and income and estate tax education. This free webinar is sponsored by American Forest Foundation and USDA Forest Service. While there is no fee to participate in webinar you must register online at [https://cc.readytalk.com/registration/#/?utm\\_source=2017assessment&utm\\_medium=Email&utm\\_campaign=2017ForestsandFamilies&meeting=cqsbjw1jthrt&campaign=2t8ao4trpo8n](https://cc.readytalk.com/registration/#/?utm_source=2017assessment&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=2017ForestsandFamilies&meeting=cqsbjw1jthrt&campaign=2t8ao4trpo8n). The webinar is scheduled to begin at 12:00 p.m. CST and last approximately 2 hours.

**March 31, 2017 – Sustaining Balance through Focused Management and Technology Workshop, Conroe, TX.** This free workshop is being sponsored by the TFA SFI Committee and Montgomery-Harris County Landowners Association. Lunch will be provided but attendees must RSVP by March 28<sup>th</sup> and can do so by calling Texas A&M Forest Service at (936) 273-2261 or visit <http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/registration>.