

Illinois Forests



"The Voice for Illinois Forests"



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Our Mission...

"to act on issues that impact rural and community forests and to promote forestry in Illinois."

Our Goals...

- Promote forest management and help landowners manage their forests
- Educate members and the general public about rural and community forestry
- Advocate for favorable legislation and policies to benefit/protect landowners managing forests
- Understand and engage our members, and increase IFA membership
- Govern the IFA efficiently and effectively to better serve our charitable mission



Attention: Forest Landowners in Illinois

by Sarah Kendall, Iowa State University

In 2017, Iowa State University was awarded a grant to assist and educate current and prospective maple syrup producers through workshops and field based events, as well as, written, online, and video platforms. The grant was awarded as part of the Acer Access and Development Program, established for the promotion of maple syrup production and the management of maple stands within the United States. Project staff will specifically support the maple producing association members and non-members of six Midwest states (Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Iowa, Indiana, and Illinois) as well as the Inter-Tribal Maple Syrup Producers Cooperative with direct, face-to-face learning opportunities, workshops, and field based events all while offering educational outreach to the entire maple production region through written, online, and video platforms.

Areas of focus will include:

- 1) Increase the knowledge and adoption of technology to more efficiently produce high quality, food safe maple sap, and syrup from existing taps;
- 2) Increased taps per established producer by utilizing a new clearinghouse that geographically links producers in a location with local landowners willing to rent or lease woods for production;
- 3) Inform landowners/managers of potential revenue from renting/leasing woodlots for maple production and how to formalize the process; and
- 4) Increase overall production through Maple 101 schools (in person and online content) geared towards potential producers or hobbyist looking to expand in the Midwest. This effort will also create a single point of contact for maple serving several Midwest



states to spearhead education events, handle producer questions, create and disseminate maple information from one easily accessible site.

All landowners interested in receiving materials regarding educational opportunities in Illinois, please follow the link below to opt-in to the mailing list. All provided information will not be released to any external parties. We encourage distribution beyond your association, for our program is open to all interested landowners. To opt-in to the list, send an e-mail to this address:

maple_education@iastate.edu

Forestry Summit 2018

by Dave Gillespie, IFA Secretary

The Forestry Summit, sponsored by the Illinois Forestry Development Council (the Council), took place on the campus of the University of Illinois in Champaign June 12 and 13, 2018. The Council was created in 1983 with the passage of the Illinois Forestry Development Act. The Council is charged to identify and evaluate the social, economic, scientific and educational value of Illinois' forest lands and forest products industries. The Council consists of twenty-nine (29) representatives of groups and organizations from the forestry community of Illinois plus members of the Illinois General Assembly and the Governor's Office. The Illinois Forestry Association (IFA) is a member of the Council. IFA President Joe FitzSimmons and IFA Secretary Dave Gillespie attended the Summit as the IFA representatives.



The Forestry Summit was called to determine how the Council can help the IDNR implement the "Illinois Forest Action Plan." The Council divided the Action Plan into four basic topics. The four topics were:

- The Changing Landscape of Forestry-shifting dynamics of land use in the State and loss of forest blocks.
- Forest Health – invasive threats and climate change effects.

- Forestry Professionals – youth engagement, available jobs, loss of mills, industry opportunities, and State level professionals.
- Funding and Advocacy – permanent funding and management opportunities, education and outreach.

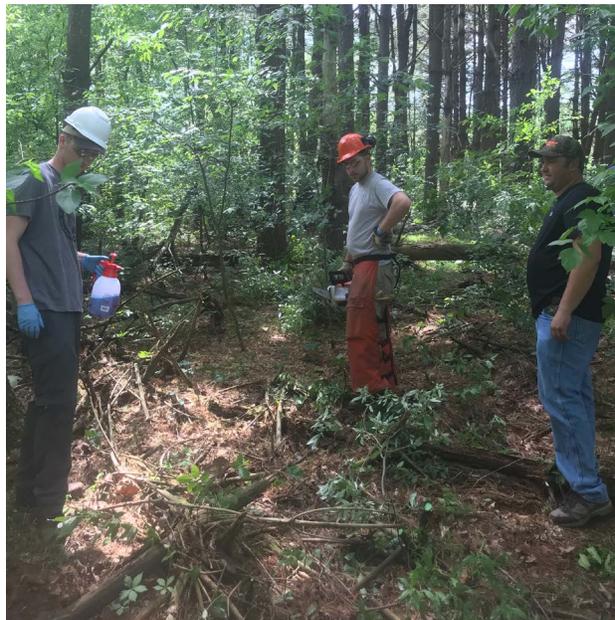
The delegates to the Summit were divided in four groups. Each of these groups cycled through four breakout sessions, one on each of the four topics, where they were encouraged to provide feedback on the topics. All comments and feedback was recorded. Now begins the task to record all the feedback into a report on the results of the Forest Summit – 2018.

The last Forestry Summit, also sponsored by the Council, was conducted in 2004. One recommendation of that Forestry Summit was the great need for the establishment of a state-wide forestry organization. From that recommendation the IFA was established and continues to grow into the "voice for Illinois forestry."

SIU Forestry Training Days at Dixon Springs



Over 40 SIU Forestry students participated in a special training session held May 15-17 at the Dixon Springs Ag Center. Over the course of three days, students learned how to safely operate a chainsaw to fell and buck trees, how to identify and treat invasive species, and how utility companies manage vegetation with aerial trucks and other equipment. Students got to practice professional tree climbing at the Ag Center, then moved over to SIU's Touch of Nature to assist with some needed timber stand improvement. Instructors included IFA Board Members Roger Smith and Landon Satterfield. IFA President Joe FitzSimmons and Treasurer Mike McMahan also made an appearance to visit and talk about the IFA. The event was a joint effort between the IL Arborist Association, IFA, and University of Illinois Extension Forestry, with several other sponsors supporting the effort with financial and instructional contributions.



SIU Forestry alum Landon Satterfield, Procurement Forester at Altenburg Hardwoods, mentors forestry students during SIU training days.





Chris Evans, Illinois Extension Forester and leader of IFA's cadre of technical advisors, holding court with SIU Forestry students during training days at the Dixon Springs Agricultural Center.

IFA Board Seeks Regional Director Nominees, Volunteers for Specific Tasks

The IFA is looking for a few good people with a strong interest in advancing our mission and interests across the state. That can be a real challenge, since we are not sure who among our membership has a passion for forestry, the time to get involved, and/or the skills that could enhance what we are able to do as a charitable organization.

We already have a great board, but there is room to grow. Our bylaws allow up to 5 "Directors" for each of our 4 regions. In the past couple of years we have lost several Directors because they became ill or they moved or simply wanted to move on to spend time on other interests. No one should feel that service is expected to be perpetual, and in fact it is good to refresh the board with new perspectives.

Landowners are an important part of the mix. It's good to have situational diversity so that the board is looking out for the interests of all its members. We don't *just* want the veterans who already know a lot because then it's too easy to overlook the needs of those still learning. We need some rookies in the mix, too.

The IFA also needs specialized experience in other areas besides forest stewardship. Skills that can enhance non-profit organizations like ours include accounting, legal, fund raising, grant writing, marketing, graphic design, event planning, IT support, and clerical. Other expertise that has been and can be especially useful to our cause would be estate planning, real estate, or other areas in which specialized knowledge could contribute to landowner outreach.

The IFA Board meets about 4 times per year, usually in Springfield or Champaign. In between these meetings there is an opportunity for each board member to find ways to help out. There is no set list of requirements, but there are opportunities beyond contributing to the discussion during meetings that you can discover as you go.

If you'd like to explore a role as a board member, or even as a single task volunteer, please let us know. Reach out to someone listed on Page 2, or send an e-mail to ilforestry@gmail.com so we can set up a time to talk about it further.



Are you on Facebook?

So is Illinois Forestry...

Illinois Extension Forestry

www.facebook.com/IllinoisExtensionForestry

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Find us.

"Like" our pages.

Share your favorite posts.

Join us in promoting Forestry in Illinois!

Save the Dates!

Illinois Forestry Association's Fall Conference

September 27-29, 2018

Northfield Inn & Conference Center -- Springfield, IL

Thursday, September 27 - Field Tour and Opening Reception

Friday, September 28 - Indoor sessions and 13th Annual Business Meeting

Saturday, September 29 - Optional events end at noon

Program planning still in progress - Members will receive an e-mail with more details and the link/form to register

Seeking Sponsors, Exhibitors, and Silent Auction Items



State Forester Update

by Tom Wilson



The Division of Forest Resources 16 District Foresters, two Forest Technicians and support staff continue to provide technical and professional forestry assistance to forest owners statewide. Our knowledgeable and motivated field staff demonstrates and assists with spreading forestry knowledge and guidance. Program managers in Springfield continually provide guidance and structure for Urban and Community Forestry, Fire, Forest Health, State Forests, Timber and Wood Utilization, Private Forest Stewardship, Forest Legacy, Forest Inventory and others.

Numerous individuals have been inquiring what the signed state fiscal year 2018 budget means for IDNR. It will take a few weeks before the entire budget can be fully reviewed and discussed within the agency to know implications and meaning.

Forestry Development Act stewardship program review letters will likely start being sent out in July. Letters will be sent out by district and distributed over a period of several months. These letters help inform District Foresters of changes, needs and accomplishments regarding IFDA enrolled acres.

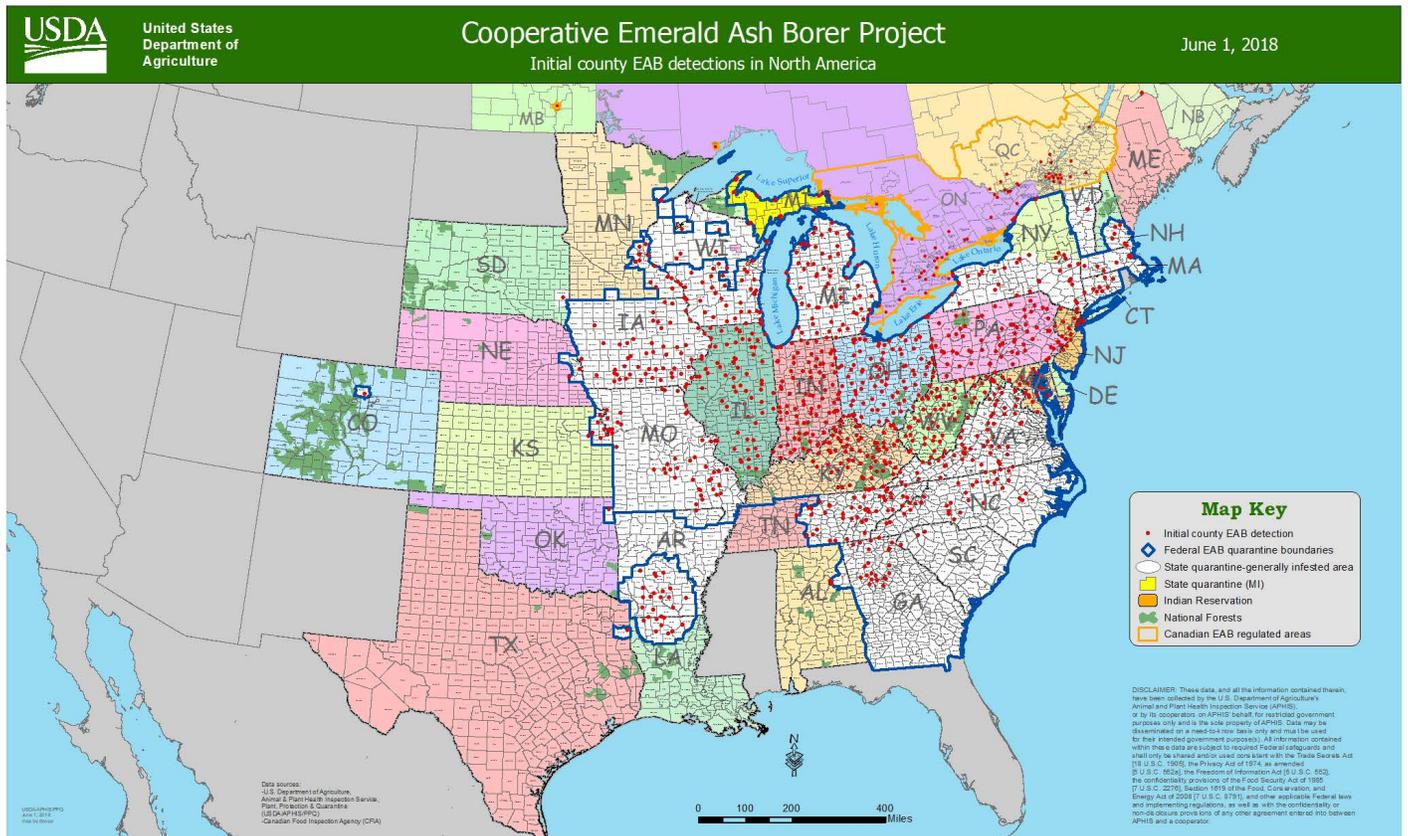
The Division of Forestry will be hosting the annual meeting of the Northeastern Area Forest Fire Supervisors. The meeting will run from June 18th thru 22nd. This meeting provides state forestry agencies to collaborate, cover updates, technology transfer, train with a review of the 2017 fires season and discuss anticipated 2018 fire season.

There will be a forestry summit put on by the Illinois Forestry Development Council

June 12th & 13th. The summit provides opportunity for agencies, organization and other partners concerned with forestry to go over the Illinois Forest Action Plan. Discussing this guiding document with multi-discipline natural resource managers provides opportunity for all to understand issues and concerns forests of Illinois face. Collaboration and understanding provides for better understanding and increased cooperation.

June 25th thru 29th the U. S. Forest Service, Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry will be conducting program review of all Illinois forestry programs that receive funding from Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry. This includes such programs as Urban and Community Forestry, Forest Stewardship, Fire, Forest Protection and Forest Legacy.

Resources will be available for the Western fire season as needed. Illinois traditionally provides qualified resources for dispatch of 20 member fire crews when the need arises.



Changes/additions included since the April 2, 2018 map are as follows: Initial county detections in: McDonough County, IL; Carroll and Taylor Counties, IA; Richmond County, NY; and Floyd & Washington Counties, VA. Initial state detections in: Aroostook County, ME and Minnehaha County, SD. Added to the list of counties quarantined by their state: Minnehaha and parts of Lincoln and Turner Counties, SD; and all counties in Vermont. Added to the list of Canadian initial county detections and initial detection in Province of New Brunswick: Madawaska County, NB.

Working with Private Landowners to Sustain Oak Ecosystems in Northeastern Illinois

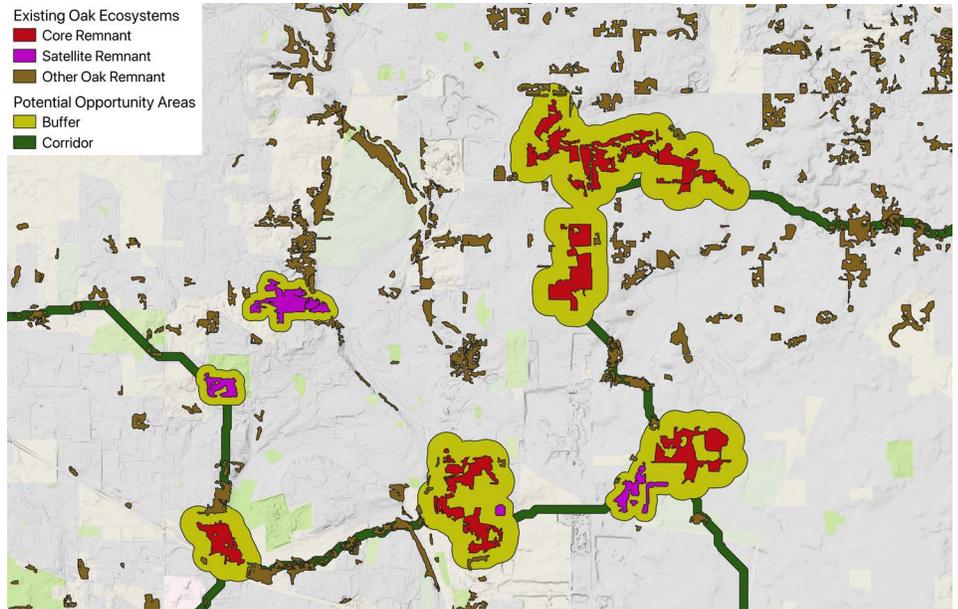


by Christopher Mulvaney, *The Morton Arboretum*

Oak woodlands are critical ecosystems. In fact, oaks themselves are considered keystone species, meaning that they support a larger number of plants and animals as compared to other species. Unfortunately, the future for our oak woodlands in Illinois, and indeed the larger Midwest, is uncertain at best. These ecosystems face a number of compounding threats including direct cutting, fragmentation, inadequate management, invasive species, and limited oak regeneration, among others.

In 2015, The Morton Arboretum and several partners released the Oak Ecosystems Recovery Plan for the Chicago Wilderness Region, an area spanning Southeastern Wisconsin, Northeastern Illinois, Northwestern Indiana, and Southwestern Michigan. This plan was based on an analysis of remaining remnant oak ecosystems across Northeastern Illinois. This study revealed that the extent of oak woodlands had declined by about 83% since the early 1800s and that more than 70% of the remaining habitat was on private lands. This underscored the important role that private landowners play in the long-term sustainability of the region's oak woodlands.

The Morton Arboretum and the Chicago Region Trees Initiative (CRTI) are now leading a region-wide initiative involving a growing list of organizational collaborators working together to implement the goals and recommendations in the Oak Ecosystems Recovery Plan. Outreach to private landowners is a major component of this work. Using the data on existing remnant oak ecosystems, the partners have developed a mapping model that identifies a network of oak recovery opportunity areas comprised of larger, higher quality core and satellite sites that are buffered and connected by a combination of smaller, lower quality natural areas, reclaimed lands, and



urban/residential plantings (buffers and corridors) (Figure 1). The model provides a geospatial context to the recommended strategies and actions in the Oak Ecosystems Recovery Plan by highlighting areas on the landscape that could be strategically important for protecting, restoring, and sustaining oak habitat. In essence, it is a vision and guide for expanding and reconnecting oak ecosystems on our modern landscape. The idea is to go beyond traditional land conservation approaches and to promote oak recovery strategies across landowners and different land-use types. For the private woodland owner in a buffer area, for instance, this could mean coordinating with the adjacent public landowner on invasive species removal and control. For residential areas within a buffer or corridor, this might mean planting more native trees, shrubs, and wildflowers to help improve its habitat value and ecological connectivity potential.

Earlier this year, the partners working in Northeastern Illinois identified at least one oak ecosystem core and buffer site for each of the respective counties as initial focal points for private landowner outreach and engagement around

oak recovery. The partners are now convening around each of these areas to develop their action plan for moving this work forward.

The Morton Arboretum is simultaneously exploring funding mechanisms that could help support planning and management on private lands. One example is the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). This program utilizes existing NRCS programs, such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), to support voluntary conservation actions on private lands. An existing RCPP administered by the Illinois Forestry Development Council and focused on oak-hickory stand improvement in select counties in the west-central and southern portions of the state provides a good model of how this could work in Northern Illinois.

To learn more or to find out how you can get involved, contact Chris Mulvaney at mulvaney.christopher@gmail.com.

Chris Mulvaney is a Consultant working with The Morton Arboretum's Oak Ecosystem Recovery Initiative.



by Debbie Fluegel,
Illinois Trees Forever Program Manager
and Field Coordinator

Trees Forever is a Midwest based environmental non-profit organization whose mission is to help people plant and care for trees and the environment by empowering people, building community, and promoting stewardship. Founded in 1989, Trees Forever was started by two volunteers who were concerned with the amount of dirt covered snowbanks and by the number of windbreaks and forested areas being removed. After talking with friends and colleagues, they determined that something had to be done. Thus, the beginning of Trees Forever, a grassroots group of citizens, in Iowa, wanting to improve their communities, neighborhoods, and states by planting trees.

In 2000, Trees Forever expanded into Illinois with the Illinois Buffer Partnership, a collaborative partnership of Trees Forever, the Illinois Council on Best Management Practices, Syngenta, GROWMARK, state and federal government agencies, and other private donors, working with landowners and farmers to plant trees, shrubs, grasses, and wildflowers along streams and rivers to improve water quality, reduce stream erosion, and provide wildlife and pollinator habitat. Annually, between 10-20 participants are selected to receive cost-share assistance (up to a maximum of \$2000.00 for 50% of the remaining expenses after federal, state, and local funding has been applied to their project) , on-site assistance from



Field day host Eldon McKie shared the history of his Oneida, IL farm and why it was so important to plant a riparian buffer along the creek to control soil erosion and improve water quality.

Trees Forever field staff, project signs and the opportunity to host a field day to highlight their project. Types of projects eligible for the Illinois Buffer Partnership program include: riparian buffers, livestock buffers, streambank stabilization projects, wetland development, pollinator habitat, rain gardens and agroforestry projects. The application period is August-December with a deadline of Dec. 31st for submission for a project to be completed the following calendar year.

In 2014, Trees Forever added the Pollinator Habitat Conservation program to our existing Buffer partnership of Trees Forever, to highlight the importance of trees and woodland plants to pollinators as the first food source in the spring. Annually, Trees Forever works with 20 landowners and communities (10 each in Iowa and Illinois) to plant native trees, shrubs, grasses and flowers as pollinator project demonstration sites. Trees Forever staff helps landowners and communities on proper site selection and preparation, appropriate plant species composition and on-going maintenance requirements for the establishment of pollinator-friendly habitat. Churches, schools, homeowners, farmers, communities, landowners and others are eligible to apply. Applications are available on www.treesforever.org beginning in June with a submission deadline of Sept. 30th for a project to be completed later that fall or the following calendar year. Selected participants will receive up to a maximum of \$1000 for 50% of the remaining expenses after any federal, state, and local funding have been applied to their project.



Volunteer Strike Team members examine a city tree in Ottawa, IL, looking for damage from a tornado that went through the area in February, 2017. The specially-trained arborists assess the trees for structural damage and advise the city on what kind of corrective pruning should be done or if the tree should be removed. The Strike Team is a collaborative effort of the U.S. Forest Service, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and Trees Forever's Recover, Replant, Restore! program.

Trees Forever, Continued -



48 first graders from Olympia North Elementary School, along with the Village of Danvers staff, planted 48 trees in Danvers, as part of the Recover, Replant, Restore! program.

From 2000-2017, Trees Forever's water quality and pollinator programs in Illinois and Iowa have awarded more than 570 project and demonstration sites, planted more than 9400 acres in conservation plantings, protected 183 miles of streams with riparian buffers, and planted more than 1.5 million trees and shrubs.

Trees Forever is also working with communities in central and southern Illinois with the Recover, Replant, Restore! program. Through private funders, and support from the US Forest Service, and in partnership with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Urban Forestry program, Trees Forever is helping communities recover from natural and man-made disasters (i.e. floods, wind, drought, ice, emerald ash borer), replant with a diverse selection of disease and storm-resistant tree species, and restore a healthy and beneficial community forest. Through this program, small communities are able to receive assistance with conducting street tree inventories, with volunteers, to determine what their community forest is made of and where the ash trees are located, achieve Tree City USA status, update and implement local

forestry programs and ordinances, create volunteer tree boards and committees, inform citizens through public outreach and education how trees benefit their community and how the citizens can help, and volunteer training in the care and maintenance of the community trees. Currently, Trees Forever is working with the City of Ottawa and the Village of Naplate to recover from their February 2017 tornado. In June 2017, the Strike Team, a group of highly trained certified arborists, was deployed to the two communities to assess all of the publicly owned trees within the tornado impacted zone of both communities. During the summer of 2018, the street tree inventory of the tornado impacted section of Ottawa will be completed by volunteers.

In addition to the various programs, Trees Forever staff also provides educational presentations, on a variety of topics, to groups and organizations, host field days with landowners to showcase their conservation project, lead tree and wildflower walks, host exhibits at numerous conferences, including the Farm Progress Show, Illinois Pork Expo, and many others, and advocate for Illinois' trees and forests.

On June 7 we held a Growing Healthy Trees Workshop in Hillsboro, IL. On July 20, 2018, Eric & Angela Funk will host a Buffer & Pollinator Field Day near Armington, IL.

Trees Forever also has many publications available, including a whole series of fact sheets: the Pollinator Fact Sheet, lists the top ten trees for pollinators; Plant Some Savings, planting for energy efficiency; Working for Water Quality, planting native plants to improve water quality and reduce erosion; Trees and Green Space: A Healthy Prescription, trees are essential to our well-being; Natural Disasters; and many others. Other Trees Forever publications include educational posters, videos, resource guides, agroforestry toolkit, coloring books, and more.

For more information, visit the Trees Forever website at www.treesforever.org.

Debbie Fluegel is Program Manager and Field Coordinator for Trees Forever in Illinois.



Volunteers attend a Trees Forever Pollinator Workshop, at Bremer Sanctuary, to learn about the importance and benefits of pollinators, proper species selection, site establishment, maintenance, and plant identification.



Existing features, such as roads, make great firebreaks.

Give Me a Break!

The whys and hows of designing and installing firebreaks

by Chris Evans, University of Illinois Extension Forester

It's easy to tell a forest that has had prescribed fire well applied. Instead of impenetrable thickets of honeysuckle and other invasives, native understory species create habitat for wildlife. Young oaks have space to thrive and are not crowded out by less desirable trees. Skillful and knowledgeable application of prescribed fire is one of the most effective ways to manage for a healthy forest.

Preparation, especially in the design and creation of firebreaks, is a critical factor in the success of any prescribed fire. A good firebreak can be the difference between a successful day conducting a burn and forever being known as 'the person that started that big fire that got away!'

Also, nothing is more of a headache during a prescribed fire than bad firebreaks. Here we give a few tips to help landowners understand how to design and install proper firebreaks.

Placement

Using existing roads, trails, or streams as firebreaks when possible can greatly reduce the amount of new line you have to create. Edges of cultivated fields and expansive rock outcrops can also serve as potential natural firebreaks.

In steep terrain, place firebreaks on ridges or at the base of hills (or use existing streams!) for easier use by burn crews. Avoid placing breaks on steep slopes if possible. When placing permanent breaks on steep slopes, be sure to incorporate water control structures, such as water bars, to prevent erosion.

Some invasive plants can be spread easily by people and equipment. Unfortunately, firebreaks are a common avenue for invasive species to spread. If a firebreak goes through a large infestation of a problematic invasive, consider controlling the invasive species before placing the break or moving the break so that it doesn't intersect with the infestation.

Design Considerations

Take into consideration the following tips when designing a firebreak:

- Partnering with a neighbor to burn both properties on the same burn can reduce the amount of firebreaks needed and achieve burns for both landowners with minimal additional effort and cost.
- If permanent firebreaks are desired, consider choosing a location so they can also be used as trails or interior roads. This is a great way to achieve multiple goals at once!
- Removal of dead snags and heavy downed woody debris near the firebreak can reduce the amount of post-burn mop up needed and help prevent fires from escaping.
- When using a UTV or ATV during a prescribed burn, design firebreaks to allow the equipment access when possible.
- Consider 'green' firebreaks by planting vegetation (clover, grass) that will be green and actively growing during the expected burn period. This will help reduce erosion on permanent firebreaks.



To help prevent escaped fire, dead standing trees (called snags) should either be removed or thoroughly cleared around to prevent them from catching fire.



Leaf-blowers are a quick method of installing a handline in a forest.

Firebreaks in Forests: Handlines

In areas of forests where permanent firebreaks are not an option or not practical, handlines are quick and effective firebreaks.

Handlines can be installed using rakes and/or leaf blowers. In forests where the primary fuel is leaf litter, these handlines can be as little as 2-3 feet wide on the upwind side or 4-5 feet wide on the downwind side. If you plan to burn in weather conditions that may result in higher fire intensity, you may want to widen those lines by a couple of feet.

When installing a handline, be sure to distribute the leaves so that they aren't piled up next to the break. Cut and remove and downed woody material and small roots that occur in the handline.

In areas with high amounts of fine fuels (like grasses or dense vines) near the firebreak, handlines may not be adequate. Either reduce fuel loads through mowing/cutting of fine fuels and removal of larger fuels, widen the firebreak to compensate for the higher flammability, or change the location of the firebreak to be farther away from the problem fuels.

Firebreaks in Grass/Prairie

When building firebreaks in grassland or prairie habitat, simply low mowing is usually not adequate as fire may still creep through the grass. After

mowing, use a disk to interrupt the grass and create some bare patches of soil. Alternatively, use a rotary tiller to thoroughly turn over the soil to create a large amount of bare soil. While a disk is much faster, a rotary tiller will yield a better firebreak. For best results, mow the grass immediately adjacent to the cultivated or disked line low. This will reduce the intensity of the fire as it reaches the break.

Firebreaks in grasslands are usually much wider than those in forests. A 10-15-foot mowed firebreak with a five-foot disked or tilled line in the middle will usually be adequate. For taller grasses, such as our native warm season species, mow a 20-foot firebreak with a 10-foot disked or tilled line in the middle. On the downwind side of tall grasses, even wider firebreaks may be needed.

Avoid waiting until the last minute to mow, disk, or cultivate your firebreaks around grass. The thatch created from the installation can reduce the effectiveness of the break. Installing a break early, then 'touching it up' right before the fire is a better practice.

In trouble areas of the firebreak with persistent grass or very flammable vegetation adjacent, wet-lining the firebreak just before lighting it (if it is on the ignition side of the burn) or before the fire reaches it can help reduce flame intensity and prevent fire creep through the line.



When burning a hardwood forest, firebreaks of 2-3 feet in width can be effective.



Wet-lining: Wet-lining is a type of firebreak that wets vegetation just before ignition to render it less flammable. This requires the least amount of preparation but requires a lot of water on-site during the burn. This method is most commonly used when very flammable vegetation occurs near the firebreak.

Preparation Before Burn

All firebreaks should be inspected and touched up before a burn. Trails and roads used as firebreaks will often have to be mowed or have the leaves removed using a rake or blower before using them as a firebreak. Small streams may need to have woody debris or clumps of leaves and other vegetation removed.

Any dead standing trees within two tree-lengths of a firebreak should either be removed or have all leaves and vegetation removed from the base. Heavy downed woody debris should also either be removed or cleared around when it is within 30-40 feet of the firebreak. Avoiding this step can lead to a long-night babysitting burning logs, a lot of effort mopping up after the burn, or even an escape! On steep slopes, any heavy woody debris within 100-150 feet upslope of the firebreak should either be removed or inspected to verify it will not dislodge and roll across the break.

The day before or the morning of the burn, the firebreaks should once again be inspected.

Conclusion

Once you have your firebreaks planned and carefully executed, your chances of a successful burn are much better, and you'll be on your way to a healthy forest.



Red or White?

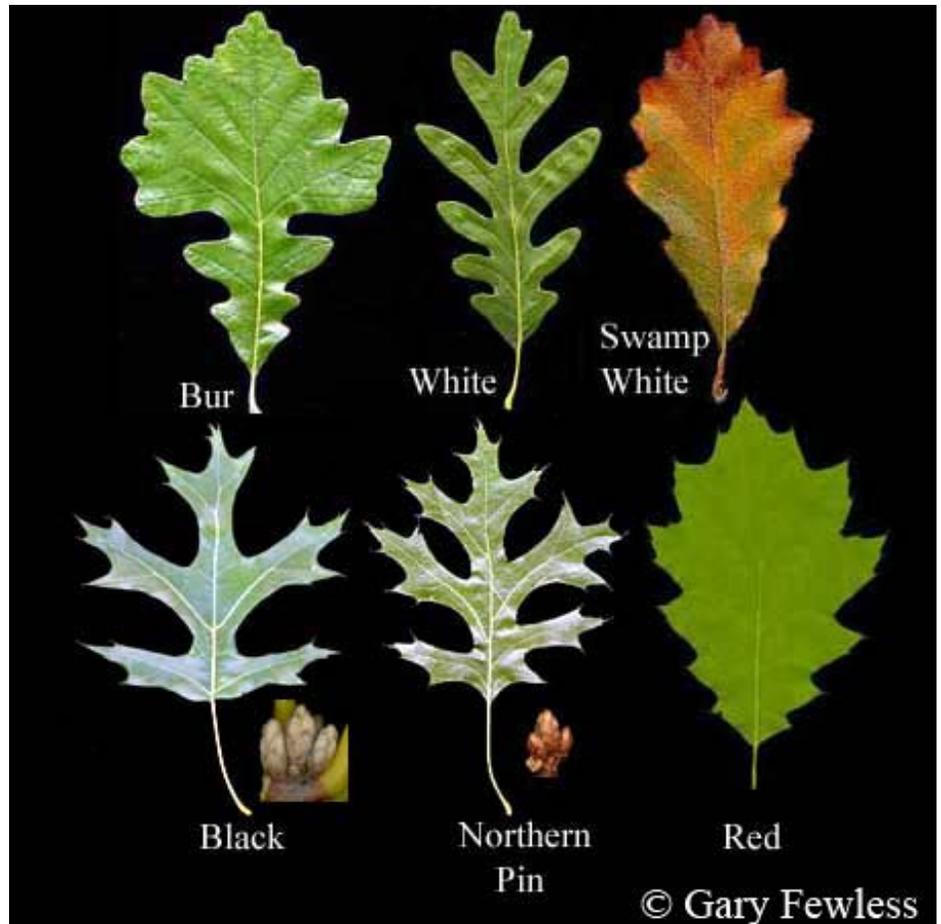
by Matt Candeias

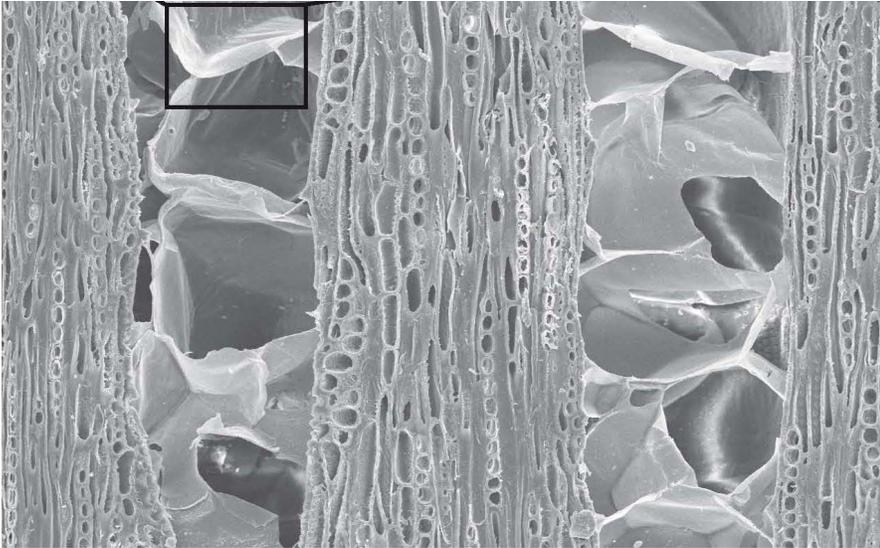
Who doesn't love a nice oak tree? One cannot overstate their importance both ecologically and culturally. Although picking an oak tree out of a lineup is something many of us are capable of doing, identifying oaks to species can be a bit more challenging. This is further complicated by the fact that oaks often hybridize. Still, it is likely you have come across some useful tips and tricks for narrowing down your oak choices. One such trick is distinguishing between the red oaks and the white oaks. If you're anything like me, this is something you took for granted for a while. Is there anything biologically or ecologically meaningful to such a split?

In short, yes. However, a true appreciation of these groups requires a deeper look. To start with, oaks are members of the genus *Quercus*, which belongs in the family Fagaceae. Globally there are approximately 400 species of oak and each falls into one of three categories - the red oaks (section *Lobatae*), the white oaks (section *Quercus*), and the so-called "intermediate" oaks (section *Protoblanus*). For the sake of this article, I will only be focusing on the red and white groups as that is where most of

the oak species reside. The intermediate oak group is made up of 5 species, all of which are native to the southwestern United States and northwestern Mexico.

As is common with oak identification, reliable techniques for distinguishing between the two groups can be tricky. Probably the most reliable feature is located on the inner surface of the acorn cap. In white oaks, it is hairless or nearly so, whereas in red oaks, it is covered in tiny hairs. Another useful acorn feature is the length of time it takes them to germinate. White oak acorns mature in one season and germinate in the fall. As such, they contain lower levels of tannins. Red oak acorns (as well as those of the intermediate group) generally take at least two seasons to mature and therefore germinate the following spring. Because of this, red oak acorns have a much higher tannin content. For more information on why this is the case, read this article.





Tyloses in white oak xylem.

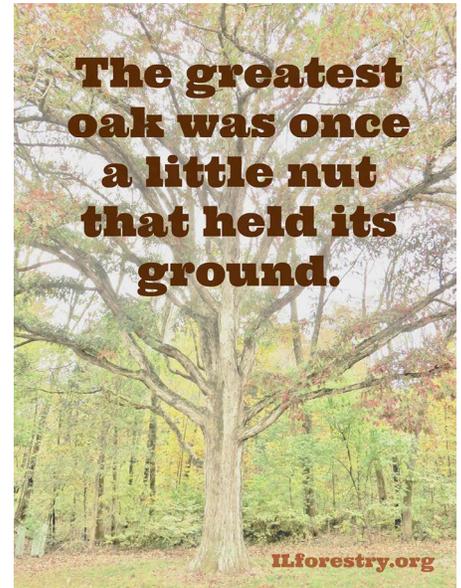
Less apparent than acorns is the difference in the wood of red and white oaks. The wood of white oaks contains tiny structures in their xylem tissues called tyloses. These are absent from the wood of red oaks. The function of tyloses are quite interesting. During extreme drought or in the case of some sort of infection, they cut off regions of the xylem to stop the spread of an embolism or whatever may be infecting the tree. As such, white oaks tend to be more rot and drought resistant. Fun fact, tyloses are the main reason why white oak is used for making wine and bourbon barrels as it keeps them from leaking their contents.

More apparent to the casual observer, however, is leaf shape. In general, the white oaks produce leaves that have rounded lobes, whereas the red oaks generally exhibit pointed lobes with a tiny bristle on their tips. At this point you may be asking where an unlobed species like shingle oak (*Quercus imbricaria*) fits in. Look at the tip of its leaf and you will see a small bristle, which means its a member of the red oak group. Similarly, the buds of these two groups often differ in their overall shape. White oak buds tend to be smaller and often have blunted tips whereas the buds of red oaks are generally larger and often pointed.

Tricky leaves of the shingle oak (Quercus imbricaria). Note the bristle tip!

Despite this broad generalizations, exceptions abound. This is further complicated by the fact that many species will readily hybridize. *Quercus* is, after all, a massive genus. Regardless, oaks are wonderful species chock full of ecological and cultural value. Still, oak appreciation is something we all need more of in our lives. I encourage you to try some oak identification of your own. Get outside and see if you can use any of these tricks to help you identify some of the oaks in your neighborhood.

This article originally appeared as a blog post on the site: www.indefenseofplants.com. It is reprinted with the author's permission.



<https://ilforestry.org>

TREE CARE IN CITIES, SUBURBS THE FOCUS OF TRAINING WORKSHOP ORGANIZED BY THE CHICAGO REGION TREES INITIATIVE

by Melissa Custic, *The Morton Arboretum*

Held in partnership with Triton College, the two-day event brought expertise and hands-on learning to students, municipal workers, and volunteers in natural areas, among others

Today's urban trees face a diverse set of challenges, from pests and disease to soil compaction and pollution, but perhaps some of the biggest obstacles faced by trees in cities and suburbs are improper planting and maintenance.

On April 4-5, the Chicago Region Trees Initiative (CRTI) held an Urban Forestry Basic Training at Triton College. CRTI is a coalition established by The Morton Arboretum and Openlands, a Chicago-based conservation organization, and aims to coordinate action on key issues facing trees and the urban forest. Its bi-annual two-day workshop taught attendees, including public works crew, landscapers, utility workers, and entry-level foresters, fundamental tree care and maintenance skills in order to reduce risk to the urban trees that reside in cities and suburbs and instill safe practices to the people who care for trees and work around them.

"When we first started, our intention was to reduce the amount of damage done to trees by the people working with and around them, who had no prior forestry knowledge. The trees in our communities face a lot of challenges and it is amazing to see the number of people willing to take a few days to learn about how to protect them," said Melissa Custic, the Chicago Region Trees Initiative coordinator.

Throughout the workshop, participants listened to lectures about tree care and biology, completed worksheets and station-based identification tests to reinforce learning, and got their hands dirty during hands-on trainings in tree planting, pruning, and chainsaw handling. Participants learned from expert instructors from The Morton Arboretum, DaveyTree, SavATree, and



the Forest Preserves of Cook County and Park Ridge, who donated their time and expertise to the workshop.

Forty-seven attendees from 18 different organizations and municipalities attended the basic training. While some attendees traveled from as far as Indiana to attend the training, the majority of participants work within Triton College's district.

"This training really made me realize just how much significance you can have on a tree five years, 10 years down the road" said Breshawn Spikes, the crew leader for the Student Conservation Association. A volunteer-run organization with members as young as seven, SCA plants trees throughout Indiana. "I think our crew really benefited from coming here today. I'm realizing just how vigilant you have to be about where and how you plant trees."

Triton College horticulture students, Ramona Michael and Michelle Karabetos, also attended the event. "We were excited to learn specifics about urban trees and have a chance to participate in the hands-on trainings," Michael said. "The hands-on components really supplement our coursework and it's nice to meet and network with people from the industry," Karabetos added.

Many attendees had little to no previous training in tree care and maintenance and the training provided them with the tools needed to jumpstart a career in forestry. For many, it was their first time planting a tree. The training served

as a stepping stone for many attendees who were taking on new tree-related responsibilities in their professional roles or interested in becoming certified arborists in the future.

"Even if this training causes just one person to become more interested in trees or make a connection with a tree they see at the park they service or a municipality they work in, my time was worth it," said Shawn Kingzette, a volunteer instructor from Davey Tree Experts.

Trainings like these are invaluable to the Chicago region. Urban trees can decrease energy bills, absorb rain runoff after a heavy storm, and filter pollution out of the air. While most trees in the wild live 80 to a 100 years, urban trees often live only 20 to 30 years, however correct planting and maintenance skills can help trees in cities and suburbs live far longer.

The next Urban Forestry Basic Training is scheduled on August 28 and 29 at the Riverdale Park District. For more information about the workshop, visit <http://chicagorti.org/UFBT>.

The Chicago Region Trees Initiative's vision is that the Chicago Region will be the greenest, most livable, most resilient region in North America. CRTI believes that trees are critical to achieving this vision. We will ensure that trees are healthier, more abundant, more diverse, and more equitably distributed to provide needed benefits to all people and the wildlife that live in the Chicago Region.

History of Conservation in Illinois

Contributed by Dave Gillespie, IFA Secretary

(Installment # 25)

This account of the history of conservation in Illinois was written by Joseph P. Schavilje in 1941. This installment begins where installment # 24 ended.

Among the laws enacted by the Illinois General Assembly during this period which related to forestry are the following:

- 1874 – “It shall be the duty of all railroad corporations to keep their right-of-ways clear from all dead grass, dry weeds, or other dangerous combustible material and for neglect shall be liable to penalties.”
- 1874 – “Any county board is authorized to offer a bounty to any person in the county who shall hereafter plant one or more acres of land with forest trees and properly cultivated them for 3 years. The bounty may not exceed ten dollars per annum for the three years for each acre. Trees so planted must not be at a greater distance than ten feet apart each way and must be in a healthy and growing condition. Any Person claiming such bounty must present to the county clerk proof that the law has been complied with. The county clerk there upon issues a certificate to that effect.”
- 1887 – “The Governor shall annually, in the spring, designate, by official proclamation, a day to be designated as “Arbor Day”, to be observed throughout the State as a day for planting trees, shrubs and vines about the homes along highways, and about public grounds within this State.”

(To be continued in the next issue of “The IFA Newsletter”.)



Summer, already? I thought that we were still in spring. That is what the calendar says, but the thermometer says otherwise. We have gone from freezing weather and snow to 90+ degree heat in just a few very short weeks. Just a few showers were recorded here in April and rains have been spotty in May. However, most of this year’s corn crop is in the ground and up. The trees have leaved and bloomed, and I am typing this with a head full of tree pollen.

Almost everyone that I talk to is complaining about all the allergens around. Thus we can all exclaim: So much, for this year’s spring! At least we did not get all the floods and have to replant like last year. Hold that thought: I talked to my cousin in Union County and they have had one rain after the other ever since the cold weather stopped. There can be a big difference in climate since Illinois is such a long state from North to South, so what happens in the northern part of the state will usually be quite different from the central and southern parts. WE have several different climates here.

A few days ago, I was at the local cemetery helping put flags on veteran’s graves when some asked about the Eisenhower Ash tree that we planted several years ago. We obtained the tree from Wal-Mart, which was donating trees to Veterans organizations to plant in honor of veterans who were buried at local cemeteries. I looked around and saw that it had gotten quite large. Since it is isolated from other ashes, hopefully it will be spared from the Emerald Ash Borer, but at the same time I will not be shocked if symptoms’ appear.

Now this begs the question: Has there been any effort in Illinois to collect seeds from the various ashes and put them into a seed bank for raising new trees when this crisis is resolved? This particular tree came from seed of an ash tree that was at President Eisenhower’s boyhood home in Dennison, Texas. Other than the



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Even without the specifics, it’s easy to search for the Illinois Forestry Association as your preferred charitable organization. Just remember to enter “smile dot” before amazon dot com. At no cost to you, Amazon will donate 0.5% of eligible purchase totals to the IFA.

Every little bit helps.
Thanks for your support!

Reading Room...

[Backyard Woods - Bring Your Vision to Life](#) - Colorful 44 page PDF, USDA Forest Service

[Beneficial Forest Management Practices for WNS-Affected Bats](#)

Voluntary Guidelines for Managers and Landowners in the Eastern US. 42 page PDF from the White Nose Syndrome Response Team

[Oak Problems - A Plant Clinic Report](#) 12 page PDF from University of Illinois Extension

[Field Guide to Native Oak Species of Eastern North America](#) - 175 page PDF, USDA Forest Service

historical value, it is no better than any other ash. What about other sub-species of ash? I know that some are quite rare. What kind of organized effort has been made to collect the seed, and if not, is this a project for the IFA to undertake?

Volunteers interested in taking on a project like this are invited to contact a member of the IFA Board of Directors or Technical Advisory Committee. (See Page 2)

Illinois Forestry Association
P.O. Box 224
Chatham, IL 62629-0224



Purple Paint Sign Order Form

Name _____
Street Address _____
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E-Mail Address _____

of Signs ____ x \$12 (Member Price) _____

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Shipping & Handling _____

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Shipping: 1 sign - \$8.00 | 2 signs - \$9.00 | 3 signs - \$9.00 | 4 signs - \$10.00 | 5 signs - \$11.00
Orders in excess of 5 signs must be shipped in two mailers

Mail Order Form to: (Check or Money Order made payable to *Illinois Forestry Association*)

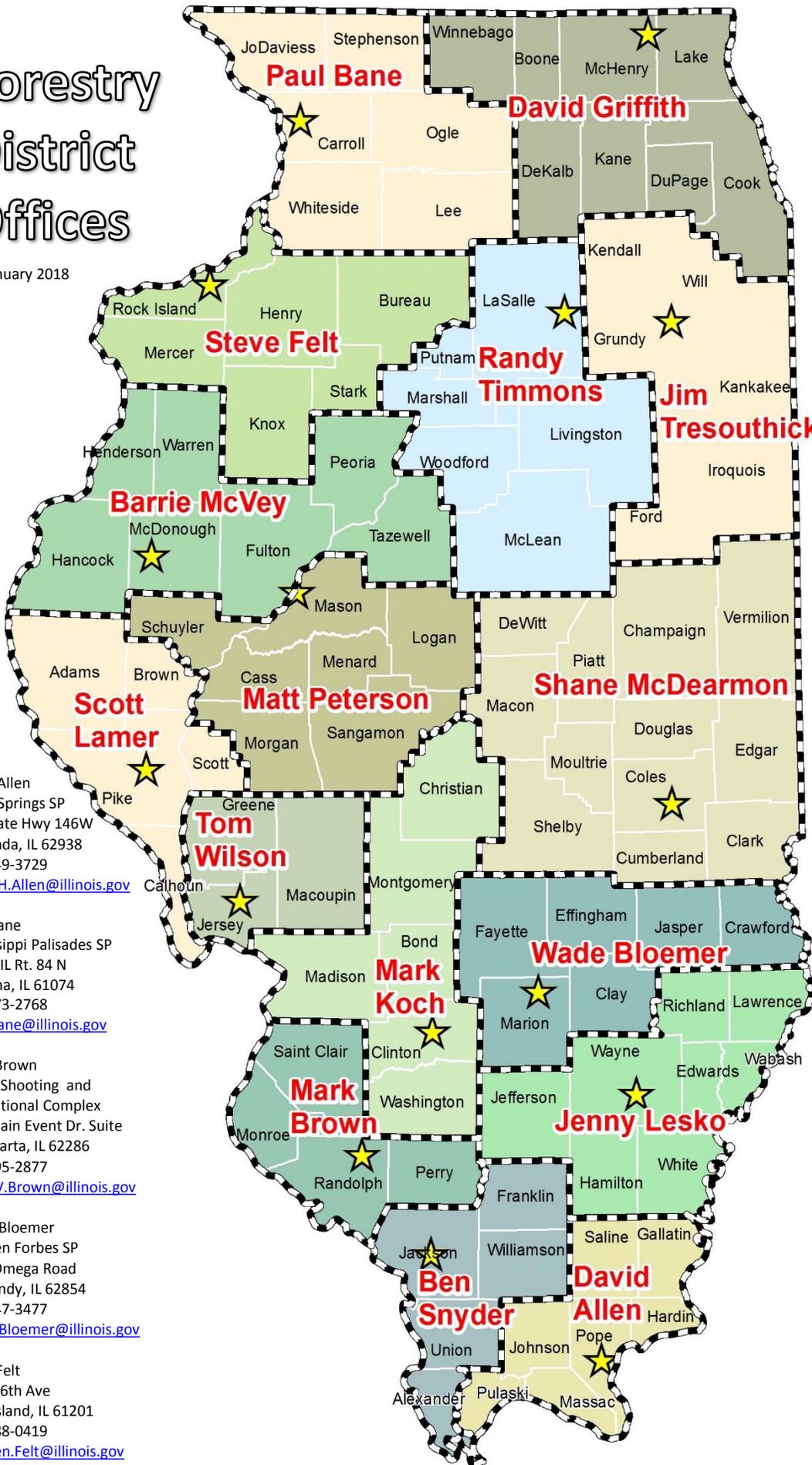
Stan Sipp
Director, Region 3
P.O. Box 111
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Signs are shipped via U.S. Postal Service
Invoice will be included with signs

Questions? Contact
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