

FOREST STEWARDSHIP BRIEFINGS

Timber ◇ Wildlife ◇ Water ◇ Soil ◇ Best Management Practices ◇ Forest Health ◇ Recreation ◇ Aesthetics

TFS - A CENTURY OF SERVICE

from the Texas A&M Forest Service website

For more information:

- <http://tfsweb.tamu.edu>
- <http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/history>



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Over the past 100 years, Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS) has accomplished many feats, including establishing itself as a premiere entity in both forestry and all-hazard response. With no signs of slowing down, this year marks the first century of service for TFS. The agency will have celebrations across the state to recognize this milestone.

The state agency was established in 1915 by the 34th Texas Legislature under the Texas A&M College—making TFS the first state forestry agency in the nation to be part of a land grant institution.

“Texas A&M Forest Service has always been a leader nationwide among state forestry agencies,” says former TFS director (1980-1996) Bruce Miles. “A big part of this comes from being part of the state’s land grant institution system where our department heads shared information, technology, and research results.”

For the past century, the people of TFS have been answering the call to service by monitoring the forests to improve health and productivity; working with communities to plant, care for, and conserve the trees where people live, work, and play; and by educating landowners on sustainable land management practices.

“The employees of this agency are so vital in continuing to accomplish the goals and dreams that were put in place” said former director (1996-2008) James Hull.

TFS is mandated by the state as the lead agency in wildfire suppression. Through predictive services, prevention programs, and response models, TFS has revolutionized the way states prevent, prepare for, and protect against wildfire.

TFS leads incident management teams during state disasters and has led responses to such incidents as the Space Shuttle Columbia recovery; Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Ike; and the 2011 wildfire season.

TFS is one of four agencies under The Texas A&M University System that is also part of Texas A&M AgriLife. “Texas A&M AgriLife brings today’s best teaching, research, extension, and service to Texans. For 100 years, Texas A&M Forest Service has embodied service as it protects against wildfires, provides forestry education, and leads the way in sustainability and conservation” William A. Dugas, acting vice chancellor and dean for Agriculture and Life Sciences said.

The centennial celebration kicked off at the annual Texas A&M AgriLife Conference the first week of January and continues in February as the agency is recognized during the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents meeting, and by the Texas Legislature.

TFS has partnered with the George Bush Presidential Library and Museum and the George Bush Presidential Library Foundation to host an exhibit highlighting the agency’s past 100 years. The exhibit is open March 16 - November 8, 2015.

The agency will also host several events throughout the state, including 100 tree giveaways and a commemorative tree presentation to each county in Texas.

For a list of centennial events, go to <http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/history>. The website provides visitors access to historical agency images and documents, and allows visitors to listen to, view, and explore historic films and audio files.

WILDLIFE HABITAT ASSESSMENT

from Texas Parks and Wildlife website

For more information:

- http://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/wildlife_diversity/habitat_assessment/
- Project review requests can be submitted to WHAB@tpwd.texas.gov

Under Section 12.0011 of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Code, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) is charged with "providing recommendations that will protect fish and wildlife resources to local, state, and federal agencies that approve, permit, license, or construct developmental projects" and "providing information on fish and wildlife resources to any local, state, and federal agencies or private organizations that make decisions affecting those resources."

Project types reviewed by TPWD include reservoirs, highway projects, pipelines, urban infrastructure, utility construction, renewable energy, residential and commercial construction, and many others.

The information on this webpage (see sidebar) has been compiled by the TPWD Wildlife Habitat Assessment (WHAB) Program to assist project developers in identifying, evaluating, and addressing potential impacts to natural resources of conservation concern in Texas. Guidance on how to obtain information on endangered species, important natural resources, project documentation and review, and appli-

cable state and federal regulations is provided.

The TPWD WHAB Program now accepts projects through electronic submittal. If submitting requests electronically, please include geographic location files when available (e.g. GIS shape file, .kmz, etc.).

There are links on the webpage that tell you where to find information to help:

- analyze a project for impacts to sensitive resources (threatened and endangered species, rare species, riparian areas, native vegetation, etc.);
- determine locations of water resources, ecoregions and biologic provinces, general vegetation types, state parks, Ecologically Significant Stream Segments, etc.;
- evaluate the need for permits and compliance under federal environmental laws; and
- implementing Best Management Practices to minimize adverse impacts to wildlife resources. The resources provided can be referenced to aid in the design, construction, maintenance, and operation of a project.

TREE TIPS - FAMOUS TREES OF TEXAS

"Famous Trees of Texas" was first published in 1970 by the Texas Forest Service (now Texas A&M Forest Service), an organization created in 1915 and charged with protecting and sustaining the forests, trees, and other related natural resources of Texas.

The 3rd Edition was published in 1984 and is now out of print. Its purpose - as stated in the Preface - was "to memorialize those trees which have been a witness to some of the exciting periods and events in Texas' frontier history."

For the 100-year anniversary of TFS, the agency presents a new edition of this classic book, telling the stories of 101 trees throughout the state. Some are old friends featured in the first edition and still alive (27 of the original 81 trees described

in the first edition have died); some are newly designated, discovered as people began to recognize their age and value. All of them remain "living links" to the state's storied past.

Free copies of the 1st Edition of "Famous Trees of Texas" were distributed to all schools and public libraries in Texas, made possible by the generous financial support of The Moody Foundation of Galveston, Texas.

Although now out-of-print, you may still find a copy of the old book at your local library, used bookstore, online retailer, or even the occasional yard sale. For reference, the Library of Congress Catalog Card Number is 83-50814 and the International Standard Book Number is 0-89096-174-3.

from Texas A&M Forest Service website

For more information:

- http://texasforestservice.tamu.edu/websites/FamousTreesOfTexas/About_the_Book/

To order the book:

- <http://www.tamupress.com/product/Famous-Trees-of-Texas,8201.aspx>

TEXAS CO-OP ADDS BIOMASS CAPACITY

Pine trees are now a power source in East Texas, and a co-op biomass plant is using the fuel to produce enough electricity to meet the needs of 24,000 homes.

Officials from East Texas Electric Cooperative (ETEC) say the new Hilton Lively Renewable Power Project is generating about 45 megawatts of electricity from timber waste produced by local logging operations.

“We are delighted that this innovative renewable energy project is now available,” said Edd Hargett, General Manager of the Nacogdoches-based ETEC.

Ryan Thomas, Chief Financial Officer of ETEC, says “East Texas Electric Coop is a ‘G&T,’ which stands for Generation and Transmission cooperative, as opposed to a distribution cooperative like Deep East Texas, Sam Houston, etc. We supply the power to the ten distribution co-ops in East Texas, who then turn around and supply it to folks like you and me.”

Constructing the plant and its support equipment on 65 acres near Woodville took about two years. Since its completion in November 2014, it has become a

busy destination for trucks loaded with chipped wood waste. The chips come directly from nearby forestry operations, and are wood residue from timber production.

The biomass facility provides 25 full-time jobs. Fueling the operation requires delivery of about 300 loads of wood chips each week (60 loads per weekday), supporting about 60-75 timber supply and transportation jobs in the region. Processed water recycled from the local municipal wastewater treatment plant is used to produce steam before it is cooled and returned to that facility.

“Lively Renewable has contributed greatly to the local economy and will continue to do so throughout its operational life,” said Thomas. “It will also help insulate East Texas Electric Cooperative and its distribution co-op members from wholesale market price swings.”

The G&T has a strategic goal of mitigating the effects of market volatility related to wholesale power supply costs on its member co-ops, particularly during extremely hot or cold periods in the region.

from an article by Derrill Holly, Electric Co-op Today, Staff Writer

For more information:

- <http://www.etc.coop>

FORESTRY AND THE CLEAN WATER ACT

Timber production is recognized as a land use that is compatible with wetland protection (as are normal farming and ranching activities). Although wetlands are federally regulated, normal forestry operations in wetlands such as soil bedding, site preparation, harvesting, and minor drainage are exempt from permit requirements under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act Amendments of 1977, as long as the activity:

- 1) qualifies as “normal silviculture,”
- 2) is part of an “established” silvicultural operation,
- 3) is not part of an activity whose purpose is to convert a water of the United States into a use to which it was not previously subject,

4) follows the fifteen Mandatory Road Best Management Practices, and

5) contains no toxic pollutant listed under Section 307 of the Clean Water Act in discharge of dredge or fill materials into waters of the United States.

Some (but not all) indicators of an “established” operation include:

- Written management plan
- Past harvesting with forest regeneration
- Fire, insect, or disease control to protect timber
- Forest roads follow BMP guidelines

A forestry activity will require a Section 404 permit if it results in the conversion of a wetland to a non-wetland.

from “Texas Forestry Best Management Practices” publication, March 2014

For more information:

- <http://goo.gl/4XbjVv>
- <http://goo.gl/Xelv0t>

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WILDLIFE AND WOODLAND EXPO

Texas Wildlife and Woodland Expo and Spring Fling

March 28, 2015

10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Lone Star College - Montgomery in The Woodlands, TX

Texas Wildlife and Woodland Expo and Spring Fling is designed to help families learn a little about the land on which they live - and how to best take care of it - through hands-on clinics, live demonstrations, and children's activities. There are also opportunities for scouts to work on some of their badges. **Free tree seedlings** will be available throughout the day, while supplies last.

The **free** clinics and live demonstrations will teach you how to nourish your plants, trees, and wetlands; attract wildlife to your property; and protect yourself from wildfire.

A big part of this event is the Family Adventure Zone where youngsters can climb a rock wall, take a peek at a live screech owl, and learn how to kayak. For the first time, there will also be a dock diving competition for dogs - a real fun event to watch!

Go to <http://expo.tamu.edu> for more information on speakers, activities, and directions to the event. Free admission!

For info on entering the DockDogs competition, see "Upcoming Events" at <http://www.heartoftexasdockdogs.com>.



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