



SOUTH DAKOTA FAMILY FORESTS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Summer 2022

Semi-Annual



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South Dakota Family Forests Association would like to give special recognition to Greg Josten. On June 8, 2022 Mr. Josten retired from South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resource as State Forester.

Greg Josten is a South Dakota native having grown up in the Sioux Falls Area. From a young age, he was interested in Forestry and the Black Hills area was a favorite place for his family to vacation. After high school he attended the University of Montana where he received a Bachelors of Science Degree in Forest Resource Management and a Master’s Degree in Forest Science.

In 1975 he took his first job working with Gardner’s Nursery out of Sioux Falls South Dakota where he planted trees and landscaped around residences. At the time, he had no idea that these tasks where part of “urban forestry” he just knew he liked working with trees.

South Dakota Department of Agriculture (now South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources) obtained this talented individual in 1983. Working through different positions and changes in departments he was a fire management forester, forest stewardship program coordinator, and supervisor of the service forestry programs until 2014. He succeeded Ray Sowers as State Forester in the summer of 2014 until 2022.



Programs that Greg has worked on since becoming the State Forester have included the revisions of the SD Forest Action plan, the Black Hills Mountain Pine Beetle Epidemic response, United States Forests Service Black Hills National Forest - Forest Plan Amendment, Emerald Ash Borer detection and response, along with numerous other projects.

Forever grateful for everything you provided to the citizens of South Dakota and your help with SDFFA!



A Tree Farmers Story—Agricultural Status & Forestry

In March, the Pennington County Commission unanimously recognized our agricultural status on appeal to the equalization office denial. This move was the culmination of a three-year journey in establishing our tree farm. The ag status helps us keep the 28 acre parcel my family has been on since 1947. The SFFFA has been instrumental in every step the process.

SFFFA members helped connect us with the state foresters to complete a free tree farm inspection, forest management, and stewardship that led to our certification with the American Tree Farm System. We filed the first of three years of proof of income in 2019 from timber products we harvested and sold locally. SFFFA members have been vital in advice and support as we continue to grow our small business while managing our forest.

In January of 2021, members of the state legislature threatened legislation that would decimate the ag tax protections for a majority of tree farmers in the Black Hills. Members of the SFFFA worked for many hours to steer the legislation to a better direction and to educate state lawmakers on the value tree farms bring to the state. The law was amended heavily from its original form and the impact on tree farmers on smaller parcels like ours was greatly reduced. None of this would have taken place without the SFFFA's tireless effort.

That effort continues today with external outreach like tax assessor workshops that help keep policy makers informed of the value we bring by protecting wood, water, wildlife and recreation. SFFFA has also helped sponsor several valuable ongoing workshops for tree farmers, thanks to leadership in the state forestry office. [The workshop recordings be found online](#) and include topics from capitalizing on carbon sequestration, to stopping pests like IPS beetles and pine wilt.

The effort to keep the Black Hills and other South Dakota woodlands open space free from over-development will only grow more important in the coming years. The role of the SFFFA in protecting and supporting landowners and ag producers in the state is vital, and I encourage everyone to stay active in the SFFFA and to bring your neighbors along. Together we can build a bright future for our state.

Mike Ray—SFFFA Landowner

Potential & Scheduled Events

Conservation Easements 101—July

What is SD Ag Land Trust—August

SFFFA Fall Field Workshop & Social—September

Conservation Easements & Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation—September

Dakotas Society of American Forester Fall Conference—October 12-13th —Custer, SD (All Encouraged to Attend)

Riparian Workshop & Beaver Dam Workshop—October 13-14th—Outdoor Campus West, Rapid City SD

Who is the Northern Prairies Land Trust? - October

Legal Repercussions of Conservation Easements—November

Conservation Round Table—December

Monthly Forest Health Workshops provided by DANR.



Keep an eye on our [Facebook Page](#) or [Website](#) for regular updates and surprise workshop or social opportunities.

Thoughts from the Stump

I would like to dedicate my column to honor a good friend and member of South Dakota Family Forests Association board and former state forester. Greg just recently retired after serving as our state forester for 8 years and the South Dakota Dept of Agriculture for 39 years. Greg was not only a good friend to me but also to SDDFA.

Greg's involvement with SDDFA actually started at least 25 to 30 years ago when Greg was involved with Keep South Dakota Green Association and the South Dakota Tree Farm Committee. Greg's pragmatic and even handed approach to issues and problem solving has been his greatest strength. Two events stand out to me that exemplify why I appreciate Greg so much. The first event that Greg showed true leadership was during the last Black Hills Forest Plan's Phase 2 Amendment process. Greg was the representative for South Dakota's Dept of Agriculture as a Cooperating Agency with the USFS. He did a great job facilitating and organizing the South Dakota counties and other organizations who participated in the Cooperating Agency process as they developed their comments and recommendations for "Phase 2".

The other event is Greg's participation and leadership during the SDDFA's first leadership retreat at Spearfish Canyon Lodge in 2015. SDDFA was at the crossroads and we were trying to determine what type of organization we wanted to be. Greg had been just recently named the state forester and chose to come to our 3 day retreat. I was honored and thrilled that our state forester thought so much of our organization to participate and provide excellent counsel.

Greg, we will miss you, but your presence and legacy has made both the "State Forestry Dept." and SDDFA healthier and wiser. We all strive to leave things we touch in better condition that we found them and Greg did that.

Your Good Friend and fellow U. of Montana Forester

Bill Coburn



SD Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources News New State Forester

A warm welcome to SD Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources (DANR) New State Forester Marcus Warnke. The relationship between DANR and SDDFA has been cherished over the years and we look forward to continuing this partnership into the future.

Marcus Warnke was born and raised in Rapid City, SD and after high school he went on to earn a Bachelor of Science (BS) in Forest Resource Management from the University of Montana, Missoula. During summer breaks, Marcus returned to the Black Hills to work seasonal positions with the Black Hills National Forest. Following graduation Marcus accepted a position with Idaho Department of Lands in Kingston, Idaho leading a seasonal timber crew, firefighting, and completing small timber sales on Idaho's state endowment lands.



In the winter of 2009-2010, Marcus returned to South Dakota to pursue career opportunities closer to home and family. After working various temporary forestry positions with the Black Hills National Forest, Marcus accepted the Forest Health Service Forester position with the South Dakota Department of Agriculture Resource Conservation & Forestry Division in May, 2012. Over the past 10 years, he has worked his way up through the division, most recently working as the Natural Resource Planner, wherein he completed the 2020 South Dakota Forest Action Plan. In 2018 Marcus was selected to attend the Governor's Leadership Development Program through USD, and earned a graduate certificate in Organizational Leadership.

Marcus married Kelly (Owens) Warnke in 2012, has two children and enjoys woodworking, timber-framing, camping, hiking, and traveling with his family.

Congratulations Marcus!

How to Restore Riparian Areas Before It Is Too Late

Riparian areas are the lands bordering rivers, streams, lakes, and other bodies of water. They provide many economic and environmental benefits. These include providing habitat for wildlife, protection from erosion, mitigation of the magnitude of flood events, regulating water temperatures for fish, and improving water quality by removing excess nutrients and sediment from surface runoff. There are many threats affecting riparian areas today. The largest threats are climate change and invasive plants. However, they also include agriculture, grazing, fire, forest harvesting, mining, recreation, drought, water degradation, and urbanization.

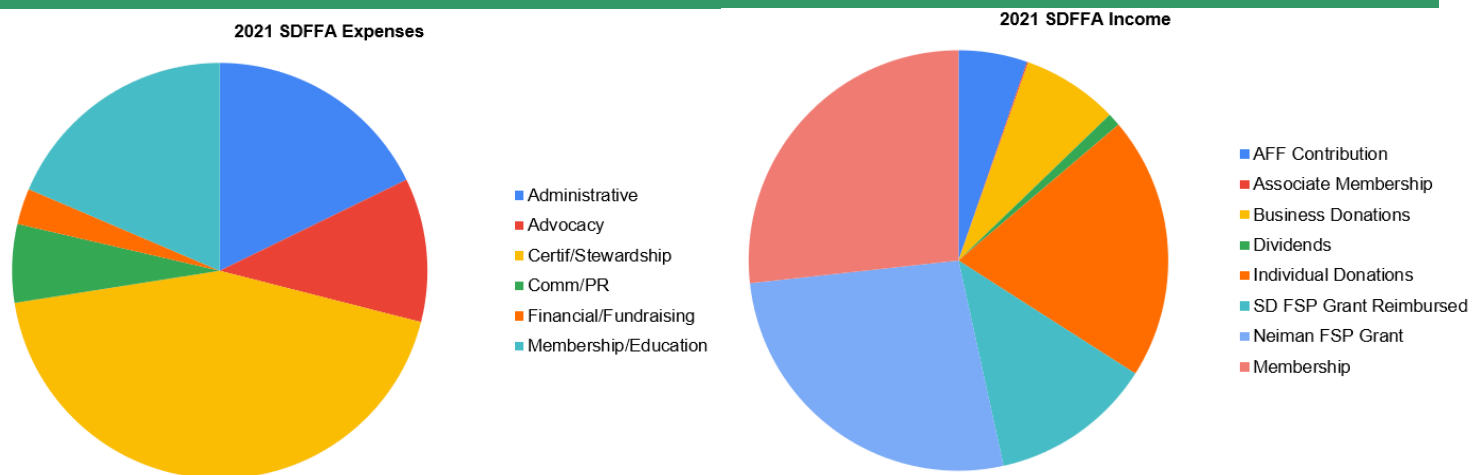
Thankfully there are actions one can take to restore these areas. The most important step would be installing fencing to exclude or control stock access. Another very important step is removing all invasive plant species and replanting with native trees, shrubs, and grasses. Leaving trees, large limbs, and branches that have fallen into the watercourse can trap sediment and create habitat for threatened native fish and frogs.

In recent years an innovative stream restoration technique referred to as Beaver Dam Analogs (BDA) has become a popular method to restore riparian areas. BDAs are man-made structures designed to mimic the form and function of a natural beaver dam. Like natural beaver dams, BDAs slow water velocity, allowing sediment to accumulate and raising groundwater levels. The most common type of BDA is one that uses a series of channel-spanning, semiporous, wooden post structures woven with vegetation and cobble. Post less BDAs constructed with cobble and gravel have also been successful. This allows landowners to get creative in their BDA designs with materials they may already have, making it a simple and cost-effective solution.



To get more information on riparian restoration and beaver dam analogs there will be a workshop at the South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks Outdoor Campus in Rapid City on October 13th & 14th 2022. Keep a lookout on our website for registration details.

Faryn Klebe—National Wild Turkey Federation Forester, SDFFA Certified Inspector



Inspector of the Year 2022—Lynn Kolund

Congratulations to Professional Forester and longtime South Dakota Family Forests Association supporter Lynn Kolund!

Lynn has been selected as the 2022 SD Inspector of the Year for his years of service to forest landowners and SDFFA. To say that Lynn's volunteerism goes above and beyond is an understatement. Serving as an SDFFA Board Member, Committee Chair and Certified Inspector, Lynn has always stepped up to organize and participate in SDFFA events, lead projects and carry out inspections.



Passionate about forestry, Lynn generously shares his time and experience with others, including forest landowners, fellow foresters, and Conservation Districts, particularly the Custer County Conservation District.

Lynn retired from the US Forest Service after a 37 year career, and later established his company, Dakota Forestry. We are ever grateful for his invaluable service to SDFFA and dedication to promoting sustainable, healthy forests!

Thank you so much for all of your hard work over the years, your energy, and everything you bring to this organization.

Congratulations Lynn Kolund!

Do you know an outstanding Inspector or Member within the SDFFA Organization?

Would you like to get them local (if not nationally) recognized for their outstanding service?

SDFFA accepts nominations year-round for Tree Farmer of the Year, Inspector of the Year, and Volunteer of the Year.

Nominations can be made by visiting the SDFFA website <https://www.treefarmssystem.org/south-dakota>

Or obtaining a nomination form from SDFFA Executive Director at sdtreefarm@gmail.com.

Seeking nominations that are engaged in the SDFFA Organization, uphold and exude qualities in high regard for SDFFA such as willingness to assist others, furthering forest stewardship practices, encouraging others, or willingness to implement management strategies.

[SDFFA Facebook Page](#)

[NEW MEMBER INQUIRY FORM](#)

Interest Article:

[HELPING FORESTLAND OWNERS NAVIGATE THE TAX CODE \(USDA\)](#)

[Helping Forestland Owners Navigate Tax Code](#)



[TREE FARMER OF THE YEAR NOMINATION FORM](#)

[INSPECTOR OF THE YEAR NOMINATION FORM](#)

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!!

Membership 130

So far in 2022 SDFFA has been graced with 5 new members

Acreage 22,674

Jennifer and Gordon Sabo Don Hecker & Ruth Puckett
Tim & Kalyn Gutormson
Kent & Kristi Hanson
William Cowan



ATFS Standard 1—Commitment to Practicing

Management (such as forest stewardship) plans are important tools to help landowners plan for the long term health of their properties. These plans help landowner manage their property to accomplish all of their objectives, identify your goals and management activities. No one can develop a property management plan without knowing what benefits landowners value and what ones are not important. Management recommendations for a for a given stand can vary dramatically depending upon the goals and objectives. Plans and recommendations made by a professional forester who does not understand the objectives ensures that assumptions are made about the landowner’s priorities and objectives. They should be adaptive and active like a “living document.” Each plan is unique to the developer, the landowner, and any programs that they are participating in.

The American Tree Farm System (ATFS) Standards of Sustainability Stand 1 states that the landowner(s) “shall have and implement a written forest management plan that is consistent with the size of the forest, the scale, and the intensity of the forest activities. Landowner(s) should have a plan that showcases the diversity of their property, be adaptive, and that the landowner(s) implement the plan to the best of their abilities. At a minimum the landowner should monitor for changes that could interfere with the management objectives identified in the plan.

Patricia Weyrich—SD DANR Rural Forestry Program Coordinator

Forest Stewardship Plans—The Basics

In South Dakota there are a number of reasons for creating a Forest Stewardship Plans and different ways to accomplish one’s goal of obtaining a management plan.

[USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Conservation Activity Plan \(CAP\)](#)

Plans developed for producers to identify conservation practices needed to address a specific natural resources need. Typically these plans are specific to certain kinds of land use such as property transitioning or can also address a specific resource need. CAP plans must be created by NRCS certified Technical Service Providers.

[SD Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources Forest Stewardship Program \(DANR\)](#)

Is an extension of a federal program so it has regulations on what must be covered in the plan. 16 different items must be addressed, management recommendations must be included, maps of the property, and the landowner contact information.

Being part of a federal program properties are selected at random for selection each year. Some properties get visited every 5 years others may never see DANR professionals.

[South Dakota Family Forests Association \(General versus Grant Program\)](#)

The organization works closely with DANR Forest Stewardship Program and requires all individuals participating in their grant program to follow requirements of DANR when creating a Forest Stewardship Program. If a landowner goes through a different avenue to obtain a management plan, ATFS guidance is followed. Properties are visited 1 every 5 years by certified inspector and professional forester.

[Register of Private Professional Created Plan](#)

These plans are based off of the landowners wishes and concerns. No guidance is given since landowners work directly with professionals to achieve their goals. What both parties agree on determines what is in the Forest Stewardship Plan.

If financial assistance is given to the landowner to create a Forest Stewardship they must follow the guidance of that program.

[ATFS Landowner Plans \(Management Plan Template\)](#)

ATFS has created a template to allow landowners to use one management plan to participate in their program.

Thank You Sponsors!!

Jim and Sally Scherrer Charitable
Foundation

**DAKOTA EQUIPMENT RENTAL
CHAIN SAW CENTER**



Black Hills Forestry—Bill Coburn

Dakota Forestry LLC

Bob Burns & Mary LaHood

Doug & Denise Miller

Doris McDill

Harry & Barb Ayer

Paul & Julie Schipke



WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!!

If you would like to volunteer for a specific project or task please contact sdtreefarm@gmail.com

Projects that Committee's are working on:

- ♦ Semi-Annual Newsletter Articles, Ideas, or Help
- ♦ Agricultural Classification Landowner Workshop
- ♦ Member Directory
- ♦ Forestry/Timber TV Commercial
- ♦ New Membership Brochure Update
- ♦ New/Non-Member Outreach
- ♦ Additional Informational Handouts (White Sheets)

What projects would you like to see committee's work on?



SEND US PHOTOS OF YOUR SOUTH DAKOTA FAMILY FOREST: WOOD, WATER, WILDLIFE, RECREATION, and **YOUR** FAMILY. Email your photos to: SDtreefarm@gmail.com

South Dakota Family Forests Association Board

- Bill Coburn: Chairman & Black Hills Forestry Inc.
Forestry Consultant, Tree Farmer (CF)
- Bob Burns: Vice Chairman, Tree Farmer
- Mary LaHood: Tree Farmer
- Executive Director, Treasurer, & Tree Farmer
- Doug Miller: Tree Farmer & Secretary
- SD Department of Agriculture & Natural Resources
—State Forester
- Ben Wudtke: Black Hills Forest Resource
Association Executive Director
- Matthew Lottes: Spearfish Forest Products Forester
- Mike Ray: Tree Farmer
- Sid Goss: Tree Farmer
- Logan Brown: Wildland Fire Division
Urban Interface Specialist
- Danielle Wiebers: Tree Farmer
- Lynn Kolund: Dakota Forestry LLC
Forestry Consultant

Committee Members

Communication and Public Relations

Mike Ray—Chairperson
Faryn Klebe, Patricia Weyrich, Mary LaHood

Advocacy

Bob Burns - Chairperson,
Sid Goss, Ben Wudtke

Financial & Fundraising

Bill Coburn - Chairperson,
Mary LaHood, Danielle Wiebers

Certification

Patricia Weyrich— Chairperson,
Logan Brown, Mary LaHood

Membership & Education

Lynn Kolund - Chairperson,
Mary LaHood



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ACCEPTING VOLUNTEERS IN ANY/ALL CAPACITIES.

PLEASE CONTACT ANY OF OUR MEMBERS IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING.