



the Forest Steward

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“**W**here is the next generation of foresters going to turn for professional guidance on ethical and policy considerations as they start their own careers? It should be to us.”

Shane Hetzler, Forest Stewards Guild Membership and Policy Council, and Trout Mountain Forestry, Oregon



Photos by Reina Fernandez, Forest Stewards Guild



A Forest Stewards Guild Youth Core worked in western New Mexico, near the Navajo Nation at Cibola National Forest. Students Aaron Martin, Larshyanya Yazzie, Janelle Sam and Martin Skeet are shown here collecting data on crown condition, tree diameter, and tree height.

**Forest Stewards
Guild**
putting the forest first

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■ To our Members and Supporters

Across America's forests, change is arriving.

The larches and aspens in the west are turning a burnished gold. In the eastern forests tinges of red, yellow, and orange are brightening the landscape, and reminding people in our cities and country sides alike of the beauty, grandeur, and importance of our forests. Perhaps some will think too of important

contributions made by the people who work each day to conserve and care for our forests; people like the members of the Forest Stewards Guild.

Growth and change continue at the Guild as well. After three years of extraordinary service as the Guild's chief executive, Fred Clark will become its Senior Forester and Zander Evans will succeed him in the pivotal role of Executive Director. Long a member of the Guild, Fred brought a compelling vision and his boundless energy to advancing the Guild's mission and goals. This energy carried through many activities, including visiting with our members around the country, strengthening our organization and finances, and establishing a new national office in the heart of Aldo Leopold country where the Land Ethic took form.

Zander will press forward with similar vision and energy, not missing a beat. After more than a decade developing and managing the Guild's growing array of field programs and research, Zander will apply his outstanding leadership skills to make the Guild even more effective in achieving and demonstrating its mission and fundamental purposes. Zander is committed to positioning the Guild as a leader in fostering our long-term vision of ecological



forestry, as a solution to ecological and economic challenges facing the country.

Throughout the past five years of growth and development at the Guild, Rick Morrill has guided its Board of Directors with a steady hand, supporting the work of the staff, listening attentively to members around the country, and focusing intently on continuous forward progress. It is a privilege for me to follow in Rick's footsteps, and I am grateful that he will

continue to provide his advice and counsel on the board as its immediate past chair.

There are challenges ahead for America's forests, and for its stewards. We are entering a time of unprecedented change; a "no analog future" in which much of our forest history, science, and management practice must be viewed in a new light. The members, staff, and board of the Forest Stewards Guild are well prepared to help meet these challenges, through practical research, responsive and responsible forest management, and an unswerving commitment to the stewardship of forests for this and future generations.

In this issue of the Forest Steward and in future features online, you'll read about some of the challenges, questions, and ideas on the minds of Guild professional members, partners and students. As we highlight successes and explore opportunities, we are grateful that you are a part of it all. As a friend or supporter of the Guild your work is part of our work – and we look forward to continuing our shared efforts to protect and care for our forests.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Al Sample". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Al Sample, Board Chair.

A Liberal Arts Approach to Forest Stewardship

Written by Richard Drew Bowden, Ph.D. Richard is a Professor of Environmental Science at Allegheny College in Pennsylvania, and a professional member of the Forest Stewards Guild.

First-year college students often want to halt logging in an effort to protect forests. Students at Allegheny College, a liberal arts undergraduate institution, are no different. “Our students are passionate about environmental protection - we applaud that,” commented Eric Pallant, Chair of Environmental Science. “They like trees, they like forests, and they want to save them. At Allegheny, however, students learn that you can be a tree hugger with a chain saw,” added Pallant. Although the college does not offer a forestry major, students interested in forests get interdisciplinary, hands-on experiences with stewardship and learn that protecting forests often means managing them, even with a chainsaw. A host of courses introduce students to forest flora and fauna, biology and ecology, woodland streams, forest economics, and societal pressures that challenge good stewardship. For example, Professor Ben Haywood, an interdisciplinary scientist, teaches *Birds, Ecosystems, and People*, which looks at environmental, social, and cultural entanglements between birds and people. Courses collaborate with forest landowners, foresters, and forest organizations to examine forest use and protection. A research methods class is currently quantifying invasive plants in a forest that is managed by the Foundation for Sustainable Forests (and featured on page seven of this issue). Students frequently parlay their interests into year-long theses that further their educational or career goals. One student prepared a video on the hemlock woolly adelgid, interviewing locally and nationally known foresters and ecologists; that video aired on local TV, leading to employment with the National Park Service.



Rich Bowden (L), Owen Ludwig (C), forester Guy Dunkle (R) discuss harvesting techniques during a logging operation at one of Allegheny's forests.
Photo credit: Derek Li

A Liberal Arts Student's Experience with Forest Stewardship

Written by Owen Ludwig, Allegheny College student and former Guild intern.

As an incoming first-year student, my thinking about forests was like that of my classmates; logging was bad. Period. I grew up in northwestern Ohio and spent much of my time exploring the woods behind our house. I loved hiking, canoeing, camping and anything outdoors, and my appreciation for the natural world transformed into a desire to study the environment. I particularly loved forests and trees, and it only seemed logical that cutting trees was an ecologically damaging process. However, in my freshman seminar on natural resource conservation, I got a taste of another perspective by visiting Guy Dunkle on a trip to a logging site. Guy is an Allegheny alum and forester with Firth Maple Products, a firm that practices sustainable forestry. I was fascinated by the idea that harvesting trees and sustainable forest management were not mutually exclusive. I saw a potential future for myself, so during my sophomore year, I asked Guy if I could intern with him. I learned the ins and outs of the logging industry and practiced the silvicultural art of choosing trees for harvest in a way that improves the integrity of the forest over time. This internship led me to the Forest Stewards Guild, and I soon found myself in New Mexico learning about western forests, and working with foresters, scientists, landowners, and youth on forest management projects across the state. My internship with the Guild not only helped change the way I view forests, but also affirmed my role as a forest steward. I now work for Firth Maple Products, and I am focusing my senior thesis on minimizing soil disturbance associated with logging skid trails. One way or another, my future will involve playing in and working with forests.



Owen Ludwig finishes up a small group selection in Pennsylvania to increase diversity and promote red oak, sugar maple, and tulip poplar.
Photo credit: Owen Ludwig.



A Guild Model and Perspective

Conversations about Guild style forestry with Shane Hetzler.

- Shane is a professional member of the Guild and serves on the Membership and Policy Council.

By Colleen Robinson

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Shane Hetzler grew up in Oregon and has done forestry work in the West African country of Senegal, Connecticut, and in his home state. Last year he was offered the opportunity to fulfill a career dream and return to Oregon to work for Trout Mountain Forestry in Corvallis. Guild members Mark Miller, Scott Ferguson, Barry Sims, and Matt Fehrenbacher also work for Trout Mountain, which provides planning and management services to forest owners in the Pacific Northwest. Trout Mountain foresters believe that the long-term ability of forests to provide for families and communities depends on harvesting trees in a manner that respects all the values of the forest. We asked Shane to share more about what this work means to him.

About Trout Mountain

“Folks at Trout Mountain Forestry have been doing Guild style forestry for decades,” Shane said. “I really feel we are stewarding the forest and not working for just timber production or just wildlife or just any one thing. We promote a balanced approach with all our clients.”

“This is the kind of forestry where we take time and reflection to ask, ‘what is the land telling us?’ The answers inform our management planning as much as other, more human-centered factors.”

Trout Mountain puts a strong emphasis on variable density thinning and variable retention harvests. There is a tension between the economics of this silvicultural approach and other approaches to forestry in the Northwest. Overall, Shane believes that longer rotations on forestry operations would be beneficial all around- higher quality wood products, greater ecological services, and a more understanding public.


Helping to build understanding

Shane knows firsthand about nuance in people’s understanding of forestry based on location and experiences. Corvallis, Oregon is a college town surrounded by forestland with log

trucks rolling down main street. People live close to the resource and see this regularly. By contrast, many locations in New England, like where Shane worked in New Haven, Connecticut, have large populations of people with a different view of what a forest is. Many urban dwellers, when asked what typifies wilderness or nature or a forest for them, turn to their local park.

“That is the next frontier for forest management and conservation,” Shane said. “We have increasing urban populations and people are disconnected from their natural resources so they don’t have a frame of reference.” Getting people out to see an operation is the best way to help them understand that it is okay to cut trees.

Across the forestry sector, there are misunderstandings about what happens in the woods when people can’t see what’s going on behind a locked gate. Anyone unfamiliar with forest management, dropped onto an active project, feels shocked, whether the project involves clear cuts, thinning, or otherwise. Any type of disturbance elicits a very visceral reaction. Shane believes forestry



Sunrise from the summit of a recent oak restoration. According to The Nature Conservancy, prairie and Oregon white oak savanna in the Willamette Valley has been reduced to 2% of its native range due to development pressure, agricultural encroachment, and a lack of burning historically done by Native Americans.

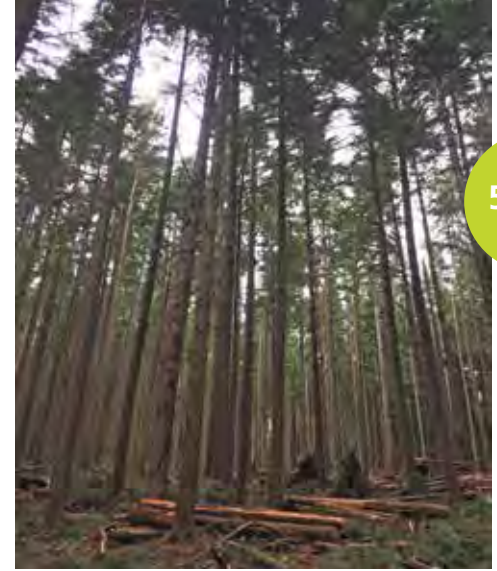


professionals can do a better job of teaching people what management is and how we are managing for multiple benefits.

Trout Mountain is a helpful model because the skilled foresters there incorporate that into their work. These Guild members partner with nonprofits, municipalities, and landowners to provide tours, equipment demonstrations, and show the big picture of why it's important for sustainable forest management.

For example, the Build Local Alliance in Portland connects local, responsibly grown and processed wood with local projects. They partnered with Trout Mountain to do a tour and logging demonstration at a summer

camp called Camp Adams, one of Trout Mountain's Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-certified clients. Next, they followed the trees to a small-scale mill that processed them. Finally, in downtown Portland, they toured a building where the same FSC cedar trees were used in construction. People saw the entire process. "These opportunities to connect the dots between a standing tree and the benches we sit on are very important for the public and for us professionally as a whole," said Shane. "I see similarities between the great work coming out of the farm to table movement and what we could be doing as forest stewards with products we provide."



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All photos courtesy of Trout Mountain Forestry.

From top left to right:

Northern Red-Legged Frog (Rana aurora) inspecting a recent variable density thinning on a Trout Mountain Forestry client's property.

Second thinning in a mature fir stand to promote uneven structure and species diversity.

Trout Mountain Forestry Douglas fir seedlings awaiting the 2018 planting season.

Logs from a cut-to-length harvest at the Oregon Coast, awaiting a forwarder.

Barry Sims, partner and General Manager of Trout Mountain Forestry discusses logging and wood utilization of FSC-certified western red cedar on a client's property. This tour, with a group from The Build Local Alliance in Portland, followed logs from the harvest site to a local custom sawmill, and finally to their destination in North Portland's One North building.

A Trout Mountain Forestry variable retention harvest in the Oregon Coast Range.



Stewardship in perpetuity

By Colleen Robinson and Amanda Mahaffey

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We envision an abundance of intact forest ecosystems that provide for greater biological diversity, sustainable forest products, the economic viability of rural communities, and recreational opportunities. Our management philosophy is to partner with nature.

The Foundation for Sustainable Forests is a charitable non-profit land trust that embodies Guild style forestry in northwestern Pennsylvania. The Foundation “partners with nature” and with local landowners, schools, state agencies, and other conservation organizations to protect forestland and promote healthy forest management practices. The Foundation strives to influence the region’s sustainable forestry landscape, support local economies, and provide a replicable model for other forest-dependent communities.

The Foundation for Sustainable Forests owns land, but also manages it. “Rather than preserving land untouched, the Foundation for Sustainable Forests is actively managing our timber resource to provide the forest products and ecosystem services that people depend on,” says Annie Socci, the Foundation’s Executive Director. “By functioning within the local community, we are better positioned to educate the public about sustainable forestry and therefore impact a greater area.”

The vision and philosophies of Troy Firth, President and Founder, help the organization succeed. The central management approach is “worst first selection,” in which the trees that need

to be harvested to support the overall health of the forest are harvested first, even if they have the least commercial timber value. In this way, a manager never compromises the health of the forest for the sake of the proceeds. Socci explains, “We consider the forests we protect to be our endowment. Therefore, it is in our best interest to not draw upon the principal. The ‘worst first’ model is like using the interest to reinvest in additional conservation efforts.”

The Foundation owns over 900 acres across northwestern Pennsylvania and western New York, and with each new family touched by their outreach, the forest stewardship community grows. According to Socci, “As the organization grows, we will be able to sustain our operations, and achieve additional conservation goals, with the net proceeds from sustainable timber harvests on the land we protect.”

How it works

Well-intentioned landowners ask the Foundation to help them “do the right thing” by their families and the land. These landowners have varying levels of experience with forest management, so it can be difficult to define and embrace “the right thing.” Socci explained that it comes down to the donors’ readiness to share a piece of themselves; it is an emotional decision. Property owners often have formative memories of stewarding the land. Donating can initially feel like severing the personal connection, even if they ultimately feel a sense of resolution or peace. “Most of these conversations are years in the making, and we understand the need for time while considering the future of one’s land,” said Socci.

Photo top: Attendees of a Foundation for Sustainable Forests conference learn about sustainable forest management, which includes using horses to skid logs and minimize damage to the forest floor wherever feasible. Photo courtesy of the Foundation for Sustainable Forests.

The Foundation's integrated approach to forest stewardship is captured in the story of Moxie Woods in Mercer County, Pennsylvania. The 128 acres is typical of forests in the region, subject to high grading in the past, and more recently untouched with a presence of non-native and invasive species in the understory. Today, this land is emblematic of the relationships the Foundation develops with landowners. Moxie Woods started with a woodland owner who wanted to secure the future of their forest. According to Socci, "People have options among conservancies they can turn to for help. This landowner chose us because she responded to the idea of responsible use of the land." Moxie Woods is not intended to be a museum, but a living forest managed for sustainability over time, while supporting the rural economy with jobs for horse teams, logging crews, log truckers, and more. This holistic approach is a bedrock goal of the Foundation.

Another property, the 17-acre Bail Family Forest in Crawford County, Pennsylvania, was recently conserved in perpetuity through a shared donation to the Foundation and Allegheny College. This will be a teaching and demonstration forest. Net proceeds from its sustainably harvested timber will be shared between Allegheny College and the Foundation. "The Bail Family's gift will provide excellent teaching and research opportunities for students to explore sustainable forestry in a variety of ways, from courses that examine ecological processes, to those that examine policy and human use of natural resources," commented Dr. Eric Pallant, chair of Allegheny's Department of Environmental Science.

Organizational trust is needed for projects such as these to succeed. Socci's words echo those of Shane Hetzler from this issue's article about Trout Mountain Forestry, "We build trust by showing first-hand what we do on the ground. Many donors attend our conferences, where we showcase our forestry work."

The Foundation's Loving the Land Through Working Forests conferences help tell the story of what forests looked like before the industrial revolution, as well as what may lie ahead in the era of climate change. Foundation staff and partners teach about holistic approaches for managing for wildlife, how to read a timber contract for signs of unsustainable forestry practices, and how to find resources to plan for the future of their land. "Many landowners come to these conferences because they want to steward their property responsibly," said Socci. "It is important to our mission that we support their efforts."

One of the Foundation's principles is that forestry is an art and a science. Although research should absolutely inform management, at the same time, nature is so dynamic that we cannot assume we know a forest based on research alone. The Foundation utilizes both science and field observations to inform management decisions. "We need to be open-minded and willing to try different approaches, such as where to put small group selections to cultivate uneven-aged, diverse forests," says Socci. This approach allows the Foundation to adapt its forest management plans to an ever-changing ecosystem.

The power of partners

The Forest Stewards Guild is proud to be a partner in the important work of the Foundation for Sustainable Forests. The Foundation spreads the "spark" of ecologically, economically, and socially responsible forestry in rural communities.

In turn, Socci is grateful that "the Guild helps us frame what we are trying to do in this region through a broader, national lens." Socci adds, "The Guild works hard to improve the forestry culture, public awareness, and perception of a better-quality ethic on how we manage forests. The Foundation tries to do the same in our region. First and foremost, our priority is to steward the land we currently protect."

The Foundation for Sustainable Forests was born in 2009, out of the original Firth Family Foundation of 2004. 2012 marked the start of a membership program, annual conferences, and national visibility through an article titled "A Forest Conversation" by author Wendell Berry.



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At the Foundation's heart we are seeking the elusive win-win situation between forests and people. That balance is part of what makes us unique. When we succeed, we help ensure the future of both.

We consider the forests we protect to be our endowment. Therefore, it is in our best interest to not draw upon the principal. The 'worst first' model is like using the interest to reinvest in additional conservation efforts.

- Annie Socci, Executive Director

Photo above:

A small group selection, approximately 10 years later. These gaps are created to cultivate age and species diversity within a middle-aged to mature forest.

Photo Credit: Foundation for Sustainable Forests



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Guild Gatherings – sharing the vision

Our first year of regional Guild Gatherings brought opportunities to network and learn from professional members and partners closer to home. We look forward to more of these events and appreciate your enthusiasm! Please let us know your ideas on topics and locations for future Guild Gatherings. What site, partner, or forest steward exemplifies great work that you'd like to see showcased? Help us gather and learn together. Contact Colleen at colleen@forestguild.org or **608-333-0554** today.

Comments from Guild Gatherings in 2017:

“See cool projects, get face to face.”

“Excellent projects and presenters.”

“These are field based opportunities to learn from other foresters and see what they are wrestling with.”

“Interesting to hear and consider relationships to work I'm doing here.”

“I'm heartened by the number of guild gatherings happening around the country. I hope it continues, both for professional benefits and for the organization's presence.”

“Very good discussion of ecology and management in this site type and economic context.”

“These events can help people feel less isolated. There is valuable comradery.”



Lake States Guild members gather for a field tour at Wisconsin's Northern Highland - American Legion State Forest near Woodruff.

Photo by Fred Clark, Forest Stewards Guild