



MPC 2020-2023 Elections

Forest Stewards Guild professional and retired professional members in good standing have the opportunity to elect three representatives to the Guild's Membership and Policy Council. The MPC 1) supervises the development of Guild policy and position statements and the modification of our mission and principles, 2) addresses issues related to membership and member services, and 3) selects the members of the Membership and Nominating Committee in conjunction with the Board of Directors. Voting for this year's election runs through Saturday, December 14, 2019. Professional and retired professional members have been emailed ballot instructions. Contact Colleen Robinson at colleen@forestguild.org or call 608-395-4724 if you haven't received your ballot email or have questions regarding the election. We thank the following candidates for their willingness to serve.

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A link to a Survey Monkey ballot will be emailed to members who are eligible to vote on November 14, 2019. If you prefer a paper ballot, please contact Colleen at 608-395-4724 or membership@forestguild.org. Elections runs to December 14, 2019.

Jeff Denman, Hensley, AR

Biography

After receiving a BS in Forest Management from the University of Arkansas at Monticello in 1978, Jeff has more than 40 years of applied experience in the area of the Lower Mississippi River managing hardwood forests for numerous landowners with objectives ranging from pure wildlife habitat management to high timber production. He has inventoried over 225,000 acres of hardwood or pine forests and marked timber on over 22,000 acres. He has prepared dozens of Forest Management Plans ranging from 20 acres to as much as 160,000 acres involving a multitude of stakeholders. He has set up and administered scores of timber sales ranging from \$1,000 to \$275,000.



Jeff co-chaired a group of 75 scientists over 3 years resulting in a paradigm-shifting publication in 2007 about Desired Forest Conditions for wildlife: “Restoration, Management and Monitoring of Forest Resources in the Mississippi Alluvial Valley: Recommendations for Enhancing Wildlife Habitat”. Work stints include employment by a mid-size forestry services and consulting company in Arkansas & Louisiana, a forestry consultant (a hardwood management pioneer) with hardwood sawmill, as first field forester for Arkansas Game & Fish Commission, then Chief Forester on 160,000 acre White River National Wildlife Refuge of the US Fish & Wildlife Service for 30 years, and currently serving as a Consultant Forester.

Candidate Statement

Conserving our forests is best served by recognizing landowner objectives and all management possibilities to achieve those objectives. Evaluating potential actions while considering costs and benefits allows for the best options to be presented to the owner so that best decisions can be implemented. Forest management actions range the full gamut from set-asides to regeneration by total harvest. In the ecosystems along the Lower Mississippi River Valley that I have mostly worked in, partial disturbances by Variable Retention Improvement Thinning are the most frequently used and most cost-effective technique I have advocated to meet the landowner’s objectives. Too frequently forest management has focused on the initiation or release of regeneration stage with too little focus on intermediate treatments that can enhance wildlife habitat, improve forest productivity and resilience, while providing periodic income to offset expenses of land ownership. Throughout my career, I have strived to communicate the message of both active planning and economical implementation to set the stage for the accrual of beneficial conditions to meet the landowner’s objectives. With the Forest Stewards Guild, this type message is being further spread into additional areas. ▲

Justin Hart, Tuscaloosa, AL

Biography

Justin Hart is Professor and Director of the Environmental Science Program at the University of Alabama. He is also the Director of the UA Forest Dynamics Lab. The primary mission of the Forest Dynamics Lab is to provide science-based solutions to pressing forest management issues. Justin's research interests are in forest stand dynamics and forest disturbance ecology. The results of his studies are used to guide forest management, especially in the realm of natural disturbance-based silviculture and forest restoration. Justin is currently Associate Editor for the journal *Forest Science* and on the Editorial Boards for the journals *Forest Ecology and Management*, *Forestry*, and *Forests*. He teaches classes in forest ecology, silviculture, forest restoration, and forest measurements. In 2017, Justin worked with UA students to create the UA Student Chapter of the Forest Stewards Guild. The UA Student Chapter has worked on local service projects such as trail building and tree planting and is actively promoting Guild principles on campus and in the community in conjunction with Project Learning Tree and other efforts.



Candidate Statement

In 2011, I gave an invited presentation at a Guild sponsored conference in Sewanee, Tennessee on forest restoration. I realized then that the Forest Stewards Guild was a group to which I wanted to belong and in which I wanted to invest. I joined as a professional member in 2012. My personal environmental ethics are aligned with Guild principles. As an educator, I use the Guild principles in my classes to provide the philosophical foundation for the courses I teach. In particular, I would like to help the Guild recruit student members and establish official student chapters. I would also like to assist the Guild in reaching faculty and students at non-traditional forestry schools, like my own. In my opinion, environmental science and natural resources management programs, in addition to traditional forestry programs, would be well served by a group of students committed to Guild principles. A central challenge is to maintain student membership and active involvement in the Guild after graduation, and I would like to work with colleagues on this and other issues. ▲

Shane Heltzer, Corvallis, OR

Biography

Shane Heltzer has over 10 years' experience in forestry and conservation. He holds dual bachelor's degrees in History and French from the University of the Pacific, with a minor in Environmental Science. Before graduate school, Shane served as an Agroforestry volunteer with Peace Corps in Senegal, West Africa. He received a Master of Forestry degree from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. Following graduate school, Shane managed the Quiet Corner Initiative for the Yale School Forests office, engaging landowners in northeastern Connecticut around issues related to sustainable forestry, small-scale agriculture, and renewable energy. He spent three years working as a professional consulting forester for a company that he founded in New England before returning to his home state of Oregon to work as a forester with Trout Mountain Forestry. He currently resides with his wife (another Guild member!) in Corvallis, Oregon.



Candidate Statement

Since joining the Forest Stewards Guild in 2012, I've been fortunate to work alongside an inspiring and dedicated group of members and staff. These individuals believe like I do that the sustainable management of our forests is intrinsically tied to a societal well-being that extends far beyond things like timber production. It is because of these values that I have worked to expand the reach and impact of the Guild as a current Membership and Policy Council (MPC) representative. Through my work on the MPC, I've been nominated by my colleagues on the Council to serve as the next MPC Chair, pending my reelection by the membership.

From heading the Student Engagement subcommittee within the MPC to chairing the Pacific Northwest Regional Steering Committee for my region, my work on behalf of the Guild has been focused on growing the organization in new ways. By both engaging with students who are drawn to Guild-style forest management and looking to how we can better support historically underrepresented regions and membership groups, my hope is to help see the Guild through a new and exciting period of growth that ultimately elevates ecologically-based forestry as a viable and suitable option for even more forest professionals across the country. I see this national network of ecologically-driven members as essential to confronting and countering threats to our forests such as climate change, shortened rotations, and overharvesting. But beyond these issues, I also see this network as essential to our well-being as professionals engaged in forest management - from the innovations that we are exposed to at a Guild Gathering when we visit our friends' and colleagues' projects to the beers that we share afterwards when discussing what we learned. For all of these reasons and more, I am seeking out a second term as your MPC representative. ▲

Laura Schweitzer, Denver, CO

Biography

Laura Schweitzer holds a Bachelor of Science in Forestry from the University of California at Berkeley and a Master of Science in Environmental Science and Policy from the Johns Hopkins University. She brings over 18 years of experience working in the field of forestry and natural resources, with particular focus in international and national forest policy and community based forestry. Laura currently serves as the Executive Director of the Council of Western State Foresters and Western Forestry Leadership Coalition based in Denver, CO. Prior to that, Laura gained a broad range of professional experience working with the WY State Forestry Division, the Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters (now called the Northeastern Midwestern State Foresters Alliance), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, the United States Department of Agriculture - Foreign Agricultural Service, American Forests, and the Blodgett Forest Research Station.



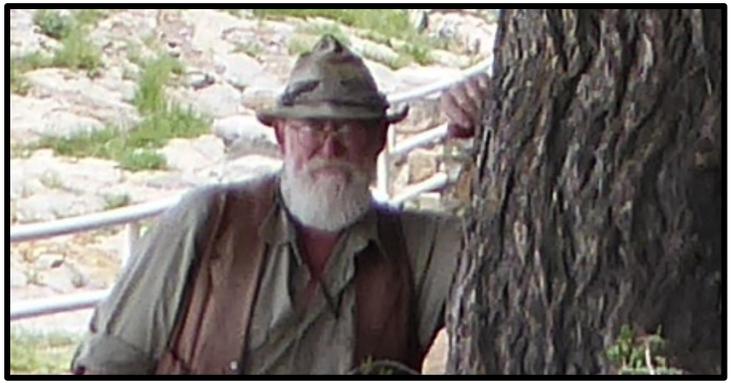
Candidate Statement

I am a member of the Forest Guild because I see it as an important voice within the forestry sector – a unique voice speaking to the importance of wholistic forest management approaches that benefit forests and people into the future. My professional life has focused heavily on bringing diverse stakeholders together so that through their collective expertise, experience, and wisdom, they can more effectively speak with amplified voice on important issues and come up with better solutions for seemingly intractable problems. I believe strongly in the power of working together to achieve as a community that which we are not able to achieve individually. This is why I see the work of the Forest Guild as simply critical - because the Guild cares about the needs and represents the views of forestry professionals who share a belief in sound, forward thinking, comprehensive forest management principles. The Guild's MPC further serves as the mechanism for ensuring the Guild remains in tune with members' needs and views, and that those views are strategically and appropriately conveyed to external audiences. I believe my experience in policy advocacy, strategic issue framing, non-profit member services, and convening would add value to the MPC's efforts and it would be an honor to play a service role for this organization for which I have such great respect and admiration. ▲

Mark Vander Meer, Missoula, MT

Biography

Mark Vander Meer has over 35 years of applied experience in the fields of ecologic restoration, forestry, soil science and multiple-use natural resource management. He earned an A.S. degree in forestry, a B.S. in natural resource management, and an M.S. in plant ecophysiology, disturbance ecology and soil sciences. Mark has been a partner with Watershed Consulting in Missoula, Montana, for the past 20 years. Mark operates a native plant nursery to supply company projects with quality plant stock. In addition, he also owns Bad Goat Forest Products. He oversees a sawmill and timber framing shop that adds value to by-products of forest restoration and urban forest work. Mark's forest restoration work emphasizes sustainable forest use, low impact logging and resourceful forest product marketing. He is adept at developing practical forest management plans that encompass landowner goals. He is the forester for Missoula's wastewater treatment hybrid poplar plantation.



Mark also specializes in the ecologic restoration of severely disturbed sites such as degraded riparian areas, abandoned placer mines, gravel pits and road obliteration projects. Through the years Mark has managed nearly 100 revegetation projects, most of these located in riparian areas that have suffered severe disturbance such as cattle grazing, hay cropping or placer mining. Mark is the primary author of three revegetation manuals written for specific clients and ecosystems. In 2019 Vander Meer assisted the Lebanon Reforestation Initiative with a 25 km riparian revegetation project.

As a USDA certified soil scientist, Mark is a leader in the assessment and rehabilitation of damaged forest soils. He is often invited to teach soil biophysics and disturbance ecology. Mark is an ISA Certified Arborist and oversees the company's urban forestry program. As a company, Watershed Consulting emphasizes mentoring the next generation of natural resource managers through internships and workshops. Mark has been the driving force behind this effort.

Candidate Statement

I've been a Guild member for over 20 years and proud to see how the organization has developed and matured over the years. Founded as a "fringe group" that emphasized honest sustainable forestry and encouraging an appropriate relationship between people and forests, the Guild is now a highly regarded organization that provides localized technical assistance and an important national voice. The Mission, Principles and Land Ethic put forth by the Guild reflect my own values, land ethic, and on-the-ground practices.

Serving on the MPC will allow me to maintain and build bridges between Guild members and the organization. My location in the Northern Rockies will fill a geographic vacancy within the Guild and promote membership where like-minded foresters are many, but Guild members are few. I am especially excited for the opportunity to develop and promote events and workshops. Working to refine Guild policy and positions as well as updating the Guild's Mission & Principles is exciting work that frames what the organization will stand for into the future. ▲