

**2019**

Building capacity and  
innovation for positive change  
in the forests and beyond.



Guild Gathering field tour attendees amidst pines, milkweeds,  
and monarch caterpillars in northern Wisconsin.

All photos in this publication are credited to the Forest Stewards Guild.





A grove of 80 year old Western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*) presides over an understory of sword fern in Valley View Forest, Jefferson County, WA.

## Rising to the challenge

Attendees of the Creative Silviculture Guild Gathering in northern Wisconsin show their excitement about the day's dry weather for the field tour.

**A**s we look forward to our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Guild is growing and expanding our positive influence by promoting the highest standards of forestry and demonstrating our values in forests across the country. We are rising to the challenges forest ecosystems and communities face in 2019. The balanced, science-driven approach we've championed for 25 years is what's needed in this era of polemic politics. Our commitment to on-the-ground solutions makes a difference acre by acre, even as we call for policies that help to amplify the effect of those solutions.

This review highlights exciting projects from across the country—all of which involve Guild members. For example, members are helping demonstrate ecological forestry in southeastern bottomland hardwoods, guide climate adaptation in the Northeast, share bird-friendly practices in the Northwest, identify opportunities

for reforestation in the Lake States, study treatments to reduce wildfire threat in the Intermountain West, engage forest dependent communities in the Southwest, and inspire the next generation of forest stewards across the country. Members influence everything we do, from identifying important policy issues to sharing insights to solve silvicultural quandaries.

Without you, our members and supporters, the Guild wouldn't exist. Members are the spark that started the Guild and continue to be the life blood of the organization. Thank you to all of you who have donated this year—your contributions are crucial! Your support allows us to match federal grants and pilot new ideas. If you haven't had a chance to contribute to the Guild this year, please do! Use the attached envelope, our new website, [www.ForestStewardsGuild.org](http://www.ForestStewardsGuild.org), or just email [membership@forestguild.org](mailto:membership@forestguild.org).

**Your growing Guild needs your support** as we address unprecedented challenges facing forests, forest stewards, and forest dependent communities. Every contribution helps, whether its hosting a field trip for other forest stewards, sharing your management insights, donating at the Stewards Circle level, or adding your employer as an organizational sponsor.

■ As a member of the Guild and through your donations you are supporting innovative, collaborative work that demonstrates we can restore and manage forests while protecting the wildlife, water, vistas, trails, and carbon we all need. Because of you the Guild will be celebrating our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year!





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FSYC summer crew trainers take a break during their trainer-training in the Santa Fe National Forest, New Mexico.



## Southwest

Collaborative work promoting community-based solutions remained a guiding theme this year in the Southwest Region. The Guild's help in coordinating the Greater Santa Fe Fireshed Coalition (GSFFC) resulted in increased community involvement in fire adaptation efforts in Santa Fe through initiatives like the Fireshed Ambassador program. The GSFFC also engaged non-traditional partners in forest management, such as local breweries, who are releasing a Fireshed branded brew this autumn! We also support GSFFC through continued leadership in the Fire Adapted New Mexico Learning Network. Success in the Fireshed is amplified across the state to members of the learning network who can gain from successes and challenges in Santa Fe.

The Rio de Las Trampas community forest stewardship program brings together multiple partners to empower community involvement in forest restoration while also providing income and fuelwood to local woodcutters (leñeros). We helped community members form a forest council that will manage the program and employ a "forest mayordomo" based on the centuries



FSYC summer crews work and learn about trail construction and improvement from Southwest Director Matt Piccarello (orange hard hat) during their orientation training at Hyde Memorial State Park, New Mexico.

old model of communally managed irrigation systems (acequias). The Guild and the Council recruited their first leñeros who will complete a Forest Worker Safety Training class and start work soon.

with a certificate recognizing their service and help them be more competitive for positions with federal land management agencies. Several crew members took advantage of this opportunity on their federal job applications this autumn.

The Forest Stewards Youth Corps (FSYC) successfully wrapped up its summer season and the Fall Fire & Fuels program is underway. Returning FSYC members can now receive a competitive hiring status for federal jobs. As a 21st Century Conservation Service Corps organization, the Guild can provide members

Staff updates include Matt Piccarello's promotion to Southwest Region Director when Eytan Krasilovsky was promoted to Deputy Director. Gabe Kohler, who has really stepped up in the short time since he started at the Guild, was promoted to Southwest Program Coordinator.







## Pacific Northwest

We are excited to expand our Pacific Northwest Region (PNW). Kendal Martel, previously a Program Coordinator in the southwest office, moved to lead the Guild's objectives in Oregon, Washington, and Northern California as the Pacific Northwest Region Coordinator.

The Guild, with Gregor Yanega's help, had already established a successful Foresters for the Birds (FFTB) program in the PNW, which provides forest stewards with tools for effectively communicating with landowners about the benefits of managing forests with bird habitat in mind. FFTB originated in Vermont and is expanding nationwide through efforts like these. A TREE grant from the Tualatin Conservation District provides FFTB three years of funding to hold workshops, landowner demonstrations, and other educational activities in Washington County.

The Guild is expanding and strengthening the Fire Adapted Communities statewide networks in Oregon, Washington, and Northern California, building on partnerships in the region and our experience in the Southwest. We are coordinating a year-round wildfire learning network in Southern Oregon and organizing a prescribed fire workshop for private landowners in 2020 with the Klamath Lake Forest Health Partnership. Other efforts include a goal to expand Guild membership in the PNW and to facilitate better knowledge and information sharing through quarterly calls among Guild members.

We are excited to expand the Guild's role in this part of the country by working with partners to help communities, foresters, and members promote ecological forestry, wildfire mitigation, and forest restoration.

*Closeup of moss at Valley View Forest in Jefferson County, WA. (top left)*

*A Western red cedar sapling growing in a forest clearing at Chimacum Ridge, Jefferson County, WA. (lower left)*



## Northeast

Guild-style forestry and ethics are advancing in the Northeast, illustrated in part by the following snapshot of activities. Deputy Director Amanda Mahaffey delivered a joint keynote at the New England Society of American Foresters meeting that got everyone assembled to actively think about the role of ethics in the forestry profession.

Guild Gatherings at Stone Fence Farm in New Hampshire and the Appalachian Mountain Club's Maine Forestlands, and other partnered events, provided perfect spaces for 170 people to share forest wisdom on a variety of forest management challenges.

Guild members in Vermont hosted forums on managing ash in the context of the emerald ash borer, teaching managers to appreciate the biological and cultural value of ash and explore options for maintaining ash in our forests.

The Guild and partners are helping grow our knowledge of forest climate adaptation strategies. In 2020, we will work to increase resiliency in southern New England's oak forests and engage Downeast Maine woodland owners in protecting the integrity of our woods, waters, and wildlife. As fire weather patterns change, we support the fire science community through the North Atlantic Fire Science Exchange. A two-day workshop at the Altona Flat Rock brought together wildland fire managers, scientists, numerous students, and community members to learn about the ecology and human community preparedness following a 2018 wildfire.

The Guild plays a vital role in helping forest stewards put the latest science into practice. Guild Gatherings and other member events help us share knowledge, ideas, strategies, and community values. Please host and sponsor!



Why study science? Professor Mark Lesser from SUNY-Plattsburgh helps students and field trip participants appreciate how a scientific deep-dive into an ecosystem can help inform forest management decisions.





Mike Lewelling (RMNP Fire Management Officer), Kat Morici (Colorado Forest Restoration Institute, Lead Monitor), and Meg Matonis (IMW Region Manager) walk through a treatment aimed at reducing hazardous fuels at Rocky Mountain National Park.



## Intermountain West

We are excited to announce strategic expansion into the Intermountain West (IMW) with new hires Corrina Marshall and Meg Matonis. Numerous IMW communities are embedded in forests ripe for high-severity wildfires. The combined efforts of the Guild's new IMW Region, Fire Management Division, and the Gravitas Peak Wildland Fire Module, all located in Loveland, Colorado, are promoting fire-adapted communities and landscapes.

The Guild is supporting local communities by producing Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP) for the Evergreen and Platte Canyon Fire Protection Districts. With consistent stakeholder engagement and robust spatial analysis, the CWPPs are relevant and actionable. Additional funding could enable us to support underserved communities in need of wildfire mitigation and CWPPs.

Our research with Rocky Mountain National Park fire and fuel managers and the Colorado Forest Restoration Institute will help us understand fuel treatment effectiveness in the region. We are also expanding the Guild's Fire Learning Network portfolio through an analysis of Certified Prescribed Burn Manager programs across the United States. Our findings and recommendations will support Washington and other states as they develop their own certification programs.

The IMW Region is building relationships with existing organizations that promote fire and fuel management in Colorado. We hope to develop strong and lasting partnerships in the area to advance the Forest Stewards Guild vision of ecologically, economically, and socially responsible land management.



Workshop attendees study the growth rings of this old stump for evidence of past fires.



## Lake States

We are rapidly growing our reputation as an integral partner on projects of all shapes and sizes across the country, but at heart, we are still a Guild of forest stewards who need to gather and share ideas from time to time. More than eighty stewards shared ideas about creativity in the profession and restoration of forested ecosystems at a pair of Lake States Guild Gatherings this year.

The decision to cut or not cut an individual tree is a yes/no choice, but at the stand or landscape scale, the results of those choices combine, leaving a forest manager to face uncertain outcomes. Some of us define the art of silviculture as how one combines



Early returns on bottomland forest restoration near New Albin, Iowa.

these simple binary questions into a larger mosaic of the forest. Our August meeting in Woodruff, Wisconsin served as a great opportunity for forest stewards to discuss some of the creative ways they are blending art and science to support healthy forests.

In September, we focused on what forest restoration means and how we define success. The bottomland hardwoods of the Upper Mississippi River in La Crosse, Wisconsin served as the perfect backdrop for this discussion.

Defining restoration, undertaking management, and measuring success are all extremely challenging in this ecosystem, yet work in this region can yield tremendous benefits to a wide range of values including water quality, species migration, and carbon sequestration.

This is just a snapshot of how we are bringing heads together and looking for solutions to issues facing the region's forests. Both events also inspired new Guild memberships, so the impact and longevity of these solutions continues to grow! We need you as members and supporters to host and sponsor learning events to keep our community strong and grounded in putting the forest first.





## Southeast

We have expanded our southeast regional program at a rapid pace. This autumn, Nick Biemiller was promoted to Southeast Region Director and Dakota Wagner was hired as our new Southeast Region Coordinator to assist with program activities. The Guild offers the Southeast an invaluable alternative to the conventional forestry paradigm, meeting the needs of communities, family forest landowners, and natural resource professionals.

In the past year, we have restored 982 acres of shortleaf pine ecosystems in the Cumberland Plateau, advanced a vision of ecological forestry for bottomland hardwood forests, and enhanced the sustainable certification of southern forests. We hosted a Bottomland Hardwoods Learning Exchange in Brunswick, Georgia that catalyzed new collaboration among more than 30 individuals across the region. We helped initiate a novel, community-based forest stewardship program in the Sandy Mush Community of western North Carolina, focused on increasing resources for invasive plant control. In addition to launching Phase II of our shortleaf pine project in the Plateau, we are launching two bottomland hardwood projects in the Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley and the Coastal Carolinas. These projects support the creation of demonstration sites that exemplify best practices, engage the public through education and outreach, and connect family forest landowners to planning support and technical resources to steward their forestland.

These efforts, and new projects in partnership with the Sustainable Forests Initiative, the Georgia Water Coalition, and the Wetland Forest Initiative, are part of a robust program that engages forest stewards and restores forests with Guild involvement across the Southeast.



Guild member Nate Wilson flags gap areas for an irregular gap shelterwood treatment to restore shortleaf pine and oak ecosystems on the University of the South's Forest in Tennessee.



The Guild hosted learn-and-burn trainings for family forest landowners in Kentucky and Tennessee, increasing landowner's training, awareness, and experience in the application of prescribed fire as a restoration and silvicultural tool.



## Guild Gatherings A GUILD FOR THE FUTURE

Each year our Guild Gatherings become more frequent and better attended. By October 2019, we welcomed 144 women to Women Owning Woodlands events, 550 people to webinars and partnered events, and 240 people to Guild Gatherings – more than one of which received the accolade of 'best event' from participants!

When we gather, we humbly step into the unknown of shifting and challenging management scenarios, sharing both successes and problems. We learn how to help a sensitive landscape as we ask it to meet numerous, often competing, needs. We take a close look at what we can learn from historical events and the subsequent responses. We share hope, conundrums,

Attendees of a Michigan Tech University Guild Student Chapter event include advisors, faculty, students, and former students who are now Guild Professional Members and graduate students! (top)

Guild members enjoy a laugh during a Guild Gathering in Oregon. (lower)

examples of success, and build new connections. These gatherings are only possible because of our members and partners. YOU are the heartwood that holds up these incredible opportunities for our discussion, learning, and forward momentum.

A sign of the forward momentum is the growth in student membership. This year, new student chapters are starting blogs, planning field trips and speaking events, and building connections within our community. Our new Student Chapter Toolkit rolled out by the Membership and Policy Council, and upcoming student member webpage features are designed to support them. Professional members are often a student's guide into forest stewardship. Please be sure to let us know when you have jobs and internships to share, and when you know students who need help getting involved.



# Stewards Circle

*Providing essential support for our work*

**Stewards Circle members give generously to help fulfill our mission. Thank you for being our leading circle of support in 2019.**

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## Anniversary reflections

by Board Chair, Al Sample

**T**hree decades ago, a few foresters paused to re-examine not only *what* they were doing as foresters, but *how* and *why*. They struggled with these questions together, coming away with new insights, ideas, and hope. It turned out there were scores of foresters who had felt “the stirrings of an ecological conscience,” as Aldo Leopold described it. They were eager to learn from one another. This is the wellspring from which the Forest Stewards Guild emerged 25 years ago.

Those conversations grew into a nationwide dialogue that has helped redefine the practice of forestry. In our next 25 years, the Forest Stewards Guild will continue to play a critically important role as a leader, and as a forum for the free exchange of new ideas and approaches.

**Be part of it all!** We want to share your reflections. How has the Guild shaped your career, your recreation, your mentoring, your perspective? What management struggles do you need help to solve?

### **Where will you be in 2020?**

The Guild is hosting two celebrations in our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary year to look forward and reflect. First, in late-spring or summer in Corvallis, Oregon. Then, in late summer in Ashville, North Carolina. More details are coming but get ready to join one or both events because we have so much to celebrate together and gain from our community!

Your involvement, presence, and support made change and innovation possible on the landscape. Thank you for all you do for forests and thank you for doing it with us!