

2025

30 years of leadership, continuing
on to forge a healthy future.



Attendees of a Northeast, 30th anniversary Guild Gathering social.

30 years of ecological forestry in action

The Guild is unique Since 1995, the Guild has been the epicenter of innovation in the woods and champions of ecological forestry. 2025 has been nothing if not eventful, and through our collective efforts, our 30th year represented the best of what the Guild has to offer.

We advocated for common-sense, scientifically sound policies at the 9th American Forest Congress. We supported one another and learned together through numerous gatherings, webinars, research projects, and workshops. We mentored and trained the next generation of forestry professionals and advocates through our Forest Service Youth Corps and student memberships. We continued to expand the ways we share our stories, with more member-hosted events and videos that capture the difference this community makes. We worked on growth of the Guild, guided by our new strategic plan and development department, energized by seeing so many of you step up in a whole new way as Lifetime Members. In this review of the past year, you'll read about how the Guild is expanding our programs and positive impact

across borders. And we are well underway in planning and an extra special Guild Gathering that will take place in September in Maine. We hope to see you all there!

This work is only possible because YOU make it so. It is through our members that we ensure a thriving future for forests—here's to the next 30 years and beyond!

Zander Evans, Executive Director

Your support is critical! The generosity of our members directly fuels the work you will read about in this review. We do not take it for granted how significant it is when you trust us with your financial resources, and we are deeply grateful for it. If you would like to make a donation, please visit us online at www.ForestStewardsGuild.org or email Ami at ami@forestguild.org.



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Marke Andre discussing silvicultural approaches at Arcata Community Forest during the 2025 PNW Guild Gathering in Arcata, CA.



Pacific Northwest

In the Guild’s 30th year, the Pacific Northwest advanced collaboration and learning opportunities throughout the region. In April, the Guild co-hosted a two-day Guild Gathering in Arcata, California, with the City of Arcata, Pacific Forest Trust, Cal Poly Humboldt, and BBW & Associates. Field stops in the Arcata Community Forest and the Van Eck Forest highlighted community forestry, late-seral development, restoration, and carbon monitoring—while connecting Forest Stewards Guild founding members and new practitioners in the same landscape.

Forestry for the Birds (FFTB) programming continued in Oregon with OSU Extension, Bird Alliance of Oregon, and Columbia Land Trust. Workshops and walks used the *Forestry for the Birds: Western Oregon* guide to link habitat features

with management choices. These events broadened landowner engagement, distributed guidebooks, and strengthened relationships that support future collaboration.

In October, the Northwest Innovative Forestry Summit (NIFS) met on Oregon’s central coast at Cascade Head under the theme *Meeting the Moment: Forest Stewardship in Times of Change*. Over three days, participants examined coastal forest stewardship through panel sessions, a full-day field tour, and closing reflections tying lessons to home landscapes.

Together, these efforts advanced the region’s role as a trusted convener and educator—keeping ecological forestry, collaboration, and community at the center of the work.



Austin Tomlin discusses site management with attendees during the Forestry for the Birds tour at Columbia Land Trust’s Columbia Stock Ranch in Rainier, Oregon.



Attendees of the 2025 Northwest Innovative Forestry Summit after participating in a silviculture activity near Cascade Head, Oregon.





Newly qualified Forest Steward Apprentices in Maine - Jake, Aegnor, and Gabe don smiles and a little soot, after a day on the fireline as participants in the 2025 Maine Training Exchange (TRES) held September 2025.



Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture in Western North Carolina partnered with the Guild to host a women focused entry-level chainsaw workshop with hands on experience and excellent instructors. Photo credit: Alice Baker, BRWIA in North Carolina



A year of growth in the east

To borrow a metaphor from the forestry world, in 2024 we planted the seedlings of staff and program development in the East and in 2025 we put on tremendous growth. Thanks to the diligent efforts of Guild staff and our partners, we have achieved a lot that will help both forests and communities be more resilient in the future. A small sample of highlights from the past year include: the launch of the Forest Stewards Apprenticeship program; implementing demonstration sites supporting the protection of Ash trees; and the treatment of over 500 acres of forest restoration across 11 National Park Service units as part of NPS' Resilient Forest Initiative.

The Forest Stewards Apprenticeship (FSA) builds on the decades of success in New Mexico of the Forest Stewards Youth Corps. FSA crews typically have longer terms of employment (6 months to 1 year) and complete a variety of forestry projects on public and private lands while also gaining professional certifications, and networking opportunities with local partners. So far, in 2025 we have launched three FSA crews in three states (WV, VA, ME), employing 11 apprentices. FSA crews have impacted over 1,000 acres of forests and earned a variety of professional certifications including registered pesticide applicator's license, chainsaw safety, first-aid and CPR, and wildland firefighting. Our newest FSA crew, hosted in partnership with the Penobscot Nation in Maine, has already racked up

several accomplishments since their start in September, including participating in the Maine Prescribed fire Training Exchange (TRES) in partnership with the Nature Conservancy and others. The ME TRES had a strong Guild presence as Guild staff were a key partner in the organization and implementation of the two-week training opportunity.

The Guild led Sustaining Ash Partners Network (SAP-Ne), which launched in 2024, successfully into the implementation phase in 2025. Working with partners in ME, NH, VT, MA, and NY, SAP-Ne funded the creation of five demonstration sites using a variety of preservation methods treating more than 150 acres. SAP-Ne webinars and field tours have also served hundreds of partners throughout the region, highlighting the cultural and ecological value of Ash trees and the interest in saving them from the emerald ash borer.

Initiated in 2023, the Guild's partnership with the National Park Service's Resilient Forest Initiative really hit its stride in 2025. Working in partnership with a variety of small private forestry businesses, this project covered more than 500 acres across 11 parks in five states throughout the East. With hundreds more acres and thousands of trees slated for treatment over the next several years, this project is on track to transform forests across National Parks in the east while also providing employment and opportunities for local businesses.



The year-long Forest Steward Apprenticeship Program crew in southwest Virginia in their Guild shirts! Left to right: Walker, Billy, and Ryan. A fourth crew member has already been hired by project partners!



This pilot year of the Forest Steward Apprenticeship Program also had a 12-week crew in West Virginia. The crew lead (left) was hired full time by a forestry company after this experience. Left to right: Elizabeth, Rachel, Mary.

While most accomplishments can be stated using metrics such as acres, trees, or people reached, the value of the Guild's work in the East extends beyond what you can easily measure. Our impact is also expressed by the relationships we've built and the communities we've supported. Whether it is offering chainsaw safety workshops for landowners addressing hurricane Helene impacts, or supporting local forestry businesses, the Guild will continue our work to balance landscape scale achievements with local investments.

The Northeast hosted two Guild Gatherings in 2025 to celebrate our 30th anniversary. We want to give a special shout out to member Barrie Brusila, who hosted one, as an opportunity to learn, meet new people, and connect with long-time friends and colleagues. Thank you, Barrie, for arranging a meaningful agenda and sharing your space and stewardship efforts with 30+ participants.

The other Guild Gathering brought members to Burlington, Vermont for an evening social at the Burlington Beer Company to connect, share experiences, and enjoy great conversation in a fun, welcoming atmosphere. Members had a chance to meet local Guild staff, Rachel Swanwick and Michelle Giles, and reconnect with Zander Evans, executive director, who was in town to join the fun.

Guild members sometimes share their reflections with us in event notebooks, across the country. Here are a few from a 2025 Guild event in the northeast, that inspire us for our time together in September!

“Communicating good forestry was and still is one of the greatest gifts that membership at the Guild has made possible and I have been honored to be a long-standing member since its inception.”

“The Guild has been a meaningful part of my professional forestry career and personal growth story since its inception.”

“You can never know a tract of forest the same way after you’ve napped there at the base of a tree.”

Join us to celebrate 30 years of ecological forestry and chart a bold vision for the future! Please save the date!

***National Guild Gathering – Celebrating 30 years!
September 15 – 17, 2026 | Freeport, Maine***

This event will feature inspiring discussions, working sessions, and field trips that connect policy, practice, and people. Be ready to experience Maine's rich coastal culture — from vibrant working waterfronts and small-town charm to world-class local cuisine — while engaging in meaningful conversations on forest stewardship, ecological integrity, and the future of conservation.





Participants of the 2025 Northern Forest Bird Network meeting enjoy a walk/run together at Cloquet Forestry Center in Minnesota.

This guidebook is one of four that the Guild has produced with partners across the country to expand Forestry for the Birds programs

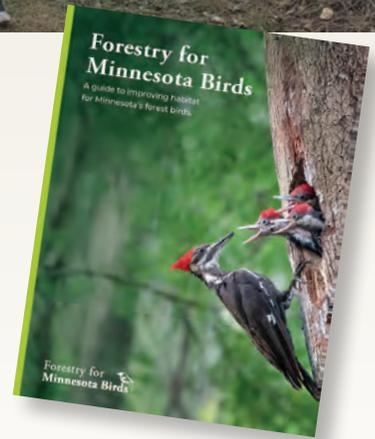


During a field tour at the Forestry for Minnesota Birds workshop, attendees rode from site to site at Cloquet Forestry Center on a seated trailer.



Lake States

The Guild has spent the last 30 years advancing an ecological approach to forestry by synthesizing lessons learned through research and grounded in practice. This approach was vital as Christian Nelson (Lake States Coordinator) and Mike Lynch (Lake States Director) oversaw the completion of the Forestry for Minnesota Birds guidebook this year. This project was several years in the making and took close collaboration with a strong steering committee representing a variety of interests and organizations. The guidebook includes actionable recommendations that are based on decades of bird habitat research and observations, while maintaining operational practicality and economic viability of timber harvests. We have now launched an outreach phase and are looking forward to connecting with more forest stewards on how they can enhance bird habitat while supporting the production of local forest products.



Guild staff and members are also involved with numerous other efforts in the Great Lakes Region. Some of them include supporting the National Park Service as they steward the forests they are entrusted with and continuing our ongoing efforts to increase awareness, acceptance, and application of prescribed fire in the region.

Lastly, we want to thank our members and partners that made our annual Lake States Guild Gathering a success. This event was focused on the Forestry for Minnesota Birds guidebook and held at the Cloquet Forestry Center with field demonstration sites on nearby Carlton County forestland. It was wonderful to see personal connections made or rekindled here and the conversations that enrich our passion for land stewardship.

We look forward to hosting additional Lake States Gatherings in 2026. These meetings rely on you as members and supporters to host, sponsor, and suggest learning events to keep our community strong and grounded in putting the forest first.



Participants at the Northern Forest Bird Network meeting run through forest management planning exercises using considerations from the Forestry for the Birds, Minnesota guide.



Attendees birdwatch during a Forestry for the Birds event at the Cloquet Forestry Center in Minnesota.



FSYC crew members from Jemez Pueblo hold the northwest line on the 2025 Black Lake prescribed burn.



FSYC crew members from Jemez Pueblo cool down and mop-up the north line on the 2025 Black Lake prescribed burn.



Southwest

This year the Guild's longstanding programs in the Southwest continued to develop and evolve in our 30th year, even as our commitment to centering the needs of communities, forests, and watersheds remained steadfast. Our staff grew and continued to work with new and existing partners and funders to expand and deepen the impact of our work. In 2025 we welcomed Alex Etkind, Anna Jaramillo-Scarborough, Shannon Maes, Jeremy Marshall, Megan Rangel-Lynch, and Andreas Wion to the Southwest team!

2025 started out dry so the Forest Stewards Youth Corps (FSYC) winter crew focused on hazardous fuels removal near communities and critical infrastructure. The FSYC year marched on with a successful summer program and organizing the fall program that we expanded this year to meet the wildfire and chainsaw training interests of our partners at Rocky Mountain Youth Corps and Ancestral Lands Conservation Corps. Then we hired and prepared the winter 2025/26 crew, who thanks to the moisture, got started early in the season burning piles. We are excited to learn that several of our FSYC members from this year secured seasonal positions with the USDA Forest Service for 2026, no doubt thanks to the USA Jobs and resume training, mentorship, and certifications they received during their time at the Guild.

Southwest staff were extremely busy planning, designing, monitoring, collaborating, and implementing. Staff worked with landowners in the Santa Fe area to protect dozens of homes from wildfire. The Fire Adapted New Mexico Learning Network awarded \$18,456 through its spring and fall microgrant cycles to support Network leaders like the Guild across New Mexico in wildfire adaptation outreach, educational event programming, community mitigation projects, and organizational development. Guild efforts also improved forest health on private land in the Cuba area, and we facilitated a 2-day invasive species training opportunity for land managers from Ramah Navajo and Acoma Pueblo. The Guild planned multiple Watershed Restoration Action Plans in critical headwater areas, and implemented over 3,400

acres of prescribed fire! We also supported community access to firewood in the Zuni Mountains, providing wood splitters and other equipment to 2 Community Fuelwood bank hubs.

Our 30th year celebrations also included a member-hosted event in Peñasco, New Mexico. The event focused on fungi and the important roles and inter-relationships between mycorrhizae and soil and forest health. Thanks to Carl Struck and Johanne Riddick for hosting, and for agreeing to have the event captured on video (<https://youtu.be/k5WHoJ0FLmA>)!



Guild staff Rachel Bean and Eytan Krasilovsky hosted a Brazilian delegation of fire managers and practitioners and took them on a field tour into the wildland urban interface around Santa Fe to share challenges, solutions, and ideas.



A puffball mushroom discovered during a member-hosted Guild Gathering in New Mexico.



2025 BY THE NUMBERS

890 MEMBERS

Across North America, representing

709 ZIP & POSTAL CODES



89

gatherings +
local
events



2,808

total event
registrants
reached

Forest Stewards Guild



276

early-career forestry
professionals impacted
through
no-cost student
memberships, Forest
Stewards Youth Corps,
and Forest Stewards
Apprenticeship
programs

Spotlight on Collaboration: 2-3-2

The Guild prioritizes collaboration to accomplish more together than is possible alone. As a shining example, the 2-3-2 Partnership facilitates cooperation and information-sharing between organizations working toward watershed and landscape resilience across a 5,000,000 acre region in southern Colorado and northern New Mexico.

In 2025 alone, 2-3-2 partners protected over 22,000 acres from wildfire, and improved over 8,000 acres of riparian areas!



6 Highlighted 2025 Guild programs and activities:



Forestry For
The Birds



Women Owning
Woodlands



Forest
Steward
Magazine



Fire
Management



Policy
and
Research



Northwest
Innovative
Forestry
Summit

From the Forest Stewards Youth Corps (FSYC) + Forest Stewards Apprenticeship (FSA) Programs



The Guild supported 37 FSYC and 12 FSA members in 2025, all receiving career development.



Crews performed over 25,000 hours of work in New Mexico, West Virginia, Virginia, and Maine.



Members planted 950 ponderosa pine seedlings; in New Mexico and Maine, they assisted with over 3,600 acres of prescribed fire.



Teams were trained in first aid, safe and effective fuel reduction, erosion control, reforestation techniques, and much more!

From our youth directly...

“

“I really enjoyed learning about wildfire along with a bunch of other people who were also new. It made me feel really safe and supported.”

”

“

“My favorite part was the prescribed burns, it was really fun to see how all of our training comes together in the real world.”

”

Spotlight: Wildfire Defense in Santa Fe, NM



382 total home wildfire risk assessments conducted + our grant program funded critical vegetation pruning and removal for wildfire mitigation around 96 homes



22 brand new firefighters trained to support beneficial fire; Our 1st wildfire detection camera using AI was installed



3,481 acres of prescribed fire in New Mexico supported through the All Hands All Lands Burn Network



Stewards Circle Donors

Providing steady support toward our vision

Your support helps us match federal grants, pilot essential programs, and tell stories of stewardship.

Thank you.

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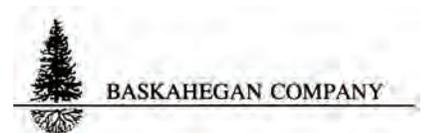
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Onward... this Guild makes a brighter future

2025 was a year full of unimaginable challenges and opportunities. The Guild's leadership and results reach far beyond the snapshots shared in this publication. The fact is, there's no way to adequately capture the contribution this community makes to forests and communities. Through stories and events, we will keep shouting it from the tree tops with gratitude. We also know, it's just the start. What we do, and how we do it today, carries on long after, for a healthy future. Thank you for being here, for your support, and we look forward to the next 30 years in this community!

Visit often for details at <http://www.ForestStewardsGuild.org/events>. Coming up in 2026...

- Member-hosted Guild Gatherings in the Northeast
- Guild Gatherings in the Lake States
- The Guild's national anniversary celebration in Maine
- *Your* event (reach out to membership@forestguild.org with ideas and details for us to share)