

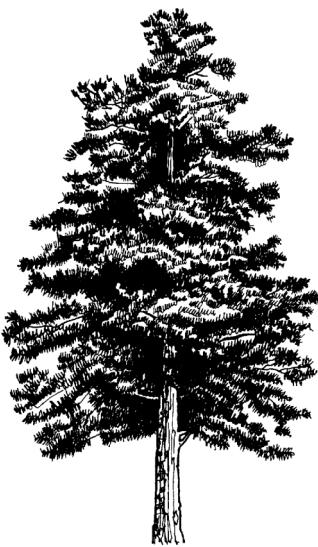


San Juan Tree Farmer



A Colorado State Forest Service—Durango District Newsletter for Forest Landowners.

May 7, 2012



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Thoughts from a Forester:

The famous naturalist John Muir once wrote, “Between every two pines is a doorway to a new world”. As a forester, it is most satisfying to help open this doorway of inquisitiveness to forest landowners who have a desire to learn more about their forestland. The ecological relationships between soils, topography, climate, plants, animals, etc. is truly fascinating. Having an understanding of these relationships is an important component of connecting yourself to the land and enjoying your property and the natural world. In this issue of *San Juan Tree Farmer* you will find opportunities to learn more about wildlife and their habitats, forest insects and disease that affect Colorado’s forests, a fledgling organization formed to address forest concerns and provide wildfire mitigation services, and more.

I am especially pleased to include a short news release on page 6 regarding the recognition that St. Columba middle school science teacher Lu Boren will receive in mid-May. Lu will be awarded a 2012 National Project Learning Tree Outstanding Educator award from the American Forest Foundation. It is the efforts and effectiveness through teachers like Lu that are so important in opening the door of environmental education and service-learning into our classrooms. Today's children will be tomorrow's forest landowners and decision-makers. The next time you walk between two pines take a minute to reflect on the importance of our natural resources and your role as stewards.

Thanks and I'll see you in the woods,

Dan Wand, CSFS Forester

Forest Fact: Area of forestland in Colorado by forest type, 2002-2009.

Forest Type	Area Thousands of Acres	Percent
Spruce-fir	4,571,066	18.69
Lodgepole pine	1,662,570	6.8
Aspen	5,065,277	20.71
Mixed Conifer	1,783,740	7.29
Ponderosa pine	2,527,660	10.34
Montaine riparian	934,666	3.82
Pinon-Juniper	5,177,926	21.18
Oak shrubland	2,365,998	9.58
Plains riparian	246,493	1.01
Introduced riparian vegetation	116,899	0.48
Total	24,452,476	100

Source: 2010 Colorado Statewide Forest Resource Assessment

San Juan Tree Farm – 2012 Meeting Dates and Topics

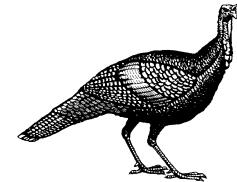
Date & Time:	Program:	Speaker:	Location:
Friday, May 18th (9 a. m. -12:30 p.m.)	Topic: Managing Private Forestlands for Wildlife Habitat. 1 hr. classroom session followed by 2 hour field tour to view forest treatments on public lands west of Durango.	Trevor Balzer & Casey Cooley with Colorado Parks & Wildlife	Durango, at the La Plata County Extension Bldg. Animas Room
(TBD) To be determined	Topic: Forests & Watershed Management. Water Quality & Forestry Best Management Practices	TBD	TBD Pagosa Springs
TBD	Topic: 2012 San Juan Outstanding Tree Farmer Recognition.	TBD	TBD

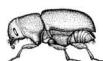
Managing Private Forestlands for Wildlife Habitat—Friday, May 18th

Forest landowners are invited to attend a Colorado State Forest Service seminar presented by Colorado Parks & Wildlife staff on the topic of “Managing Private Forestlands for Wildlife Habitat”. This session is designed to inform forest landowners of the habitat needs for various species of wildlife and to identify forest treatments that will meet goals for enhancing wildlife habitat. This meeting will begin at 9 a.m. with a 1 hour classroom session to overview basic habitat needs for wildlife including time for questions & answers. After the classroom session participants will car-pool for a short drive west of town to view public land forest treatments in the Junction Creek area. Discussion will focus on forest treatments within the ponderosa pine/Gambel oak forest type, but other forest types can be discussed as well. The field tour will be set up to accommodate stops for those who prefer minimal walking, or stops with opportunities for short hikes for those who prefer a closer look at treatments away from access roads.

The meeting will be begin **@ 9 a.m. on Friday, May 18th in the Animas Room of the County Extension Building**, located on the La Plata County fairgrounds at 2500 Main Avenue, Durango (east side of Hwy 550). Participants are asked to please RSVP by contacting the CSFS Durango District office at 247-5250 prior to the meeting.

Habitat: Defined as “the place or type of site where a plant or animal naturally or normally lives and grows.” Every species of wildlife has a set of habitat requirements that is ideal for that specific species. For instance, the Merriam’s turkey is capable of utilizing all of Colorado’s forest types throughout the year. From riparian river bottoms and pinyon-juniper woodlands to the high elevation spruce-fir forests, the wild turkey may be present as the seasons change. During spring, breeding and nesting requirements are important. Forest openings and/or an open forest understory facilitates the males strutting and display behavior. Vertical and horizontal cover including trees, shrubs, slash, rock ledges, and herbaceous vegetation are key to successful nesting. During summer, developing broods benefit from invertebrate abundance for protein, which in turn is related to herbaceous productivity. Openings, riparian areas, springs and seeps, burns, aspen stands, and flood plains provide for such productivity; and when adjacent to forested and shrub cover provides protection from predators. It is also important that mid-day loafing sites and roosting areas be located nearby. Loafing sites are typically characterized by a dense overstory, an open understory with good visibility, and the presence of fallen snags, logs, large diameter slash, and low rock outcrops that are used as perches. While ponderosa pine is the most common tree species used for roosting, other species are also used. Roost sites are frequently located on ridges or near the top of slopes where several trees are available. Multi-story stands containing dominant trees with layered, open, horizontal branches spaced at least 24 inches apart are preferred. Diversity of vegetation is important in many aspects to provide ample food throughout the year.





2011 Forest Health Aerial Survey Results



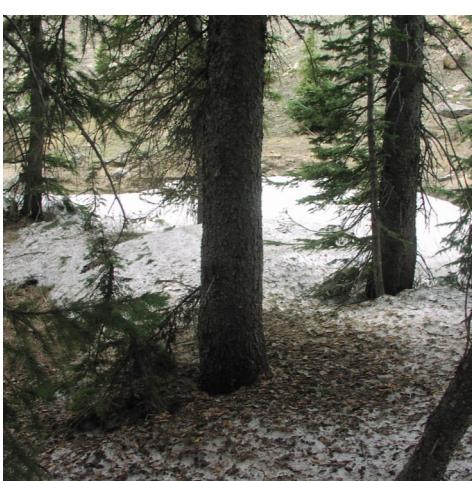
On Jan. 30, 2012, the U.S. Forest Service and Colorado State Forest Service released the results of the annual aerial insect and disease survey in Colorado, which indicate that the most significant forest health concern continues to be the spread of the mountain pine beetle. Although an additional 140,000 acres of tree mortality were detected across the state, the epidemic has slowed down in many areas. The 2011 survey results bring the total infestation to 3.3 million acres in Colorado since the first signs of the outbreak in 1996. For the second consecutive year, the Front Range, particularly Larimer County, continues to experience the highest mortality rates affecting ponderosa and lodgepole pine trees. Other significant information learned from the survey includes spruce bark beetle and Sudden Aspen Decline (SAD) findings.

- The spruce bark beetle also continues to spread at higher elevations, especially in southern Colorado. Statewide, 262,000 acres were detected with tree mortality in 2011, which brings the total affected acreage since 1996 to 741,000.
- Sudden Aspen Decline (SAD), which was highly visible on the Western Slope for several years, now appears to have subsided. Field observers noted that many aspen stands once considered dead are showing some new sprouting, and plant pathologists and entomologists don't anticipate large-scale mortality in aspen this year as a result of SAD.

Aerial survey maps and related materials are available on the USFS Region 2 website @ <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/r2/forest-grasslandhealth/?cid=stelprdb5348787>

A copy of the [2011 Report on the Health of Colorado's Forests](#) as well as other information related to forest insects and disease can be found on the CSFS website @ <http://csfs.colostate.edu/> This website includes links to common insects & diseases found in Colorado, as well as CSFS Insect & Disease Quarterly Reports.

Recently CSFS Entomologist Sky Stephens visited southwest Colorado and presented information at well attended public meetings in Pagosa Springs and Durango on May 1st & 2nd. While the **mountain pine beetle** continues to garnish much attention in the lodgepole and ponderosa pine forests of the northern part of the state, it is the **spruce beetle** that has grown to epidemic proportions in southwest Colorado with extensive mortality in the Engelmann spruce forests of the Weminuche Wilderness. Armillaria root rot and other diseases are also present in the spruce-fir forests creating hazardous conditions from the weakened trees for those who spend time in the woods. Douglas-fir beetle is also common. Fir engraver beetle, western pine beetle, Ips engraver beetle, spruce budworm, Douglas-fir tussock moth, Tiger moth, pine tip moth, and western tent caterpillar are active insects occurring at endemic levels.



Signs of bark beetle activity.

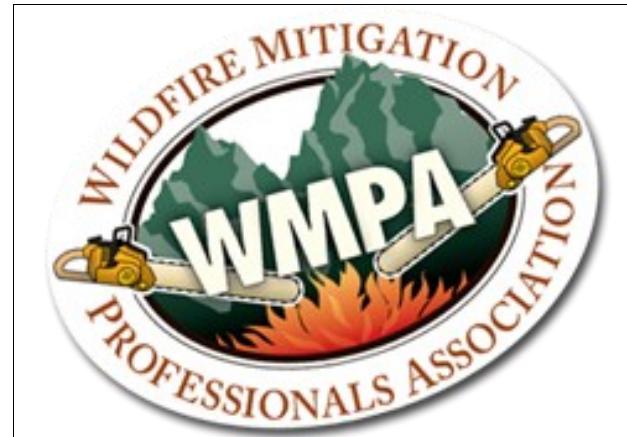
Left: An Engelmann spruce with accumulating flakes of bark at the base of an infected tree. The removed bark is the result of woodpeckers searching and feeding on developing larvae.

Right: Galleries made by the adult beetle and larvae as they feed on the phloem (inner bark) layer of an Engelmann spruce. Different species of bark beetles create different & unique gallery patterns.



Wildfire Mitigation Professional's Association (WMPA)

The State of Colorado has gained a new partner in the effort of wildfire disaster prevention. The **Wildfire Mitigation Professionals Association, Inc.** (WMPA) was established by local mitigation contractors who plan first to develop the association within the state of Colorado and then to expand to a national platform. WMPA's mission is to "promote the sustainability of competent wildfire mitigation professionals for the benefit of the community and the environment". The top priority of every WMPA member is to help reduce our communities' exposure to the disastrous outcomes that wildfire presents.



WMPA is already breaking ground with new, innovative campaigns and programs to increase wildfire preparedness, reduce wildfire risk, and protect community values. In conjunction with steadfast efforts to partner with local fire protection districts and local, state, and federal agencies, WMPA is developing and implementing the following programs...to name a few: lobbying & legislation, accreditation & certification, safety & risk management, grants & resources, standards & ethics, mentoring & partnerships, education & knowledge. The WMPA Research and Development Committee is developing programs including: mitigation data collection (which can be utilized by property owners, mitigation contractors, and partnering agencies), biomass as renewable energy, and POL (products other than logs) utilization. The Mortgage Assurance Committee is working hard on wildfire issues that affect the insurance, real estate, and lending industries to develop solutions that ensure the sustainability of those industries and our region as a whole.

WMPA has also partnered with USFS/BLM, CSFS, FireWise, county offices, local fire protection districts, and the insurance industry to develop the "Fired-Up" Campaign. The "Fired-Up" Campaign is a systematic course of activities that collectively serve as a vehicle for coordination and collaboration among residents, various industries, and federal, state, county, and local agencies to reduce the risk of wildfire and increase wildfire preparedness. The purposes of the Campaign are to engage interested stakeholders, to educate communities, to develop common language and mitigation standards, and to encourage action and movement in a positive, proactive direction.

WMPA takes community risk very seriously and is committed to being an engaged and dedicated partner in wildfire preparedness efforts. The organization values relationships with related individuals, businesses, and agencies, and intends to continue developing mutually-supportive, working relationships.

For more information, please contact WMPA at 970-799-WMPA (9672) or check out the website at www.theWMPA.org.

Forestry Webinars available @ CSU-Extension, Small Acreage Management website.

An educational resource that is pertinent to forest landowners is the Small Acreage Management website available through the Colorado State University—Extension. The website provides links to numerous publications, bulletins, fact-sheets, and videos that are designed to help landowners understand their land and resources. Providing information through the use of a Webinar is an effective way to utilize the time of both participants and the presenter. In addition, webinars can be recorded for later viewing at a time that is convenient. This past spring several forestry related webinars were conducted and are available for viewing at the small acreage management website www.ext.colostate.edu/sam/. The webinar topics and their recorded dates include:

[Wildlife Habitat Improvements for Forests in Colorado](#) - April 18, 2012

[Best Management Practices on Forested Small Acreages](#) - April 11, 2012

[Poisonous Plants of Colorado](#) - April 4, 2012

[Major Forest Health Concerns for Small Acreage Landowners](#) - March 14, 2012

[Proper Tree Care Practices for Small Acreage Landowners](#) - March 7, 2012

[Windbreak Design and Maintenance in Colorado](#) - March 1, 2012

While visiting the website there is also the opportunity to sign-up to receive a periodic newsletter.

Forest Ag Inspection Fees Increase

Participants in Colorado's Forest Agriculture program will find an increase in the annual inspection fee when they submit applications to apply for an agricultural property tax classification through forestry for the 2013 tax year. The annual deadline to apply for the classification is October 1st. **Effective the next inspection season 2012/2013, the inspection fee will be \$60 + \$1.50/forested acre not to exceed \$600.**

American Forest Foundation offers planning tool.

The American Forest Foundation has launched MyLandPlan.org, an easy-to-use, fun, and interactive website created to help woodland owners protect the land. The centerpiece of MyLandPlan.org is a new mapping tool that will allow people to go online, map the features of their property (including special, favorite spots, and landmarks), and track their progress as they make improvements on their land. In addition, a social site within MyLandPlan.org will allow woodland owners to share stories, photos, management tips, and progress reports with their families, friends, and other woodland owners.

**COLORADO STATE
FOREST SERVICE
FLC 7233
DURANGO, CO 81301**

Phone: 970-247-5250
Fax: 970-247-5252
Email: cfsdugo@lamar.colostate.edu



Knowledge To Go Places

Websites:

CSFS = www.csfs.colostate.edu

National Tree Farm =

www.treefarmsystem.org

State Tree Farm = www.treefarmer.com

Colorado Wood Utilization & Marketing =

<http://csfs.colostate.edu/cowood/>

Durango Teacher Receives National Project Learning Tree Outstanding Educator

Project Learning Tree (PLT), the environmental education program of the American Forest Foundation, named Lu Boren one of five 2012 National PLT Outstanding Educators. Boren is a middle school science teacher at St. Columba School in Durango, Colo.

She will be honored at PLT's 26th International Coordinators' Conference, in Deadwood, South Dakota, on May 14-17. Boren teaches earth science, chemistry, physics, life science and other subjects to sixth, seventh and eighth-grade students. She uses environmental topics and PLT activities to engage her students in their learning and has energized the entire school community in new approaches to learning. Through her efforts, St. Columba became a PLT Green School in 2011 and students and faculty throughout the school are involved in investigating and improving their school's environmental footprint. Boren also works closely with state and federal natural resource agencies to develop and present localized curriculum for science teachers in Colorado's four corners region using PLT activities on topics such as forest management, fire ecology in native ecosystems, and watershed health. She was honored as Colorado's Outstanding PLT Educator in 2009. Every year PLT provides more than 30,000 educators with the tools and on-the-ground training they need to incorporate environmental education and service-learning into their curriculum. PLT activities use trees and forests as "windows" on the world to help teachers strengthen their teaching of core subjects, take their students outdoors to learn, and grow stewardship in the next generation. PLT's Outstanding Educators are selected for their commitment to environmental education, their exemplary use of PLT and their exceptional teaching skills. For further information on Project Learning Tree contact the CSFS Durango District @ 247-5250.