



A Word from the President: David Boyd



“May you live in interesting times”... Yeh, thanks. A year ago, none of us had a clue just how “interesting” things would become. We’ve been pushed to do business and get together in new ways. Walnut Council meetings on Zoom aren’t the same as in-person, but I hope you’ll see this as a new opportunity to take advantage of their online offerings. Last July, they held a series of webinars, and they have more planned in the near future. Tapping into the expertise of experts, as well as participating in Walnut Council meetings from the comfort of your home has its advantages. Here is a listing of what Walnut Council will be offering soon:

- **Thursday, September 17, 2:00 pm Central Time: “Planning and Resources for Conservation Tree Plantings”**, (hosted by Purdue University Forestry & Natural Resources) via Purdue Facebook Live - no registration required- select the link to go directly to the livestream: www.facebook.com/PurdueFNR/events

- **Tuesday, October 20, 3:00 pm Central Time: “Invasive Shrub Control”**, Chris Evans, University of IL extension
- **Tuesday, November 17, 3:00 pm Central Time: “Pruning”**, speaker TBD
- **Tuesday, December 15, 3:00 pm Central Time: “Economic and Technical Assistance Sources for Management on Your Land”**, Lenny Farlee, Extension Forester, Purdue University; Brian Kruse, Missouri NRCS.

If you missed the Forest and Woodland Association of Missouri (FWAM) 2020 summit, you’re still in luck. The archive can be accessed on their web page www.forestandwoodland.org/forestry-summit. With sessions on **“The State of the Forest”**, **“Overview of the Forest Products Industry”**, **“Forest Risk and Vulnerability”**, and **“Opportunities for Forests and Carbon”**, you have the opportunity to learn about issues related to Missouri forestry. You can also use some of time you saved by staying home to visit the University of Missouri Forestry Extension at www.snr.missouri.edu/extension/. Their courses and resources include Master Naturalist, Master Pollinator Steward, Missouri Woodland Steward and the Soil Health Assessment Center.

The current situation has also created the opportunity to attend seminars and workshops across the country — or around the world — without jet lag. Penn State, for example, offers a series of webinars, many of which are relevant for all hardwood forest management. Check the web site: www.ecosystems.psu.edu/research/centers/private-forests/outreach/pa-forests-web-seminar-center. The American Tree Farm System (www.Treefarmssystem.org) is another valuable online resource.

The Ohio Forestry Association, (www.ohioforest.org) is worth checking out (**“The 2020 Paul Bunyan Show”**, sadly is cancelled).

("A Word from the President" continued from Page 1).

Of course, if you're in the mood for something different, there is a plethora of other learning experiences available. I just "attended" a dulcimer playing workshop somewhere in California (I think). If you have internet access, many of these opportunities are low cost or free. If you have a microphone and video camera, the live conferences are a lot more fun, but you can participate just fine without them, using the keyboard in "chat" mode.

Meanwhile, stay well. It may be a while before we see each other in person, but that doesn't mean we have to be strangers. Hope to see some of you on one of these webinars or meetings.



Brian Kruse, Forester, Northeast Region, Missouri, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

NRCS has a new Area 2 Forester, Brian Kruse, covering the Northeast Region of Missouri. Brian was formerly the NRCS State Forester of Indiana, however he is not new to Missouri. Brian previously worked in Missouri from 2003 to 2014 for the Mark Twain National Forest and the NRCS

out of the Nevada and Rolla USDA field offices. Brian has also worked for the Virginia Department of Forestry and the Illinois

Department of Natural Resources. He received a bachelor's and master's degree in Forestry (Hardwood Silviculture) both from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale.

Brian is housed out of the Columbia USDA Service Center. He will be servicing the forestry needs of NRCS on the Area 2 staff covering the Northeastern 30 counties of Missouri from Cooper to Maries county and north to Iowa and east to the Mississippi River. Services to the Area 2 NRCS staff include: forestry related practice planning, installation and certification; spot checks; forestry and prescribed burn training to NRCS field Staff; and direct landowner assistance for EQIP and CSP financial assistance programs.

Brian, along with his wife (Victoria) and children (Chloe, age 10 and Ryan, age 6) are looking forward to living in Columbia where his wife's family currently lives.

Brian's most memorable experience as a forester was *"when an Indiana consulting forester allowed me to mark a single walnut tree for sale, that sold for a little over \$50,000 on the stump"*.

Contact information: Brian Kruse; Area 2 NRCS Forester; 601 Business Loop 70 W, Suite 213E Columbia, MO 65203; Office: 573-875-5540 x 3; Email: brian.kruse@usda.gov

Family-owned Forests & Carbon

What many may not realize is that some of the most effective solutions to addressing our climate challenges lie in our existing land and forests. Forests have the potential to store even more carbon through sustainable forest management, which have been proven to play a significant role in [sequestering more carbon](#). Click on this hyperlink to learn more from the American Forest Foundation.

NRCS Updates

Joe Alley – NRCS State Forester



The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) works with landowners across the state and the country to provide conservation planning assistance and financial assistance to address resource concerns on private land. Missouri NRCS offers two primary programs for addressing Resource Concerns on private forestland: EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program) and CStP (Conservation Stewardship Program). These are competitive programs with some similarities but also substantial differences. EQIP works well for implementing the basic practices that are needed to improve your forestland. Note that a Forest Management Plan is required for most EQIP practices on forestland (EQIP funds can be used to develop a Forest Management Plan also).

CStP is designed to reward landowners that have addressed some or all of their Resource Concerns and to encourage further enhancement. EQIP and CStP application sign-ups are continuous. However, there are generally annual deadlines for making application. As of this writing, these application deadlines have not been determined for fiscal year 2021 (beginning October 1). However, it is likely that these deadlines will occur soon, possibly in October. It is strongly recommended that applications be made at your local NRCS field office as soon as possible. Note that application does not obligate the applicant to anything but is required for program eligibility.

Contact your NRCS field office today for assistance with improving your forestland, enhancing wildlife habitat, or installing agroforestry practices. In addition to NRCS staff, our field offices partner with MDC Foresters and Private Land Conservationists, National Wild Turkey Federation Foresters, and Quail Forever/Pheasants Forever Biologists to provide the right expertise in the right place.

[Missouri NRCS](#)



Wind sheared off a branch on this black walnut sapling creating a wound (above his hand). Read this recommendation from retired USFS Forester and Missouri Chapter Member, Jerry Van Sambeek.

In my opinion this black walnut has a wound that should be managed by coppicing either at the bottom of the wound or at the root collar. Examine the area carefully to see if you can find dormant buds in the bark. If you find buds, make a 45-degree angle cut starting about a quarter to a half inch above the bud cutting toward the ground. If this bud breaks this spring, it will form callus quickly over the wound leaving a small scar where the callus meets. If you do a horizontal cut, during the summer you will see a wedge of dead stem develop behind the bud that will take longer to callus over and leave a larger scar. If you do not want scars in your future veneer log, do a slanted basal coppice as close to the root collar, but you must leave some of the root collar on a walnut. When the whorl of sprouts develops next summer, reduce to a few good sprouts that origin as low as possible on the stem. Eventually, select the best sprout and manage it. Or, look for a better crop tree using this as a trainer.

Pruning Saw Options

Bob Ball, Member

Walnut Council recommends corrective pruning operations occur during the dormant season of hardwood trees. Cooler temperatures for pruning will be here soon. Do you have the proper equipment to get the job done? In this article, I will focus on pole pruning saws.

I would be remiss before jumping right into a discussion about saws and pruning to not mention it is essential to **first select your crop trees**. The faster you can focus pruning to only your crop trees the easier pruning becomes. For those of us with sore shoulders and broken pole saws, do not fall into the trap of pruning all your trees! Prune only the crop trees. Save your body and equipment for other woodland management tasks.

Regardless of which pruning tools you use, the second most important decision is focusing only on properly removing 2" and smaller lateral branches up to your target height. Refer to our posted Pruning Articles at our chapter website: <https://walnutcouncil.org/state-chapters/missouri/> for corrective pruning techniques.

Mechanical pole pruners are now commonly found on tree farms and for good reasons. My personal preference is to not use them for corrective pruning. Mechanical pole saws become heavier than you might imagine when carried around for several hours. They give you a carrying sling for good reason. Like a chain saw they require fuel, oil and a sharp chain. Plus, they are limited in reach because they want to keep the weight down. Newer models have smooth touch starts, smaller kerf chains and rechargeable batteries. They are also dang expensive! If you are "limbing" or removing larger limbs because of their low position, storm damage or disease then buying an automated pole saw may be a good investment. Stihl makes several nice units. The members using them are pleased, so I am not discounting this tool as a consideration in



Corona 14' Pole Saw with chain drive

your pruning arsenal.

Instead, I prefer the 7' to 14' telescoping compound action Corona pole saw. It has a steel 15" saw blade, chain drive with a pull rope operating a cutting head with a 1 1/4" diameter capability and enough extension height to reach routine target pruning heights. Go to: <https://shop.coronatoolsusa.com/tp-3714-compound-action-tree-pruner-14-ft.html> or visit "Forestry Suppliers" at www.forestry-suppliers.com for many pole and handsaw options.

Lowes no longer carries this pole saw because they recently switched to Fisker tools. To me the Fisker pole saw is clunky and heavy. Lowes sold the Corona units for \$72 or less. The Corona pole saw is my recommendation because you will need the pruner to manage the central leader and smaller diameter limbs of younger trees. It is almost impossible to use a saw blade to cut the upper-most, smaller limbs. Instead, use the shears to cut off smaller limbs.

Many of my trees are pole size and beyond the reach of the Corona pole saw. For those trees I am using a Stihl saw that is 20' long which allows me to reach my target pruning height of 21'. Those units cost \$215 and at that price they do not come with shears. Shears can be added, but you must switch heads back and forth which takes too much time. I only use this saw for

About Missouri Chapter News

Missouri Chapter News is distributed to members of the Missouri Chapter, Walnut Council and selected guests. The newsletter is intended to keep members informed about timely events while also distributing general information about the management of fine hardwoods. Members are encouraged to provide feedback about this outreach approach and suggest topics for future issues. Comments and suggestions can be emailed to Bob Ball, Newsletter Editor. During the year we will also distribute "technical articles" on specific topics of interest to woodland landowners. Both the newsletters and technical articles are being archived at our chapter website.

Continued from “Pruning Saw Options” on Page 4.

more mature trees. Maybe the best-known pole saw is **Silky** used mostly by professionals. They are expensive and heavier as well. You can find them for sale as used tools. Be careful they are not damaged. The blades are expensive and costly to have sharpened. Sometimes the pole sections have been dented or bent so they will not slide easily.

If you are working on only lower limbs, you might try a rechargeable reciprocating saw like Milwaukee or DeWalt. Again, I much prefer a professional 13” curved hand saw with 6 tri-edge razor teeth per inch from A.M. Leonard, Forestry Suppliers, Stihl, Fisker or Silky. Purchase a sheath to protect the blade. Look for a sheath you can attach to your belt. These handsaws are light weight, and they will cut forever. Honestly, I use mine too often to clear a path through the weeds and brush just trying to reach my crop trees. Use an inexpensive spray oven cleaner to keep your pruning saw blades free of tree resin.

I am not a fan of automated pruning pole saws. I have noticed those who like those units are pruning much larger limbs than my limit of 2” and they are working in neat, clean rows of trees. My tree sites are rough with lots of brush so I need something that’s easier to collapse and move around from tree to tree. The Corona tools are *Made in America* and have a limited lifetime warranty. I have had Corona replace a few of my pruning tools. Their pole saw has a couple of issues, but I still recommend it because of the price and full feature capability.

Pruning is not fun, but it is a must if you want to grow veneer hardwood unless your plantation is dense enough the lower limbs will self-prune. Once you begin pruning, it is a continual process until you have achieved your target pruning height. **Again, you only need prune the crop trees!**

Be safe! Wear a safety helmet and gloves. These saw blades are very sharp. Make sure all parts are tight before using a pole saw. Keep hand tools nearby and tighten loose bolts and screws as needed. I have had saw blades come loose while sawing. They fall quickly and if they strike the pruning pole they are guided directly toward you!



Left: A 13” curved hand saw is a must for pruning lower branches.

Right: The 14’ Corona pole saw with the blade and chain drive pruning shears is an affordable all-purpose pruning tool.



Evaluating White Oak Logs

Scott Brundage, Member

Over the years member Scott Brundage wrote many articles on all aspects of woodland management. His longer papers are archived at our chapter website under [“Technical Articles”](#). However, we just discovered a paper that had been overlooked. We lost Scott on August 8th. In honor of his desire to continually educate us, we are sharing this paper on Scott’s behalf written in 2014. (Bob Ball & Fred Crouse.)

“Scaley or flaky bark on white oak trees indicates better quality logs than blocky bark. Blocky bark seems to show old or slow growth and, over mature trees which can mean dotted wood, shake, minerals or all three. With slow growth the odds go up there will be a mineral problem. Medium growth rates are better than slow growth rates. I have sold fast growing trees (1/4” growth rings or 1/2” per year annual growth) for as much as \$5.00 per board foot. In fact, one 26” DBH tree in Ohio sold for \$6.00 in 2014. I have seen fast growth exported logs, but ring uniformity is more important than growth rates. Growth rings on a poor white oak log may show slow growth, then fast growth, slow growth, etc. throughout the life of the tree.

In my opinion when selling white oak, it is best to have the logs on the ground if the logging site has a history of livestock grazing or fire. Timber buyers use a lot of guess work when buying on the stump in those growing conditions so their prices are usually lower. The contrasting view to that approach is sell all timber on the stump and let the log buyer determine the value before any trees are cut.

It is possible to have white oak veneer on the 1st, 2nd, or even 3rd logs. Butt logs are obviously the most common veneer logs, but I have sold many 2 log veneer trees in Ohio and Indiana timber sales.

Years ago notch cut felling was not a problem if the notch is not too severe and there is enough trim in the butt log. However, today loggers typically use the **“plunge cut”** method that avoids “splinter pull” when the tree falls. Splinter pull shows up in veneer slices as a fuzzy area which veneer buyers do not like.

Veneer logs must be straight. The best logs will have no defects on four sides, but logs with three clear sides is often acceptable although the price per board foot will be less. The best veneer logs are



The white oak crop tree on the right is at a growth stage where it is really increasing in volume and value. Future crop trees in this stand would benefit from thinning.

straight, clean, and large. One veneer company prefers 18” to 20” DIB (diameter inside the bark at the small end) and 12’ logs. The last three veneer mills I visited had 13’ veneer slicers, but some slicers today can handle 14’ logs.

The best white oak log lengths are either 8’ - 6” minimum, 10’ - 2” or 12’ - 2” in length. The longer odd lengths on 8’ logs is because on small diameter logs (14” or 15” logs) the mill cuts 99.5 inch panels and as they refer to this as “100 inch logs”. This buyer on longer logs only needed a 2 inch trim. Personally, I always used a 3” trim minimum just to be safe. Occasionally, a veneer buyer may have a minimum log length of 7’ - 6”, but that is rare.

The average price on 13” to 15” DIB was \$1.25 (In Ohio back in 2014), and the average price on 16” to 20” logs was \$1.80 per board foot. The price on larger logs of 21” to 24” was \$2.50 with a range of \$2.00 to \$4.00 per board foot.” *Missouri prices today are less.*

Hardwood Tree Discrimination in the 2018 Farm Bill

CRP Program and CFR

Dusty Walter, (Chair) & Jim Ball, (Member) Missouri Forest Resources Advisory Council (MoFRAC)



The Missouri Forest Resources Advisory Council officially started in 2008. However, it joins a history of council's who have provided advice on issues impacting the forests of Missouri. The Missouri Forest Resource Advisory Council (MoFRAC), an organization representing 26 diverse member groups, (*including the Missouri Chapter Walnut Council*) was formed and exists to facilitate communication among all who are interested in Missouri's forests to assure long-term forest health, productivity and sustainability. Membership includes private groups as well as state and federal agencies, and a diversity of perspectives that range from those of the Sierra Club to the Missouri Forest Products Association. The group has no direct authority related to land management, agency, or policy. However, with input from diverse perspectives the group seeks to serve as a sounding board for members and to inform the public and government officials on the issues impacting Missouri forests.

During our March 3, 2020 meeting, Jim Ball presented on changes to language in the 2018 Farm Bill that will have a significant impact on hardwood tree plantings and contracts, both in Missouri and the broader hardwood region of the United States. There was good discussion by the MoFRAC members on the advice we might provide, which led to the formation of a subcommittee to draft an Issue Briefing and a position statement.

The following Issue Briefing, and included position statement, was approved by a near unanimous vote of MoFRAC on June 2, 2020. To date, it has gone out to Missouri state and federal elected officials, and Missouri state and federal agencies. In its original language, it is available for anyone to use as a means to inform on the issue of hardwood discrimination in the 2018 Farm Bill CRP (Conservation Reserve Program) and CFR (Code of Federal Regulations).

Issue:

Now for the first time in the 33-year history of CRP, language of the 2018 Farm Bill, Section 2201 (d)(2) (A), and provisions in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), 7 CFR 718.2, 7 CFR 1410.2 and 7 CFR 1410.62 significantly discriminate against hardwood tree plantings in Missouri and the nation.

In this Farm Bill, only hardwood tree contracts are limited to one reenrollment period. These limitations have not been applied to other CRP plantings, whether softwood trees (such as pine), or grasses and legumes. Additionally, the CFR contains provisions that disallow the re-enrollment of tree practices when a contract expires; such as in years when there is no general CRP signup. Typically, grass practices are protected in this regard and for several years retain their cropland status and then can be re-enrolled.

Provisions in the 2018 Farm Bill and CFR are biased against hardwood tree plantings, their continued management and provides a huge economic disincentive for farmers to enroll new plantings of hardwood trees.

Background:

Congress, representing the American public, first established CRP in the 1985 Farm Bill to financially incentivize farmers to remove environmentally sensitive land from crop production and engage in practices that improve soil and water conservation, wildlife habitat, and water quality. The Farm Bills since then have been reauthorized and amended every 4-5 years. The most recent Farm Bill was signed December 2018.

Trees provide some of the best opportunities for long-term public benefits. The perennial nature and long-term growth of hardwood trees offers CO₂ storage, wildlife habitat, future wood products, lower soil erosion, streambank stability and improvements to water quality. These benefits to society go far beyond the maximum 30-year enrollment limit currently imposed by the new 2018 Farm Bill.

(MoFRAC Position Statement - Continued from Page 7)

This agreement between farmers and the American public is expressed in contracts generally with terms of 10-15 years. The contracts are awarded to farmers on a bid basis favoring the best environmental practices and impact. Farmers receive annual rental payments for acres enrolled. Now that hardwood enrollment is limited, farmers relying on this land for income, may choose to clear the trees and return these environmentally sensitive lands to cropland and undo years of benefits that resulted when under perennial tree cover.

A farmer who is considering putting his land in a new tree CRP practice faces a dilemma, if he plants trees, the best he can hope for is two contract periods and then be left with decades of net negative cash flow from his land, or instead, he can plant grass practices, without the limitations on re-enrollment or the difficulty of removing the trees. Any farmer who is motivated by economics will plant grasses instead.

MoFRAC Position Statement:

Hardwood trees offer many benefits to society and comprise a majority of forests in Missouri. Likewise, they comprise many of the CRP tree plantings in the state. Language in the CFR and CRP, which restricts hardwood tree reenrollment, unjustly breaks a partnership between farmers and the US government and will negatively impact CRP tree planting in Missouri. Therefore, we believe the 2018 Farm Bill and CFR should reflect equal treatment of all CRP plantings and their maintenance.

Tree Acres of CRP in Missouri and Hardwoods Impacted

	TREE PLANTINGS			EXISTING TREES (CP11)	total
	SOFTWOODS (CP3)	LONGLEAF PINE (CP3A) 1/	HARDWOODS (CP3A)		
Current as of January 2017	486.10	0.00	15,215.87	1,902.74	17,604.71
Acres expiring 2017	238.10	0.00	2,634.38	828.07	3,700.55
Acres expiring 2018	0.00	0.00	562.36	193.81	756.17
Acres expiring 2019	0.00	0.00	95.45	84.32	179.77
Acres expiring 2020	0.00	0.00	1,068.89	796.54	1,865.43
Acres expiring 2021	168.90	0.00	377.92	0.00	546.82
total expiring acres 2017-2021	407.00	0.00	4,739.00	1,902.74	7,048.74

Data Sources:

<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/conservation-programs/reports-and-statistics/conservation-reserve-program-statistics/index>

https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdfiles/Conservation/Excel/CRP_COUNTY_PRACTICE.xlsx

https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdfiles/Conservation/Excel/CRP_COUNTY_PRACTICE_EXPIRE_2017_2021.xlsx