

FOREST STEWARDSHIP BRIEFINGS

Timber ◇ Wildlife ◇ Water ◇ Soil ◇ Best Management Practices ◇ Forest Health ◇ Recreation ◇ Aesthetics

LEOPOLD CONSERVATION AWARD

from the Sand County Foundation website and others

For more information:

- <http://leopoldconservationaward.org/participating-states/texas/>
- http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/land/private/lone_star_land_steward/

The Leopold award, given in honor of renowned conservationist Aldo Leopold, is conferred each year by Sand County Foundation, an international non-profit organization devoted to private land conservation, in partnership with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) as part of its Lone Star Land Steward Awards program. The 2014 Leopold Conservation Award winner for Texas was the Winston 8 Ranch in Nacogdoches County in East Texas.

When the Winston family acquired their property just south of Nacogdoches in the 1980s, it was largely land that had been cut and not replanted. Since then, it has been carefully restored and transformed into a showplace on how to produce timber and quality wildlife habitat.

Today, Virginia Winston and sons Simon and Dee, own and operate the 3,400-acre Winston 8 Ranch, a verdant medley of pine forest, longleaf pine, open range, and wetlands providing food and shelter for a resurging population of white-tailed deer, northern bobwhite quail, and wild turkey.

The property is used regularly by the College of Agriculture and Forestry at Stephen F. Austin State University for fieldwork and research, and by state and federal agencies as a demonstration area on forest management. It is also used for educational and recreational opportunities. Through a partnership with the National Wild Turkey Federation, the Winstons have hosted students and disabled hunters at special events on the ranch.

Dedicated to sound management principles and stewardship, The Winstons have implemented an active wildlife habitat im-

provement program that involves timber management, prescribed burning, invasive species control, and native habitat restoration. The family uses prescribed burning to reduce the threat of wildfires and to provide wildlife species, such as the eastern wild turkey, with places to nest near places to feed.

They have restored 180 acres of native longleaf pine and thinned and burned hundreds of acres of loblolly pine to promote forest health. Interspersed throughout the upland open pine habitat are more than 500 acres of riparian/wetland habitat and approximately 90 acres of native grasses and forbs growing in openings and on pipeline rights-of-way.

“The Winston legacy and dedication to stewardship is entrenched in their core family values,” said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist Jeffrey A. Reid. “When John Winston acquired the property, it was largely a cutover tract of land. Intensive planting, management, and harvesting have led this property to be held up as one of the premier examples of multiple use forest land and open pine management.”

The Winston 8 Ranch was nominated for the Leopold Conservation Award by Mr. Reid and the Recognition Sub-committee of the State Stewardship Coordinating Committee, which is made up of natural resource professionals that recognized the ranch as a “showcase of sound forest and wildlife management and a glowing example of what good natural resource stewardship is all about.” The Winstons were presented with this award at a prestigious awards banquet sponsored by Texas Parks and Wildlife in Austin this past May.

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LONGLEAF PINE CONSERVATION

from Texas A&M Forest Service website

For more information:

- <http://texasforestservice.tamu.edu/main/popup.aspx?id=18790>
- <http://goo.gl/Qck8gl>

The Nature Conservancy, Texas A&M Forest Service, and the U.S. Forest Service have collaborated to purchase a conservation easement on 4,785 acres of forestland in the Longleaf Ridge area of East Texas, permanently protecting some of the best longleaf pine habitat in the state.

The groups purchased the easement for \$2,277,000 from Crown Pine Timber LP, a limited partnership managed by Campbell Global, a timber investment and management firm based in Portland, Oregon.

The easement was funded through the Forest Legacy Program, a federal program managed by the U.S. Forest Service. The Nature Conservancy provided \$569,250 in matching funds.

This type of conservation – often called a “working forest” conservation easement – keeps forestlands in private ownership while conserving the land for future generations. Landowners and local communities continue to realize economic gain from timber management while the forest provides other benefits such as watershed protection, wildlife habitat, recreation, and

scenic values. Crown Pine Timber will continue to harvest timber on the property according to a forest stewardship plan; however, the easement prohibits subdivision and development of the land by any current or future owner. Texas A&M Forest Service will monitor and enforce the conditions of the easement.

Longleaf Ridge, where the easement is located, is a large block of undeveloped forestland located north of Jasper, Texas, connecting the Angelina and Sabine National Forests. The easement protects examples of the area’s unique features, including spring-fed creeks, Catahoula rock outcrops, longleaf pine forests, and bogs which are home to wild orchids and insect-eating pitcher plants.

Over the last decade, increased awareness and restoration efforts have begun to reverse the century-long decline of longleaf pine forests, including the recent organization of the America’s Longleaf Restoration Initiative, a national effort to focus public and private funding on maintaining, improving, and restoring longleaf pine forests throughout its historic range.

TREE TIPS - FALL WEBWORM

from Texas A&M Forest Service website

For more information:

- <http://texasforestservice.tamu.edu/main/article.aspx?id=1209>

The fall webworm is a common pest of many shade and ornamental trees in Texas. This insect pest mainly affects the appearance of the host tree and is more a nuisance than a threat to the tree’s health.

After hatching, the larvae begin to spin a silken web over the foliage on which they feed. As they grow they enlarge the web to cover more and more foliage. Young larvae skeletonize the upper leaf surface while older larvae devour the entire leaf except for the large veins and midrib.

Since both the fall webworm and the tent caterpillar construct webs in the crowns of their hosts, it is important to distinguish between the two. The web of the fall webworm is more flimsy and encloses the ends of the leaves of individual branches. The tent caterpillar confines its web to

limb crotches and flat mats along branches, and they are only found in early spring.

The fall webworm has many natural enemies. These beneficial insects along with disease, starvation, and unfavorable weather conditions usually keep webworm populations at tolerable levels. Should direct control become necessary, nests of the webworm may be pruned from high value trees and destroyed. Chemical controls recommended for the fall webworm include Sevin and the bacteria *Bacillus thuringiensis*. All suggested chemicals must be currently registered and labeled for use by the EPA and the Texas Department of Agriculture. Before using any pesticide, read and carefully follow all application directions, cautionary statements, and other information appearing on the label.

THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT!?!

The official Outdoor Annual -- Texas Hunting and Fishing Regulations app is now available for free download on iOS and Android platforms, providing sportsmen with mobile access to information they can use in the field and on the water.

Once installed, the app enables access to the summary of the Texas 2014-2015 hunting and fishing regulations without having to be connected to the Internet. It can also utilize a device's GPS capabilities to access location-specific regulations, such as fish size and bag limits and county-specific hunting regulations.

On another high-tech note: For the better part of 20 years, eastern turkey hunters have reported their harvest to mandatory check stations scattered across East Texas. Unlike most Texas game animals, each Eastern wild turkey harvested in Texas must be reported within 24 hours of harvest. For years, that meant a drive to the local check station. That check station may be located right down the road or across the county. Beginning this coming spring season (2015), Eastern turkey hunters can report their harvest on their Apple or Android smart phone or tablet by

downloading TPWD's Wildlife Harvest Survey. The new app is available on iTunes and Google Play. The app will have links to game wardens, wild-life biologists, wildlife management areas, and more. Use the app to report your harvest or for all its other functions.

Another option for reporting your harvest during the 2015 spring Eastern turkey season is through the TPWD website. The Wildlife Harvest Survey and links to the new app can be found online at the link in the sidebar. You can also find the locations for the physical check stations there.

TPWD plans to continue to run the physical check stations during the 2015 spring season. However, in the coming years the digital checking systems will become the standard. This system will also be available for hunters to voluntarily report any resident game animal harvested in Texas.

TPWD is always trying to increase the amount of data we can get on how game animals are doing across the state. This is how many wildlife decisions are made. Your support and participation is needed and greatly appreciated.

*from Fall 2014 edition of
"Pineywoods Post,"
TPWD*

For more information:

- <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/regulations/outdoor-annual/app/>
- http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/huntwild/wild/game_management/turkey/
- <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/regulations/outdoor-annual/hunting/>
- <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/regulations/outdoor-annual/fishing/>

PRESCRIBED BURNING GRANTS

In an effort to reduce wildfire hazards on private lands, Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS) is administering grant funding for prescribed burning on private property within 10 miles of a National Forest boundary through the U.S. Forest Service's Community Protection Program. Strategically-planned prescribed fires can enhance ecosystems and protect homes and communities from wildfire.

Texas A&M Forest Service has administered this grant since 2006, having awarded \$82,889 just this last year to 26 landowners for a total of 2,815.8 acres of prescribed burns.

Landowners who wish to apply for grant funds may submit a prescribed burn plan, property address and location map, map

of burn unit with coordinates, and contact information of landowner and burn contractor.

Texas A&M Forest Service will review applications and notify selected landowners prior to burning activities. TFS does not assist with the burn. Upon approval of funding, the work will be completed by a contractor chosen by the landowner. Selected landowners can be reimbursed up to \$30 per acre, pending inspection by TFS personnel of the completed prescribed burn.

Applications must be submitted between October 1st and October 31st, 2014.

Download an application under the "Protect Your Community" tab at texasfirewise.com.

*by Kelly Reeves-Weaver,
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For more information:

- Kreeves-weaver@tfs.tamu.edu
- <http://Texasfirewise.com>
- <http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/main/article.aspx?id=15379>



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- Joe Pase, TFS-Retired, Lufkin, Texas

EDWARDS AQUIFER MANUAL

The Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance (GEAA) has published a new handbook - *Watershed Stewardship for the Edwards Aquifer Region; A Low Impact Development Manual*. This publication was designed for developers, landscape architects, and all of those who live on, or are planning to build over, the fragile aquifer recharge areas. The manual is available for download on the GEAA website, www.aquiferalliance.net. Look under "GEAA Publications."

The Foreword states: "This manual provides a practical set of tools known as low impact development (LID) specifically adapted to the Edwards region to offer options for growth and ultimately, sustainability."

"... this manual targets developers and planners to help lead the way in implementing development stewardship practices based on the science of maintaining aquifer integrity at each developed site."

Besides covering the ecology, geology, and hydrology of the region, topics covered include Aquifer Regulation, Landscape Management for Aquifer Recharge, and Low Impact Development Toolbox. It even contains a Plant Selection Guide of native trees, shrubs, vines, forbs, wildflowers, grasses, sedges, and rushes.