The Granite State Division voted at the annual winter meeting in February to increase the monetary support it provides to Project Learning Tree (PLT). This effort, headed by Esther Cowles, provides teachers in the State with the tools and experiences to provide forestry related educational opportunities to their students. Using week long indoor/outdoor seminars and a full range of educational materials the program reaches several hundred teachers a year with a message of respect for our forests and their values to society.

We have been asked to provide the general membership with the jist of Esther’s remarks which are summarized below.

“PLT helps to create the environment in our schools and communities that makes it easier for you to do your work. I also believe that PLT is one tool in the tool chest for sustaining the forestry profession. 2007 marks PLT’s 28th year in NH. In that time, we have trained nearly 4,500 teachers and reached at least half a million students.”

Esther’s three main points were:

Quality trumps quantity.
When PLT started, one-day workshops ruled the day and we measured our success by numbers of teachers trained. No more. Today, professional development for teachers must lead to changes in teacher practice or academic achievement. Sustained and intensive are the buzzwords.

Maximize the return on your investment. All too often I hear foresters say, “We just need to teach kids it is okay to cut trees.” Wrong! We need students to understand much more than that. Things like why trees grow where they do, how forests change over time, what other life is supported in that forest, what economic and social systems are supported by that forest, how to mimic natural processes to meet certain objectives, and more. Every single teacher I know agrees with that list and all those concepts are embedded in the new state science frameworks.

Don’t let these be the good old days. Embrace the child or teacher who questions why you are cutting trees. It means they care! …we are in the midst of one of the most profound and rapid societal shifts in history. The present generation of children is the first to be raised indoors! Their plugged-in lives are largely devoid of rough and tumble days freely exploring the natural world that was so common to us. We are just beginning to understand the ramifications of their “virtual” world and they are dire. We must fight the urge to go along with this trend.

“If you remember nothing else from my remarks, remember this. When given the chance to teach one child, a classroom, a youth group, or a school, I implore you to take them outside.”

**JB Cullen Retires**

J.B. Cullen, 30 year employee of DRED Division of Forests and Lands, retired on April 1. An SAF Fellow, JB has most recently provided SAF with 10 years as Treasurer of the Granite State Division.

Nearly 100 people from all the facets of JB’s life and career met in Manchester on April 14th to roast and honor him with a great meal and a lot of laughter. While some jokes were told, the party was mostly about respect and acknowledgement. Congratulations JB, we hope to keep seeing you at SAF functions (when you can find the time!).
Members of Interest

Wendy Scribner, Carroll County Forester and Education Chair of the GSD Executive Committee is responsible for arranging educational opportunities for the membership throughout the year. Some thought being considered for 2007 include a sylvicultural review of Bartlett Experimental Forest on it’s 75th anniversary. If there is something you want to see covered by a GSD program please contact Wendy.

John O’Brien reports some pockets of ‘utter devastation’ in pine stands through northwestern Sullivan and western Grafton Counties. Winds associated with the nor’easter in late April dropped millions of board feet of white and red pine in an area stretching from Plainfield to Woodsville. John advises that if you have properties in that area that used to have white pine on them you should probably check them out.

A very successful Black Fly Breakfast was held at the new Canterbury Country Club on the 27th of April. Public and private forestry and logging professionals met to commiserate on current wood markets and to learn about new planning and programs efforts in the State. Geoff Jones gave a multimedia presentation on Long Pond in Stoddard and on the exemplary land protection program occurring in that town. A great breakfast was served to nearly 150 attendees.

Nominate your friends for SAF awards. They might find out that you did and share their home brew with you. On the other hand, you could just continue to drink alone!

Bob Simpson of the National Tree Farm Program met with the Tree Farm executive committee (TFEC) the morning of May 4th and followed up with a meeting with about 50 TF inspectors in the afternoon. Bob covered some basic ground about the program and answered questions about any expected future changes once approval is received from the PEFC designating TF as a viable certification system. GSD rep to the TFEC is Dick Johnston. (rbjohnston@turbonet.com) or phone (603) 968-4145.

GSD members stepped up and sponsored all the UNH students on the list for SAF membership this year. In fact, after the winter meeting we had more sponsors than students. You folks are GREAT!

Membership issues considered by SAF Council

Region VI Council representative Roger Dziengeleski reports that Council voted on several of the membership issues before them at their March meeting. They voted to abolish the sliding dues schedule and establish instead a flat membership fee of $133 per year. Members will now be able to count their student years towards their total. The Golden member program will be retained but there will be a $25.00 annual assessment to those members to receive the Journal of Forestry. The final item passed at this meeting was the creation of a single local fee to be assessed on any new application. The issue of most contention is the requested reduction in the categories of membership to two, Member and Student member. With some effort the southern and southwestern regions added a third category of Associate member. They are adamant that only graduates of accredited forestry schools should be allowed ‘Member’ status. The change in membership categories would require a vote of the entire membership which might just be a good thing.
GSD Policy Concerns

Your Executive Committee knows that some of the membership are disappointed with GSD’s reliance on other organizations and individuals to provide policy ‘overhead’ to our group. The committee wrestles with being able to respond in a timely manner to issues that seem to pop up over night. How can we get a direction from the membership on fast moving issues and concerns when even this type of light newsletter communication is weeks between the writing and your reading? By the time we are aware of an issue and then try to poll or canvas the membership the time for response is over and the decision made.

One way we can take the initiative is to develop and publish position statements. For example, NESAF recently created a position statement on Global Climate Change. Position statements are one page documents that state where we stand on a particular issue of concern to the public or to us.

If you think the Granite State Division should consider a position statement on a particular issue please contact one of the Executive Committee members listed on the back of the newsletter.

Looking for Position Statements? Visit WWW.NESAF.ORG
For what National SAF has to say follow the links to WWW.SAFNET.ORG.

Future of Forestry at UNH

Janice Mulherin and Pat Hackley are two of several GSD members serving on a select committee of forestry community representatives to discuss the needs and possible fate of the UNH Forestry Program. Faced with the dual challenges of declining enrollment and increasing costs the College of Life Sciences and Agriculture (COLSA) has been re-structured and in their search for some new thoughts, and to their credit, they appealed to the forestry community within the State. At the first meeting of the group the UNH conveners provided background information about the current situation at the COLSA and at the Thompson School. The group was asked some difficult questions including: Is there a need/desire for the 2-year, 4-year and Masters programs to continue? Once a consensus was reached that New Hampshire and New England would be better served with programs in place, the second meeting followed up with a request to describe what the programs should look like.

While the School is contemplating the responses, the group membership is hopeful that some good will come of their efforts. According to Patrick “As a representative of the GSD-SAF, I was greatly encouraged by the openness of the faculty, staff and college administration to accept the constructive feedback. I am optimistic that they will follow through on at least some of the recommendations in order to maintain and ultimately grow the UNH Forestry program.”

It’s never to early to volunteer for a committee position or as a candidate in any upcoming election.
GRANITE STATE DIVISION SAF

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GSD SAF is on the web. Visit www.NESAF.ORG

Talk to a friend about becoming a member. Applications are on line or can be provided by one of the individuals listed below.

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Keep up to date regionally.....Read the NESAF News Quarterly