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Upper Chippewa News

South Fork of the Flambeau River Watershed Association Up and Running

John Denver once wrote, " Let the Rivers Run, Let the waters Speak".

The South Fork of the Flambeau River is designated an Outstanding Resource Water because of it's excellent water quality and natural condition. The Mission statement of the new organization is to "protect, enhance, and restore the South Fork Flambeau River Watershed for it's ecological, recreational, aesthetic, and cultural values for future generations and to increase community support for conservation through education".

The association has already sponsored a river clean up yielding enough garbage to fill a one-ton dump truck. They also sponsored a Night of Storytelling by Kenny Salwey " The Last River Rat". Salwey entertained over 30 people by reflecting on his early life growing up along the Mississippi River in Buffalo County, MN. He touched on the basic

roots of the organization, the Wisconsin Public Trust Doctrine.

The SFFRWA is empowered by the Public Trust Doctrine. The doctrine is based on the notion that the navigable waterways of the state belong to all citizens of the state. It gives rise to the common understanding in Wisconsin that as long as you have your feet wet you are on public ground, or rather on public water.



The South Fork River Watershed Association is letting the South Fork speak for it's self through a River Protection Grant it recently received from the State of Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources. The association plans on conducting about 3,500 tests of water in the river at six or seven sites for over two consecutive years. It will also make possible testing for invertebrates and

(Cont. on page 3)

The mark of a successful man is one that has spent an entire day on the bank of a river without feeling guilty about it.
-Chinese Philosopher

Inside this issue:	
South Fork Flambeau	1
Calendar of Events	1
Planning For Your Forest	2
Forestry Resources	3
Reflections on a Day in the Woods	3

Calendar of Events

Dec 1: Heating with Wood. Learn about the various aspects of heating with wood, from which wood burns best to insurance concerns. Starts at 6PM at the Medford Extension office. Pre-register at 715/748.3327.

Dec 2: Heating with Wood. See above. Starts at 6PM at the Phillips Extension office. Pre-register at 715/762.0036

Dec 14: Northwood's Rivers and Wildlife. Join John Bates and John Olson for an evening of storytelling. Starts at 6PM at the Phillips Middle School library. Sponsored by the South Fork Flambeau River Watershed Association.

Planning For Your Forest: What do you want?

Whether you just bought your 40 recently or you have owned it for 30 years, there was a reason you were attracted to it. The best way to make sure that the woods fulfill your dreams is to create a management plan. Finding a forester you trust to help you with a plan is important, but before any plans get written, you need to take some time to write down what you want from your woods.

First take some time to answer a few questions. Why did you decide to buy this property? What do you enjoy most about the property? What would you like to see on your property in 10 or 20 years? What don't you like about your property?

There are some general categories of interests forest owners have often mentioned: wildlife, recreation, beauty, enjoying working in the forest and income. However, these broad categories need to be whittled down into something more specific. Let's get into a couple of examples.

If you decided to buy your property for the purpose of hunting, think specifically about what animals you would like to hunt for. This will impact what kind of habitat a forester will encourage in your woods. Say you want to hunt turkey; the forester may manage for older hardwood forests with acorn or nut producing

trees and a mix of pine forests. It should be noted here that the forester also has to work with nature. If your forest and soil won't support a pine forest, it is unreasonable to expect them to grow there.

Perhaps you enjoy hiking and birdwatching. Two things that may be considered in a management plan are the trail system and again, habitat. You can create a trail system or you can use existing logging roads. The trails themselves may attract birds, or you can manipulate the habitat of your forest even more for specific species. For example, woodpeckers depend on standing dead trees, or snags, for food and shelter.

Now that you have established your goals, it is time to work with a forester. They will look at the current forest conditions and work with you to decide what needs to happen in your woods to achieve your goals. To identify a forester, you can refer to the list of cooperating foresters at <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/forestry/Private/Assist/privfor.htm>.

For more information refer to Forestry Fact #48 "Getting the Most From Your Woodland", #87 "Caring For Your Woods: A 10-step Plan for Landowners" and #75 "Hiring A Consultant Forester". They can be found at http://forest.wisc.edu/fe_facts.htm or at your local Extension office.

The true meaning of life is to plant trees under whose shade you do not expect to sit.

-Nelson Henderson

Forestry Resources You Should Check Out

Here are some resources to help you with your forest.

Forestry Terms

<http://cecommerce.uwex.edu/pdfs/G3018.PDF>

Harvesting and Forest Management– Describes some of the harvesting techniques used by foresters and loggers. Learn about clearcuts, selection cuts and more.

<http://cecommerce.uwex.edu/pdfs/G3424.PDF>

Conducting a Successful Timber Sale– Walks the reader through 7 steps of a timber sale.

<http://cecommerce.uwex.edu/pdfs/GWQ036.PDF>

Understanding the Sample Timber Sale Contract

<http://forest.wisc.edu/extension/publications/94.pdf>

Beginner's Guide To Third-Party Forest Certification

<http://www.dovetailinc.org/publications.htm>

Family Forests, Tree Farm and FSC

<http://www.dovetailinc.org/publications.htm>

Owning Wisconsin Woodlands– A CD that contains most of the forestry publications from UW-Extension and DNR.

<http://forest.wisc.edu/extension/CD/>

If you have problems accessing these on the web, contact Kris Tiles at 715.762.0036.

Reflections on a Day in the Woods: Unexpected Sightings

A few weeks ago, my compass wasn't in the pocket where I usually keep it. Thinking it had fallen out, I was walking through the woods, eyes on the ground, looking for it. Hearing a rustle of leaves, I looked up, expecting to see a squirrel. Instead, I was surprised to see a fisher watching me from the base of a nearby tree. After a second or two of staring at each other, she darted away. But the weasel family curiosity got the better of her, and she ran only a few feet before turning around and heading back toward me. Walking along a fallen log, she approached closer and closer, watching me the whole time. Caution then got the better of curiosity, and she darted off again. This was repeated several more times, and each time she came even closer. Finally, after getting within about six feet of where I stood, she must have decided that I was either dangerous or boring and she loped away across the little swamp and up the hill.

This started me thinking about how some of our most memorable experiences are those we least expect. This seems especially true of wildlife encounters. Just the other morning I was standing near the creek, immersed in the goldness of autumn in the woods. Morning light and a forest of gold leaves created a magical world. This was one of those fall days that seem to be a bonus in life. I'm not sure if it was a bit of motion or some small sound that alerted me to a little creature coming my way. I caught a glimpse of a grayish something running, and then saw it jump across a low spot before disappearing under a log near my feet. Soon an acorn appeared, carried in the mouth of a mouse-like being. The acorn was almost as big as its head. I knew it wasn't a deer mouse but wasn't sure exactly what it was. As it came within inches of my feet, I could see

that it had a short tail and reddish fur on its back. Somehow 'red-backed vole' came to mind, though I wasn't even sure there was such a thing. (A later look in my mammal guide confirmed that it was, indeed, a red-backed vole.) After passing my toes, the vole went up, over, down, and under the roots of a hemlock. Then it disappeared, still carrying its acorn. What a cute little thing!

But there was more. As I was watching the vole, I had noticed a few small white feathers lying atop the mossy hemlock roots. A closer look revealed more feathers in a hollow underneath. One feather was from a blue jay. A clump of gray-brown feathers about eight inches looked to be part of a wing of a larger bird. These had the ends nipped off. The work of a weasel? I don't know.

Other autumns have also brought unexpected surprises. Two years ago, in early November, I was fixing the ladder to our tree house. It was a pretty easy task, just cutting some blocks to put under the base of the ladder. While I was sawing, there was a crashing of brush not far to the south.

(Cont. on pg. 4)

South Fork Flambeau (cont.)

macro-invertebrates, which can tell a lot about the health of a river or lake. The grant will truly allow the river to run and the water to speak to the community.

The Association intends to effectively distribute environmental information, and promote river stewardship through education, programming and events. The SFFRWA has over 100 members dedicated to the mission statement and to the idea of letting the river run.

-Mike Wade is a member of SFFRWA.

To get more information on SFFRWA, see their web page at <http://www.geocities.com/southforkflambeau>



UPPER CHIPPEWA NEWS

A NEWSLETTER OF THE UPPER CHIPPEWA BASIN PARTNER



Upper Chippewa Basin

The Upper Chippewa News is produced by the UW-Extension Basin Educator for Natural Resources, Upper Chippewa Basin.

Feedback and article suggestions are welcomed. Contact Kris Tiles at:

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Linking Watersheds, Landscapes, and Communities

Upper Chippewa



Basin Partnership

We're on the Web!

[http://basineducation.cfdev.uwex.edu/
upperchip/](http://basineducation.cfdev.uwex.edu/upperchip/)

Reflections on a Day in the Woods (cont.)

In seconds a doe appeared, coming toward me, full-speed ahead. Upon seeing me, she swerved, followed by a ten-point buck in hot pursuit. As they disappeared over the hill, a six-pointer went tearing after both of them – with high, but false, hopes, I suppose.

After staring after them for a few minutes, I went back to my sawing. I hadn't even finished the first cut, when a branch cracked and I looked up to see an eight-point buck about thirty feet west of me. It was obvious that he knew I was there, yet he was heading directly toward me. A bit unnerving when you're kneeling on the ground! It is amazing how big an animal less than four feet tall can look from that viewpoint. At about ten feet - and just as I was wondering how often deer attack people – he wheeled around and took off. He had no more than disappeared from sight, when crunching leaves to the east announced the fifth deer in less than ten minutes. This one was a spike buck,

who turned and ran as soon as he saw me. Was the rasping sound of my handsaw a better deer call than those I've purchased?

While clearing buckthorn late last summer, a four-toed salamander popped out of the sphagnum moss where I had just stepped. This salamander is considered rare in Wisconsin so seeing it was a special treat. I love being outdoors, whether in the woods or the swamp or the fields. But I also hope to see wildlife while I'm out. I often try to gain some slight advantage by wearing camouflage, walking upwind, and trying to walk softly.



Sometimes I sit, trying to be as quiet as a mouse, and wait for some creature to come by. Yet, more often than not, my most interesting and enjoyable wildlife experiences occur when I'm not really looking for wildlife. Sometimes they are even the reward for working.

- Cathy Mauer