



**K-STATE**  
Research and Extension

# Kansas Canopy

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*Newsletter of the Kansas Forest Service*



*Kansas Forest Service hopes to engage more landowners in streambank stabilization and streamside tree plantings through the creation of a "Water Quality Advocate Network."*

## Forest service grants implement the "Vision for the Future of Water Supply in Kansas"

The Kansas Forest Service is kicking off 2017 with two new grants from the U.S. Forest Service to act on the Governor's *Vision for the Future of Water Supply in Kansas* (<http://www.kwo.org/The-Vision.html>). One grant specifically addresses the issue of declining water supplies in federal reservoirs in eastern Kansas. These reservoirs

provide water to two-thirds of the state's population, and 60 percent of our electricity production. Future estimates project 40 percent of these reservoirs will be filled with sediment, and five of the seven major river basins will not meet water supply demands during a drought. The high cost of dredging has policy makers

focusing on the implementation of conservation practices that stabilize streambanks in the watersheds above these reservoirs to reduce sedimentation.

One significant challenge is that conservation practices like tree planting take valuable cropland out of production and

*continued on page 5*

# Comments from the State Forester

## Precision forestry

One of the principle water quality issues in Kansas is nutrient-laden sediment entering waterways through surface water runoff. To address this issue, scientists from the National Agroforestry Center in Lincoln, Nebraska teamed up with scientists from the University of Kentucky, Iowa State University, and the John Deere Corporation to develop a geographic information systems (GIS) approach for locating woody buffers along cultivated fields. The resulting tool, a computer program known as AgBufferBuilder, allows GIS specialists to account for runoff, and to design more effective buffers.

The tool uses digital models in conjunction with state soil maps to identify patterns of flow to field boundaries by soil types. The tool then sizes buffer dimensions according to the patterns of flow using buffer area ratio relationships. The resulting design is larger along segments with greater runoff, and smaller along segments with less. In this process, the technology delivers an efficient constant trapping around the field margins for sediment and pollutants.

Using AgBufferBuilder designs, scientists are nearly doubling sediment-trapping outcome over constant-width buffer designs. Moreover, they are saving land space allocated to buffers. In their view, the tool quantifies performance, demonstrates that variable-width buffers are more efficient for water quality, and concludes that a variable-width design provides a simpler and less costly way to boost water quality performance.

An example of the AgBufferBuilder application on a no-till silt loam site, designed to remove 75 percent of sediment from field runoff during a

2.4-inch in one hour rainfall event, is highlighted in Figure 1. The fields, outlined in yellow, and the buffers, outlined in red, illustrate the process. On the northern field, the buffers are on the east and west sides because that's where most of the field runoff drains. The designed buffers, outlined in red, cover 0.77 acres. In comparison, a 50-foot wide buffer along the east, west, and south sides of this field would total 4.6 acres. The 0.77 acre precision-located buffers accomplish the same objective as a 4.6 acre uniform-shaped buffer around the whole field. On the southern field, the buffer is not along the riparian zone on the north-central edge, but along other points as runoff does not exit the field in the north central area.

While the concept and technology are still new, AgBufferBuilder appears to be a solid and practical tool for addressing Kansas water quality issues. In that regard, the Kansas Forest Service intends to work with



Larry Biles, State Forester, Kansas Forest Service.

partners to explore the value of adding AgBufferBuilder to the state's buffer design processes.

**Larry Biles**, State Forester, oversees all operations of the Kansas Forest Service.

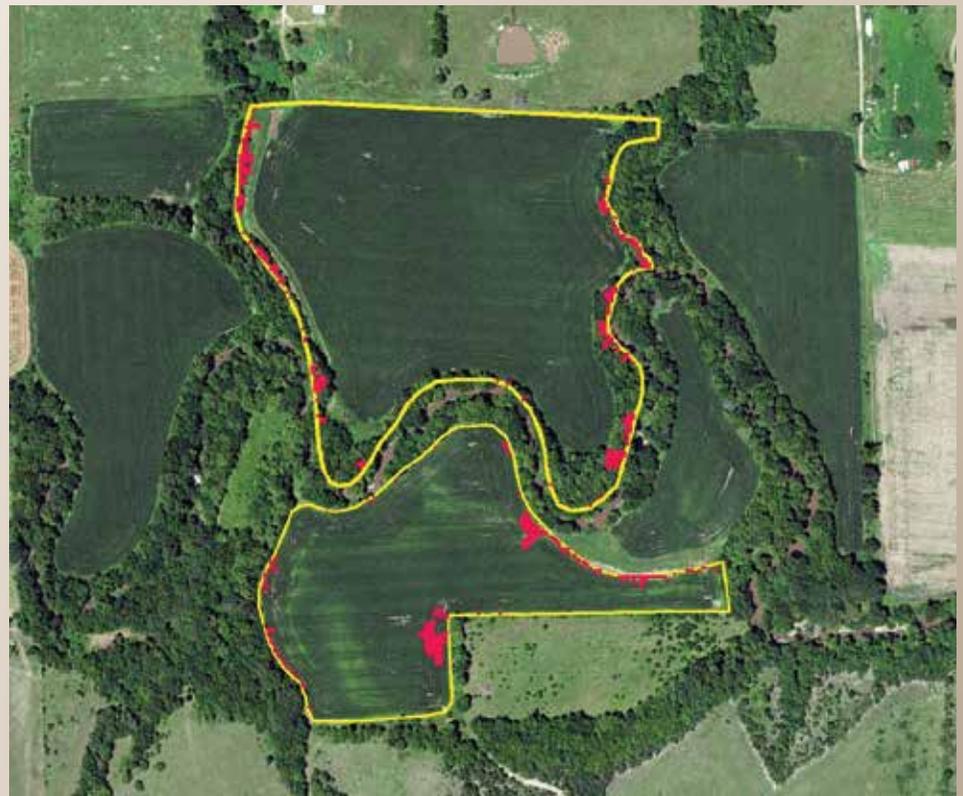


Figure 1

## Ready, Set, Go!

Ready, Set, Go! is a nationally recognized fire prevention program focusing on preplanning for home survivability in the event of a wildfire. The program is managed by the International Association of Fire Chiefs to increase awareness of the dangers from fire in the wildland-urban interface. The program is designed to be tailored to specific communities and fire environments.

*Ready.* Be fire-adapted and ready. Take personal responsibility for making your home ready in case of a wildfire. Create defensible space by clearing brush away from your home. Use fire-resistant landscaping and harden your home with fire-safe construction measures. Wildfires are not only a problem for those living in forested regions of the country. Wildfire in Kansas is a real threat, as demonstrated by the Anderson Creek Fire in spring 2016. Structures survived because the surrounding landscape was kept clear from dead trees, dry grass and clogged gutters.

Surviving structures were aided by fire-resistant building materials.

Assemble emergency supplies and move belongings to a safe place. Keep valuable documents in a safe, accessible container that you can grab and go. Don't wait until it is time to evacuate to start looking for those valuables. While Ready, Set, Go! is designed for a fire emergency, it's also useful in planning for a tornado, flood or other disaster. Prepare to leave home for an extended period of time. Although the emergency event may pass in a matter of hours, you may not be able to return for days.

Plan escape routes and ensure all residents know the plan of action. While you may always use the same road for your daily commute, plan for that route to be unavailable. Rural Kansas is dotted with wooden bridges and narrow, low maintenance roads that may slow your escape. When an evacuation is eminent, plan to leave early and stay away late. Once you've left, do not return for any reason. The return trip can be much

more dangerous than when you left. Wildfire could be closer to your escape route, the smoke will likely become an issue of concern, and you are now competing for space on roads that need to be reserved for emergency vehicles.

*Set.* Once you have a plan, you are set to go. As with other emergencies, continually monitor local news and weather. Bring combustible material inside, such as patio furniture cushions, door mats, and anything that could catch embers and support fire. Close windows and doors, but leave them unlocked. Remove lightweight flammable curtains, and move furniture to the center of the room. Lastly, back the car into the driveway with the keys in the ignition. Waiting until you may get caught in thick smoke is a loss of valuable time.

*Go!* Once you are told, or determine for yourself, that it is time to evacuate, do so quickly. Don't second guess an evacuate notification, you could waste valuable minutes that may be critical to survival. Go to a predetermined safe zone like a community center, Red Cross shelter, church, or school.

**Ross Hauck**, Fire Management Coordinator, directs fire management activities for the Kansas Forest Service.



## Conservation seedling success

Mother Nature extended her hand across Kansas last fall, gracing us with favorable planting conditions. The combination of mild temperatures and decent moisture resulted in excellent conditions for seedling planting. When soil temperatures stay above 40 degrees in the fall, it's an opportune time for promoting root growth. Initiating a root system in the fall allows seedlings the entire spring season to



expand their foundation. Thus, the more established the roots are before summer, the more advantageous it is for the seedlings.

We would like to thank our fellow conservation enthusiasts for supporting our conservation seedling program. During fall seedling sales, we received 390 orders, which resulted in 19,900 seedlings sold — a 20 percent increase over the previous year's fall sales! Eastern Redcedar continued to be a best-seller for windbreak purposes. Bur Oak, Swamp White Oak and English Oak were big sellers among deciduous trees. We continue to add more species to the seedling program, including Buttonbush, Baldcypress, Bitternut Hickory, Oriental Arborvitae, Pawpaw, Shagbark Hickory, Shumard Oak, and Western Soapberry.

Spring is an active time of year for everyone, especially landowners

looking to plant trees. Planning and ordering your spring seedlings now helps alleviate the last minute scramble to get seedlings in the ground before summer. Give the Kansas Forest Service a call and let us help plan your windbreak or conservation planting. We are taking tree orders now through the first of May. When you place your order, we can set the shipping date to accommodate your schedule. Ordering early guarantees the greatest selection of seedlings. To view or order tree and shrub seedlings online, visit <http://kfs.mybigcommerce.com>, or call 785-532-3304 (toll free 888-740-8733) with questions. As always, we appreciate your patronage.

**Mark Haller**, Conservation Forester, manages the Conservation Tree Planting Program and related activities for the Kansas Forest Service.



*Eastern Redcedar seedlings are an excellent choice for windbreak purposes.*

## Water supply, cont.

consequently, adoption is slow at best. In an attempt to engage more farmers and ranchers, the grant will create a “Water Quality Advocate Network” made up of farmers, ranchers and other landowners who have already implemented water quality conservation practices. These folks will serve as mentors and water quality advocates for their fellow landowners. Research suggests people are more likely to accept information from their peers combined with support from natural resource professionals. A coordinator will develop the network and serve as a liaison between the mentors, new landowners and natural resource professionals.

This grant provides for the application of outreach strategies gleaned from the Tools for Engaging Landowners Effectively (TELE) training. ([www.engaginglandowners.org](http://www.engaginglandowners.org)). TELE was developed by the Yale School of Forestry and the Sustainable Family Forestry Initiative. TELE helps natural resource professionals design more effective outreach programs. By connecting with landowners on a personal level, this process has the potential to help convince landowners to take action, whether it’s protecting riparian forests, stabilizing streambanks, or planting trees. Hopefully, using the TELE approach will leverage the outreach and education strategies associated with

the *Vision for the Future of Water Supply in Kansas*. Local focus groups will also be assembled to further understand the best approaches to engaging landowners.

The Kansas Forest Service received a second grant with work targeted in south-central and southwestern Kansas. This grant focuses on the removal of invasive tamarisk and Russian olive, and the restoration of native grass, willow and cottonwood. Tamarisk and Russian olive are phreatophytes, plants with deep root systems that may draw directly from water tables. They are exotic invasives that have displaced native plant communities on an estimated 55,000 acres, or 56 percent of the Arkansas River corridor in Kansas. The loss of native habitat also affects the federally endangered whooping crane and least tern, especially above Quivira National Wildlife Refuge. Tamarisk can increase soil and water salinity, and of course contributes to the decline of the Ogallala Aquifer.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, a strong partner in the proposal, has “shovel ready” projects that the grant funds through their Partners Program for Fish and Wildlife. The project draws on a wealth of knowledge and expertise from the Tamarisk Coalition who will guide restoration, assessment procedures and workshops

in the Upper Arkansas, Cimarron and Rattlesnake Creek watersheds. The Kansas Department of Agriculture’s Plant Protection and Weed Control and Division of Conservation will provide cost-share support through local Conservation Districts, and oversee the revision of a 10-year strategic plan for the comprehensive control of phreatophytes in Kansas. Revising the plan will complete one of the action items in the *Vision for the Future of Water Supply in Kansas*. Other partners include The Nature Conservancy, who will provide technical assistance, the Kansas Water Office and the Upper Ark Regional Advisory Committee. Sarah Zukoff, entomologist with the Southwest Research and Extension Center, will collaborate with Scott Marsh, a weed specialist with the Kansas Department of Agriculture, to survey and map the Larger Tamarisk Beetle as a biological control agent. The Natural Resources Conservation Service continues to be a critical partner in expanding the control of these invasives and restoring native habitat through USDA conservation programs. Without these strong partnerships, many of which I haven’t been able to list, none of this work would be possible; paramount among them, U.S. Forest Service, State and Private Forestry, who provides federal funding through the Landscape Scale Restoration competitive grant program.

**Bob Atchison**, Rural Forestry Program Leader, coordinates rural forestry activities for the Kansas Forest Service.



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*The grant will sponsor landowner workshops that provide opportunities for peer exchange and advice from natural resource experts.*

# Forester highlight: David Bruton

## Where do you fit in the circle of forestry?

When considering what it takes to make the forest industry viable and successful in Kansas and elsewhere, I recognize that a “circle of forestry” is needed.

This circle begins with landowners and others responsible for managing the timber resource. These individuals invest time and effort in planting trees, and carry out management practices such as thinning, pruning, and vine removal to produce quality timber products. In forestry, these are referred to as timber stand improvement (TSI) practices. A small amount of time engaging in these practices can provide a large benefit to the long term health, productivity, and quality of woodlands.

The second part of the circle involves loggers who are able to give landowners a fair price for their timber, and perform quality harvesting. If landowners don't get what they feel is a fair return on their time and

investment, they'll be less likely to invest in their woods. Harvesting small diameter trees is discouraged. While markets do exist for 16-inch diameter at breast height (DBH) trees, it is really at that point when they are entering the years of greatest annual financial return. For example, a tree with a 16-inch diameter inside the bark, measured at the small end of the log, will double in board footage volume when it reaches 21 inches. Additionally, the prices loggers are able to pay for these larger diameter logs can also increase dramatically. These trees are typically the ones used to yield highest value veneer and grade lumber products. How logging activities are executed have a big impact on the future productivity of a woodland. Loggers should use care so as to not damage or negatively impact the residual stand that is left to grow for future harvests. Directional felling, avoiding the woods during wet

conditions, using care while dragging logs through the property, and limiting harvesting in the spring, when tree bark peels off easily, are all actions loggers can take to reduce negative woodland impacts.

The third segment of the circle involves sawmills. In addition to landowners' fair compensation, loggers need to receive a fair return for their time and effort, as cutting trees is physical and hazardous work. Loggers make a significant financial investment in the equipment required to harvest and move logs. Transportation costs play a huge factor in the forest industry, therefore it's important to have quality sawmills scattered across the landscape. The downturn in the economy over the years has resulted in the closure or reduction in production of some of Kansas' larger mills. These losses move markets for local timber farther down the road, thereby reducing economic



*Black walnut logs being loaded at logging site.*

viability and regional demand for timber. The Kansas milling industry is also currently short on kiln capacity. This is a necessary step where lumber is dried to acceptable levels before use by secondary processors and consumers. Additional focus on increasing kiln capacity in Kansas would benefit the industry.

The fourth part of the circle involves secondary processors and those who make wood products. The thought of using locally sourced lumber may not cross the minds of most Kansans. Kansas sawmills can produce stacks of lumber, but without ready markets, all is for naught. Educating the public about local sawmills and the available services is important. It may be possible for sawmill operators to adjust their operation or products to accommodate special requests – a big benefit of doing business locally.

To complete the circle, the fifth segment involves the consumer. Ultimately, economics are what makes this process work, therefore consumers of forest products are vital. Over the years, consumers have become disconnected from where things used in daily life come from, including forest products. It's important that we promote and use our local timber resources and keep consumers connected to the many benefits, uses, and products that trees provide. After all, trees are a natural, renewable resource that need to be managed and utilized to realize their full potential.

**David Bruton**, *Forest Products Marketing and Utilization Forester for the Kansas Forest Service.*



*Landowner Jerry Botts in Atchison County, Kansas, standing in his 18-year-old black walnut plantation.*



*Pallets produced at Industrial Crating in St. Paul, Kansas.*

# Forest stewardship remains strong in Kansas

For the past 14 years, Michael and Kathy Bovaird have been working to improve their 40-acre woodland in southeastern Shawnee County, Kansas. In 2006, they began collaborating with their district forester on a plan for their land. The strategy included selective harvesting, timber stand improvement comprised of thinning and pruning, vine control, wildlife habitat enhancement, trail improvement, and erosion control through water diversion.

That same year, the Bovairds enrolled in the Kansas Tree Farm program, and have remained active members for the past 10 years. The Tree Farm program works together with the Forest Stewardship program in Kansas to support and encourage woodland owners who are committed to sustainably managing the woodland and associated natural resources on their properties.

The Forest Stewardship program is a U.S. Forest Service program delivered through the Kansas Forest Service at Kansas State University. The Kansas Tree Farm program is a private not-for-profit organization funded by the American Tree Farm System.

Each year, the Forest Stewardship and Kansas Tree Farm programs jointly recognize a Kansas landowner who has done outstanding work in managing his or her woodlands. In the fall of 2016, Michael and Kathy Bovaird were selected to receive the Forest Stewardship Tree Farmer of the Year award.

“Both of us grew up surrounded by natural forests, and upon moving to Kansas, strongly felt a void left by Kansas’ sparse forests,” Bovaird said. “We felt a strong need to find some woodland property and searched for several years before finding it. Since purchasing what we affectionately referred to as ‘Chiggerland,’ we have spent countless hours developing an

improved forest stand, a place we now call “Kamika,” where we can enjoy the beauty of a forest we call our own, but are more than willing to share.”

As winners of the award, the Bovairds received a \$200 gift certificate, as well as a commemorative plaque courtesy of the Kansas Forestry Association. They, along with the 2016 Kansas Agroforestry Award winners, Marvin and Twylia Sekavec of Ness County, were recognized at the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts’ 72nd annual convention last November in Wichita. Fittingly, the theme of the convention was “Building a Conservation Legacy.”

**Jennifer Williams**, *Communications Coordinator, coordinates communications activities for the Kansas Forest Service.*



Michael and Kathy Bovaird were recognized as the Forest Stewardship Tree Farmers of the Year at the Kansas Forest Service Fall Forestry Field Day.

## The many benefits of forests

Woodlands and forests are increasingly in need of care and attention. The importance of forests goes beyond supplying us with timber and other timber-related goods and services. Trees store carbon, provide freshwater, and maintain biodiversity in nature. Good stewardship of our woodlands is critical. Proper management helps ensure long-term sustainability of timber and other paper products, improves soil, which in turn provides clean water for communities, and provides habitat for a variety of wildlife and birds.

Science supports that climate change is occurring, and with it, devastating forest fires and global pest outbreaks.

A well-managed forest helps mitigate climate change. Wood is recognized as one of the most sustainable materials we have readily available, and the range of products grows steadily day-by-day.

With an increasing proportion of the world's population living in cities, the need for green spaces has become more and more apparent. Studies show the well-being of urban populations depends on access to green spaces. If we desire to have abundant, productive lives, improving forests is the best thing we can do today.

Nature is an ideal setting to strengthen both your mind and body. Studies have

found that simply spending time in the woods can lower blood pressure, reduce stress, and improve mood. Studies have also shown woods to have noticeable effects in fighting common illnesses including diabetes, ADHD, and cancer. Whenever possible, plan time to spend in a wooded environment, whether it be in an urban or rural setting.

A forest is more than just trees, a forest deserves to be appreciated as a source of public well-being. Spending time among the trees is beneficial to your health!

**Jeanna Leurck**, Forest Stewardship Program Manager, USDA Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Region, Golden, Colorado.



*Spending time in nature, particularly in woodlands, provides proven health and wellness benefits. Pictured: Delaware River, northwest of Muscotah, KS.*

# Welcome new Kansas Forest Service employees!

Last year, through funding provided by the U.S. Forest Service, the Kansas Forest Service was able to hire undergraduate students to work on mapping the Kansas tree canopy. Jakob Whitson and Abbey Marcotte joined us from the Department of Geography at Kansas State University.

Jakob works on mapping the agroforestry resources in Kansas using the ArcMap and eCognition programs. He also assists in the testing process of a new tool that will map the windbreaks in Kansas using ArcMap. In his free time, Jakob enjoys spending time outdoors, specifically hiking, skateboarding, camping, disc golfing, and biking.

A Manhattan, Kansas native, Abbey enjoys attending college in her hometown close to her family, friends, and her dog, Pedro. She is a senior at Kansas State University working towards a Bachelor of Science in Geography, with a minor in Mass Communication. She works in ArcMap to map windbreaks in the Kansas tree canopy. Some of her hobbies include traveling, hiking, graphic design, spending time at the lake, and watching K-State sports.

Within a year, the Kansas Forest Service will, for the first time ever, have a geospatial layer of the tree canopy throughout rural Kansas. We

currently have about 75 percent of the state completed. This new layer allows us, with our many partners, to better manage Kansas's natural resources.

Ryan Rastok serves as the District 1 forester in northeast Kansas. He was raised in the Lawrence area where he graduated from the University of Kansas in 2010 with a double major in Environmental Science and Geography. He has professional work experience as a climbing arborist, environmental consultant, invasive forest insect survey specialist, forest entomology researcher, municipal arborist, and a city forester. He attended the University of Arkansas where he earned a Master of Science in entomology with an emphasis in forestry. His office is housed in the NRCS office in the Farm Service Center in Oskaloosa. Ryan is eager to work with the landowners in District 1 to promote the health and productivity of the forested areas in northeast Kansas. Ryan spends his time outside of work with his family, climbing trees professionally and recreationally, running, canoeing, writing, reading, socializing, and collaborating with friends and colleagues on a variety of professional and personal projects.

Aaron Yoder recently joined the Kansas Forest Service as an Agricultural Technician with the Conservation Tree Planting Program. Aaron grew up in North Newton, Kansas and has worked in agriculture in various settings for the last decade. He graduated from K-State with a Bachelor of Science in Horticulture in 2011, and a Master of Science from Michigan State University in Horticulture in 2014. After school, he worked as a field/research technician for the MSU Potato Outreach Program. He has worked on farms of varying size specializing in horticultural crops around the country. He recently settled in Council Grove where he helps with the family cattle/hay farm and runs a small lavender farm in his spare time. Welcome Aaron!



*Aaron Yoder, Agricultural Technician*



*Jakob Whitson, student*



*Abbey Marcotte, student*



*Ryan Rastok, District 1 forester*

# Kansas State University restructures the Kansas Forest Service

The Kansas Forest Service, directed by state forester Larry Biles, is nearing its 130th anniversary as an agency in 2017, and its 107th anniversary as a division within Kansas State University, but November 17, 2016 heralded a new beginning for the Kansas Forest Service. On that day, the dean of Kansas State University's College of Agriculture, and director of K-State Research and Extension, Dr. John Floros, announced that the Kansas Forest Service would be housed as an independent agency within K-State Research and Extension. In his announcement, Dean Floros noted that the Kansas Forest Service would be more appropriately located under

K-State Research and Extension and not in an academic department.

This move came at the request of the state forester, and several factors contributed to the decision. Over time, through faculty retirements, there has been a reduction of the discipline of forestry within the Department of Horticulture and Natural Resources. The recognition that a state forestry service agency is more appropriately located under K-State Research and Extension, and not in an academic department also contributed to the change. Additionally, the opportunity for improved administrative efficiencies is a byproduct of this restructuring.

After reviewing the request to become an independent unit separate from an academic department, and taking into consideration the services that the Kansas Forest Service provides, the College of Agriculture's administrative team endorsed the move.

This shift does not affect the principle functions or operations of the Kansas Forest Service, as they are still guided by 16 legislated powers and duties, and their mission of "Care of Natural Resources and Service to People through Forestry." The agency continues to operate through several district offices around the state, and at the state office just west of Kansas State University.



*The annual Kansas Forest Service statewide staff meeting took place at the state office in Manhattan, KS December 5-7, 2016.*

## Links of Interest

Kansas Forest Service  
[www.kansasforests.org](http://www.kansasforests.org)

K-State Research and Extension  
[www.ksre.ksu.edu](http://www.ksre.ksu.edu)

State of Kansas  
[www.kansas.gov](http://www.kansas.gov)

Kansas Department of Wildlife,  
Parks and Tourism  
[ksoutdoors.com](http://ksoutdoors.com)

Natural Resources Conservation  
Service– Kansas  
[www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov)

Farm Service Agency–Kansas  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/ks](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/ks)

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## Upcoming Events

### February 2017

**Now – May 1** – Order Conservation Tree Seedlings. Order online at: [www.kansasforests.org](http://www.kansasforests.org), or call 1 (888) 740-8733

**February 18** – Protection, KS. Comanche County Tree Workshop. Contact Aaron Sawyers, 620-582-2411; email [asawyers@ksu.edu](mailto:asawyers@ksu.edu)

**February 22** – Hays, KS. Northwest Kansas Community Forestry Workshop. Contact Jami Seirer, 785-624-3138; email [jseirer@ksu.edu](mailto:jseirer@ksu.edu)

**February 28** – Liberal, KS. After the Storm: Tree Pruning Workshop. Contact Kylee Harrison, 620-624-5604; email [kharrison@ksu.edu](mailto:kharrison@ksu.edu)

### March 2017

**Now - May 1** – Order Conservation Tree Seedlings now through May 1, 2017. Order online: <https://www.kansasforests.org/events/index.html>

## We Need Your Help

To reduce printing and mailing costs, the Kansas Forest Service would like subscribers who are willing to receive the newsletter electronically to send their e-mail address to [jgwilliams@ksu.edu](mailto:jgwilliams@ksu.edu) or call us at 785-532-3308.

Your email address will not be given to any other organizations.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to let us know.

[kansasforests.org](http://kansasforests.org), or call 1-888-740-8733.

**March 4** – Manhattan, KS. Annual Fireline Safety Refresher. Contact Eric Ward, 785-532-3307; email [eward@ksu.edu](mailto:eward@ksu.edu)

**March 22-23** – Beloit, KS. Tree City USA Recognition Day. Contact Tim McDonnell, 316-788-0492, ext. 202; email [tmcdonne@k-state.edu](mailto:tmcdonne@k-state.edu)

For a current listing of events, check: [www.kansasforests.org/events/index.html](http://www.kansasforests.org/events/index.html)