

Distant Thunder

Securing our Forested Lands

The Art and Science of Working Forest Conservation Easements

Tammara
Van Ryn

The woods look good. You have just completed a forest management job you are proud of: a forward-looking, long-range plan; a careful harvest; little residual damage; and great growing stock for the future. This is the kind of work you can talk about at the next Guild meeting. Then, some months later, you drive by and it is all gone — replaced by a “lots for sale” sign. Your heart sinks, and you wonder if this is the ultimate end of all of your work. One tool that may offer hope is a conservation easement.

Conservation easements, first used by the National Park Service in the 1930s, did not become recognized in their current legal form until 1969 when Massachusetts passed the first state conservation easement enabling act. Since then, almost every state has passed such legislation. Generally, these laws allow a land trust or government agency to accept a transfer of land rights through a deed of conservation easement (or conservation restriction in some states). The conservation easement identifies conservation values on a land parcel and restricts activities that may diminish those values. Conservation easements most

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Distant Thunder

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The mission of the Guild is to promote ecologically responsible resource management that sustains the entire forest across the landscape. The Guild provides a forum and support system for practicing foresters and other resource management professionals working to advance this vision.

Cover Photo:

A large sugar maple in Vermont
(Photo by Pieter Van Loon)

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR, MARY CHAPMAN

Making the Link

The overall pattern of land ownership in the U.S. is changing. As Guild foresters, we need to be asking ourselves what future forest land ownership looks like, and how it will affect our practice of forestry. Across the country, the National Resources Inventory found that between 1982 and 1997, an average of 2137 acres of forest was lost to development each day. Over the same period of time, the number of private forest land owners increased from 7.8 million to 9.9 million, resulting in more forest land owners with smaller land units. Even large tracts of industrial forest land are more susceptible to fragmentation in that they are no longer as likely to be transferred in their entirety from one timber company to another when sold. Now these tracts often enter a broader market, with a different suite of potential owners whose management objectives differ.

Helping to address the fracturing of forest land ownership are local, regional and national land trusts. Fueled by public concern over the loss of open space, contributions to land acquisition funds, and public bond issues and appropriations, organizations such as the Land Trust Alliance are reporting record numbers. The last decade of the 20th Century saw a 42 percent increase in the number of local and regional land trusts, which protected 6,225,225 acres (an area twice the size of Connecticut) of open space as of Dec. 31, 2000.

Two mechanisms helping land trusts set these milestones are conservation easements (CEs) and, with greater implications for the Guild forester, working forest conservation easements (WFCEs). WFCEs guide forest management in order to protect specified forest values in perpetuity. They establish long-term management goals and require a forest management plan, including baseline inventory and periodic monitoring information. They are a means to ensure that, regardless of who owns the land in the future, consistent management goals guide activities on the land across time.

I challenge us all as Guild members to become involved with land trusts and other forest land owners to help guide forest management with responsible stewardship through "Guild-style" forestry.

The Guild Member-Land Trust Interface *How to Get Involved*

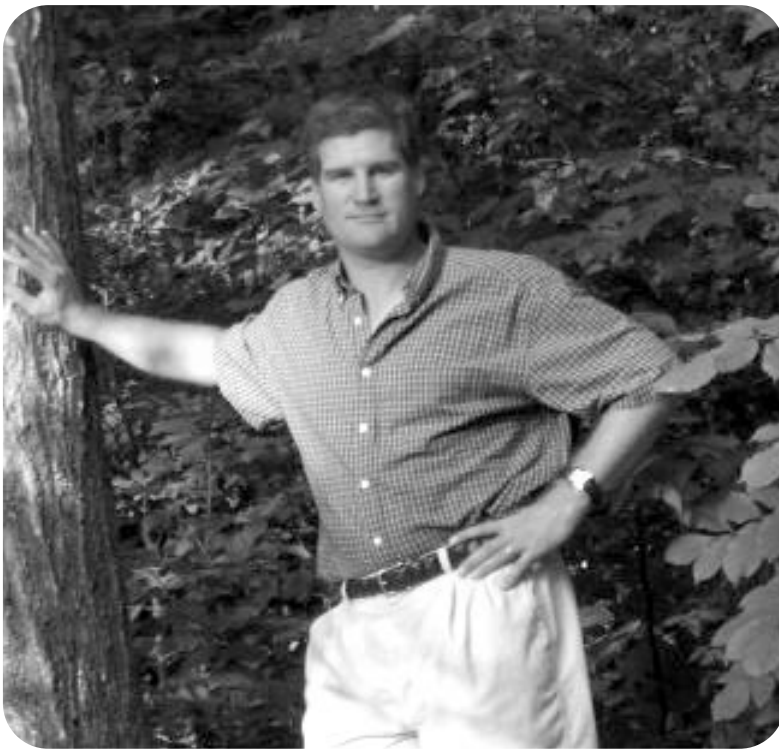
- Contact landowners, educate them about land conservation options, and encourage them to work with land trusts.
- Demonstrate how income generated from a forested property can ease financial constraints on long-term ownership while preserving conservation values.
- If your local land trust isn't involved with forestry or WFCEs, offer a presentation or tour of well-managed forest land to inspire them.
- Help land trusts delineate and evaluate properties. Conduct ecological inventories for easement development, and monitor existing easements.
- Help land trusts draft conservation easements, particularly when silvicultural prescriptions or related land management activities are involved.
- Assist land trusts with general land management. This includes, but is not limited to, helping conduct inventories and plan forest management strategies; establishing wildlife habitat maintenance or enhancement goals; promoting sustainable, low-impact timber harvests; creating and maintaining recreational trails.

SOUTHEAST

David
Halley

North Carolina Land Trusts Seek Foresters' Input

The statistics are mind boggling in my home state of North Carolina. Two hundred acres of open space (farms and forests) are being converted for development EVERY DAY! It doesn't take a professional to realize that if we don't protect our forests, we won't be practicing forestry in the future in North Carolina. North Carolina is not the only state dealing with growth problems and their impact on our natural resources. Growth is a national issue and is one reason why open space preservation has become such a popular movement in the United States. Smart growth initiatives, sustainability studies, purchased development rights, and conservation easements are products of that movement.



David Halley: 'One way I got involved was by promoting land trusts and conservation easements to my clients and landowners.'
(Photo by Trish Halley)

The Forest Stewards Guild's First Duty Principle is "to the forest and its future," thus getting involved in initiatives to protect and preserve forests is elemental to Guild foresters.

One way I got involved was by promoting land trusts and conservation easements to my clients and landowners. In my home state of North Carolina, there are now twenty-three recognized land trusts covering the entire state. Ten years ago there were only fifteen land trusts, and of those, only half had been in existence for more than a couple of years.

My initial involvement led the Conservation Trust for North Carolina (CTNC) to ask me to develop a sample conservation easement to support working forests. With input from others in the state and from work done by other land trusts and the national Land Trust Alliance, we drafted a Working Forest Conservation Easement (WFCE) tailored to North Carolina forests. We put our first draft on a chat-line web site to get input from a variety of stakeholders across the state. The web site allows individuals from around the state to provide comments and feedback on the draft. That dialogue is ongoing, and you can review our current draft at <http://webpages.charter.net/nclorax/>.

When we started, we were cautioned against developing "the" WFCE, since easements need to be specifically tailored to meet the requirements and objectives of each landowner and easement holder. With that in mind, CTNC wanted to develop a sample WFCE that would serve as a starting place for further discussion on what a WFCE might contain. We were clear from the start that our work was to be a guide for developing specific easements.

In drafting the WFCE, we learned a few lessons. First, when drafting a WFCE, it is critical to ensure that the language is not too restrictive and that there is enough flexibility to meet the needs of a dynamic forest. Because forests are constantly changing, the task of drafting an easement in perpetuity is very challenging. The New Hampshire Conservation Institute, which conducted a comprehensive evaluation of conservation easements,

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North Carolina Land Trusts, continued from page 3

recommended that forest management be carried out in accordance with broad goals instead of actual management practices. They recommended specifying the desired end results, giving the landowner the freedom to choose which strategies they felt were most appropriate to the land. We liked this goal-oriented management language; it provides for changing technology and allows the landowner to use whatever tools and expertise are currently available, as long as the overarching goal of ecologically sound management is achieved.

“The Forest Stewards Guild’s First Duty Principle is ‘to the forest and its future’. Thus, getting involved in initiatives to protect and preserve forests is elemental to Guild foresters.”

The second lesson we learned is that when drafting a WFCE, it is necessary to recognize that an easement has to be held by a second, qualifying organization. That easement holder then has a legal obligation to protect the conservation values of the easement. Accordingly, the easement holder would be negligent if it did not include provisions that would prohibit any activity that would degrade the land’s conservation value. Requiring an approved forest management plan in the easement language provides the means for the land trust to authorize specific forestry practices on the land it protect without requiring forest management details in the easement that could become outdated. An up-front forest management plan will help create a dialogue about goals and objectives for the property between the forester, the landowner and the land trust. This dialogue will ensure that all parties understand the restrictions of the easement.

In our sample easement, we also require that, before a landowner conducts any commercial harvest, a timber harvest plan is submitted for review and approval by the easement holder. The easement establishes minimum requirements for the timber harvest plan. Having a timber harvest plan reviewed and approved by the easement holder may reduce the risk of a violation. Although some landowners are reluctant to let a land trust have veto power over their timber sales, the easement holder needs to be allowed the latitude to spot inconsistencies between the intended management and the easement terms.



In North Carolina, two hundred acres of open space (farms and forests) are being converted for development every day.
(Photo by David Halley)

With land trusts now grappling with the challenge of drafting WFCEs and enforcing these easement agreements in perpetuity, there is an increasingly greater need for professional foresters to get involved. Forest Stewards Guild foresters can play key roles in supporting land trusts. Making yourself available to land trusts to review draft language, to prepare or to review forest and timber management plans, and to serve as a resource for your local land trust can be an important step in protecting the forests upon which we all depend. As Guild foresters, our involvement will help to ensure our First Duty Principle “to the forest and its future.”

David Halley is a consulting forester with True North Forest Management Services in Holly Springs, North Carolina and is a Forest Stewards Guild member.

***“Working Forest Conservation Easements
- A Process Guide for Land Trusts,
Landowners and Public Agencies.”***

by Brenda Lind

The Land Trust Alliance has published an excellent overview of a WFCE: “Working Forest Conservation Easements - A process guide for land trusts, landowners and public agencies”. It can be ordered through their website at: www.lta.org.

Back to the Land in the Methow Valley

Katharine
Bill



Local landowners Roger and Fernne Rosenblatt placed an easement on their property to protect its conservation values. (Photo by Katharine Bill)

It was an unusually sunny January afternoon, and the sun on the pines was melting just enough snow from the tree branches to hit us unexpectedly with large drops. I was visiting the future home site of Sherrie and Eric, two landowners who plan to retire in the Methow Valley. Sherrie and Eric had called the Methow Conservancy for advice about living in a fire-prone pine forest echoing a general interest in fires and forestry that is emerging in local conversations.

We looked up at one of the large firs that had just showered us with droplets and I asked, "Are you familiar with this one?"

"We're from Illinois, we don't know anything about these trees," they answered, "We just wanted to live in the forest."

"Conservation easements hold great potential to bolster land stewardship with legal teeth and professional review."

We post-holed along through knee-deep snow, and with minimal guidance, Sherrie was soon pointing out pines and firs and asking questions. It was a small lot and a short visit, with inspiring implications. My walk with Sherrie and Eric might not have happened in the Methow Valley five years ago, and it hints at how times are changing.

The Methow River traces the eastern edge of the North Cascades Mountains of Washington State, and its watershed extends over 100 miles from the Passayten Wilderness to the Columbia River. Historically, fires singed the Methow Valley every 10-15 years, until homesteaders moved to the valley at the turn of the century. These ambitious settlers removed the lion's-share of the large, fire-resistant ponderosa pines for construction and for clearing agricultural land, and then quickly built watchtowers and water tanks for suppressing fires. What was left has now grown quietly, without fire, for several generations.

What has also grown in the Methow Valley is a recognition that the low-intensity burns of the past were beneficial, and that active forest management can play an important role in restoring some of the forest diversity that was once here. While glaciers and fires shaped the landscape of the valley in the past, today, like all over the West, people are the dominant force which now shapes local forests. Thus, a group of volunteers started the Methow Conservancy in 1995, with a mission to "inspire people to take care of the land based conservation projects."

The Methow Conservancy currently holds over 2,800 acres in conservation easement, each carefully tailored to the land that it protects. All the forested conservation easements include specific performance goals for forestry and guidelines for forest management. Each conservation easement also

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Two middle school students counting tree rings on a core at the Rosenblatt field education day. (Photo by Katharine Bill)

includes baseline documentation of stocking, species diversity, and land condition at the time of the easement, including photopoints and GIS maps. Conservancy staff are familiar with every easement, understand the restrictions, visit the property, keep updated digital photopoints and inform the landowner about pertinent grants, lectures and opportunities to better manage the forest.

Local landowners Roger and Fernne Rosenblatt exemplify the great potential for conservation easements to bolster good land stewardship with legal teeth and professional review. The Rosenblatts bought 140 acres of forested land in the early 1970s, as urban refugees from Seattle. They used the land as a rural get-away and built a small cabin with trees from the site. For 25 years they brought their children and friends to the cabin and had no knowledge of the surrounding forest ecosystem. Then, in 1994, the Rosenblatts' property had an intensive outbreak of bark beetle. Roger and Fernne began researching forestry, which led Roger to pursue a Master of Forestry degree at the University of Washington's College of Forest Resources. As a forestry student, Roger focused his work on his land, and he and Fernne cruised timber, measured growth rates and wrote a forest plan that the Methow Conservancy eventually incorporated as part of the Stewardship Plan for their conservation easement. While Roger and Fernne learned more about their forest and its trees, they also bought adjacent forested land and built their commercial tree farm to over 400 acres.

The Rosenblatts placed an easement on their property to make sure future owners of the land would have a management plan to guide timber cutting, to prevent future subdivision and grazing, and to protect the conservation values of the large parcel.

By placing a conservation easement on their land, Roger and Fernne have both established forestry objectives in legally enforceable terms and formed a system for monitoring and evaluating the results over time. Last September I joined Roger and Fernne for the annual monitoring on their property. Roger established photopoints in 1997, and this year we went high-tech as we duplicated them with a digital cameras and brought a GPS unit to record the exact point coordinates. Roger has followed the recommended guidelines for photopoints to the letter and has a meter-board with a marked camera point at each station. "This is where the real fun is," Roger says. "Look at the change over 5 years". Roger and Fernne exult in watching both the forest and their dreams for restoring the land grow.

Ideally, the conservation easement ensures that someone pays annual visits to the Rosenblatt forest and evaluates it. Someone will re-read the easement, update the photopoints and determine whether or if thinning or planting or burning should be prescribed. Each easement has a stewardship endowment to help cover these long-term costs, and the members of the Methow Conservancy also help to bear the costs of watching lands protected by conservation easement, recording the changes, and upholding the carefully documented intentions of landowners over the long term.

Actively coordinating restoration and land protection between neighboring landowners is another exciting role of the land trust. Over the past three years, the Methow Conservancy has helped to orchestrate a forest restoration project between seven conservation easement landowners with over 400 acres, in what is locally called the Rendezvous area. While individual landowners designed specific parts of their own easements, the land trust acted as a common denominator to allow for landscape-level coordination within an otherwise fragmented ownership area.

In the Rendezvous area, the initial forest plans were written as part of the Methow Conservancy conservation easements, and in the process, the landowners became aware that they needed to do work to protect diversity within the forest that otherwise seemed "natural." Much like Eric and Sherrie from Illinois, the Rendezvous landowners initially wanted a retreat in the forest and later realized the need for active forestry.

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NORTHEAST

A New England Success Story

Carl
Powden
and
Pieter
Van Loon

Has there ever been a gathering of Guild members that didn't quickly come around to a tale about a well-managed piece of land that was recently smoked? All of those years of thoughtful management and foregone income wiped out in a matter of days or months. Properly written and monitored, conservation easements can help assure that a history of stewardship continues despite changes in ownership or managers.

Over the past 25 years the Vermont Land Trust (VLT) has conserved farm and forest land and gained the stewardship oversight on 383,000 acres with about

The Reverend Norris Tibbetts and his wife Mary bought an 1100+ acre Arlington farm as a summer retreat in the early 1940s. Subsequently, the property was transferred to the four Tibbetts children. For over forty years the property was professionally managed and carefully harvested. The guidance the family provided for their forestry professionals was simple: "Manage the timber resource for the long term with full consideration for water quality, wildlife and aesthetics."

The foresters were true to the Tibbetts' objective. A 1999 property appraisal by a reputable timber company showed that the forest could yield just under 22 cords per acre with 56% sawtimber on a property that is 90% hardwood. The estimated per acre gross timber value/operable acre in July 1999 was \$1335. Depending upon where you're from, this may not be anything to get excited about. In Vermont, however, these numbers are truly exceptional. One forester described the land by saying, "I haven't seen anything that good north of Pennsylvania".

"The Tibbetts worked with the Vermont Land Trust to develop an easement that set standards for high quality management and prohibited liquidation."

The Tibbetts loved the woodlands and mountain that had been theirs for more than 50 years but were recently confronted by a common dilemma. The family was concerned about the ability of future generations to continue to enjoy the family retreat. Sale of 964 acres would provide needed cash and make continued ownership of the remaining 200 acres a reality. By placing an easement on the land before it was sold, the Tibbetts had a guarantee that future owners would be committed to sound stewardship.

The Tibbetts worked with VLT to develop an easement and a unique sale process. The easement set standards for high quality management and prohibited liquidation. Through the sale process, the Tibbetts were not only able to find out who was willing to pay the most, but of equal importance, they were also able to consider the

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Pieter Van Loon at the 2001 Forest Stewards Guild meeting in Silver Bay, New York.
(Photo by Steve Harrington)

1,000 easements. Conserved properties range from small family-owned parcels to large investment group holdings of approximately 86,000 acres. While the size of the parcel and the dollars involved is always unique, there are forest issues common to most projects. An example to provide an understanding of how the process of placing an easement on a working forest property can work is a project involving the Tibbetts family and the VLT.



Tammara Van Ryn at an early Guild meeting in Sugar Hill, New Hampshire.
(Photo by Forest Trust)

often limit subdivision or development, but can also guide farming, forestry, and other activities. The land trust or agency annually monitors the property for consistency with the conservation easement, and if a violation occurs, takes steps to remedy the infraction.

Concurrent with the passage of the state enabling acts, Congress, and more recently states, have provided income and estate tax incentives for the charitable donation of conservation easements. The value of a qualified conservation easement donation may be deducted from federal income tax as a charitable contribution. Some states have added tax credits for a donation in addition to the federal deduction. An easement may lower the value of the land for estate tax purposes, reducing pressure on heirs to sell timber or land to pay the estate taxes. Recent federal legislation allows heirs to put a conservation easement on the property after the decedent's death and before the taxes are due - an incredible incentive for conservation. In addition, new funds to purchase conservation easements, such as the Forest Legacy Program, are becoming available each year.

Increasing public interest, supportive state policies, tax incentives, and the potential for cash purchases have all combined to escalate the use of conservation easements. From 1990 to 2000 there was a five-fold increase in the amount of acreage local and regional land trusts had protected with

conservation easements. Today, these groups protect more than 2.6 million acres with easements. At least an equal number of acres are protected by national conservation organizations and government agencies.

Ensuring that conservation easements protect managed forest values over time, however, means moving beyond a standard easement into a much more detailed arrangement. A working forest conservation easement differs by generally identifying forest conservation values, establishing long-term management goals, requiring a forest management plan, containing forest inventory details in its baseline documentation and requiring knowledge of forest management for monitoring. The forester can and should play a critical role in each of these stages of easement drafting and monitoring.

Like forestry, working forest conservation easements are part art and part science. As new easements are drafted and existing easements monitored and enforced, land trusts will learn more about the benefits and the challenges of these easements and look to foresters for help. Foresters will be at the front lines of debates about management plan implementation and enforcement and will be relied upon to develop new monitoring techniques for measuring the protection of forest values. Forester involvement will become increasingly important as elevated public spending on easements inspires more rigorous public scrutiny. Foresters can also help assess when acts of nature (ice storms, fire) and human nature (global warming, pollution) might change these forests, render easement terms moot, and humble us all.

Conservation easements in general, and working forest conservation easements in particular, offer the promise of securing a well-managed forest landscape long into the future. Easements offer more permanence than regulatory or market approaches, yet are not appropriate for every parcel. An easement may not be the appropriate tool if the landowner or the holding entity (government or nonprofit) wants more control over activities than an easement can reasonably provide. In these cases the landowner may consider a term management agreement to accomplish some specific wildlife objectives, or the government or nonprofit may want to hold full fee title to the land.

Landowners have shown an increasing interest in term management agreements similar to those provided by the USDA wetlands reserve or conservation reserves programs. These agreements are generally not considered conservation easements (though they may use a similar deed to secure the

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Working Forest Conservation Easements, continued from page 8

term), as they are designed for a term of years rather than perpetuity. Term agreements are generally purchased, not donated. They provide opportunity for short-term habitat protection but, unlike a permanent conservation easement, neither prevent future subdivision or development nor provide the opportunity to allow for long-term ecological change. Term agreements often simply postpone inevitable development. For these reasons, Congress and most of the states only recognize permanent easements when tax benefits

are provided for the donation of a conservation easement. While conservation easements may not be the perfect tool for all situations, they are an appropriate approach to help secure the land base you are working on for future generations of owners and foresters. When there is a conservation-minded landowner, potential for a well-managed piece of forest, and optimism for the future — a working forest conservation easement may be just the solution.

Tammara Van Ryn is Eastern Region Director of the Land Trust Alliance. Before joining LTA in 1997, she was Forest Policy Director at the Society for Protection of New Hampshire Forests. She is a member of the Forest Stewards Guild.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Bryan
Foster

Promoting Working Forest Conservation Easements



Attorney Stephen J. Small wrote the income tax regulations on conservation easements when he worked in the Chief Counsel's Office of the Internal Revenue Service. Now a private attorney, he represents clients across the country on estate planning and land conservation as well as giving seminars and workshops. His books, *Preserving Family Lands: Book I* and *Book II* have become the standard introductory texts for landowners and estate planning professionals. He gave these insights into working easements during a phone interview with Bryan Foster, former editor of *Distant Thunder*.

Why should landowners consider an easement?

"The basic problem is this: without proper planning a valuable piece of land can trigger an estate tax so large that the land itself will have to be sold to pay the tax. Rising real estate values have left many rural families land rich and cash poor. They are headed for a major estate tax shock unless they do something now."

How can conservation easements help estate planning?

"A conservation easement is one tool to use in estate planning. It's a contract written between a landowner

and a donee organization, usually with assistance from attorneys, accountants and land managers. An easement gives income tax deductions and reduces the value of the estate. An easement is the only planning tool that will forever protect the land against real estate development and commercial development, while still allowing the landowner to own the land and use it for recreation, agriculture, forestry and ranching."

What role should forest managers play in developing conservation easements?

"Working forest easements are difficult because there's so much disagreement over what forestry practices will protect the resource and still allow a profitable use of the property. Forest managers can work with donee organizations to make sure that the landowner's interests and the specific condition and ecology of the forest are considered in the contract. The easement contract should generally not have a detailed management plan because a plan cannot cover every eventuality, but instead should have a set of measurable standards or guidelines for forest management."

What are problems you foresee with easements?

"The interest in conservation easements has outstripped technical support. Some donee organizations just give a standard easement contract to landowners for them to sign. Landowners must pay close attention to the contract and work with attorneys, land managers and others to make sure the contract fits their needs. A conservation easement is a serious document that has ramifications far into the future."

A New England Success Story, continued from page 7



Sugar maples on the Tibbetts' property.
(Photo by Peter Van Loon)

firms' reputations. The proposed easement terms were made clear to all and prospective buyers whose interests were limited to short-term gains were filtered out.

In our region, working forest conservation easements (WFCE) typically reduce property values 30% to 40%. The easement value for this property was estimated to be approximately 40% of the total value of the property because of the high value of the standing timber and the inability to liquidate that value because of the easement. Despite the presence of the WFCE, however, the Tibbetts were able to realize \$747,500 from the sale of their conserved acres.

Meadowsend Timberland, whose lands are managed by Guild members Jeff Smith and Jeremy Turner, proposed the winning bid. Jeff acknowledged that acquiring the Tibbetts' land

was a big opportunity. "A lot of great work has occurred on this land before now. We have an obligation to continue to strive for the highest levels of stewardship while generating an acceptable return for the company."

When asked how the easement impacted his work, Jeff responded, "I think the easement reflects the kind of long-term management Meadowsend strives to achieve anyway." He added, "Without an easement, we would have had to compete with folks who were focused on the quick buck. That would have been tough given the quality of the stocking."

In July of 2001, the WFCE was tested. Jeff called VLT after discovering some blown down timber on the property. The forest management plan had not been completed, but given the high value and quality of the trees, a salvage operation was needed. VLT's forester made a site visit, discussed the planned operation and gave approval to proceed. The landowner knew and honored the terms of the easement and the holder was reasonable in its interpretation. That's how life with an easement should be.

*"Without an easement, we
would have had to compete with
folks who were focused on the
quick buck. That would have
been tough given the quality of
the stocking."*

To fulfill its stewardship responsibilities, VLT has a full-time forester on staff, but not all entities holding easements do. If there is a local land trust in your area, stop in, introduce yourself, and get to know their program. Understand the easement process and consider volunteering. You have information and skills they will appreciate. Who knows, you may even get a little work. Once you've gained the necessary understanding, think about your clients. Instead of meeting and talking about the ones that got away, let's start talking about the properties that we've secured for the future.

Carl Powden is the Forest Projects Director and Pieter van Loon is the Stewardship Forester for Vermont Land Trust. Both are Forest Stewards Guild members.

Forestry in the Methow Valley, continued from page 6

The scale of the work is not large, but it does model the potential for forestry and conservation easements to together protect land from potential abuses such as fragmentation, overgrazing, clear-cutting and fire suppression.

While conservation easements might not be the most intuitive tool in the jacket of every field forester, my experience at the Methow Conservancy has impressed me with the power of conservation easements to educate landowners, connect them with professional advisors, coordinate the necessary ground work and record the results through long-term

photo-monitoring. Conservation easements have great potential to close the loop between the private and public benefits of private forestlands. In the words of one forested easement landowner in the Rendezvous, “We couldn’t imagine that land blackened with catastrophic fire, or with ATVs, cows and people running all over it. A conservation easement seemed like the only enforceable way to protect the land that we love over the long term.”

Katharine Bill, a FSG member, has a Masters of Forestry and became Executive Director of the Methow Conservancy in April of 2002.

BARRIE BRUSILA

From the Chair...



It's an honor to serve as the chair of the Board. As I want the Board to be accessible to every member, please feel free to contact me with your thoughts, ideas, etc. My email is mid-maine_forestry@juno.com.

This organization will grow and thrive with the support and work of its members. I'd like to apply the familiar concept of scale to the Guild itself. We are used to thinking at the scale of a landscape, stand, individual tree, and/or soil. We have different comfort levels with working at these various scales, and I encourage each of you to find your own niche where you can help the Guild, and thus your profession and yourselves, grow and prosper.

At the “landscape” scale, the national office has the exceptional staff of Mary, Steve and Angela; and Henry and other Forest Trust employees as well. The Board enthusiastically generates many good ideas and suggests directions for this hard-working staff. At the “stand” scale, several regions have coordinators who are employees of the Guild. These coordinators rely on you to suggest and assist with tours, workshops, meetings, regional legislative issues, and to help spread the word about the Guild. At the “individual tree” scale, think of the people you know who might be interested in the Guild and give them a brochure and newsletter, and invite them to a Guild meeting.

We can't do any of the above work without the “soil” which feeds us and all living beings. Like the soil, your good work in the woods and the passion behind it together are the foundation of the Guild and a real inspiration to me. Nourish the passion as it nourishes you. The Guild, which includes all of you, is the best thing that has happened to me professionally in my 20+ years as a forester. Let's all work, in our own way, to help spread the word to others who might share similar inspirations.

Barrie Brusila is the Chair of the Forest Stewards Guild. She and her husband Mitch are FSC certified resource managers who operate their business, Mid-Maine Forestry, out of Warren, Maine



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HELP CONVEY OUR VISION!

Submissions Sought for the Tenets of Forestry

Whenever Guild members get together, there exists a powerful sense of mutual understanding about what it is that members are trying to accomplish. Through the Tenets of Forestry Project, the Guild is attempting to create a means to convey this sense to a broad audience. The Tenets seek to crystallize the thinking and experience of Guild member foresters in a way that lays out "a coherent vision of forestry practice" that can be grasped by forestry students, landowners, timber companies, conservationists, policy makers, and other forestry professionals.

We are seeking foresters and allied natural resource professionals interested in contributing written pieces for inclusion in the Tenets Project. At present, we envision the Tenets unfolding as a series of essays or working papers that will be compiled into a larger unified whole. Currently, a seminal framework of the subject matter to be addressed is outlined in a Table of Contents. For virtually every topic listed in the Table, we hope to have both 1) general discussions and 2) personal examples/case studies. Please feel free to do either or both, and to address more than one subject. Written pieces may consist of anything from a few paragraphs to several pages, and if you have already written something that you feel would be appropriate for inclusion, send us that, too.

If you are interested in receiving the Table of Contents and/or contributing something to this effort, please let us know by September 20th, 2002.

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