

Alternative Use Facts Need of New Landowners

Incentive programs to promote better land management should recognize the landowner as the major decision maker, according to a recent study at The Pennsylvania State University. The survey was made among 80 individuals who had acquired land in Warren County during 1968 and 1969.

Public land management programs, the new owners suggested, should provide the landowner with adequate information on land-use alternatives. Such programs should also provide the owner with the means of deciding between conflicting uses, it was pointed out. Carrying out the study were B.J. Turner, C.H. Strauss, and L.J. Swandic of the School of

Forest Resources at Penn State.

A profile of the study group showed an average age of 43 years and an average income of \$14,000, with nearly half having attended college. Sixty per cent of the individuals live in Warren County, 10 per cent live elsewhere in the Commonwealth, and 25 per cent live outside the state. Only 15 per cent of the owners derived their total income from their land. Sixty per cent did not rely on their land as an income source.

Most of the survey group utilized their woodlands for several functions—with wildlife habitat, hunting and fishing, and timber production being equally and most frequently mentioned. The second most important set of

Schweiker Proposal Aids Flood Victims

Disaster unemployment assistance (DUA) will be made available to some 800 self-employed Pennsylvania farmers

objectives involved aesthetics, maintenance of water flow, soil protection, and speculative investments. Two-thirds of these owners had carried out some low intensity timber management activity on their land—either as planting, thinning, or harvesting of trees.

Older owners with better asset positions and fewer time constraints were inclined to become actively engaged in land management programs, but were less flexible in their pattern of usages. Younger owners had less time and money to invest in these pursuits but did maintain a wider array of land use options. The intent to harvest woodlands in the future was expressed more by younger owners than older ones.

Nearly half of the owners expressed interest in expanding their land holdings. Smaller properties were treated as residence or recreation sites. Larger ownerships frequently displayed increased management efforts and the adoption of financial objectives, often allied with timber production. Overall the current land ownership pattern does not appear to be detrimental to existing or future flows of timber products.

and small businessmen hit by June floods as a result of efforts by U.S. Senator Richard S. Schweiker (R-Pa.).

Schweiker announced adoption by the U.S. Department of Labor of his suggestion that self-employed persons working to repair flood damage on their farms and business should be considered "unemployed" until they are back in operation. The ruling is retroactive to the June flood and covers self-employed persons who had previously been denied benefits because of procedural guidelines issued by the Labor Department.

Schweiker said, "Although farmers and small businessmen repairing flood-damaged farms and businesses had no source of income until their repairs were completed, Labor Department rules still denied disaster unemployment assistance to them on the technical grounds that they nevertheless were working."

"This was clearly a discriminatory policy, resulting in hardship to hard-working farmers and small businessmen and their families. I am delighted that the Labor Department has adopted my proposal, and hope

this breakthrough has not come too late," he said.

In July this year, Schweiker expressed concern about Labor Department interpretation of DUA regulations. He wrote the Department to express concern that "existing regulations will cause some farmers to leave the farming business entirely, since unemployment compensation is desperately needed now by many, and they may be forced to give up their farms to keep their families and themselves at a bare subsistence level."

In September, Schweiker wrote Secretary of Labor James D. Hodgson to complain that denial of DUA benefits to self-employed farmers and small businessmen was "a particularly harsh interpretation of your own regulations."

"I question whether a farmer is able to perform services in his business where his ability to carry on such a business has been rendered impossible because of a disaster. In my view, a farmer cannot perform services in his business until he has regained the ability to carry on his business. He cannot do so until he has restored his farm to a condition in which he can generate income," Schweiker wrote Hodgson.

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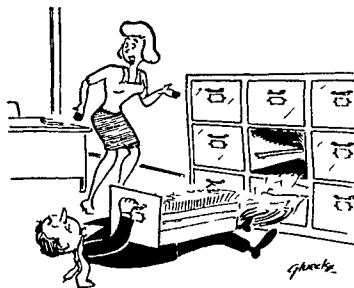


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