

# Tour Centers On Forest Stewardship

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Lancaster Farming Staff  
ROCKSPRING (Centre Co.) —  
More than 500,000 of the woodlot owners in Pennsylvania control 75 percent of the total woodlot area, or 12 million acres in the state.

Many have come to understand the importance of good woodlot stewardship, which can take many forms — including managing for the beauty of the property, timber, and wildlife.

John G. Buzzell, forest landowner, conducted tours of the Rockspring research farm forest recently at Ag Progress Days.

The emphasis of the tours was on forest stewardship — how to manage effectively to promote diversity and abundance of tree species and wildlife.

“What the best thing to do for one person’s plan for his woodlot wouldn’t necessarily fit somebody else’s objective,” said Buzzell to the group, which consisted of five woodlot owners from the state, including a farm that managed about 355 acres of wooded area. “But the whole idea of the ste-

wardship program is to manage your woodlot in a wise fashion so that you can use it, you can conserve it, and you can preserve what’s in it.”

The tour, which could also be taken self-guided with a map, emphasized managing clearcut areas to promote the resurgence of tree and plant species, brush pile management to promote new tree growth and wildlife habitat, rebuilding various tree species by canopy clearance, managing grape vines and other types of food for wildlife, water control using broad dip diversion structures, maintaining clearcut areas, and the aspects of genetic potential combined with growing conditions on the effect of tree standability.

One of the aspects of the stewardship program at the Rockspring forest was to get rid of undesirable plant species, such as the barberry, multiflora rose, autumn olive, and fern and to promote growth and regrowth of the pine, black walnut, and other native trees.

Emphasis of the tour was also

placed on management of water diversion structures and how to maintain them for wildlife. Maintaining them for insect development is important to sustain young poults and other types of wildlife.

Managing species for maximum diversity will help ensure the continuation of the forest and forest wildlife.

The 1.5-mile tour (on a road paid for by the sale of timber from the forest, according to Buzzell) also showed the effects of tree genetics and location on growth.

Buzzell said that forest landowners have a responsibility to take care of the forest. “The whole idea of this is to treat the environment that’s there in a kindly way. You don’t want to do anything to harm it. You may change it in some sense, but you don’t want to harm it.”



A stream with a natural rock bed flows into a hollow wooden log culvert in the forest. Buzzell said this may be the site for the original name of the natural underground “rock springs.”

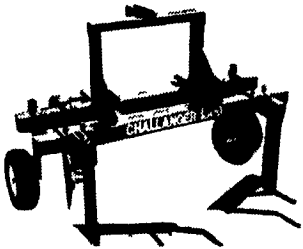


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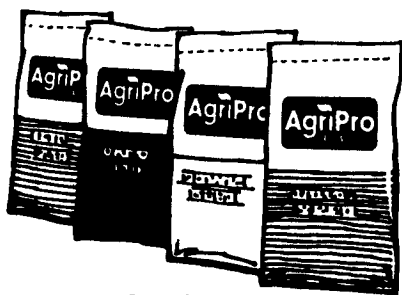
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