

# Penn State Scientist Appointed National Director Of Sustainable Forestry Partnership

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — Michael Washburn, associate director of the Sustainable Forestry Partnership in Penn State's School of Forest Resources, has been appointed national director for the partnership, effective Jan. 1, 2000.

The Sustainable Forestry Partnership works to document innovation in "sustainable forestry" — methods that meet society's needs for a range of forest values, goods and services while maintaining resources for future generations.

As director, Washburn will coordinate projects at Penn State, Oregon State University and Auburn University; recruit new university partners; raise funds for core and project-specific resources and serve as the contact person for multi-university research projects. He also will continue to work for Penn State. His office will be located at the USDA in Washington, D.C.

"We're really pleased to see the partnership expand," said Larry Nielsen, director of the School of Forest Resources. "A Washington presence means an enhanced ability to work with a wide range of agencies and organizations with interests in sustainable forestry. Michael's appointment demonstrates the school's national leadership in this area."

The partnership performs research on sustainable forestry, shares innovative information, educates and trains forest decision-makers and assists faculty and students, forest landowners, timber harvesters, foresters, mill owners, retailers, consumers and wholesale purchasers of wood on sustainable forestry issues.

A project with the Western Pen-

sylvania Conservancy is exploring ways to harvest timber on conservancy lands without conflicting with biodiversity and conservation. "Traditionally, the conservancy protected land by purchasing it and preventing it from being taken out of its natural state," Washburn said. "Now they're recognizing that lands can be thoughtfully managed for timber production. This project is an opportunity to put good science into practice."

With the Society of American Foresters, Washburn and information specialist Laurie Schoonho-

ven are developing a "virtual forest demonstration network," or web-based forest tour.

"Anywhere in the world, people will be able to go online and see how forests change over time," said Washburn. "They'll also be able to observe the effects of different management practices."

The first forests to go online include Seven Islands Land Company, a 1 million-acre forest in Maine; the McDonald-Dunn Forest, Oregon State University's research forest; and a private forest

in Alabama.

Washburn hopes his presence in Washington D.C. will generate internships for Penn State students. "Larry and I also are discussing a potential forest policy course, in which students do a residency in Washington D.C. and work with national leaders who live forest policy every day."

Washburn joined the school as research associate in 1998, after completing his doctorate in forest resources at Penn State. He earned a master's degree in wilderness

management and bachelor's degree in environmental studies from the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry in Syracuse.

The Sustainable Forestry Partnership is university-driven, with support from the MacArthur Foundation, the USDA's Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, the U.S. Forest Service's State and Private Forestry division, and other public and private sources.

## Pa. State Grange Asks For Premium Increase

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — A representative of the Pennsylvania State Grange asked members of the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board recently to increase the over-order premium so that the blend price for milk is \$16.50 per hundredweight to offset one of the biggest drops and to cover additional expenditures related to the drought this summer.

Art Zug, who farms 600 acres and has a dairy herd of 500 (of which 250 are milked) in Juniata County, told PMMB members at a

hearing held at the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture that setting the price at \$16.50 indefinitely would help dairy farmers whose product is priced by the PMMB to recover their cost of operation.

"My anticipated mailbox price for November and December milk is \$11.50 to \$12.00 per hundredweight, and that price is with over-order prices and the usual premiums we receive, which is much lower than our cost of produc-

tion," Zug said. "Our cost of production for November was approximately \$14.90 (cash cost per hundredweight) with most of the expenses being purchased feed."

As an advocate for rural Pennsylvania, the Grange is a leading force in agriculture and rural issues.

Zug said the lower prices paid to dairy farmers is having a ripple effect on agribusiness and rural communities across the state.

"My wife and I, along with many dairy farmers, are very concerned about the drop in milk prices," Zug said. "Many farmers are in financial distress, and now, with depleted feed inventory due to dry weather, that distress has been compounded. Machinery dealers, feed companies, and service corporations are very con-

cerned and are noticing less farmer buying power due to conditions. I know of a least one dealer in the area that has laid off several employees already."

Zug said that his financial numbers now — and in the future — are not very promising.

"We expanded our operation in 1997 with the hope that the agriculture economy would turn around," Zug said. "But today their outlook just keeps getting bleaker and bleaker. Where is agriculture going in the next century? If we, as a nation, become dependent on other countries for our basic food supplies, we put ourselves at great risk. Pennsylvania farmers must be profitable and productive to provide food and fiber for our nation and for the global economy."

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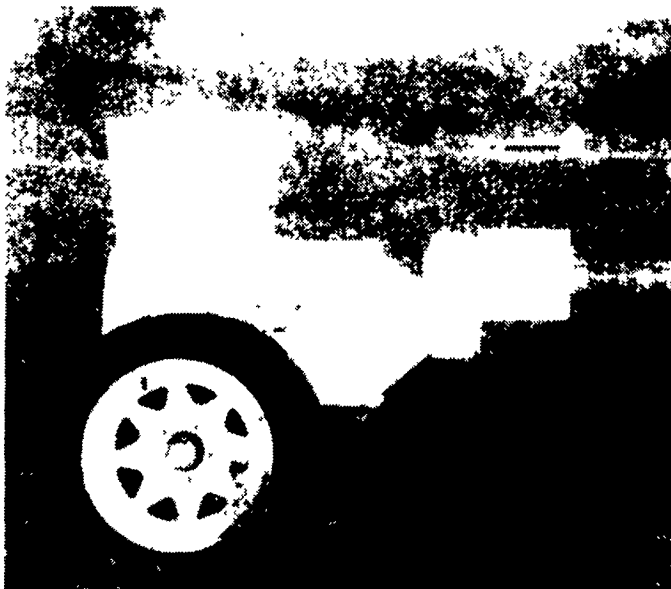
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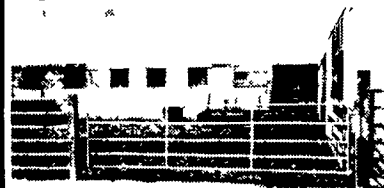
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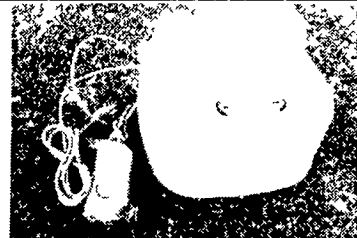


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