

Biological woodsman planning local timber harvest demonstration

Forests are vital to our communities, points out Jerry Gray, president of the Virginia Forest Watch. "Forests filter the air and provide clean drinking water; recreation, and habitat for wildlife. We also derive value from forests in the form of both timber and non-timber forest products. Forests sustain us and yet we develop our forests into parking lots and buildings at a rate of 26,000 acres per year in Virginia. While many can agree that developing forest lands with concrete and asphalt represents the greatest lost to forest cover across the state, when it comes to managing forest lands for its economic and other benefits not all foresters think alike."

On March 24, 2007, join Jason Rutledge of the Healing Harvest Forest Foundation for a Biological Woodsmen demonstration in Floyd County. For Rutledge, there is no question that the highest and best use of forests is to "address humans' needs for forest products while creating a nurturing coexistence between the forest and human communities" as revealed by his organization's mission statement. On March 24, Rutledge will demonstrate the forest-sensitive practice of removing the worst trees from the forest while leaving the better trees to grow using the renewable-resource extraction method of modern horse logging.

"I am glad to offer an opportunity to show that there is an alternative to the kind of logging that takes all the value off the land and leaves the land ravaged," said Harold McCall who is hosting the event on his land in Copper Hill. "Jason

Rutledge will demonstrate the forest-sensitive practice of removing the worst trees from the forest while leaving the better trees to grow.

is skilled at identifying the trees that are losing value due to disease as well as the trees that will increase in value if they are left to grow. Jason can take some trees down while not damaging the trees left standing, I'll still have a forest, and the horses don't tear up the soil like machines do."

McCall's cutover acreage in Copper Hill is typical of the small forestland parcels in Floyd County. There is not a lot of value in the forest today, but with some thoughtful care the future value of the trees can be greatly improved, he said. "We have a little bit of everything on our place that was an apple orchard back in the day."

Join Jason Rutledge, the Healing Harvest Forest Foundation, and Virginia Forest Watch for a demonstration of what it means to be a Biological Woodsmen serving the forested community of Copper Hill. Meet at the Apple Ridge Farm on Pine Forest Road in Copper Hill at 1:00 pm on March 24 to carpool to the demonstration. For more information telephone 929-4222.



Using a team of horses, a woodsman harvests trees.