



THE ROANOKE CENTER

Sustainable Forestry and African American Land Retention Project



WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING! **Alton Perry, Program Manager**

Project landowners have asked that the project provide a snapshot of what other landowners participating in the project have been up too. Listed below are the landowners accomplishments and events they attended. Roanoke Electric Cooperative, The Roanoke Center, and project staff appreciates everyone's participation and efforts in the success of this project.

Landowners Participating in Project

There are 110 landowners participating in the project. Project staff and partners have conducted 91 landowner/partner meetings to assist landowners with program services and technical assistance. These meetings have been held at the county NRCS Offices or the NC Forest Service Offices. Meetings are held with individual landowners and family members with Sustainable Forestry Project staff, County Natural Resources Conservation Service, and county NC Forest Service staff. Landowner/partner meetings provide landowners the opportunity to inform the agencies what they want to do with their property (landowner objectives) for the short term and long term. Landowners and agencies engage in a deep dialogue on how the technical assistance

the agency provides can assist the landowner in reaching their forest management objectives. During these meetings landowners and project staff and partners discuss topics such as forest management plans, engaging consulting foresters to assist with timber sales, how to reduce property taxes through the Forestry or Agriculture Present Use Taxation Program, and how to apply for financial assistance to implement forestry practices.

Landowner Outreach/Education

The Sustainable Forestry Project in partnership with the University of Mount Olive hosted an Estate Planning Workshop in Roanoke Rapids on November 18, 2016. 47 landowners attended this workshop. Landowners heard from attorneys on estate and succession planning, strategies for elder care, and understanding solar farm leasing. Attendees were able to meet local natural resources agencies and organizations, and local timber industry representatives.

The project in partnership with NCSU Extension Forestry hosted a Timber Markets workshop in Jackson on February 24, 2016. The workshop was attended by 51 landowners. Forestry Extension Specialists from NC State University presented: What is in a forest management plan; Selling



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timber in local timber markets; and The value of consulting foresters.

Project landowners Kenneth and Gloria Skinner presented to attendees what landownership means to them and how they want to leave their children and grandchildren a healthy and productive forest of many benefits through sustainable forest management. The Skinners talked about value in hiring Elizabeth Barnhardt, consulting forester to assist them with their timber sale and reforestation after final harvest. Elizabeth Barnhardt, consulting forester presented to attendees the process involved with selling the Skinners timber and preparing the harvest area to plant new loblolly seedlings for the next generation.

Project staff and project partners have attended monthly **Lunch and Learns** at local Science Technology Engineering and Math (**STEM**) schools to engage youth on the importance of natural resources and careers in environmental/natural resources fields. Youth are informed that science, technology, engineering and math are all a part of the natural resource fields.

Alton Perry presented a project report of accomplishments at **Congressman G.K. Butterfield State of District Address on May 3, Halifax Community College.**

Project Landowners Attend Conferences

Project landowners, Mr. & Mrs. Tyrone Williams and Mr. & Mrs. Richard Hewlin, attended the **Minority Landowner Magazine** Conference in San Antonio, Texas on February 18-20, 2016. The project provided a scholarship to attend the conference. The Williams and Hewlins attended breakout sessions on Engaging Youth in Agriculture, Land Ethics and the Broken African American Value Chain, and had opportunity to network with landowners from around the country to discuss their efforts and projects in agriculture and forest management. USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA Rural Development, USDA Farm Services Agencies, universities, and other natural resource agencies and organizations presented and provided landowner information during this conference. Project landowner Avis Gray and her daughter, Jordyn Gray, attended **Landowner/Brand owner Summit** in Chattanooga, TN on March 1-2, 2016. The meeting, a first of its kind, was hosted by GreenBlue and American Forest Foundation to allow a dialogue on sustainable forestry between landowners who produce fiber and corporations who use various wood products. Ms. Gray spoke on behalf of the project and received inquiry from the



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attending corporations interested in learning more about the project.. For more information on the Summit go to:

<https://www.forestfoundation.org/greenbl-ue-summit>

We applaud project landowners, Dr. and Mrs. Wendell Perry and family, along with Ms. Avis Gray and daughter Jordyn, who were featured in CoBank's Growing Rural America annual Corporate Social Responsibility Report. CoBank has provided funding to the Sustainable Forestry Project since 2013. The article can be found at www.cobank.com and search Growing Rural America.

Forest Management Accomplishments

Project landowners through assistance from project staff and project partners are implementing sustainable forest management practices on their properties. These practices include aerial application of herbicides to control undesirable brush prior to reseeded after harvest; pre-commercial thinning to reduce the number of loblolly pine trees per acre to encourage optimum growing conditions; and hiring of consulting foresters to assist with timber sales. Four landowners are in process of acquiring NC Tree Farm status which will identify these landowners as having certified forests.

For more information on the NC Tree Farm Program visit

<https://www.treefarmssystem.org/north-carolina> or contact your local NC Forest Service Office.

Project Accomplishments

Reforestation - 4,000 acres
56 forest management plans - 3,200 acres
3,400 acres under Present Use Taxation
\$200,000 cost share assistance through Environmental Quality Program (EQIP), NC Forest Service, Forest Development Program (FDP), and SFAALRP Forestry Services Fund.

Estate/ Succession Planning

Six project landowners have completed their estate/succession plans (wills, trusts, limited liability corporations) with financial assistance through the project's **Legal Assistance Cost Reimbursement Program.**

Upcoming Events

Sustainable Forestry Project landowners are invited to attend Roanoke Electric Cooperative's Annual Meeting and Member Appreciation Day on August 27, 2016, from 8am until 12pm at the Hertford County High School in Ahoskie.

To contact project staff call 252-539-4602 or 4603.