Comments from the incoming State Chair

Though 2007 has only started, the Michigan Society of American Foresters has an ambitious agenda for the year. The Executive Team met in January to map out our plan and to review our budget. We have about $2,000 in the bank account for operations and about $4,000 in the Michigan SAF Education Fund, formerly called the Foresters’ Fund.

The planning for the spring meeting is well on the way. This year’s topic will be focus on woody biomass which is a subject that may involve all of us in the future. Maybe we’ll have to start cruising tag alder, eh? The dates are set for May 8th to 10th and it will be at the Bay de Noc Community College in Escanaba. The fall meeting is still in the pre-planning stages, but a committee has been formed and the topic will focus on water. The latest version of Michigan’s Water Quality Management Practices on Forest Land, a.k.a. BMP Manual, should be out by then, and we are looking for a possible joint meeting with the Michigan Fisheries Society.

The LP Chapter is also planning for a one day meeting, on March 3rd, to be held in conjunction with the Walnut Council during MSU Agriculture and Natural Resources Week. And on March 2nd, there will be a Certified Forester test administered by SAF for those wanting to become a Certified Forester (CF).

As you may recall, last fall we finalized our Deer Position statement and in December Pete Squibb, Don Dickman, and Bill Rockwell made a presentation to the Natural Resource Commission on our Position. As Bill noted in his report to the Executive Team, “I don’t think we bombed”. As a follow-up to the Position Statement, Bill Cook will be sending out a forester perception survey of deer damage. When you get your survey, please fill-out and return so that we can have a better understanding of the effects of deer on forested areas.

What’s inside?

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HOW TO SUBMIT ARTICLES TO THE
MICHIGAN FORESTER NEWSLETTER

Everyone is welcome to submit articles, photos, ideas or suggestions! E-mail submissions are preferable, but other delivery systems are accepted. Articles should be MS Word documents or compatible format. All materials for publication should be submitted to:

Editor: Georgia Peterson
c/o MDNR FMFMD
PO Box 30452
Lansing, MI 48909
Phone: (517) 335-7383
Fax: (517) 373-2443

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A Letter from the Editor

Perhaps you’ve noticed that this issue is late. Very very late. Even if you haven’t been standing at your mailbox, fingernails drumming, I’d like to think that most of you are at least moderately interested in the content of the Michigan Forester. And so, I apologize for the delay. I have an excuse that rings as true as any version of the “dog ate my homework” you might hear from pupils.

You see, my computer betrayed me. I thought, since most of my files are kept on a server that is backed up on a regular basis and since we’ve got the latest virus software, that I was safe from the occasional crash. This was not a good assumption. Files were corrupted for this issue, not once, but twice. Since computers are supposed to be inanimate objects, this shouldn’t be taken too personally. But as these things become more complex and integral to our lives with every passing year, each computer failure becomes more of a personal failure that disrupts our ability to do the most basic tasks (like compiling a newsletter).

My message: Don’t trust computers. As they have evolved from their precious early tic-tac-toe and punchcard days, they have developed minds of their own and seem to have every intention of defeating the human race. Maybe not as dramatic a scene as a scene from The Terminator or The Matrix, but just as disastrous. You might suggest that human error causes these problems...but do they? Remain vigilant, and back up your backups if you use these confounded contraptions.

—Georgia Peterson

similar with some changes in language. We are also working on updating our expiring Fire Position. This should be finalized shortly.

Glenn Moll continues to spearhead the UP Autotour. Brochures are available in all the visitor centers in the State and it can be viewed our website. We recently spent $4,000 to print 30,000 brochures which should last about 3 years. Glenn tells us that some of the signs are starting to wear out, so new signs have been ordered and we’ll be purchasing posts and hardware. Glenn is looking for volunteers to help with the sign update/replacement project.

We’ve learned that a researched with the Northern Experiment Station (formerly known as the North-Central Experiment Station) is hoping to re-measure the experimental hardwood marking plots on the Duke’s Experimental Forest on the Hiawatha National Forest. MSAF is considering donating to this worthwhile cause.
We have two, new 50 year members: Dave Ridgway and Jonas Snyder. Wow, what an accomplishment and they no longer have to pay dues, though donations are accepted!

Bernie Hubbard has been our Council Representative for the past two plus years and this will be his last year. If you are interested in the council position, names are due by June. This is a commitment from 2008 to 2010.

Membership continues to be an issue and SAF is looking for solutions. For example, MSAF had 650 members in 1995 and we currently are down to 463. We’re competing with other more ‘hip organizations like the Ecological Society and it seems that younger people in general, aren’t ‘joiners’. The Council is considering proposals such as a ‘flat’ membership rate, a discount rate for new members, fewer member categories, voting for members who are not foresters, and including student membership years in your total membership years. See the article in this issue of the newsletter for more information. If you are really interested, I have a 22 page report titled “Proposed SAF Membership Changes.”

This year, as in all years past, is a busy one for MSAF. If we get most of what we planned done, it will be another great year. Good luck in your forestry endeavors.

—Doug Heym, 2007 State SAF Chair

Comments from the Outgoing Chair

If you ever want to make a year fly by, try being the head of a volunteer organization. You come into the year with so many expectations regarding what you like to see happen during your tenure, then life happens, your expectations get “down-sized”, and before you know it, the year is over.

But even with those down-sized expectations, 2006 was a good year for Michigan SAF.

In no particular order, here are some random thoughts on just a few of the things that happened last year. I think that after you read this, you’ll agree that we have an outstanding state society made up of some great professionals who are helping move the profession forward. And like me, you’ll be proud to have played a part in it. In the interest of keeping this to a short story and not let it become a Russian novel (I’ll bet you didn’t know that at one time Russian authors got paid by the page; check it out, it’s true), I won’t discuss all our accomplishments and activities, so if I don’t mention your favorite project, please understand.

We had two great state meetings, Feathers in the Forest and Perception, Partners & Prescribed Fire. We continue to spread our wings (oooh, sorry for the bad pun) and delve into topics that resonate with our membership, bring us together with other professions, and help give us the information we need to be better resource managers. Although I wasn’t able to make the spring meeting due to jury duty, I know at the fall meeting I learned more about the intricacies of eastern box turtle management than I ever knew existed. What a fascinating presentation that was, and what a great meeting overall.

To help keep us on the forefront of emerging issues, I encouraged the UP Chap-
ter to pursue woody biomass as a topic for the spring 2007 meeting. A committee is now at work putting together a comprehensive program. So put May 8 – 10 in Escanaba on your calendars.

We continued to move forward on the policy front, hosting our first policy workshop in several years. Inspired by our 2005 meeting on deer management, we developed a position statement on white-tailed deer in Michigan that I believe can help shape the discussion on this vital topic and serve as a model for other state societies and conservation organizations to follow. We’ve already put this statement to use in discussions with the Natural Resources Commission and our position has been covered in the media. Rumor has it that the Wisconsin SAF society is considering developing a similar statement. The challenge now is to continue to actively use this statement to move this issue to the forefront. I’m sure our current policy and state chairs would appreciate your ideas and help on this.

During 2006 we also worked to update two other position statements, “Fire Management” and “Non-industrial Private Forests”. None of the work on these three statements would have occurred without several members generously volunteering their time and expertise to meet, discuss, prepare and review drafts, and produce final statements that reflect the breadth of our society.

We also held our first ever legislative tour in 2006, bringing our state legislator’s staff to the field to see real forestry and discuss real issues. This is a success that gives us credibility in the capital and is certainly an effort that we can build on in the future.

Our auto tour continues to be a valuable educational asset. Thanks to the extraordinary efforts of at least one of our members (you know who you are, Glenn) and the continued funding support of our executive team, this effort serves as a nationwide model. We are even investigating the possibility of adding a phone number to the signs that travelers can call to get information on the forests that they see. At the national SAF convention in Pittsburgh, I highlighted this effort for the other state society chairs, with several of them following up with questions and comments.

Unfortunately, in 2006 our membership continued to shrink. But, because some of our members took the time to make personal contact with some of those who dropped out, a few chose to return to the fold. This shows how important each of us can be in making a difference.

Looking at communications, our website continues to be an excellent repository of information on what’s going on in Michigan SAF and Michigan forestry. If you haven’t visited the site lately, check it out at michigansaf.org. And you wouldn’t be reading these words, and those contained in the two Michigan Forester’s produced in 2006, if it wasn’t for the efforts of the Michigan Forester team, and those who submitted articles and advertisements. I don’t know about you, but I sure look forward to reading each issue and keeping up with what’s going on in Michigan forestry.

So, in an era of too much to do and so little time to do it, Michigan SAF continues to be a model volunteer organization. Thank you all for giving me the opportunity to serve. Our society is in good hands with Doug Heym as our chair for 2007, and I encourage you to find a niche in SAF that you have passion for and volunteer to help out. I guarantee that you’ll get more out of it than what you put in. You, the society, and the profession will be better for it.

In closing, as my Russian friends would put it, spaceba bolshoi and dasvidanya.

—Don Howlett, 2006 State SAF Chair
Michigan’s Forestry Consultants...
The Stars of Michigan’s Forests!

1. Glen Tolksdorf, CF
   Tolksdorf Forestry
   Calumet, 906-482-9366

2. Kevin Burns, CF
   Northwoods Consulting
   Sagola, 906-396-3024

3. Dean Francis
   Upper Michigan Land Management and Wildlife Services, Inc.
   Escanaba, 906-786-3488

4. Gerald Grossman, ACF & CF
   Grossman Forestry Co.
   Newberry, 906-293-8707

5. Donald Tracey
   Donald Tracey Forestry Corp.
   Cheboygan, 231-627-4610

6. Scott Erikson
   MichiTree, Inc.
   Manistee, 231-723-9946

7. Jerry Lambert
   Forest Resource Services
   Frederic, 989-619-2882

8. Doug Lee, CF
   Lee Forestry Services
   Auburn, 989-662-0139

9. Bill Rockwell, CF
   Plum Line & Metropolitan Forestry Consultants
   St. Johns, 989-224-4600

10. Tom Stadt, CF
    Tree Tech Forestry Consultants
    Augusta, 269-760-3565

11. Steve Ruddell, CF
    Forecon Inc.
    Rockford, 616-874-9934

*Only $30 for one issue, or $50 for two issues!
Contact Jerry Grossman
PO Box 426
Newberry, MI 49868
906-293-8707
gfco@up.net
SAF Council Team Suggests Changes to Address Shrinking Membership

One way or another, most members of SAF have heard the sad story of the organization’s steadily declining numbers both at the national and Michigan’s level. Nationally, SAF is losing about 11% of its membership per year. Here at home, it’s just as dismal: membership stands at 461 members as of the beginning of January. There have been lots of discussions over the years about why these membership losses continue. Are the private sector members leaving for other organizations? Are we providing the wrong membership benefits? Are the dues too high? Is it just part of a larger trend (i.e. fewer people in our society are “joiners”)?

Leaders in SAF have been putting their thinking caps on. A three-member Council Team (including our own Bernie Hubbard) joined the Director of Marketing and Membership, Charlene Schildwachter, to develop some options to address the problem. First, they took a look at the types of members who chose not to renew. There are a few interesting patterns:

- Over half of those non-renewers had been members for less than 4 years.
- Sixty percent of the non-renewers are young—in the 20-29 age bracket.
- Many members are lost when they transition from student to the professional realm. An increasing proportion of SAF members are “Golden Members.” You know what comes next.

Interestingly, the number of new members—at least nationwide—is increasing annually. It’s just that SAF is losing members at a faster rate.

SAF leaders examined the organization’s existing policies that may be disincentives to remaining a member, and assembled an extensive list of concerns. One that seems to stand out, and correspond to the timing of the majority of non-renewers, is the incremental increase in dues after six years. The thinking was that new members who are just entering their careers in forestry should be given a price break, ratcheting up to the actual dues level after getting settled in their jobs (assuming they’ve been getting raises in the process). Unfortunately, this increase may be interpreted as a punishment for membership tenure instead.

Another source of confusion and potential conflict is the current membership structure. SAF membership categories, according to the reviewers, are too complex and do not present SAF as inclusive. Categories like “conditional professional,” “associate,” and “technician” are confusing to new members and suggest some kind of exclusive hierarchy. These distinctions seem to have little value except to exclude some from voting in national or local elections.

Based on the Council Team’s observations, they outlined some proposed remedies:

- **Create two membership categories**: “Member” and “Student,” although national SAF staff would still keep track of the levels and types of education each applicant has.
- **Allow all members to vote at all levels, including students.** Since only 38% of all eligible voters actually voted in 2005, this change would likely not increase the number of voters significantly.
- **Abolish sliding scale dues.** All members, regardless of tenure, would pay $133. Cur-

“We cannot keep fiddling around the edges and making cosmetic tweaks—we’ve got to make some serious changes.”

(Continued on page 7)
rent students who wish to keep their membership after graduation may pay a discounted rate of $85 for up to 5 years. This offer would be made only to current students who maintain their membership.

- **Members can count their student membership years as part of total years as an SAF member.** This would not be retroactive.
- **Golden Members still maintain free membership**, but the Journal of Forestry subscription will cost $25. Since it is projected that 12% of all SAF members will be in this category by 2011, will this be financially stable?
- **Create one local unit fee for new members only upon application.** The goal here is to enable new members to join and have a choice up-front of choosing whether to belong to a state society, division, and chapter and knowing the cost, without receiving a second invoice.

**Abolish endorsement of new members.** An “endorser” should not be required to apply for SAF membership. *This particular action was approved by the Council in October 2006.*

These suggested membership changes reflect a sense of urgency in addressing the drastic declines in SAF participation. The Council Team report quoted one member as saying: “We cannot keep fiddling around the edges and making cosmetic tweaks—we’ve got to make some serious changes.” According to the report, it costs (on average) 10 times more to recruit a new member than it does to retain a current one. And once an organization loses a member because they are unsatisfied, it is extremely difficult to get them back.

For more information, contact our State Chair, Doug Heym (heymd@michigan.gov, 517-335-3342).

—G. Peterson, Michigan Forester Editor

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**Know someone out there who deserves recognition for his or her achievements? Consider a Field Forester Nomination!**

The purpose of the Field Forester Award is to recognize foresters who have dedicated their professional careers to the application of forestry on the ground using sound, scientific methods and adaptive management strategies. The awards will be presented to individuals who have displayed uncommon talent, skill, and innovative methods to achieve a record of excellence in the application of forest management.

**Eligibility Criteria**

⇒ Must be a member of SAF (state year of joining).
⇒ Must have practiced forestry in the field for at least 10 years.
⇒ Management intensity may range from very intensive applications to more extensive management regimes.
⇒ May be from any employment sector.

Nominations must be submitted to our Council Representative, Bernie Hubbard, by **31 May 2007**.

For more information, contact Bernie: 215 West Ave D Newberry, MI 49868 (906) 293-5627 forestmeister@sbcglobal.net
Position Statement on White-tailed Deer in Michigan

Position:
The Michigan Society of American Foresters advocates the sustainable use and management of all Michigan forest resources for the good of society. To do this, white-tailed deer (Odocoileus virginianus) populations must be low enough to allow for the regeneration of forests and the development of desired plant communities and wildlife habitats.

Issues & Background:
- Free-ranging white-tailed deer are a public resource owned by the people of the State of Michigan and managed by the Department of Natural Resources under the authority of the Michigan legislature.
- The Michigan Natural Resources Commission Policy 2007 on Deer Management, issued April 14, 1994, says:
  - The Department's goal is to manage the deer herd using management practices based on scientific research to:
    1. Maintain healthy animals and keep the deer populations within limits dictated by the carrying capacity of the range and by its effect on native plant communities, agricultural, horticultural, and silvicultural crops and public safety.
    2. Maintain an active public information program designed to acquaint the public with the methods of deer management and the conditions needed to maintain a healthy, vigorous herd.
- Heavy deer browsing can harm the diversity of plants and animals. The field experience of many foresters indicates that such deer browse damage is significant in some parts of Michigan.
- Deer population and habitat condition data, and research from Michigan and elsewhere, indicate that deer population densities are too high in some parts of the state to sustain healthy habitats for deer and other species.
- Deer overabundance could impact the forest certification status of both public and private forest lands.
- Deer hunters are management partners and recreational deer hunting is a critical management tool that must be part of any solution.
- High deer densities contribute to increasing car-deer collisions and spread of certain diseases.

Recommendations:
- State-wide, research-based, deer population, and habitat quality assessments and goals are needed in Michigan.
- A lack of site-specific research, however, should not prevent decisions to reduce deer populations in areas where excessive habitat damage is recognized by resource managers.
- Innovative deer-population control methods should be considered, especially where damage from deer is known and where current hunting strategies are ineffective.
- Hunter and public education programs regarding the ecological impacts and management of white-tailed deer must be part of any solution.
- Non-hunting funding sources should be explored for supporting statewide wildlife management.

Discussion:
Many issues of habitat management, deer population management, and natural resource management are highly contentious. Many challenges lie in funding, management philosophy, public outreach, and the application and implementation of the results of scientific research. Michigan is not alone in this situation. The stakes for current and future generations are high. Charting alternative courses will require the best resources which biological, social, and economic sciences can offer. The existing process for managing the white-tailed deer resource must be modified to allow for the input of all segments of the public. Affected publics must have ownership in the process. A degree of failure and learning must be expected and accepted, but the status quo is neither sustainable nor desirable. Ongoing dialogue about - and cumulative action on - these issues should be a high priority in the management of Michigan's natural resources.
Position Statement on Non-Industrial Private Forests

The Michigan Society of American Foresters supports policies that encourage sustained investments in forest management and forest protection. Private forestlands are a valuable, renewable resource. Proper management of these lands enhances air and water quality, soil health, recreational opportunities, visual quality, wood product supply, and wildlife and fish habitat. About 400,000 non-industrial private forest owners control more than half of Michigan’s total forestland base, and their management decisions are often long and natural resource professionals available to help improve the management of these lands, these owners often know little about their forestlands, are not aware of forest management opportunities for multiple uses, and do not understand forest products markets and marketing. Since less than 20 percent of forest landowners use professional forestry assistance, it is clear that current programs reach few landowners.

Current programs providing assistance, education, or financial incentives are administered and represented by various public and private entities including:

Michigan Department of Natural Resources  USDA Forest Service  Michigan State University Extension  USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service  Michigan Department of Agriculture  College and university natural resource departments  Forest products companies  Michigan Forest Products Council  Consulting foresters


Recommendation:
The Michigan Society of American Forester encourages the expansion of programs to help retain private forestlands and improve the management of these lands through:

- Information and education to help landowners understand and appreciate their forests, and to recognize opportunities for forest management and protection and forest product marketing;
- Technical assistance to help landowners develop forest management plans and practices;
- A skilled labor force (including loggers) to carry out forest management practices;
- Financial tax incentives; and
- Good markets for forest products.

To accomplish this, the above-mentioned organizations should agree on a set of principles and goals for NIPF programs and their respective roles and responsibilities in implementing these agreements. These organizations can be more effective by complementing, encouraging, and collaborating with each other.

In implementing this recommendation, all programs should reflect these concepts:

- Private landowners have diverse goals that may change over time.
- All landowners will benefit from more complete information on which to base their decisions.
- Landowners need to be encouraged to seek professional forest management assistance.
- Professional forest management should be based on the best available information.

Adopted by the Executive Committee of the Michigan Society of American Foresters on March 20, 2002, and revised and renewed on January 29, 2007; it will expire after five years unless revised, extended, or withdrawn.
UP SAF and Conservation Districts Co-Sponsor Workshop on “New Technologies Related to Timber Harvesting”

On August 3rd 2006, about 45 foresters and loggers attended a technical training workshop on “New Technologies Related to Timber Harvesting” co-sponsored by the UP Chapter of Michigan SAF and the Forestry Assistance Program of the Alger-Marquette Conservation District. The workshop was originally planned to focus on the various newer types of geotextiles and related materials. However, in response to requests from forest industry representatives and participating vendors, the program was expanded to include clean-up of hazardous spills on timber harvests and fire suppression equipment for logging vehicles.

The indoor morning session, held at the Munising Township Hall, was lead off by Mike Schira, of MSU Extension. Mike gave an overview of spill response planning prevention and clean-up on logging jobs emphasizing prevention and clean-up preparedness. Steve Harrington, a veteran of the Michigan DEQ’s Remediation Division, contributed helpful comments on applicable regulations and typical examples of what needs to be done if a spill occurs. Next up was Tom Millerwise, of Midwest Environmental Products, Inc. He first presented information and demonstrated the effectiveness of PeatSorb™, a specially treated peat moss product for cleaning up hydrocarbon spills. Tom then explained ColdFire®, a plant-based, liquid, fire suppression chemical with a remarkable ability to extract heat from hot or burning objects.

In the final morning presentation, Jim Howley, of Tensar Earth Technologies, Inc, and Keith Johnson (kjohnson@contech-cpi.com), of Contech Construction Products, teamed up to explain the theory of geogrid technologies for stabilizing roadbeds and slopes. As experienced professional engineers, Jim & Keith illustrated several examples of successful installations in the UP and the Lake States.

The afternoon session was devoted to a site visit at a geogrid-enhanced wetland crossing road on Spray Creek in north-central Alger County. The project was a cooperative effort between the Michigan DNR (MDNR), who owns the land, and Forestland Group, LLC (TFG), who constructed the crossing to access formerly unreachable timberlands. Shawn Hagan, of TFG, and Scott Lakosky, of MDNR, explained the history of the project and the savings in time and money allowed by the use of geogrid material. In short, much less fill was required to construct the road over muck soils, and the road is holding up well to heavy logging traffic. Joan Duncan, of MDEQ, was on hand to answer questions about permitting wetland crossings using geogrid technology.

—Chris Burnett, Ph.D., Alger-Marquette Conservation District Forester

And now for the fine print...

A brief list of current officers

2007 Chair: Doug Heym
2006 Past Chair: Don Howlett
2008 Chair-elect: TBD
Secretary: Jason Middlestadt
Treasurer: John Pilon
District V Representative: Bernie Hubbard

Awards: Craig Kasmer
Sustainable Forestry Initiative: Ron Scott
Continuing Forestry Education: Debra Huff
Membership: Amy Douglass
LSSU Liaison: Bernie Hubbard
MSU Liaison: Karen Potter-Witter
MTU Liaison: Margaret Gale

Foresters’ Fund Chair: Mike Elenz
MSAF Webmaster: Bill Cook
Policy Team Coordinator: Bill Rockwell
Communications Team Coordinator: Bill Cook
Science & Tech Team Coordinator: Les Homan
Autotour Coordinator: Glenn Moll
Newsletter Editor: Georgia Peterson
Newsletter Business Manager: Bill Hasse

Upper Peninsula Chapter Chair: John Penegor
Lower Peninsula Chapter Chair: Georgia Peterson
MSU Student Chapter Faculty Advisor: David MacFarlane
MTU Student Chapter Chair: Margaret Gale
U of M Student Chapter Chair: John Witter
Cash brought forward from previous year $5,302.60

Revenue

- Membership Dues $3,800.00 $3,760.00
- Interest $25.00 $28.61
- Meetings Proceeds (only spring meeting made money) $1,500.00 $537.67
- Contributions $-$ $-

Total $5,325.00 $4,326.28

Funds Disbursed as of October 30, 2006

- House of Society Delegates Assessment $235.00 $222.31
- Chapter Dues (to be paid in Dec.) $550.00 $-
- Michigan Forester $1,200.00 $1,050.00
- General Admin. (acct fees, postage, ballet printing) $50.00 $613.47
- State Chair $-$ $-
- MI Forester Editor Honorarium (to be paid in Dec.) $200.00 $-
- MI Forester Bus Mgr Honorarium (to be paid in Dec.) $200.00 $-
- Secretary Honorarium (to be paid in Dec.) $200.00 $-
- Treasurer Honorarium (to be paid in Dec.) $200.00 $-
- Student Chapters $500.00 $-
- State Meetings $-$ $-
- UP Auto Tour Brochures $1,500.00 $1,500.00
- National Meetings Attendance $1,000.00 $-
- Leadership Academy Attendance $1,000.00 $1,524.17
- Awards $500.00 $359.79
- Awards Display (update) $200.00 $-
- Policy & Legislative Event $2,500.00 $1,001.13
- Misc $500.00 $137.05

Total $10,535.00 $6,407.92

Total Michigan SAF cash as of October 30, 2006 $3,220.96
Total Michigan SAF Education Fund cash as of October 30, 2006 $5,439.13

Michigan Society of American Foresters has cash assets only.
Prepared by: John Pilon, Treasurer
SAFE offers a wide variety of opportunities to volunteer and assist in making this the best professional organization around. Take advantage of the benefits you receive from SAFE. One easy avenue is to help with the publication of the Michigan Forester. Become a reporter, a photographer or simply help review the content. Contact Georgia Peterson or any other member of the executive team to learn how you can help SAFE today.

Deadline for the next issue is May 15th!