

Forest Stewardship Planning in West Virginia

Country Roads Take Me Home...

The Challenge

When Jim Shipman retired as Chairman of the Physics Department at Ohio University, he returned to his native West Virginia and purchased a 130-acre farm along Route 250 in Barbour County. The old farm had a few hayfields and acres of woods that were not readily accessible, so Jim could not enjoy his favorite pastime of jogging. He began trading some timber to a local sawmill in order to get a little bulldozer work done on a few of the roads. But his dilemma was how to obtain good overall access to the forest for recreation without degrading the aesthetic appeal of the woods.

The Solution

Jim met with Joe Tekel, a private consulting forester, who frequently prepares Forest Stewardship Plans in West Virginia. The Forest Stewardship Program is funded through the Northeastern Area, and delivered through the West Virginia Division of Forestry. Tekel interviewed Jim and his wife Genevieve to help them begin formulating a plan to meet their goals. He inventoried the woods and suggested work activities that could help them achieve the desired results.

Joe knew how to develop a planned road network that would provide good jogging as well as access to a future cabin location for the Shipmans' children and grandchildren. As part of a timber sale, Joe opened up a vista for the kids' cabin that will provide an outstanding view of Laurel Mountain.

The consulting forester knew how to develop a planned road network that would provide good jogging and access to a cabin for the landowner's children and grandchildren.



Jim Shipman and daughter Sarah examine a stump and an adjacent crop tree which has been released.

Resulting Benefits

Tekel's inventory revealed that part of the forest could support a commercially operable thinning that would yield sufficient sawtimber to pay for good roads, plus offer some additional income. There were grapevines that needed deadening so they wouldn't damage the crop trees. Jim was willing to do that work himself. It was good exercise, and ensured that the job would be done correctly.

Sharing Success

Jim says, "It is nice to have visitors tell you that they are impressed with the number of good trees you have left after a logging job is completed."

This story is not over. Jim and Joe are now talking about regenerating part of the forest and discussing the type of work that will need to be done to accomplish that goal. All of this will be done while maintaining the overall aesthetic appeal of the farm for the children and grandchildren in Florida, who one day want to come home to live in West Virginia.



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