Marketing and Selling Trees in Kansas

I would like to share my recent timber sale experience for anyone who is contemplating a timber sale. I hope this experience might help others understand some of the pitfalls and successes in conducting a standing timber sale.

In 1977, I purchased an 18-acre property that consisted of a house, 4-acre yard, and 10 acres of native timber. There were also 4 acres of uncultivated land which I tilled from 1977-1980, and planted with 750 seedlings from the Kansas Forest Service to create a black walnut plantation.

I spent 40 years mowing, pruning, thinning, fighting invasive species, and removing climbing vines. I decided to sell some of the marketable native timber in 2017.

I started the process during fall 2016 by hiring a consulting forester, because the Kansas Forest Service’s District Foresters no longer provide tree selection and marking services. In December, the consulting forester and I selected and marked 17 black walnuts, 10 oaks, and 6 hackberry trees. I created a spreadsheet of the marked trees. The consulting forester then helped me set up documents for a Solicitation for Bid, and a Contract for Sale.

On February 13, I mailed the spreadsheet and documents to five Northeast Kansas loggers. The loggers were given until March 31 to inspect the timber, and make their bid. A bid opening was scheduled for April 5. One of the loggers inspected the timber, but chose not to bid. None of the other loggers responded, and I was disappointed with this lack of interest.

Unsure how to proceed, I reached out to other loggers on the Kansas Forest Service’s “Kansas Timber Buyers Guide.” I contacted one logger recommended by a friend, who was interested enough to come cruise the timber, but only wanted to buy on a share basis. Not being interested in this type of sale, I declined the offer.

In mid-June, a Southeast Kansas logger contacted me to ask if I had sold my timber. I had not, and he asked if he could cruise my timber with me. We inspected the timber on June 23, and he suggested that I had some additional trees that were marketable. I agreed, and was paid for the agreed-upon trees. The trees were cut and yarded July 5-6, and the logs were loaded and transported a week later.

I did accomplish my goal; however, my local Northeast Kansas loggers proved to be nonresponsive for the most part. I would always be leery of working with any logger who will not pay before cutting any timber. Once your timber has been cut, you have little or no recourse to recover promised payment from your logger. A signed contract with payment prior to cutting is your best option for protecting your interests.

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Dennis Morriss – Tree Farmer, Walnut Council member, and former KFA vice-president

Upcoming Events

- **December - May** – Order spring conservation seedlings online at kansasforests.org or call 888.740.8733
- **December 12, 8:30am-2:00pm** – Bridging the Gap Urban Wood Seminar & Workshop – Anita B Gorman Conservation Discovery Center, Kansas City, MO – bridgingthegap.org/events
- **February 22, 9:00am** – KFA Board Meeting – KDWPT Office, 300 SW Wanamaker Road, Topeka, KS
2017 Fall Forestry Field Day

“Rain, Rain, Go Away...” Those were the words that resonated during this year’s Fall Forestry Field Day, held on October 4th in the community of Leonardville, approximately 30 minutes northwest of Manhattan. In spite of the weather, over 100 attendees turned out to learn about a variety of forestry-related topics, including managing young tree plantings, controlling invasive species, managing honeybees and pollination, tick borne diseases and protection, biochar opportunities for Kansas, and wildlife habitat management. Aside from the more formal presentations, participants had the opportunity to interact with, and ask questions of, numerous natural resource professionals, as well as other landowners.

One particularly notable aspect of the field day included the opportunity for participants to hear from Bill and Faye Kennedy, the 2017 Forest Stewardship Tree Farmers of the Year. The Kennedys have spent the last 27 years converting a “worn-out” piece of farmland into the forestry showplace we see today. The Kennedys began establishing thousands of trees and shrubs through the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) in 1990, and more recently, they began removing black locust and replanting with oak, hickory, and pecan trees. Participants staying for the duration of the program were rewarded with clearing skies, and a trip to the Kennedy Tree Farm for a first-hand view of all their hard work and wonderful accomplishments. Thank you to everyone who helped make the field day a success, despite the not-so-cooperative weather!

EVENT FOR LOCAL URBAN WOOD SUPPLIERS AND USERS PLANNED FOR DEC. 12 IN KC

Bridging The Gap’s Green Business Network will conduct a two-part Urban Wood Utilization Seminar and Workshop on December 12 at the Anita B. Gorman Conservation Discovery Center in Kansas City, MO. The event is funded by the Kansas Forest Service, with partnership support from the Kansas City Center For Architecture and Design, and Missouri Department of Conservation.

Millions of ash trees dying from the invasive emerald ash borer (EAB) provide the opportunity to use these, as well as other species of trees downed for various reasons, as “urban lumber.” According to the U.S. Forest Service, wood from all dead and diseased community trees could equal 3.8 billion board feet, or nearly 30%, of annual hardwood consumption in the United States.

The event’s sessions include “Designing With Urban Wood: A Practical Guide To Telling a Story While Saving The Planet,” and “Partnering For Efficiency: Creating an Effective Regional Urban Wood Supply System.” Please visit www.bridgingthegap.org for more information and registration.
KFA By-laws Revisions Outcome

The vote for the revision of the KFA bylaws was held at the Fall Forestry Field Day on October 4, 2017. The present KFA members unanimously approved the changes that had been mailed in mid-September to the entire membership. To view the current by-laws visit KSForestryAssociation.org.

— Carolyn Turney, KFA President

2017 Walnut Council Meeting

Approximately 150 attendees gathered in Lafayette, Indiana from June 11-14 for the 2017 Walnut Council Annual Meeting, including 15 Kansas representatives. The meeting was held in conjunction with the Thousand Cankers Disease Research and Operational Meeting. Many agencies were represented with information from various studies. It does appear that the disease is slowing and may be impacted by trees under stress.

Sue and I attended a tour of the Martell Forest, a property of Purdue University's Department of Forestry and Natural Resources. Here we viewed the oldest walnut clone bank at Martell, a grafted-clone trial, and a butternut resistance breeding planting. We also visited the Revington Moots Creek Farm with demonstrations and information on milling & quality, plantation management, EQIP invasive cost share, native stand management, prairie management, and tree identification. Next was the Purdue University Richard G. Lugar Forestry Farm. Topics covered included demonstration planting, flow/seed orchards, oak selections for mast and quality, and control techniques for bush honeysuckle.

Tours for partners this year included a short trip to Delphi to Explore the Wabash and Erie Canal and restored opera house, as well as the Indiana prairie, historic farmstead, and state park near Prophetstown. The post-conference tour took place at the Hugh Pence Tree Farm, an amazing family operation which was also on the national meeting tour in 2004. The tour highlighted projects Mr. Pence completed with success, as well as projects that were not so successful.

2017 was another successful and informative meeting. The vast knowledge shared by the presenters and landowners always amazes us. We hope to see more Kansas tree farmers at the meeting next year in Dubuque, Iowa in July 2018, which will include tours in Southwest Wisconsin.

Floyd Schmidt – Incoming KFA Vice-President

Member Benefits Reminder!

As a member of KFA, you are eligible for a 7% discount from Forestry Suppliers, Inc. Use code KKS when placing an order online or over the phone – www.forestry-suppliers.com – 800.752.8461
The KFA would love to hear from you!
What have you been doing with your land?
What would you like to see KFA doing for you?

Help KFA to save money and trees, go paperless!

If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically in the future, please contact Julie Sharp with your email address at: jsharp.kfa@gmail.com

Special thanks to contributing authors:
Dennis Morriss, Thad Rhodes, Carolyn Turney, and Floyd Schmidt