

# Kickapoo Sustainable Post

Newsletter of the Kickapoo Woods Cooperative

## KWC Members Provide Forestry Services

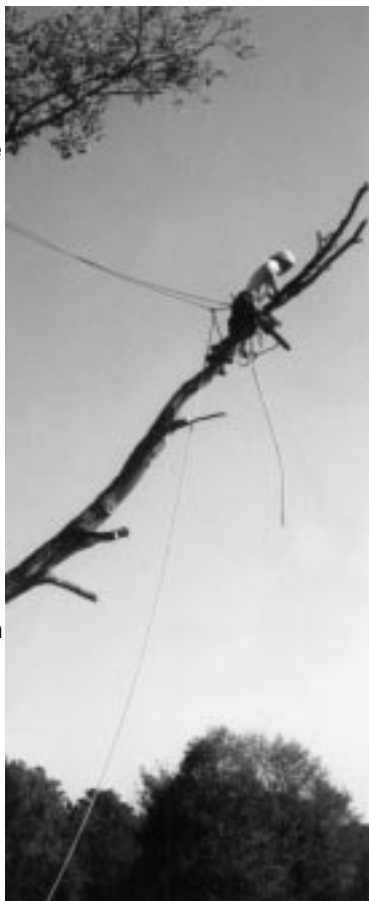
A few KWC members are providing forestry-related services, so we are beginning this series of articles to inform readers that there are some practitioners in these fields who are concerned with the health and beauty of our regional forest resources. If you are a member with a forestry-related business, please contact the editor so you can be included.

Brian Graham started offering tree trimming and removal in 1999 under the name **Action Tree Service**. He already had 10 years experience clearing power lines with Davey Tree, a long-established tree service with mandatory ongoing training for its crews in safety practices and work techniques. Before working for Davey, Brian had cut and sold firewood.

When Davey Tree lost their contracts in the area, he made the decision to offer tree trimming services independently. Brian uses ropes and harnesses to fell trees away from buildings, crop trees, or other valued items nearby. Sometimes this means climbing the tree and cutting off limbs or sections one at a time and lowering them to the ground where they will not cause damage.

Brian lives in the south Kickapoo region near Knapps Creek off Sleepy Hollow Road. He works in a 40-mile radius from his home base, taking him into Crawford, Richland, Vernon, Sauk, Grant and Iowa Counties. When a potential client contacts him, Brian goes to the site to look at the tree and evaluate how long it will take and what extraordinary risk factors may be involved. His bid is offered for no charge; he feels he must see the actual site to give a fair estimate of the cost.

Besides this, Brian also works part-time for a consulting forester, marking for and executing TSI (timber stand improvement) harvests. His knowledge of the woods is deep and broad and he is always seeking to expand his understanding. He loves being out in the woods and working with trees, getting plenty of fresh air and exercise, and facing new challenges every day. To contact Brian regarding his services, call him at 608-872-2285.



Brian Graham taking down a huge tree leaning over a house.

Photo by Linda Ness

**Kickapoo Sustainable Woods LLC** is a group of 3 young men doing primarily timber stand improvement (TSI) cutting and some tree planting. At some point in the future they intend to invest in a skidder so that they can also do sustainable harvests.

The company consists of Aaron Larson, Rhett Adams, and Teague Reynolds. All three have taken FISTA's chainsaw safety training and are now completing classes for SFI (Sustainable Forestry Initiative) certification. Rhett apprenticed with an experienced horse logger in northern Wisconsin, who educated him in the principles of GOL (Game of Logging, an advanced level training in chainsaw techniques for sustainable forestry) and gave him good experience in directional felling in red pine plantations. Aaron started thinking seriously about forestry when he was doing tree planting work in Louisiana in the mid and late '90s. Back in his native Wisconsin, he followed up to learn more, and was shocked to read in a DNR study that the harvest in the Kickapoo region is greater than the growth. "That really motivated me toward getting involved with the co-op," said

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## From The Coordinator

Last January I reported here that the Co-op had 34 members and 4400 acres of woodland under member ownership. As of January 03 KWC has 54 members with more than 7000 acres of woodland. Though significant, our pace of membership growth has not met our expectations, largely because we have been concentrating on developing our educational and management services.

Since this time last year the co-op has conducted many and varied workshops, mostly well attended by members, foresters, loggers and landowners. KWC members have elected their first board of directors and the board has developed management and marketing services to serve its members' management plans. The co-op can now offer some services in-house as well as through professional forestry consultants. Our logger training program was kicked off in November 02 and has garnered a core group of students, some longtime loggers as well as new people to the industry. We have experience with some of these woods professionals and can recommend their services. KWC has also developed and can supply to its members sample woodland services contracts with fill-in-the-blank or scratch-out terms. Several of our members have taken advantage of the above services and we can now plan to use their land as demonstration plots for future workshops.

### Expanding our Membership

This year we are concentrating on membership development. To this end we are going to target two main groups of landowners, namely absentee and farmer. In February and March we will have a booth at the Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference and next summer we will have a booth at the local county fairs. Also we will be mailing membership brochures to absentee landowners in the region. Growth of the membership is critical to the co-op's development of in-house services and sustaining revenue.

### Polishing our Plans

Development of member management plans and the co-op's management plan database are also critical to the business plan.

Management plans can be obtained through KWC and its contracted consulting foresters, the Wisconsin DNR, other consulting foresters or may be landowner developed. Wisconsin Managed Forest Law (MFL) plans will give the landowner considerable property tax savings, the deadline for 2004 enrollment is January 31st 2003. MFL plans are contracts with the state for 25 or 50 years and are designed for timber production. They do contain mandatory practices so it is essential that the landowner's objectives are clearly communicated to the plan developer and clearly stated in the plan. MFL as well as other

plans can open opportunities to the landowner cost-sharing programs that mitigate the cost of non-commercial forest management practices. Please do not hesitate to contact me for more details on management plan development.

### Strengthening Our Co-op

Our continuing objective is to build a strong and cohesive cooperative organization that can supply the services demanded by our members. The main challenge in this regard is maintaining the cooperative structure and its financing. Aside from growing membership and developing operational services, we as a group must make investments in our land as well as in the cooperative. We have been supported by the investment of a core group of member volunteers, money grants, forestry professionals (State and private), other woodland owner organizations, forestry professors and students, development organizations and a host of others. The point is that we can not continue to support the administration of the Cooperative with grant money. We need to devise a method of financing co-op administration and function internally. To this end we continue to explore ideas that will achieve our main objective of improving the region's forest resource.

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Paul Bader, KWC Coordinator

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Aaron, “and being responsible with the chainsaw, and helping to establish healthy forests rather than high-grading.”

Teague’s experience began with running a chainsaw as a teenager cutting firewood with his dad, but he really got interested in stewardship of the woodlands when he purchased a piece of land and wanted to harvest logs to build a home. He began to research how to harvest trees with an awareness of the forest community’s future. He now lives in a timber frame house he built from his woods, and has utilized the workshops and training opportunities offered by the woods cooperative to increase his skills and knowledge to help him to be mindful of just what he’s cutting down and why.

Rhett has equipment and know-how to climb trees in tight cutting conditions, and has had previous book-



Paul Bader

KSW reduces all brush to 3' high or lower to help return nutrients to the soil.

keeping experience, so he keeps their books and paperwork.

Kickapoo Sustainable Woods (KSW) is based in the Green Hollow area west of La Farge, but they travel throughout the valley and beyond to work. They would like to focus on improving the forests locally, but demand for their services has taken them as far as Fennimore and Lake Geneva. The key is that a

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**Member Profile: Paul and Bernadette Hayes**

by Jack Knight

The story of Paul and Bernadette Hayes as KWC members begins with the water. Paul’s longtime active interest in Trout Unlimited led to his daughter, Judy, fly fishing on the Blaine Rudrud farm. She met the landowner, conversed with him, and this eventually led to the Hayes family purchasing most of the Rudrud farm north of Bloomingdale a year later. While it was water that led them here, owning a woodland prompted the Hayes—who are career biology educators themselves—to learn through Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association, R.C.D AgroForestry program, D.N.R and eventually KWC, all about the woods they now owned and how to best manage it to meet the diverse goals they have developed. Their 156 acres on the upper reaches of the West Fork Kickapoo, downstream from Jersey Valley lake, are being managed with a wide range of goals.

One of the first programs the Hayes became involved with was DNR public access for trout fishing, and the stream and streambank improvement projects that go along with that, including riprap, fish “cages,” and vegetation management. The Hayes property is under MFL and Forest Stewardship plans, written up by

*Hayes, continued on page 4*

landowner must be interested in and able to pay for a harvest that may or may not pay for itself in saleable logs or lumber because of the focus on removing the lower quality trees to allow the healthy ones to get more light and nutrients.

To bid on a job, KSW members hike through the proposed harvest area, and consider the ease or difficulty of working there, amount of acreage, slope of the land, how much cutting is needed, size of the trees, and how much trail area will need to be cleared, along with the landowner’s objectives for the woodlot.

Aaron, Rhett and Teague enjoy the hard work out in the woods, but most satisfying is the feeling that they are doing something positive to counter the decline in our precious woodlands, as Rhett says, “getting away from the standard logging practices—more low impact, thinking about the future.” Teague said the hardest was a postharvest TSI job they did where not only did they see the damage done in a conventional harvest, but had to search for ways to enable the forest to rebuild its health and vitality. “Our approach is working with the woods and trying to not harm that fragile ecosystem,” said Teague.

“I like walking away from a job and knowing I will be able to come back to it some day and see the result—a nice, healthy forest.” said Aaron.

For more information, contact any of the three: Aaron Larson 625-2890; Rhett Adams 625-2067; Teague Reynolds 625-6158

## Calendar

KWC board meetings are scheduled for the second Monday evening of each month.

25 Jan - Horse Logging Field Day, Madeline Island WI. Living Forest Cooperative, Charly Ray, 715-682-0007; <http://www.livingforestcoop.com>

**1 Feb - Timber Stand Improvement workshop** at Paul Bader's, S3711 Green Hollow, west of La Farge. What to cut and what to save toward a healthy, more vigorous forest? Hike these woods and learn what considerations go into marking the trees. 625-2515; domehome@mwt.net

06-Feb - Logging influence of plant diversity Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center, Bloomington, MN USA. Minnesota Native Plant Society, MNPS@HotPOP.com; <http://www.stolaf.edu/depts/biology/mnps>

14 Feb - Wabasha County Forestry Day, Lake City Sportsmens Club, Lake City, MN

Woodland Chemicals and Equipment events provides advice on timber stand improvement, buckthorn removal, gopher control, chemical to use in forestry projects, woodland manager of the year presentation, chainsaw operation and safety. Terry Helbig, 651-345-3216. \$3.00 for lunch

### *Hayes, continued on page 4*

a private forester. The plan goes into great detail with timber inventory and management practices described in each of 11 stands, including crop tree release, small plantation thinning, timber stand improvement. The Hayes also have taken on planting shelterbelts for wildlife, trail clearing, fence removal, a little prairie planting and keeping some of the place in agriculture, all with maximum diversity in mind. Paul sees the KWC as a valuable forestry education service, and hosted a field day on their property last fall.

Paul also sees good potential for getting more recreational property owners involved in KWC as well as any number of wildlife and conservation programs, public and private.

**15 Feb - KWC display assembly workday.** Contact Paul Bader 625-2515; domehome@mwt.net

22 Feb - Madison Area Woodland Owners Conference, Insurance Headquarters Training Center Madison, WI, 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. State & federal woodland management programs plus CWD update, invasive species management, especially with fire and grazing. Connie Curran, (608)224-3704. \$25 before February 12th

27-Feb -1 Mar - Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference LaCrosse, WI. Faye Jones, 715-722-3153; moses339@wwt.net; <http://www.mosesorganic.org>. **KWC will present** a workshop and have a booth.

5 Mar - Fire Ecology Cloquet Forestry Center Cloquet, MN USA. Fires and tree mortality, six fire regimes in the Midwest, landscape patterns and diversity, and fragmentation of the forest and fire. Mary Ann Hellman, 612-624-7222; mhellman@forestry.umn.edu. \$125 (\$55)

6-7 Mar - Red Oak and Paper Birch: The challenge of managing for two disturbance-dependent species Telemark Resort Cable, WI USA Matthew Davis, (715) 532-6322, matthew.davis@ces.uwex.edu; <http://www.wisaf.org>

8 Mar - Annual Tri-State Forest Steward Conference Sinsinawa Mound Center Sinsinawa, WI. Paul H. Wray, extension forester, Iowa State University, (515) 294-1168, phw@iastate.edu; <http://www.ag.iastate.edu/departments/forestry/ext/fep.html>. Register by Feb.28.

21 Mar - Environmental Aspects of Forestry, Timber Harvest and Wood Use Kaufert Lab, U of MN, St. Paul, Mn. Jim Bowyer, 612-624-4292; jbowyer@umn.edu; <http://www.cnr.umn.edu/WPS>. \$110 (\$99 early regis.)

22 Mar - 3rd Annual Tri-State Forest Stewardship Conference Grand Theatre, Keokuk, IA. Paul H. Wray, 515-294-1168; phw@iastate.edu; Register by March 16.

**12 April - KWC Annual Meeting**—save this date, members!

**The mission of the Kickapoo Wood Cooperative is to provide sustainable forestry education, management and marketing services to landowners of the Kickapoo Valley and neighboring watersheds.**

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