

Carbon Offsets could mean cash in woodlot owners' pockets

By **Bob Austman, Manitoba Representative
Canadian Federation of Woodlot Owners**

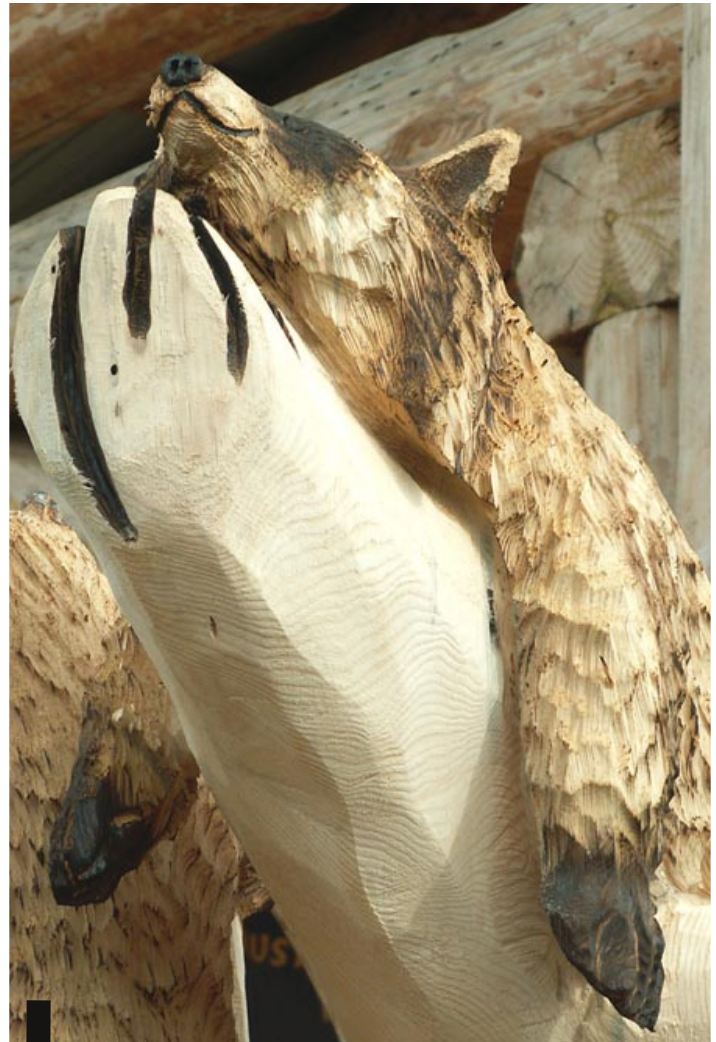
So what's your forest really worth? World governments are finally poised to put a real price on the value of trees in terms of how much carbon they hold, and the Carbon Offsets program that is now in the works in Canada could soon be putting money in woodlot owners' pockets.

It's hard to put a price on seeing wildlife on your trails, or sitting around a warm fire in the woodstove burning your homegrown firewood. It's tough to put a price on cross-country skiing on your own trails in the woodlot, or watching your kids build a tree fort in the woods. It's hard to put a price on the warm feeling that your trees are helping to purify the air, filter water, and suck up carbon. These are intangibles, but very important to a healthy global ecosystem.

Other countries have been paying landowners for many years to simply leave their forests intact. Countries such as Costa Rica, Germany, and Australia have very successful programs. We in Canada have fallen behind in recognizing how important our woodlots really are to the grand scheme of things. Has the time now come for society to "pay the piper"?

The leading nations of the world have come together twice in the last decade to hammer out an agreement which would ultimately reduce carbon

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A real cut-up

It looks like a snoozing raccoon, but it's really a work of art created by a Wisconsin artist, with the help of a half-dozen chain saws.

See more on pages 6 and 7.

- **Family BBQ planned for Birds Hill Park, page 2**
- **Busy year on tap for MFA Woodlot Program, page 5**

The Manitoba Woodlot is published six times annually as a service to the membership of The Woodlot Association of Manitoba (WAM).

WAM seeks to promote an understanding of sustainable woodlot management, increase income and employment potential for the woodlot sector, promote the use of woodlot products in the place of non-renewable and imported products, and develop human resources in woodlot management.

WAM represents the interests of our members within the Canadian Federation of Woodlot Owners (CFWO). The CFWO makes those interests known to forestry ministers at both levels of government.

WAM also has a representative to the Manitoba Model Forest, another organization that promotes sustainable management of Manitoba's wooded areas.

WAM is a non-profit organization led by a volunteer Board of Directors, which meets monthly. Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) is held each year before the end of March and is open to all members in good standing.

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Family BBQ planned for Birds Hill Park

Mark your calendar for WAM Fall Family Day and BBQ at Birds Hill Park at noon on Saturday, September 11. Yes, it is technically still summer, but we'll be quickly heading into the fall by then.

Birds Hill Park has a remarkable history and natural features, particularly in the north part of the park. The 8300-acre park was once an island in glacial Lake Agassiz and is now home to one of the largest concentrations of White-tailed Deer in North America.

WAM has booked Site 4 in Group Use Area 1 in the north-central part of the park, near the Aspen and Chickadee trails. There is also a trail to the north lookout tower. And WAM will be arranging to have a park interpreter on hand to explain the history of the park.

The plan at this point is for a noon-hour lunch, followed by a park tour. BBQs will be set up in the site's large picnic shelter, where there is also water and electricity, and modern washrooms nearby.

There is no charge for the park entrance or the Family Day. All you have to bring is a picnic lunch, although some food will be provided by WAM. Watch for more details in the next issue of *The Manitoba Woodlot*.



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To clear-cut, or not to clear- cut, that is the question

By Lloyd Church

I have read many articles in which environmentalists are concerned with problems caused by clear-cutting. This certainly should concern us all where large clear cutting areas are being conducted. However, to the small woodlot owner, it is a practice one should look at to improve the health and appearance of the property.

I have been clear-cutting in my woodlot for the past ten years, clearing about two percent of the woodlot in small half-acre lots. I do leave the Bur Oak.

This project has been a positive and rewarding exercise for me. New growth is vigorous and healthy. Wild flowers, grasses and shrubs such as the Yellow Lady Slipper, Big Blue Stem and Saskatoon that were not seen before clear-cutting are now abundant and flourishing. Young tree growth is also thriving, healthy and dark green in colour.

Further, wildlife loves the new growth and the plant fruit.

One mistake I did make was to start my clear-cutting plots on the outside of my woodlot perimeter. This is not a good practice as trees protect each other from the wind. Cutting on the outside leaves the trees unprotected from the wind, which can cause major damage.

By starting your clear-cutting plots on the inside of the woodlot, this problem is corrected, and further creates a greenhouse effect, making perfect conditions for new plant growth.

So why not try a clear-cut spot in your woodlot. I'm sure you will find it most rewarding.

Bus tour cancelled

The Trees Without Borders bus tour to the International Peace Gardens and other points in southwestern Manitoba has been cancelled. It was scheduled for July 9-10.

"We had lots of people signed up," said tour organizer Ken Fosty, who is the technical advisor for the Manitoba Forestry Association, "but we didn't have enough to make it financially viable."

The two-day tour involved chartering a bus and included the expense of overnight accommodations in Brandon. Fosty suggested that perhaps the cost of overnight bus tours means fewer people are signing up, and that one-day tours might be the way of the future.

The Trees Without Borders tour was to have included a visit to Souris, with its famous suspension bridge, large variety of butterflies and its 500-year-old oak tree. Other stops would have been at the Commonwealth Air Training Museum and the Austin Agricultural Museum, as well as the Peace Gardens.

Model Forest announces new website

Brian Kotak, the general manager of the Manitoba Model Forest (MBMF) has announced that MBMF has launched a new website.

The new website provides a wealth of information, in a new graphical package. It also provides access to the latest MBMF research reports, annual work plans and annual reports.

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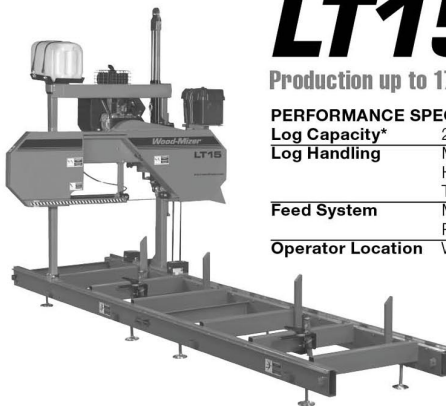
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Busy summer planned for MFA Woodlot program

Junior Rangers Program – July 12-13, 2010

The MFA will once again be partnering with the Manitoba Model Forest on the Junior Rangers Program. MFA technical advisor Ken Fosty will be involved in delivering workshops and seminars on Safe Chainsaw Use, Non Timber Forest Products and Proper Tree Planting during the sessions occurring July 12th and 13th, 2010. The MFA continues to partner with the Manitoba Model Forest and First Nations on these important environmental educational youth programs.

Tree Planting Seminars

Ken Fosty and Garry Kennedy, both technical advisors for the MFA Woodlot Program, will deliver three “Let’s Get Planting” tree-planting seminars in Russell and Inglis on September 29th and Roblin on September 30th, 2010. More than 100 landowners are expected to attend the seminars, resulting in dozens of requests for Trees for Tomorrow (T4T) tree-planting information and subsequent involvement in the Woodlot program through personalized woodlot management plans. These seminars will be held in partnership with the Lake of the Prairies Conservation District, Manitoba Food and Rural Initiatives and Manitoba Conservation.

Indoor sessions will focus on T4T promotion, proper tree-planting techniques, seedling sources, proper handling of seedlings, timing for planting and available seedling varieties.

Fall Field Days

Two ‘Woodlot Fall Field Days’ will be scheduled for fall, 2010. Locations will include

the Parkland region as well as eastern Manitoba.

Topics of interest will include woodlot management, best management practices, as well as the FireSmart program and fireproofing your yardsite. An outdoor woodlot walk’n talk with Ken and Garry will focus on numerous topics ranging from tree-planting and silvicultural techniques, wildlife enhancement, recreational opportunities and non-timber forest products. WoodMizer Canada will be present along with a variety of other sawmill operators.

Outdoor demonstrations will include proper tree-planting techniques, chainsaw equipment, portable chainsaw sawmills and a variety of small-scale logging equipment. Ken will also take the opportunity to promote the T4T program to all in attendance.

Ken Fosty anticipates over 300 landowners will attend the 2010-2011 upcoming seminars, resulting in many personalized woodlot management plans for him and Garry, as well as, many potential Trees for Tomorrow co-operators and planting sites. MFA will continue to host general woodlot management and best management practices seminars and field days in the Eastern, Southeast and Interlake regions, as well as the new expanded area of the Swan River Valley.

The Manitoba Forestry Association - Woodlot Program works in partnership with numerous agencies to successfully deliver these educational events. Partners include Manitoba Model Forest, Woodlot Association of Manitoba, Manitoba Christmas Tree Growers Association, Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, WoodMizer Canada, Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration, South Interlake School Division, Pineland Nursery, Manitoba Conservation, Red River College, numerous Conservation Districts across Manitoba and the Winnipeg River Learning Centre.



The Grizz Works outdoor studio sits in a clearing on Highway 2 near Maple, Wisconsin. To the left is a one-piece carving of family of racoons, lazily stretched out in the branches of a tree stump.

Chain saw artist lets wood chips fly

By Sheilla Jones

It's hard to miss Justin Howland's "studio" if you are travelling through the north Wisconsin forest along Highway 2, southeast of Superior. His artwork practically jumps right out at you.

A clearing in the woods along the highway is home to Grizz Works, a wood sculpture business and outdoor gallery. The front yard serves as the gallery, with a dozen or more wooden animal sculptures in a variety of sizes and poses, from an eight-foot snarling bear to a life-sized raccoon. And then there is the 24-foot totem looming over the yard.

Howland's business is sculpting animals from massive logs, and his artistic tool of choice is the chainsaw. That's when the chips really fly.

"I've been doing this full-time for ten years," said the camera-shy Howland, but he has been using chainsaws since he was eleven years old and helping his folks cut up firewood. He works freehand with more than a dozen



A pistol-packing bear sculpture in the works, destined for a casino.

different chainsaws. The sculptures are then painted or stained and treated with preservative. “Our sales are mostly residential, but we do commissions as well.”

One such commission was underway in the “studio”, which is really an open log structure with a roof. A bear, complete with a carved pistol and holster, is nearly completed and destined for a casino. Howland said that particular bear was commissioned for \$1,750.

Howland uses mostly local wood for his sculptures, including White Pine, cedar, Red Pine and willow, but he’s not competing for supplies with the lumber sawmills in the area.

“We use wood rejected by the sawmills,” said Howland. “It’s either hollow or has too many knots.”

There was a large stockpile of different-sized logs alongside the studio workshop, but Howland sometimes has to go looking for just the right piece of wood.

“Generally, we know what we’re going to make, and we choose for the project.”

Not all Howland’s work is done in his studio. He’s also received commissions to do on-site sculptures, such as the 17-foot tall Bur Oak stump in a Wisconsin park that he turned into a lumberjack with an eagle. The project earned him \$3,400.

This menacing bear sculpture “guards” the Grizz Works outdoor gallery.

Grizz Works, which Howland owns with his wife Tara, has been making quite a name for itself. In the fall of 2009, Howland carved a firefighter out of wood for the television show *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*. Howland said most of his sales are in the US, but he also ships sculptures to people in Manitoba, perhaps to people just driving by who couldn’t help but stop for a better look.



Market for carbon credits heats up

Continued from page 1

emissions, a major greenhouse gas linked to climate change.

They failed both in Kyoto and Copenhagen for two reasons. The developing countries felt that the developed industrialized nations have pumped more carbon into the air than they ever will, and no one has the money right now to spend on technology to clean up carbon emissions. That means no country wants to risk harming its economy in what amounts to “an experiment” in which there are no guarantees that it will accomplish what it is supposed to accomplish.

Even though these agreements failed to bring all nations on board, most governments are, together with industry, trying to work out a system that will “cap” carbon emissions. This is measured in the number of metric tonnes of carbon coming out of their smokestacks and tailpipes. That way, industry can “trade” or buy “carbon offsets”.

In other words, polluters such as mining companies, airlines, and vehicle manufacturers can still keep on polluting, if they buy carbon “credits”. A carbon credit is the purchase of one metric tonne of carbon that is taken up by the plants of the world, the most efficient, of course, being trees.

Here’s how the Carbon Offset program would work. Under the proposed rules of Cap and Trade, Environment Canada will register “buyers” and “sellers” of carbon, and the carbon will be sold in “units” of 10,000 metric tonnes. Woodlot owners would join together in a Woodlot Management Organization (WMO), and would bundle together the carbon sequestered in the trees in their woodlots and sell this amount to a broker. The broker would then approach buyers. The buyers are looking to purchase carbon credits to offset the amount of carbon they are putting into the atmosphere.

Here’s an example. Let’s assume Air Canada needs to purchase 50,000 carbon credits. They would approach a broker with a request to buy. The broker would shop around to get the best deal for

them.

Currently, carbon offsets are trading at around \$20 US per tonne. Therefore, the deal would be worth \$1-million US. The broker would take a ten percent commission of \$100,000 off the top, leaving \$900,000 to go to the Woodlot Management Organization.

The members of WMO would be entitled to a share of these earnings based on the amount of forested land they have under management signed on with the Carbon Offset program.

Let’s assume that there were 900 woodlot owners in the WMO. Each one would receive \$1,000 for letting their trees stand. Let’s further assume that the average woodlot was 40 acres. In this example, then, the landowner would be earning \$25 per acre per year.

That’s not bad when you consider that the landowner may only get \$5 per cord (poplar) if it were sold to a logger. At 20 cords per acre, that would bring in only \$100 for that acre of forest.

After four years, the landowner would be further ahead letting the forest remain standing. After 10 years, the landowner will have earned \$250 acre. However, let’s not forget that property taxes will take a small chunk of that, and then there’s the CRA (Canada Revenue Agency) taxman’s share.

With the downturn in the forest industry, landowners have been without a market for their wood. The Carbon Offsets program could provide a bit of income in rural areas, which could be welcome relief from the economic difficulties caused by low farm commodity prices and higher than average unemployment.

No one will get rich under this program (except maybe the brokers, Ed.) but it would breathe new life into sustainable forest management on private woodlots right across Canada. These private forests have been ignored by governments for too long, and could soon get a much higher profile and recognition for the benefits they produce for society.

Kiln drying short course offered

The 33rd Annual Kiln Drying Short Course will be held August 16-19, 2010 at the University of Minnesota, St. Paul Campus. The University of Minnesota's Department of Bioproducts and Biosystems Engineering sponsors the course in cooperation with the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Department of Forest Ecology and Management, and the Great Lakes Kiln Drying Association.

The course is designed to provide basic training for dry kiln operators and supervisors, but anyone desiring to learn more about kiln construction, kiln operation and wood-moisture relations is welcome and encouraged to attend. No previous drying experience or training is necessary.

Instruction will include lectures, demonstrations and "hands-on" kiln drying experience.

Conventional kiln drying of hardwood lumber will be emphasized; however, dehumidification drying, solar drying and air-drying will also be covered. Ample time will be available for group interaction as well as individual consultation.

For further information contact:

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2004 Folwell Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55108

Phone: (612) 624-3407

Fax: 612) 625-6286

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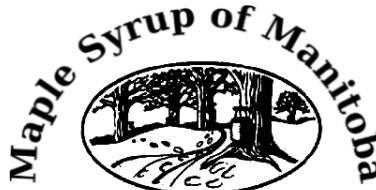
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—If you operate a commercial woodlot or agro woodlot, the WAM membership fee is a tax deductible business expense. WAM provides a receipt and member card for membership payment by request only.

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Seton argues prairies forested 500 years ago

Ernest E.T. Seton argues that the country was once wooded and was cleared by man-made fires. His paper on prairie fires was read by Rev. Professor Bryce at the Carberry Historical Museum, January 8, 1885.

In treating the historic evidence of prairie fires, I begin by claiming that they have always been the work of man. Lightning, the only other admissible agent, will be precluded when this manner of burning is considered. For fires invariably take place either in early spring or in late fall, seasons when lightning is very rarely seen.

But, admitting the occurrence of an electrical discharge which has fired the grass, it must still be remembered that one such would go but a very little way towards clearing the plains; there is little doubt that it must be kindled a great many times, as will be admitted on noting the usual course of a fire.

From its starting point it spreads in a cone-shape down the wind, until at length it is stopped by a change of wind, a shower of rain or a body of water; and as rain is abundant and lakes very numerous at those seasons, it is probable that not many fires extend further than a few miles...

Since then the fires are so often stopped, and since the fires are so ready to spring up when protected, it is evident that the fires must be kindled many times each year to keep the plains swept. Therefore, I think that no hesitation need be felt in concluding these conflagrations to be the work, not of lightning, nor of spontaneous combustion, but of man for ages back.

Next I would call attention to the fact that those parts of the country which are protected from fire are covered with bush. The protecting barriers are of two kinds, water and sand. Every hollow which contains water during May and October – the fire months – has its clump of trees; every river and lake is fringed with them, and the land is nearly all covered by dense forests in the north country behind the great guardian chain of rivers and lakes, among which are the Saskatchewan and Lakes Winnipeg and Manitoba.

Sand is a protector, because the grass growing on it is too scant to carry the fire. Hence, in such places as the sandhills, there are as many trees as the sterile ground will bear.

The seeds of these trees are carried all over and are ready to spring into new woods; and if a piece of prairie,

almost anywhere, be protected for two consecutive years it will then be found covered with a growth of poplars and willows, as may be seen about Carberry, for the smooth prairie escaped the fire last year and this spring, and is now dotted all over with tiny saplings.

Therefore I conclude that but for the fire the whole country would be covered with bush.

And there is proof that at one time these plains were well timbered. Far out on the open plains sticks may be picked up and wood unearthed, all charred, and showing where there once were trees.

I find in Professor Hind's work, vol. 1, the following referring to the journey from Fort Ellice to Moose Mountain, a distance of fifty miles; "An old Indian, born I this part of the country, told us that he remembered the time when the whole of the prairie through which we had passed since leaving Fort Ellice was once continuous forest, broken only by two or three intervals of barren ground."...

It must be remarked that what little evidence has been collected points to an occupation of this land by men, for a period of not more than a thousand and not less than five hundred years... In short then, I have brought forward reasons for believing that: This was once a wooded country; it was cleared by fire; the fires were the work of man; it would take between five and ten centuries of such fires to effect the present clearance, and their direction must have been in the direction of the Coteau du Missouri. Therefore, this country was first populated by migration up the Missouri Valley from the Southern Central Plains, between five and ten centuries ago.

Ed. Note: Some of Seton's claims are disputed, although he was a keen observer. He did not have the benefit of modern methods for dating ancient wood, and the study of archeology in Manitoba in 1885 was in its infancy.

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