

## *Diverse Woodlands, Diverse Owners, Similar Passions*

*by Doug McLaren, KWOA President*

[www.kwoa.net](http://www.kwoa.net)



**T**he woodlands of Kentucky Woodland Owners Association (KWOA) membership are as diverse as each of the members. When the opportunity allows for conversation about one another's woodlands in this organization, quickly you recognize the diversity of woodlands that exist across the state of Kentucky. Two reasons prevail: the owners, many of which are families, and the location of the land.

Owning woodlands in Kentucky is a great privilege. Each landowner feels a deep responsibility for the care, no matter what the size of the parcel. Whether you have purchased the land or have inherited it, you as the owner of these woodlands can maintain and manage it in a variety of ways. Members of the KWOA pride themselves in doing what is best for the future of the woodland. Each of the woodland owner manages according to their preferences.

In Kentucky, there is a rich diversity of timber species, each having its own character, value, and use and many owners enjoy the opportunity to manage the trees for future saw timber as a working forest. Other owners enjoy the opportunity to manage the land as wildlife habitat, wildlife ranging from those species that can be hunted during regulated seasons to those activities of simply watching residual and migratory bird species and other non-game species utilizing the land.

Watershed management always has been a valuable management opportunity for these woodland owners. Properly managed woodland acres provide high quality water for downstream owners and users. Other owners and managers of woodlands enjoy the opportunity to simply provide ecosystem services of good water, oxygen cycles, and recreational benefits for their families as well as others.

Kentucky woodland owners, whether they are members of the KWOA or not, enjoy talking about their "patch of woodlands" no matter what the size. Quickly it is discovered that their woodlands differ not only because of their management styles and techniques but simply due to the location. Different locations, different soils. With different soils comes different growing capabilities and potential. Simply stated, with the diverse soil types that we have across Kentucky you have to expect a variety of trees to be growing with different growth potentials. These are bases for the conversations that members of the Kentucky Woodland Owners Association have when they come together in both formal and non-formal settings, field days, conferences, or seminars. They are always talking about their woodlands, their management styles, and the reasons for owning their family woodlands. The diversity of each of the woods that are being managed across Kentucky is simply the result of good intentional management of the diverse woodland stewards.

Become a member of the Kentucky Woodland Owners Association and become part of the conversation. Join us at our website [www.kwoa.net](http://www.kwoa.net) and look for the next opportunity to become part of the conversation at a meeting—either in your "neck of the woods" or in one of the other regions of the state. We welcome you to share the story of your woodlands.

*Photo courtesy: Renee Williams*

**For more information log on to [www.kwoa.net](http://www.kwoa.net)**