



Kentucky Tree Farm Committee Newsletter

New Tree Farmers: Bill and Chris Lagermann

We started looking for land in Kentucky in 2004 around the Mammoth Cave area. We ended up purchasing land in Metcalfe County, which has picturesque Red Lick Creek running along the edge. Because our son Steve wanted it to be called a ranch, we named our property “Red Lick Ranch.” We have approximately 280 acres that are primarily wooded. All but about 50 acres have had the timber harvested, and we wanted to restore the forest. Our original plan was to plant bare-root trees, but the success rate wasn’t very good. We decided to seek help from the Metcalfe County Extension office, and they suggested we check out the EQIP program. We started with 70 acres and, once approved, we met with Kentucky Division of Forestry forester Mark Wiedewitsch. Mark showed us and marked which trees needed to be removed. Over the next few years I cut the marked trees and sprayed their stumps.

The most important thing I learned was that you can restore a forest faster using the new growth from the stumps of cut trees versus planting new trees. Because the old tree has an established root system, using it resulted in new growth of 6 to 8 feet a year compared to the 6 to 8 inches a year we were getting using bare root tree seedlings. Within a few years we were seeing the difference. Once the marked trees were removed, the preferred trees grew faster. We are now getting more acorns and other fruit from the trees, which is great for wildlife. Someday we hope to be able to raise some quail on our property too. Our biggest challenge was finding the time to do the work. You don’t see the results for several years, but results are definitely worth it and should bring in more money when the timber is sold.

My wife and I are very proud to have our children and grandchildren seeing this process work. The reason we wanted to buy land was so our sons and their families would have a place to come and enjoy. We all love riding through the property and seeing deer, turkey, rabbits, squirrels, and many different birds. Our oldest son, Mike, and his wife, Lynn, purchased 42 adjacent acres and he is starting to use the same improvement

processes so his daughter Rachel can enjoy it for many years to come. David’s sons Luke and Reed visit and David helps with maintaining the property. The boys already hunt with their dad—Luke got his first turkey recently. Our youngest grandsons, John Thomas and Peter, mostly enjoy hiking through the woods and playing in the creek with their parents, Steve and Sarah. We didn’t plan to live here full-time, but absolutely love the peace and beauty of living in Metcalfe County surrounded by our beautiful forest. We wouldn’t want to live anywhere else.

Our advice to all landowners is to contact the Kentucky Division of Forestry. Forester Tammy Rogers has been instrumental in helping us get our Tree Farm designation, and we appreciate her assistance and advice. My wife and I attended the Woodland Owners Short Course in order to learn more about what programs

are available to learn better timber management skills. There are also programs that can provide financial support for improving the forest. We are happy to encourage others to get involved in these programs.



Chris (red shirt) and Bill Lagermann (flag shirt) have made it a priority to include family members in their Tree Farm activities. The Lagermann’s named their Tree Farm Red Lick Ranch because of their properties proximity to Red Lick Creek and their son’s desire to have a “ranch” in the family.

Steve Gray to assume role as Kentucky Tree Farm Committee Vice-Chair

The Kentucky Tree Farm Committee (KTFC) is proud to announce Steve Gray as the 2014-2015 Vice Chair. Mr. Gray brings a significant amount of knowledge and experience to the KTFC leadership from his consulting forester business, Steve Gray Consulting Forester LLC, and his previous career as the Central District Forester with the Kentucky Division of Forestry. Mr. Gray will become KTFC chair in 2016. Please join the KTFC in welcoming Mr. Gray to his new role and responsibilities.



For more information about the Kentucky Tree Farm Program, please visit www.kytreefarm.org or call 502.695.3979.