

**A History of Forest Landowner Education
In
North Central Arkansas
1993 to 2005**

Prepared for:

The Ozark Foothills Resource Conservation and Development Council
Newport, Arkansas

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Introduction

In the early 90s, a combination of global economic factors created a rapidly rising demand for chipped hardwood for paper production. Because Arkansas' large commercial forestry operations had already been operating in the southern portion of the State for many years, the northern sector represented an attractive expansion opportunity for sourcing hardwood chips. The existing forestry industry in the north-central Arkansas region (within the Ozark Mountains) was characterized by relatively small, family-owned operations that had been focused primarily on hardwood timber for primary and secondary processing and was not in a position to respond to the new demand for hardwoods.

The north-central Arkansas region is dominated by small non-industrial forest landowners, collectively owning over 2,500,000 acres of forestlands. Over ninety percent of the region's 30,000 forest landowners relied on income from other means and most did not consider their average 80-acre forested tract to have much value...they were eager to sell timber to anyone that would buy it. Unfortunately most of these forest landowners didn't have a good sense of the value of their hardwood timber, nor did they have any technical expertise regarding sustainable harvesting techniques.

While selective harvesting represented a potential opportunity for timber stand improvement, the region's traditional high-grading and clear-cutting practices had the potential for creating big trouble for the region's hardwood industry. The stage was set for a potential disaster...the attractiveness of short-term economic gains for forest landowners could threaten the long-term viability of the region's forest ecosystem and forest products industry.

Recognizing this combination of events—both upsides and downsides—several key individuals, agencies, and organizations got together and helped develop what turned out to be a comprehensive landowner education initiative, intended to improve the quality of the region's timber resource base while also helping individual landowners optimize the economic value of their forest resources. This is the story of what happened in north-central Arkansas starting about 1993... who got involved, what was done to address the many concerns, how were the opportunities pursued, and what were the outcomes.

In addition to serving as a historical record of these events, the lessons learned from this regional "grass-roots" initiative may well be of value to others who may find themselves in a similar situation...ensuring the viability of a valuable resource base at a regional level while addressing the economic needs and desires of the inhabitants.

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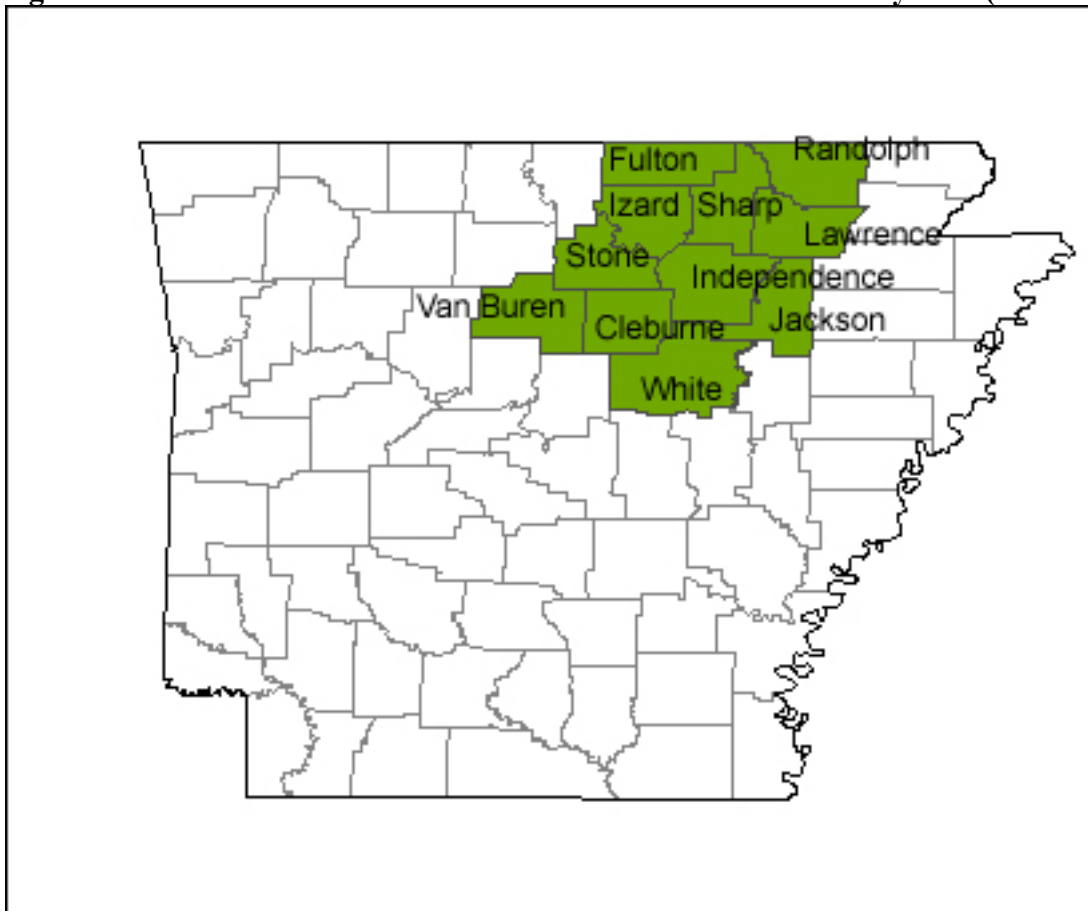
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I. Overview:

Non-industrial private forest landowners represent the largest land ownership group in the state of Arkansas, controlling approximately 58% of the State's 18,778,660 forest acres. In north central Arkansas the percentage is much higher with private non-industrial land ownership at more than 90%. This important landowner group is comprised of farmers, ranchers, homeowners, teachers, factory workers, professionals and retirees. Many of these people live on or near the forestland they own while others live in other towns, counties, states and even countries...40% are absentee landowners. These forest landowners are a diverse group holding a wide array of ownership objectives. Many of these landowners are unfamiliar with basic forest management practices, timber marketing, reforestation incentives and other important information. This is especially true for landowners in northern Arkansas.

The Ozark Foothills Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) Council area encompasses eleven counties in north central Arkansas (Figure 1). Nearly two and half million acres in the Councils area are privately owned forestlands and managed by over 30,000 non-industrial private forest landowners. The average forestland ownership is about 80 acres and few actively manage their forestland.

Figure 1: The North-Central Arkansas RC&D Council 11-County area (shaded)



Timber harvesting has a long history in this region. Since this region was settled in the 1800s, conversion to cropland and livestock pasture has been the primary reason for most of the timber clearing. Although substantial timber harvesting in the 11 county area has occurred in the past, the wood product market has not been as strong as in the southern portion of the state. The area has always experienced timber harvesting for lumber at a smaller scale than in southern Arkansas because, historically, the region's forests were considered to be less productive than those in southern Arkansas. However many factors have changed in the last 15 years. Harvesting timber for wood products has increased dramatically since the early 1990s. Demand for grade hardwood has increased while the supply of hardwood in the south has not kept up with demand, thereby increasing hardwood harvesting in the Ozarks. Also there is now a market for low quality hardwood, which can be used to make paper products.

North Arkansas and the Ozarks have a tremendous supply of lower quality hardwood trees which are particularly suitable for chipping as feedstocks for paper production. These factors caused the demand for forest products in the north central part of the State to skyrocket. This increased demand, which began in the early '90s, caught the average forest landowner in north Arkansas by surprise. However, most landowners, by their own admission, were lacking basic forestry skills and knowledge which made it difficult for them to maximize their economic return while assuring their forest resources are improved or sustained.

By about 1992 several landowners and natural resource technical agencies in north central Arkansas and other parts of the State recognized this problem and saw a need to step up the process of delivering forestry information to these landowners. This report discusses how they came together and organized a "forest landowner education effort"...an initiative that was driven by landowners to assist other landowners. This document covers a time period from approximately 1993 through 2005.

During this period there were many people, groups, state and federal agencies and government entities involved in this effort (Appendix 6). Sometimes the effort was well organized, and sometimes it was not. There were some significant successes and there were some failures. At times things worked well and at other times they didn't. In retrospect, it is widely held that the initiative was an overall success and was well worth doing.

The Ozark Foothills RC&D Council was actively involved in the initiative during most of this period and acted as somewhat of a central organizing force. Accordingly, the RC&D Council has prepared this report in hopes that other landowner groups in the country can learn from the Council's successes and mistakes in the event they are facing similar challenges and seeking to undertake a similar forest landowner education program.

II. Description of the North-Central Arkansas Region:

Most of the “forest landowner education initiative” discussed in this document occurred in the eleven-county Ozark Foothills RC&D Council area in north central Arkansas, which includes Cleburne, Fulton, Independence, Izard, Jackson, Lawrence, Randolph, Sharp, Stone, Van Buren and White counties (Figure 1).

There are approximately 2.5 million acres of privately owned forestland in the Ozark Foothills RC&D Council Area. This resource falls into the following forest types.

- 13% or 325,000 acres is native pine and pine plantations
- 18% or 450,000 acres is upland mixed pine and hardwood
- 61% or 1,525,000 acres is upland hardwood
- 8% or 200,000 acres is bottomland hardwood

This 2.5 million acres of privately owned forestland is distributed among over 30,000 landowners with the average ownership being about 80 acres of forestland per landowner. The owners of this forestland cover the entire spectrum of citizens in this area. Many are low income or limited resource land owners. Many live on or near their forestland but many also live in town, or in nearby counties. There are also owners who live in other states and other countries. As mentioned 40% are absentee landowners. Few of the forest landowners derive the majority of their income from the forestland they own. Most are interested in selling some timber from their land but there are an increasing number of forest landowners that are mainly interested in wildlife and hunting benefits.

A forest landowner survey completed by the Ozark Woodland Owners Association in 2001 brought to light many interesting characteristics of the forest landowners in this region. The survey clearly showed that the majority of landowners did not feel they had adequate knowledge to effectively manage their forestland. Detailed results from this survey can be obtained by contacting the Ozark Woodland Owners Association (Appendix 4).

Figure 2 depicts hardwood harvesting in Arkansas – note that most of the hardwoods are still harvested in the commercial timber-intensive region of southern Arkansas. For comparison purposes, Figure 3 depicts softwood production in Arkansas.

Figure 2: Hardwood timber production in Arkansas¹

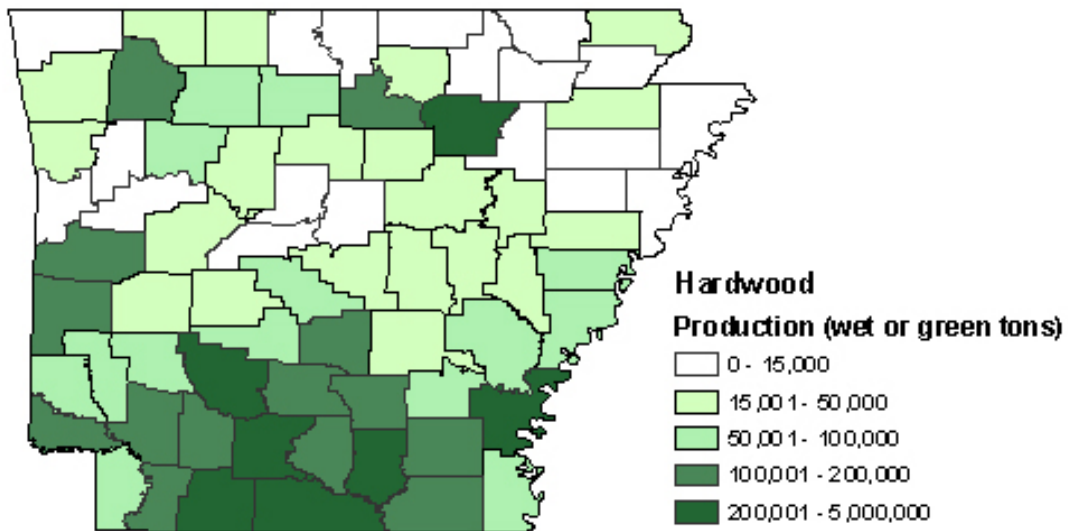
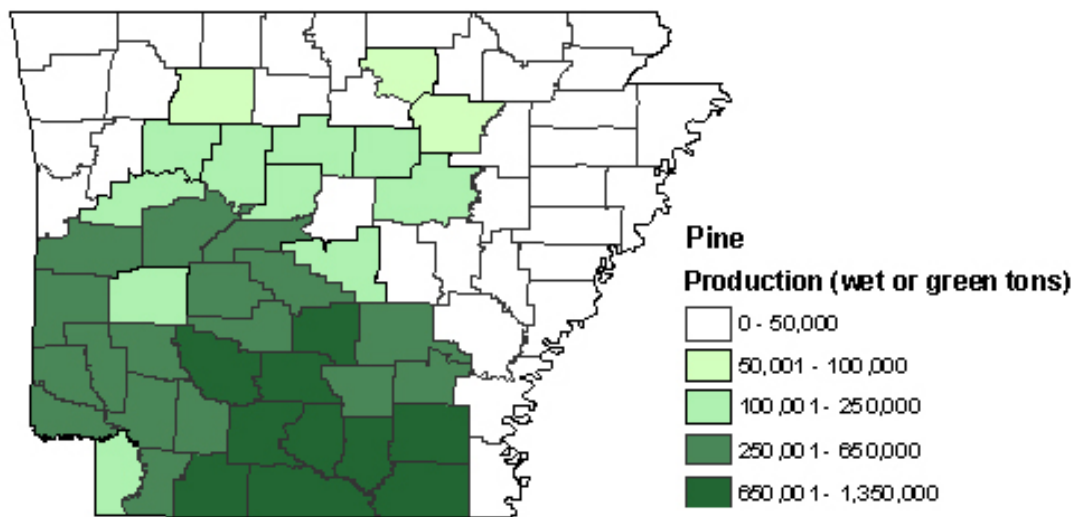


Figure 3: Softwood timber production in Arkansas¹



¹ Data source: Arkansas Forestry Commission; map produced by I-Manage, LLC.

III. History and Condition of North Central Arkansas Private Forestlands:

The forest resource statistics show that upland hardwoods are by far the dominant forest type in this region. Unfortunately these upland forest types have also been the most neglected. Since this region in the Ozarks was settled in the late 1800s, the forestland, especially the upland forests, have been subjected to repeated cycles of mismanagement through incorrect timber harvesting practices. The most common type of timber harvesting during the past 100 years was “high-grading”. This term simply means that the best trees are taken and the less desirable species and poorer quality trees are left. As a result of such practices over many years, most of the privately owned forestland in this region had been degraded:

- Overstocked with less desirable hardwood species and lower quality trees;
- Production of inferior quality timber products;
- Poor wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities;
- Serious forest health problems such as oak decline from insect infestation; and
- Increased potential for severe forest fires.

Demand for forest products from this region has seen many highs and lows since the time it was settled. Timber harvesting rates have ranged from aggressive to slow. As recently as the 1960s and 1970s there was limited demand for the region’s hardwoods. Most landowners that grew up in the region developed an attitude that their forestlands had little worth. One result of long periods of low demand and low prices for the region’s forest products was that much of the forestland has been cleared and converted to pasture land. This typically occurred on the better soils (better soils for tree production are also better soils for forage production). The forested areas were commonly relegated to steeper slopes. Livestock production, at this point in time is the dominant agricultural endeavor in the region. Although many livestock producers still have some forestland, most have not developed as much interest in managing their forestland as they have in managing their pastureland.

IV. Winds of Change in North Arkansas Forests

In the early nineties forestlands in north central Arkansas began undergoing dramatic changes, primarily because demand for both high-grade and low-grade hardwood skyrocketed. Although the region historically had almost no markets for its low quality species/trees rapidly rising demand for hardwood pulpwood quickly changed the situation. Having over-harvested the hardwood base in south Arkansas and other regions of the southeast, the pulp and paper industry began sourcing low-grade hardwood from the Ozarks, utilizing residue from high-grade timber as well as low-grade timber harvested and chipped exclusively for pulp markets.

Such increased demand for lower-grade hardwood could have significant potential benefits for the region's hardwood resources and the region's forest landowners. From a timber resource perspective, the demand for lower-grade hardwood material represented an opportunity to improve forestlands through selective removal of lower-grade and/or lesser quality trees. And, from an economic perspective, this demand offered new economic opportunities for forest landowners...points that were often promoted by the forest products industry. However, instead of utilizing the expanded demand as an opportunity to enhance the quality of their forest resources, many landowners responded by maximizing their immediate economic returns through increased high-grade harvesting and/or indiscriminate clear-cutting.² From a regional perspective, the increased demand for hardwoods coupled with such landowner reactions and short-sighted harvesting practices spelled big trouble for the region's hardwood forests and the economic well-being.

In the early nineties this combination of events caught the attention of natural resource agencies and other groups that were concerned about the region's forest resource base and economy. Some of these entities began developing their own plans to disseminate technical/economic information to landowners so they could make informed decisions regarding effective management of their forestlands. It wasn't long before representatives of these agencies and organizations came into contact with each other and realized that they had common goals and that they would be more successful in pursuit of those goals through coordinated efforts.

One of the first such partnering arrangements included the Ozark Foothills RC&D Council, Winrock International, the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, and the Arkansas Forestry Commission. In 1993 representatives of these organizations and agencies met and decided to work together to help private forest landowners in north Arkansas. From that point on many landowner education activities began to materialize...not only from this original partnership but also from other agencies and groups interested in improving the condition of north Arkansas forestland and/or the economic well-being of the forest landowners.

From the Ozark Foothills RC&D Council's perspective, the first significant landowner education activity was the creation of a forest landowner association in Independence County. It turned out that this group, which eventually became known as the Ozark Woodland Owners Association, would be a very important vehicle and a catalyst in which landowner education would be accomplished within Independence County and in other counties in north central Arkansas.

² Clear cutting is not always bad and can be an effective forest management tool in certain circumstances; however, subsequent economic analyses showed that it was generally in the long-term economic best interest of the region's forest landowners to pursue selective harvesting rather than high-grading or indiscriminate clear-cutting.

V. Creation of Ozark Woodland Owners Association:

The creation of the Ozark Woodland Owners Association had its beginnings in the early 1990s. In early 1993 the Independence County Conservation District sought assistance from the Ozark Foothills RC&D Council to help the Conservation District provide some type technical assistance program for private forest landowners in the county. The Board of the RC&D Council approved the request and authorized the RC&D staff to help the Conservation District.

The Conservation District suggested establishing a forest landowners association, based on past successes of similar approaches re production of livestock or specific agricultural crops as mechanisms for conducting education activities. While this concept was attractive to the Conservation District and the RC&D Council, they realized some type of financial assistance was required to implement the initiative. The two organizations decided that the Ozark Foothills RC&D Council would try to identify grant funds to support the Conservation District's efforts to create a forest landowners association.

Based on previous experience with other projects the RC&D Council immediately contacted Winrock International.³ One of Winrock's projects at that time was promoting sustainable management practices of bottomland hardwoods in eastern Arkansas, and a major component of that project entailed [bottomland] forest landowner education. Recognizing the concerns associated with the recent expansion in demand for hardwood chips from the Ozarks as previously discussed, Winrock was receptive to expanding the scope of that project to include support for landowner education in Independence County. After receiving authorization from Ford Foundation, the grantor of Winrock's bottomland hardwoods project, Winrock awarded a \$20,000 sub-grant to The RC&D Council to work with two Conservation Districts to establish forest landowner associations. One was Independence County, the other a neighboring county (with selection of that county to be determined by RC&D based on criteria established in the sub-grant).

With adequate financial support in place, the RC&D Council and the Independence County Conservation District, with the assistance of the various technical agencies operating in Independence County (e.g., the Extension Service office), began developing a plan to establish the region's first forest landowner association. These efforts were supported by staff of Winrock International, which had considerable experience creating rural/agricultural associations.

Although the first forest landowners association was originally envisioned to encompass a specific county, it quickly became apparent that a more regional approach was needed. Consequently, the first forest landowners group established in north central Arkansas ultimately became known as the Ozark Woodland Owners Association.⁴ Listed below, in chronological order, are the principle activities undertaken during the creation of the Association.

³ Winrock is a non-profit organization based in Arkansas whose mission is to help the poor and disadvantaged. Although most of the organization's activities are in developing countries, the organization also has a U.S. Program division, which included a domestic forestry program; refer to: www.winrock.org

⁴ Many of these activities were subsequently duplicated in neighboring Izard County, although it later became apparent that there was not enough interest among those landowners to justify pursuit of such an association in that county, so those efforts were discontinued and the remaining funds used to support the regional association.

➤ ***Creation of technical partnership***

The first action in the region was a meeting of county-level technical agency personnel from the Independence County Conservation District, The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Arkansas Forestry Commission (AFC), the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service (UACES), and staff from Ozark Foothills RC&D Council. At this meeting the Conservation District asked if these agencies would assist the District in an advisory capacity in the formation of a forest landowners association, to which the other agencies present agreed to help. It was agreed that the next step would be a meeting with several key forest landowners in the county to get their input on this idea. The three county agencies (NRCS, AFC, & UACES) agreed to each contact two or three landowners and ask them to participate in the meeting.

➤ ***Landowners begin to organize***

The meeting with the county agencies and private forest landowners, included the following landowners: Mr. Jim Barnett, Doctor Robert Craig, Mr. Elmer Kirk, Mr. Ed Schoenike, Mr. Hale Bryant and Mr. Larry Morris.⁵ At this meeting the county agencies explained the concept of an association to the landowners. After much positive discussion the landowners expressed enthusiastic support of the concept and offered to do what they could to make it happen. A forest landowner committee was formed to pursue the idea and Dr. Robert Craig was elected chairman. The technical agency representatives agreed to act as a technical advisory committee to the landowner committee (members of the technical advisory committee are listed in Appendix 9). The group agreed the next step should be a questionnaire sent to all forest landowners in the county to assess potential interest among other forest landowners for such an association.

➤ ***Getting the word out to county forest landowners***

A questionnaire was developed by the Independence County Conservation District and mailed to all individuals in the county that owned 40 acres or more of forest land... approximately 1,700 landowners. The list of landowners was obtained from the county tax assessor's office. The questionnaire was sent out and a very positive response was received. Based on these results it was decided that pursuit of the landowner association would continue and that the next step should be to discuss details with a larger group of forest landowners. It was therefore decided to invite all private forest landowners in the county to a "field day." The landowner committee took primary responsibility for organizing the field day, with technical assistance and logistical support provided by the advisory committee.

➤ ***First field day and the Birth of OWOA***

The first field day was held in 1994 with approximately 100 private landowners present. Basic forestry topics were covered in a field setting with technical presentations by the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, Arkansas Forestry Commission, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and professional forestry consultants from the private sector.

⁵ Mr. Morris was a forest landowner in a neighboring county and a professional consulting forester.

At this field day the landowner committee explained to those present the idea of forming a forest landowner association in Independence County for the purpose of bringing technical and economic assistance to forest landowners. Support was unanimous and officers were elected; Dr. Robert Craig, one of the original landowners to join the effort, was elected chairman. This event has been considered the birth of the Ozark Woodland Owners Association (OWOA).

Thereafter, the OWOA began conducting numerous meetings and field days, began developing their own projects, and began working with the RC&D Council and other partners on additional projects (these projects will be detailed later in this document).

During 1995 additional efforts were undertaken to organize and conduct forest landowner education activities. Collectively, these activities began having the appearance of a north Arkansas forestry movement and reflected a widespread and fundamental desire to embrace changes in forest management practices in north central Arkansas.

VI. Coordinated Efforts to Effect Change:

From the perspective of the Ozark Foothills RC&D Council, the creation of the OWOA catalyzed the RC&D Council into developing deeper and more committed partnerships with other agencies and groups. With the OWOA up and running and universally considered successful it seemed time to begin even more comprehensive landowner education programs, particularly since other groups and agencies had similar interests and intentions statewide.

The RC&D Council expanded its working relationships with other entities involved in forestlands in north central Arkansas. One result was that the various parties formed what could be described as a north central Arkansas advisory committee which began providing suggestions and recommendations to the RC&D Council and other project sponsors re the planning and implementation of additional landowner education projects (a list of “committee” participants is shown in Appendix 8). Although this committee worked somewhat loosely through out the years, there is no question that it served as an important coordinating mechanism for all of the efforts undertaken in north central Arkansas regarding planning and implementation of forest landowner education projects.

Planning and implementation of several more forest landowner education efforts began in earnest. Although the principal sponsors of the various projects and activities varied from one project to the next, almost all of the subsequent efforts entailed a multi-partner team approach reflecting the benefits of the coordinated strategy that was so effective during the establishment of OWOA. Descriptions of these subsequent forest landowner education efforts follow.

1. Independence County Forest Landowners Education Project⁶

After the OWOA was launched the RC&D Council assisted the Independence County Conservation District and OWOA in planning and securing a \$24,000 grant from the USDA Rural Development office in Little Rock to implement a three-year landowner education project in Independence County. The project had three basic objectives.

- 1) Provide technical and financial assistance to landowners to develop forest management plans.
- 2) Create an educational newsletter as the medium for disseminating forestry news and information to all forest landowners in the county.
- 3) Conduct educational workshops throughout the county to provide landowners with technical information and enable personal contact with forestry professionals.

The first objective was to help forest landowners obtain site-specific professionally prepared forest management plans. Although one on-going responsibility of the Arkansas Forestry Commission was to prepare such plans upon request by landowners, few landowners in this region had availed themselves of the free service. It became evident that most landowners were unaware of this service and unaware of the option [and potential benefits) of engaging a private forestry consultant.

⁶ For more information about the project or to obtain a copy of project plan contact the Ozark Foothills RC&D Council – refer to the RC&D’s contact information set forth in Appendix 1

Consequently, only a small fraction of forestlands in the region were managed (including harvesting) through any type of professionally developed site plan, whether developed by a state forester or private consultant. In fact, demand for private forestry consultants was so low that in 1994 there were only three private forestry consultants resident and working in the entire north central Arkansas region...even though this eleven-county area contained over 2.5 million acres of private forestland!

The technical advisory group recommended to the project sponsors the use of Forest Stewardship plans for the forest landowners.⁷ This was attractive in that this was an established program and would therefore be straightforward to prepare, whether by the Arkansas Forestry Commission or a private consulting forester. Plans developed by the AFC were [and continue to be] available at no charge to the requesting landowner. Project funds were used to pay the first \$300 of the cost of each stewardship plan prepared by a private consulting forester, with the remainder paid by AFC out of its Stewardship Plan funds. One outcome of this component of the project was an increase in the number of consulting foresters working in the region to meet the increased demand for developing stewardship plans.

The second objective of the project was to create a medium to get information to private forest landowners. The project sponsors developed a newsletter that went out to every person who owned 40 acres or more of forest land in the county.⁸ The technical agencies assisting the project sponsors were responsible for providing information in the newsletter. The Conservation District, with assistance from the OWOA, was responsible for getting the newsletter printed and sent out. Project funds were used to pay for printing and postage for over 1,700 newsletters sent out every three months.

This proved to be a very effective way of reaching landowners. The project sponsors found that many forest landowners in this region had never used the traditional services of the county agricultural or forestry agencies and that many of these landowners did not know what kind of information or assistance was available. Occasionally the newsletter included comments from such landowners that expressed their appreciation for the information in the newsletter (and the opportunity to obtain a stewardship plan by participating in the project).

The third objective was to convene six forestry educational meetings or workshops during the 3-year project period. The purpose of the workshop was two-fold: to provide landowners with hands-on instruction re forest management options and techniques and to facilitate direct contact between landowners and forestry professionals, both from public and private sectors. The meetings were held on Tuesday or Thursday evenings at a central location in the county; each meeting lasted for about two to three hours.

⁷ For more information re Forest Stewardship plans, refer to the US Forest Service website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/loa/fsp.shtml>

⁸ As with the initial effort in Independence County, the list of landowners was compiled from public-domain tax data available at the County Assessor's office. The newsletter was sent to each such owner, even if the owner lived elsewhere (which, in some instances, was out of state and even out of country).

Technical agency foresters and private consulting foresters as well as wildlife biologists were brought in to discuss forestry and wildlife management topics of interest to the landowners. These meetings were considered to be very successful, with attendance always near 100 landowners per meeting. Feedback from participants quickly confirmed to project sponsors that, in order to maximize attendance, it was important to provide an evening meal at each meeting since many landowners had to come directly from work to the event (and that many would not have participated if there had been no meal).

2. Ozark Foothills Forest Landowners Education Project (OFFLEP)⁹

The success achieved from the creation of OWOA and the early stages of the implementation of the landowner education project in Independence County encouraged the Ozark Foothills RC&D Council and its partners to develop a larger project to cover the other 10 counties in the RC&D Council's area. The Council secured \$200,000 in grant funds from the Arkansas USDA Rural Development office to implement this larger three-year project. The OFFLEP regional project, modeled after the Independence County project, was administered by the RC&D Council, which engaged the overall advisory committee created earlier to advise during the planning and implementation stages (refer to Appendix 8 for a list of advisory committee members).

The regional project had three main objectives, including:

- 1) Technical and financial assistance in developing Forest Stewardship plans. Both private consultants and AFC foresters would be used to assist landowners in developing Forest Stewardship plans. Project funds would pay the first \$300 per plan with the Arkansas Forestry Commission covering the remaining cost.
- 2) Dissemination of a newsletter. The RC&D Council prepared the newsletters that went out three times a year during the three-year period to forest landowners in the ten counties.¹⁰ Partner technical agencies provided material to go into the newsletter. The local conservation districts were responsible for compiling the list of recipient landowners in each county and preparing a one-page insert into each newsletter to cover county-specific forestry information.
- 3) Educational workshops for forest landowners. The RC&D Council, with assistance from the partner technical agencies, convened two meetings per year in each of the 10 counties at 2~3 hours per meeting (a total of about sixty meetings during the three-year project). Each local conservation district arranged meeting places and created a forestry committee, which helped determine the information presented at the workshops. Technical partner agencies then developed the program and identified the speakers for each workshop to fit the respective county's needs. During the implementation of this project, the University of Arkansas' School of Forest Resources became actively involved by providing speakers who added significant value to the workshops and the total project.

⁹ For more information or to obtain a copy of project plan refer to Appendix 2.

¹⁰ I.e., the eleven-county RC&D region except for Independence County.

3. *Strawberry River Forest Landowners Education Project and Little Red River Forest Landowners Education Project*¹¹

As the Independence County and the 10-county regional forest landowner education projects progressed each of the participating agencies and organizations were encouraged. The apparent success of the two projects led to demand for similar initiatives elsewhere. Two additional forestry landowner education projects were subsequently created to address concerns in specific watersheds. The first was the Strawberry River Forest Landowners Education project, patterned after the larger OFFLEP project and focused on the Strawberry River watershed.¹² The Fulton County Conservation District administered the project.

The second was the Little Red River Forest Landowners Education Project covering forestlands in the Little Red River watershed.¹³ The Cleburne County Conservation District administered the project. The funds to implement both of these projects came from the Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Commission. As with the other forest landowner education projects, project activities included:

- Stewardship Plans
- Landowner Newsletter
- Landowner workshops

4. *Ozark Forest Landowner Survey*¹⁴

As the forest landowner education projects progressed it became increasingly evident to some of the members of the OWOA that additional information was needed regarding characteristics of the average forest landowner in this region. From observations at the landowner meetings it was apparent that participants were not typical agriculturalists—the clientele group most of the technical assistance agencies and organizations were accustomed to work with. This led the OWOA to undertake a project specifically designed to more accurately determine *who* the region's forest landowners were and *what* were their opinions and attitudes regarding forestlands and forest management issues. The OWOA received funds from the US Forest Service to develop and conduct an in-depth survey of forest landowners throughout the eleven-county Ozark Foothills RC&D Council area. The findings from this survey were very important in helping the project sponsors better understand the beneficiaries of the various forest landowner education initiatives and improve the services offered to the region's forest landowners.

¹¹ For more information or to obtain a copy of project plans refer to Appendix 3.

¹² The Strawberry River watershed is located in portions of four counties in the northern section of the RC&D Council's area including Fulton, Izard, Sharp and Lawrence counties.

¹³ The Little Red River watershed is located in portions of four counties in the southern section of the RC&D Council's area including Cleburne, Stone, Van Buren and White counties

¹⁴ For more information or to obtain a copy of the project work-plan refer to Appendix 4.

By 1996, forest landowner education efforts were in full swing in north central Arkansas. The Ozark Woodland Owners Association was very active, four major landowner education projects were underway, many Forest Stewardship plans had been developed, workshops convened, and thousands of newsletters had been disseminated to forest landowners in the region. Members of OWOA concluded that it was an excellent time to bring all the region's forestry-related initiatives together to compare notes, enhance cross-project communication and coordination, and identify additional needs. In addition, the OWOA commissioned an assessment of the economics associated with the region's forest industry, with the results to be presented at the conference.

5. *Ozark Forest Industry Economic Impact Study*¹⁵

This study was conducted by the University of Arkansas School of Forest Resources Center at OWOA's request. The results, first presented at the forestry conference (see below) reflected four major conclusions:

- a) Four sectors of region's forest product industry make significant contributions to the region's economy. They are: logging – \$12.5 million; wood furniture production – \$32.7 million; pulp for paper production – \$16.2 million; and solid wood product production – \$387.3 million. The total industry output in the eleven-county region accounts for \$448,715,562 in economic activity and employs a workforce of 4,811 (as of 1995)
- b) Existing forest volume and growth in the Ozark Foothills region could sustainably support harvest activity at 2-3 times the current level.
- c) Low allowable cut estimates are 110% of primary industry capacity in the region (with high allowable cuts estimated to be as much as 180% of industry capacity); thus the existing forestry resource base has the ability to sustain significant industrial growth.
- d) The potential for forest industry growth (particularly in the hardwood sector) in the Ozark foothills is good.

Major recommendations of the study were:

- a) Improve the quality of the existing resource base through emphasis on production of quality trees and improved harvesting and marketing methods.
- b) Build a quality hardwood market through a combination of incentives and education for landowners and incentives for current and new industries.

¹⁵ For more information or to obtain a copy of the project work-plan refer to Appendix 4.

6. *North Arkansas Forestry Conference*¹⁶

The OWOA organized and convened a four-day conference focused on management of hardwood forests in the north central Ozarks with forest landowners, educators, forestry professionals, forest industry representatives, business leaders, agency personnel, lawmakers, and the general public invited. Some of the conference activities included:

- Boy & Girl Scouts for Forestry Merit Badge training
- Harvesters for ARK PRO Harvester training
- Landowners, forestry committee members, and agency personnel for Landowner Committee training
- Forestry consultants for Arkansas Forest Stewardship Program training
- Industry and agency exhibitors
- Mayors, county judges, and other economic leaders for the WRPDD/Ozark Foothills RC&D Council Meeting
- Landowners, forestry professionals and others for the Ozark Woodland Owners Association training meeting
- Landowners and forestry professionals attended the ten landowner training classes presented by the University of Arkansas School of Forest Resources and Cooperative Extension Service
- Members of the public, reporters, and others during the open house and equipment demonstration

The conference was held in Batesville, March 26 ~ 29, 2003, with over 700 attendees. The event was widely proclaimed to be an enormous success, both in terms of increasing awareness of issues and accomplishments re forest management in the Ozarks, as well as dissemination of additional information for forest landowners.

¹⁶ For more information or to obtain a copy of the project work-plan refer to Appendix 4.

VII. Understanding the Characteristics of North Arkansas Forest Landowners

As the landowner education projects began, the groups and leaders involved came to some rather unexpected findings. It seems that many of the preconceived ideas about forest landowners and their characteristics were not altogether correct. Most of the agency personnel involved in this effort had worked many years with agricultural landowners and assumed that forest landowners were very similar. Although there are many similarities there are also many important differences. Being able to recognize these differences allowed the sponsors to tailor the education activities to better meet the needs of the forest landowners. The following are some of the important characteristics we learned about the average forest landowners in north central Arkansas.

1. The typical landowner has limited knowledge of how to manage his/her forestland.

OWOA's landowner survey showed that over 90% derived the majority of their livelihood from sources other than income from their forestland. For decades the timber grown in this region was considered by many to be essentially worthless. A whole generation of landowners grew up with the understanding that the woods they owned was only good for cutting firewood and providing shade for livestock. As a result of such attitudes landowners have typically not tried to educate themselves in the management of their forestland. The majority of landowners have always relied on those in the forest products industry (timber buyers, loggers and sawmill owners) for information. Although the increased demand in this region for hardwood lumber and pulpwood during the last two decades has changed the value of this forestland, it has taken some time for landowners to realize this. In fact, there are still many forest landowners in this region that do not fully appreciate its value.

2. The typical forest landowner will not become a forester.

As noted previously, many of the technical agency staff involved in this effort came from agricultural backgrounds. The goal of these technical agencies has been to provide agricultural landowners with in-depth technical information and assistance to help them optimize use of their agricultural land resources. In fact agricultural landowners essentially created the existing agency support network because of their need for technical information and assistance – for both crop production and conservation activities. This technical assistance support network has worked well because most agricultural producers are “hands-on” operators, i.e. most agricultural landowners are themselves involved in production and conservation activities. The scope of the public sector technical assistance support network also includes forestry-related activities, although few forest landowners in Arkansas were aware of or had availed themselves of such support.

It became evident during early implementation of the north-central Arkansas forestry initiative that most forest landowners had not asked for nor received public sector technical assistance. Moreover, since most forest landowners were not active and/or “hands-on” timber producers, they weren't particularly interested in applying the technical information provided to them. Project sponsors soon realized that it was unrealistic to expect the typical forest landowner to become a practicing forester, and that a more successful strategy for achieving the overall goals of the region's forestry initiative was to more actively educate landowners re. how and where to find the assistance they needed. This approach,

however, presented another problem: there existed in this region very few individuals with the necessary technical expertise to assist these forest landowners (refer to sections VII.5 and VIII.f below).

3. *Women are substantially involved in decision-making re their family's forestland:*

When looking at the results of the landowner survey done by OWOA the statistics showed that 11% of the forestland was owned by women alone and 63% was jointly owned by a man and woman. The project sponsors noted that the percentage of women attending the landowner meetings appeared to be higher than the percentage typically attending similar meetings for agricultural landowners. It was also apparent to the sponsors that the women attending these meetings were more involved in the discussions than similar meetings for agricultural-focused meetings, and women typically looked upon their forestland as a source of retirement income. Recognizing the important role of women helped the sponsors more effectively plan and implement project activities.

4. *In most cases forest management occurs only when timber is sold.*

The information covering all eleven counties compiled from public tax records showed that the average forest ownership is about 80 acres. It was learned that most landowners would sell timber from their entire holdings when they did decide to sell. In other words, most forest landowners did not split their land up into different timber harvesting periods. This led the project sponsors to conclude that, for many landowners, timber was probably harvested only once per generation. Also, with such small holdings most landowners were not going to do interim management practices. Therefore the only time most of this forestland experienced any type of management was when the timber was harvested.

5. *Landowners need professional assistance in selling their timber.*

As noted above, the only time any management practices are implemented on most of the privately owned forestland in this region is when timber is harvested. This makes the timber harvest a critical event or opportunity for improving the forest resources in this region. However, most landowners do not have the technical skills to make good decisions on how their timber should be harvested so typically rely on others, which opens the door for mismanagement. Thus landowners need the assistance of professional foresters to guide their timber harvesting activities. One option is for landowners to get no cost assistance from State forestry employees; these foresters are very knowledgeable but are limited by regulation on how much they can assist with a private timber harvest/sale. Thus, in most instances the best option for landowners is to hire a private forestry consultant to assist with timber harvesting and sales.

6. *Providing wildlife habitat is as important as timber production to forest landowners.*

During initial discussions with the region's forest landowners it was learned that providing wildlife habitat was just as important as timber production to landowners in this region. It was also found that there is a misconception by some landowners that the two do not mix...in fact, good timber management will also improve wildlife habitat. Moreover, most foresters agree that much of the forestland in this region is over-stocked, i.e., too

many stems per acre. Thinning a timber stand usually enables desirable trees to grow better and improves the habitat for most wildlife species. By realizing that wildlife management is very important to forest landowners in this region, the sponsors were able to plan educational activities to address these wildlife issues. This helped increase the number of landowners who participated in project activities.

7. *Landowners are typically most concerned about the economic aspects of their forestland.*

The forest landowner education effort in this region was initially created by landowners and professional land managers who are fundamentally conservationists. With their background it is understandable that the initial landowner education activities were presented to landowners by appealing to their conservation ethics. As the education activities progressed the sponsors found that there is a much higher number of landowners that can be reached by appealing to their pocketbooks. In other words more forest landowners are more interested in making money than conserving resources. What was especially evident, was at some of the workshops, how landowners would pay attention when fellow landowners would explain how they were making money by managing their timber.

VIII. Lessons Learned

As noted previously, most of the landowner education projects had three basic goals:

- 1) Disseminate forest management information to as many forest landowners as possible.
- 2) Encourage forest landowners to develop management plans (Forest Stewardship Plans).
- 3) Bring landowners into contact with the forestry professionals who can provide the assistance they need.

As the project sponsors began working toward these goals they found that some of the things they were doing worked well and some didn't. One characteristic of this forest landowner education initiative was its uniqueness in that the project sponsors were not able to draw guidance from other / similar projects. Therefore, the sponsors, in some aspects, had to learn by trial and error. In order to help others who may want to get involved in landowner education, the following items reflect those activities that worked well and those areas where problems arose.

a) Identifying and Engaging proactive landowners from the beginning

Probably the single most effective factor in successfully developing the landowner education program was the initial enlisting of some outstanding forest landowners to lead the effort. As described earlier, the local technical agency personnel in Independence County recruited several key landowners that organized what became the Ozark Woodland Owners Association. Looking back, all that have been involved in this initiative agree that they could not have recruited better individuals for this task...they all owned forestland, they knew much more about forestry than the average landowner, and they were more than eager to devote their time and energy to helping this effort succeed. Those individuals were known and respected within their community and were able to bring other landowners into the effort. Their involvement helped ensure that the overall forestry education initiative continued to be landowner driven and controlled, with state and federal agencies and other organizations providing assistance as requested by the landowners.

b) Development of an overall Advisory/Coordinating Committee

As the plans for the first landowner education projects were being developed, the Ozark Foothills RC&D Council formed a committee to advise the sponsors during the development and implementation stages. This committee, made up of representatives from each of the technical agencies and organizations involved (Appendix 8), advised the local project sponsors and was able to keep the state leaders of their respective agencies apprised of activities occurring at the local level. Most of these agencies were also involved in implementation at the county level. The state level committee met frequently at the beginning and usually met quarterly during implementation. This arrangement worked well... the agency representatives provided valuable input and were current re project progress.

c) *Forest landowner newsletter*

One of the biggest challenges in educating forest landowners in this region was simply finding some means of getting in touch with them. In the eleven-county region of north central Arkansas there are approximately 30,000 landowners with 40 or more acres of forestland. Since most of these were not the “normal” [agricultural] clientele of the local technical agencies they were not on any agency’s mailing list. Compiling lists of forest landowners from each county’s tax assessor’s office proved successful – the combined database for the entire project region exceeded 30,000 landowners. The lists consisted of mailing addresses used to disseminate newsletters (regular mail proved to be a cost-effective means of getting information to large numbers of landowners). Many of these landowners indicated that the newsletters were the first contact of any kind they had received from anyone regarding their forestland.

The newsletters contained technical information, forestry news, timber prices for local mills, information on upcoming field days or meetings, and other information of interest to forest landowners. Each newsletter was usually four pages, was prepared by the Ozark Foothills RC&D Council, and contained information supplied by the supporting technical agencies and groups. Each county also prepared a two-page insert to be inserted in the newsletters sent to the landowners in that particular county. This gave landowners both local and regional information and enabled project sponsors to reach landowners who had previously been outside of the information loop.

d) *Short weekday evening workshops with a meal.*

Several types of educational meetings were held, ranging from elaborate one- and two-day field days with a host of forestry professionals presenting information to comprehensive classroom style meetings with expert presentations to informal meetings with open discussions and presentations. The first and second types of meeting were more successful at reaching landowners with above-average interest levels and knowledge of forestry. Unfortunately that proved to be a small percentage of the region’s forest landowners.

To impact the greatest number of forest landowners the sponsors found that short, relatively informal, and locally-held meetings worked best. They found that the best time was on Tuesday or Thursday evenings, with each event lasting two to three hours, allowing many landowners who worked during the day to attend. The meeting time and place along with the agenda topics would be advertised in the newsletters (local partners in each education project helped decide which topics were applicable for their area). Presenters at these workshops were forestry experts from the various technical agencies along with consulting foresters and other landowners.

The project sponsors also learned that it was also critically important to provide a meal at every evening meeting since most landowners would have to miss their usual meal time in order to attend. This turned out to be an administrative challenge...many grant making agencies/organizations don’t authorize meal costs as approved project expenses. Thus, where necessary, other funding sources had to be secured and used to cover these particular expenses which, as discussed above, were considered a major factor in realizing the high levels of landowner participation achieved in this initiative.

e) Involving landowners as speakers at workshops and field days

As the projects progressed, certain landowners were asked to be part of the program at county level workshops, which proved to be very effective. Landowners gave testimonials about forestry practices that worked for them and sponsors noted that landowners in the audience paid special attention to what other landowners had to say. Again, these landowner speakers were selected as people that were well known and respected within their community and were willing to share their knowledge/perspectives.

f) Getting consulting foresters involved

Another tactic that proved very useful was involving private forestry consultants to participate in educational activities and participate in development of the educational projects. Private consulting foresters can get more involved with forest landowners' economic matters than can state forestry personnel.—consulting foresters can provide estimates re timber volumes and potential economic returns from potential harvesting and sales whereas agency foresters can not. Since, as discussed earlier, the timber harvest is an opportune forest management event, landowners need the assistance that private consulting foresters can provide re optimizing timber management and economic benefits.

g) Promoting Forest Stewardship Plans

As the sponsors began planning specific projects there was a unanimous agreement that landowners needed to obtain [and implement] professionally prepared forest management plans. The sponsors decided to promote the use of Forest Stewardship Plans, a program that had already been established by the US Forest Service and was being administered by state forestry agencies such as the Arkansas Forestry Commission. Each Forest Stewardship plan is required to address at least two of the following:

- timber production
- wildlife management
- recreation
- Soil and water conservation.

Although project sponsors agreed that this program would effectively address the need for management plans by the region's forest landowners it was also recognized that Arkansas Forestry Commission foresters could not be expected to do all the plans and that there were not enough consulting foresters working in the region to prepare the number of plans that would be needed. Thus, as discussed previously, project sponsors had to recruit additional consulting foresters that were willing and able to work in the Ozarks to be able to offer Forest Stewardship plans to landowners in the region.

h) Bringing attention to north Arkansas forestland and landowners needs

The southern part of Arkansas has been nationally known as a leader in forestry and timber production whereas the northern part of the state has been more commonly associated with livestock production and recreation...meaning that the value of forestland in the north-central Arkansas region is often under-recognized or under-appreciated. However, as a result of this forest landowner education initiative, state and federal technical assistance agencies, academic institutions, politicians, and the general public are now better informed of the value and needs of forestlands and forest landowners in this region.

i) Addressing economic aspects of forest management.

As landowner meetings and field days were held, the project sponsors and administrators learned much about the landowners in north central Arkansas. One important characteristic is that landowners were much more receptive when the information was presented from an economic standpoint. In other words “what will it cost me” and “what will my return be”. The sponsors concluded more landowners could be reached by appealing to their economic interests than to their conservation ethic.

j) Local involvement in workshop site selection and meal preparation

Implementing the educational workshops in an eleven-county region would have been extremely difficult if it had not been for the participation of the local Conservation Districts and technical agencies. They were responsible for selecting and securing the meeting sites, local advertising of the meetings, arranging the meals and getting the crowd out. Workshop attendance would have been much lower with out their assistance.

k) Involvement from the University of Arkansas School of Forest Resources.

About half way through the landowner education projects, staff from the University of Arkansas’ School of Forest Resources began participating in the educational workshops as presenters. This added to the effectiveness of the workshops and landowners indicated that their participation improved the quality of the events.

l) Creation of a Forestry curriculum at the U of A Community College at Batesville.

Another positive outcome from the forest landowner education effort was the creation of a forestry program at the University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville. The University of Arkansas’ School of Forest Resources assisted with curricula development and two of the regional forestry conferences were held at the campus.

m) Project coordination and allocation of responsibilities

All Conservation Districts and technical agencies were given the opportunity to participate in the landowner education activities during planning and implementation. With such a large level of participation it became more critical that each participant's responsibilities be well defined and understood from the onset. During the implementation of some of the projects there were a few instances in which certain activities "fell through the cracks" and there was some duplication of effort. In hindsight the partners recognize that project implementation would likely have been more efficient if more efforts had been invested at the beginning so that each entity clearly understood their assigned responsibilities.

n) Expecting too much from project partners

While implementing some of the forest landowner education activities, the sponsors learned that, in some instances, some of the project partners were asked to provide more assistance than they were able to deliver. For example, some of the counties had problems in developing the one page county insert for the regional newsletter (in some instances the county inserts lacked in substance and were of little value to the landowners). In retrospect, additional efforts were needed in preparing local county inserts.

o) Attracting consulting foresters to the northern most counties.

As the projects progressed and demand for Stewardship Plans increased the sponsors encountered a problem of getting consulting foresters to work in the northern most counties. This may have been partly because all of the newly recruited consultants were from southern Arkansas and it was more convenient for them to stay closer to home (plus, many were fully occupied and not able to take on new clients). The Arkansas Forestry Commission County Foresters actually ended up developing more Stewardship Plans in two northern most counties than the consultants. Even though the sponsors were successful in recruiting additional consultants, there was a need for four to six more.

p) Completion of Stewardship plans in a timely manner.

The increased demand for Stewardship Plans put a strain on the resources of the technical assistance agencies and the pool of participating consulting foresters. The result was that some landowners had long waiting periods before receiving their plans (and a few of these became disinterested due to the delays). In retrospect, additional efforts (possibly including additional financial incentives) were needed to engage sufficient consulting foresters needed for timely responses to stewardship plan requests.

IX. Future Landowner Education Challenges

All that were involved in the forest landowner education effort are satisfied that their work has been beneficial to the health and productivity of the forestlands in this region. They also agree that they have only scratched the surface and that the work that has been started needs to continue at an accelerated pace. The demand for forest products from this region is still growing and the impact could be devastating if the forest resources are not managed wisely. Listed below are some concerns and challenges that must be addressed if the continuing landowner education effort is to be truly successful. A successful education program could have a beneficial impact on improving timber production, wildlife habitat, watershed protection and recreation and other forest related uses, as well as improve the economic value of the forests to the landowners.

1. Developing leadership among forest landowners to continue the education effort

It is considered essential that private forest landowners keep control of this landowner education effort for it to be truly successful. To do so the landowner groups involved must constantly develop new leaders and workers from within their ranks. It is unrealistic to expect productive volunteers to stay involved indefinitely. New leaders and workers must be in place to take over as others pull back. This can be a very difficult task to accomplish because in these busy days and times individuals with the energy and dedication to volunteer are few and far between, especially those with the knowledge and ability to be leaders.

2. Touching a significant number of the landowners.

The forest landowner education projects completed since this effort began in the early 1990s touched a large number of landowners. Nine issues of the regional newsletter were sent to over 30,000 landowners in eleven counties, over 4,000 landowners attended workshops and field days, and over 400 landowners had Forest Stewardship Plans developed (which is only a small percentage of the plans needed). A much larger percentage of forest landowners need to be involved to have a significant impact at a regional level.

3. Working with technical agencies to adapt their programs in order to provide the human resources need in this region.

As the landowner education projects progressed it became evident that there were some shortages of personnel in the technical agencies with specific areas of expertise. Before implementing additional projects, sponsors need to work with the agencies to identify forthcoming needs and ramp up to the extent possible.

4. Increasing the number of forestry professionals to assist landowners.

Even though several new consulting foresters were recruited to work in this region, there were still not enough to take care of the demand for Forest Stewardship Plans. Additional consultants will be needed if demand for stewardship plans in the region continues to grow.

5. *Continue to make the case that forestry is a significant industry in north Arkansas.*

This forest landowner education effort has done much to bring some well-deserved attention to forest resources and landowners in north central Arkansas. This has resulted in more funds and technical resources being available to the region's forest landowners. To continue and even increase this support it is very important to not let up on "telling the story" of the value and needs of north Arkansas forest lands.

6. *Continuing the collaboration among the groups and agencies involved.*

Overall, the partnerships among landowners and the technical assistance agencies, academic institutions, and other entities involved in this effort has worked well and it is considered essential for such partnerships to continue if future efforts are to be successful. Given the geographic scope it has become very difficult, in this very complicated time, for a single group to have a significant impact on trying to solve natural resource problems, especially when millions of acres and thousands of landowners are involved.

7. *Keeping the landowners involved in developing future education efforts.*

One of the reasons that this effort has been successful is that it was truly an effort created, planned and implemented with landowner participation and leadership. Continuing success will be based on the forest landowners maintaining ownership and control of the direction of forest landowner education in the region.

8. *Maintaining partnership with forest industry.*

Even though private individuals own most of the forestland in north-central Arkansas, the forest products industry (which, as discussed previously, is primarily focused on the southern portion of the State) still has a keen interest in the region. As the landowner education effort began in the early 1990's there were indications that some in the forest products industry were skeptical of the motives behind the initiative. However, the leaders of the landowner education effort, especially the OWOA leaders, took great pains to involve, from the beginning, logging operators and sawmill owners in all the activities, as well as the forest products industry at the state level. A representative from the Arkansas Forestry Association (AFA)¹⁷ was involved in the overall steering committee, and AFA staff was involved in the planning and implementation of most workshops as well as providing information in the newsletters. Involvement from the early stages helped the industry see that the goals of these landowners were the same as theirs, which was improving the forestlands of north Arkansas. Landowners and organizations involved in landowner education need to continue to involve industry as a full partner.

¹⁷ The AFA is the trade organization for the State's forest products industry; refer to: www.arkforests.org

9. *Broadening the level of support for forest landowner education in north Arkansas.*

In retrospect, the leaders of the forest landowner education effort in north central Arkansas believe that, for the most part, they were able to secure substantial levels of support from various sectors (i.e., State & Federal technical assistance agencies, nonprofit organizations and trade associations, and the private forest products industry) to complete the projects as planned. However, they also believe that some groups and agencies should have provided even more support and that other groups and agencies in the state that were not involved should have been, either of which would have led to even more successful outcomes.

10. *Further cultivating the partnership with the School of Forest Resources.*

During project efforts a beneficial partnership developed between the forest landowner education effort in north-central Arkansas and the University of Arkansas' School of Forest Resources. The school's participation improved the quality of the educational information provided to landowners and gave the School's faculty numerous opportunities to interact with forest landowners in the region. The knowledge possessed by the staff at UofA School of Forest Resources is badly needed in north central Arkansas and it will be important to see that partnership continue.

X. Summary Observations & Comments

The leaders of this forest landowner education effort believe that it has been successful because of a few basic reasons:

- 1) There was and still is a need to accelerate technical information and financial assistance to forest landowners, in order to protect and improve the forest resources in this region.
- 2) There was true collaboration and commitment among the landowners and the different agencies and organizations involved.
- 3) Forest landowners were involved throughout this time period and were able to maintain control.
- 4) The technical agencies assisting the landowners were willing and able to provide the technical assistance the landowners requested.
- 5) The sponsors were able to secure adequate funds from the public and private sector to implement their projects.

There have been some tremendous successes and there have also been some failures. The sponsors have learned from those failures and hope that others interested in forest landowner education can learn from their mistakes. Since the early 1990's, when the Ozark Foothills RC&D Council first became involved in the forest landowner education effort, a great number of landowners have received some type of technical or financial assistance. The sponsors feel the level of participation has been significant. But they also feel that this will not assure that the forest resources in this region are safe. Many more landowners need the technical and financial assistance that these projects had to offer. It is their hope that other landowners in this region as well as in other parts of our country will step up and continue this effort. If more information is needed about these forest landowner activities feel free to contact the Ozark Foothills RC&D Council or the Ozark Woodland Owners Association.

XI. Appendices:

Appendix 1. Independence County Forest Landowner Education Project:

Independence County Conservation District
490 College Street Federal Bldg, Rm 242
Batesville, Arkansas 72501
Phone: 870-793-4164 x3

Appendix 2. Ozark Foothills Forest Landowner Education Project

Ozark foothills RC&D Council
2119 Malcolm Ave. Suite 220
Newport, Arkansas 72112
Phone: 870-523-8986 x4

Appendix 3. Strawberry River Forest Landowner Education Project

Fulton County conservation District
Shaver office Complex Hwy 62 W
Salem, Arkansas 72567
Phone: 870-895-3201 x3

Or

Ozark Foothills RC&D Council
2119 Malcolm Ave. Suite 220
Newport, Arkansas 72112
Phone: 870-523-8986 x4

Little Red River Forest Landowner Education Project

Cleburne County Conservation District
110 Tulaka Blvd.
Heber Springs, Arkansas 72543
Phone: 501-362-2628 x3

Or

Ozark Foothills RC&D Council
2119 Malcolm Ave. Suite 220
Newport, Arkansas 72112
Phone: 870-523-8986 x4

Appendix 4. Ozark Forest Landowner Survey

Ozark Woodland Owners Association
490 College Street Federal Bldg, Rm 242
Batesville, Arkansas
Phone: 870-793-4164 x3

Appendix 5. North Arkansas Forestry Conference

Ozark Woodland Owners Association
490 College Street Federal Bldg, Rm 242
Batesville, Arkansas 72501
Phone: 870-793-4164 x3

Appendix 6. Ozark Forest Economic Impact Study

Ozark Woodland Owners Association
490 College Street Federal Bldg, Rm 242
Batesville, Arkansas 72501
Phone: 870-793-4164 x3

Appendix 7. Participating Agencies and organizations

Ozark Foothills Resource Conservation & Development Council
Ozark Woodland Owners Association
University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service
Arkansas Forestry Commission
Arkansas Forestry Association
Arkansas Game & Fish commission
Cleburne County Conservation District
Fulton County Conservation District
Independence County Conservation District
Izard County Conservation District
Jackson County Conservation District
Lawrence County Conservation District
Randolph County Conservation District
Sharp County Conservation District
Stone County Conservation District
Van Buren County Conservation District
White County Conservation District
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Winrock International
University of Arkansas School of Forest Resources

Appendix 8: Agencies represented on Overall Advisory Committee

Ozark Foothills RC&D Council
University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service
Arkansas Forestry Commission
Arkansas Forestry Association
Arkansas Game & Fish Commission
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Appendix 9: Independence County Technical Advisory Committee

District Conservationist, Independence County
Natural Resources Conservation Service
County Forester, Independence & Sharp Counties
Arkansas Forestry Commission
County Agent, Independence County
University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service