

OHIO SAF Newsletter
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**SOCIETY OF
AMERICAN
FORESTERS**
OHIO

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Announcements

Ohio Chapter Awards

The Ohio SAF chapter winter meeting is **March 24-25, 2026**. Therefore, we need our award nominations submitted to our chairperson on **January 9, 2026**. If you are interested in nominating someone for a chapter award please let Josh Kocher know.

National Awards

The deadline for national awards nominations is **March 1, 2026**. If you are interested in nominating someone for a national award but might need assistance pulling the nomination packet together, please let Josh Kocher know and he can assist you. You can find more information about those awards and nomination requirements online at:

https://www.eforester.org/Main/Community/Awards___Fellows/Awards.aspx

Updates to Ohio Forest Tax Law

The Ohio Division of Forestry recently passed 4 rule changes to the Ohio Forest Tax Law program that will affect both the landowners and the Foresters who assist them in enrolling in the program. These changes took effect on December 18, 2025. The changes can be summarized as:

1. Change from requiring three (3) signed agreement forms to requiring one (1) signed agreement form.
2. Change in definition of "Professional Forester".

3. Change in eligibility of forestlands – only lands engaged in management for three (3) years are eligible.
4. Change in Notice of Violation (NOV) rules.

A more in depth explanation of the changes in rules was sent out to membership on December 12, 2025. There are 2 webinars going over the changes, one on January 5, 2026 at 8:30 AM and January 14, 2026 at 6:30 PM via Microsoft Teams. Links to the webinars were sent to the membership on December 15, 2025. The amount of SAF credits for the webinar is to be determined. If there are any questions, please reach out to Jeremy Scherf or Stephanie Downs.

OSAF Fund Raising Tree Plantings:

A Followup Report

by Gary Kaster

During the period 1994-1996, OSAF participated in fund raising tree planting projects. The sites were provided and site prepped by American Electric Power; trees were provided by Mead Paper and American Electric Power. AEP paid OSAF \$150 per thousand seedlings planted. Tom Berger of the OSAF coordinated with AEP foresters on these projects.

In 1994, 60 volunteers consisting of OSAF members and OSU and Hocking College forestry students, planted 10,000 white ash on reclaimed grasslands on AEP property near High Hill.

In 1995, 71 volunteers consisting of OSAF members and OSU and Hocking College students planted 10,000 white ash seedlings on reclaimed mined land near High Hill, Ohio.



Figure 1: 1995 Planting 1



Figure 2: 1995 Planting 2

Years of research on AEP reclaimed mined grassland sites, had identified compaction and high pH (7.0-7.5) as the main factors in seedling survival. Various in-house trials had identified white and green ash as two hardwood species that could tolerate both the compaction and the high pH. Conifer species that did well, were Austrian and Pit-lolly pines. As a result, the ashes were a major component in AEP tree plantings on reclaimed grassland sites. Since the emerald ash borer was first discovered in northwest Ohio in 2003, there was no way of knowing in the 90's that the ash in these plantings would be affected by the borer. Many OSAF members that participated in these plantings have asked "I wonder how that ash did?" This fall I went out to these plantings and took some pictures. Over the years, the borer has definitely had its impact, as Figures 3 through 8 show.



Figure 3: Current Condition of 1995 Planting



Figure 4: Presence of the borer



Figure 5: Plantation condition with sporadic survivors

There are a lot of stump sprouts on trees affected. Also observed was invasion by pioneer species such as black cherry and elm. Some survivors show promise.



Figure 6: Stump Sprouts



Figure 7: Black cherry behind the Ash



Figure 8: Residual survivor

In 1996, 75 volunteers consisting of OSAF members and OSU and Hocking College students, planted 10,000 Austrian pine, white pine and white ash seedlings on reclaimed mined land on AEP's Conesville Coal Lands property. The 1996 tree planting was part of AEP's Climate Challenge Tree Planting Project aimed at sequestering carbon in trees. The site was an area that had been mined and reclaimed to grasses during the 1970's. The area had been site prepped by strip spraying and the planting was fairly easy for this type of ground. The pH and compaction were lessor factors on the Conesville site. The white ash were impacted by the borer; the Austrian and white pine did well. Other invaders are also present.



Figure 9: Current condition of the 1996 planting



Figure 10: Photo of the 1996 Conesville volunteers