

Background – MA in Forestry and MA in Env Mgmt w/ focus on economics, from the Duke School of the Env't. Most of the work has involved the Farm Bill (govt program). Not an ecologist – superficial understanding of the various processes – fire, climate change, etc.

Wysner mtn in the Uwharries – fire mgmt done there. Longleaf pine mixed with rock outcrops – coastal plain species and mtn terrain. 5-10 miles in linear distance – white pine populations, usually found in higher elevations.

USDA NC's Timber industry – an assessment of timber product output and use, 2001 – Michael Howell and David R. Brown – Resource Bulletin SRS-94.

Chicken and poultry being raised in the area – in long, skinny barns. More in southern part of the county, but one in Eliazer. A Northern Piedmont situation is the tobacco buyout – don't know how much it affects the Uwharries, but small tracts of land that can't produce tobacco can economically produce poultry on these small tracts. Other crops (soybeans, cotton) must be mechanized and grown over large scales to be profitable.

Env Defense – Center for Conservation Incentives – how to use these to encourage landowners to manage their land for protecting biodiversity. NC is one of the ED's 8 regional offices.

Caraway Prairie in Randolph County – one place where Schweinitz's sunflower exists

Cecil Frost 2004 – “the original community as described by early explorers and the first settlers was a mosaic of open woodland with interspersed prairies (Lederer 1672, Logan 1859). The prairie component was located on the flat to convex and gently rolling uplands of the larger fire compartments.”

Phillip Juras 1997 – “Rather than an unbroken forest, the Southern Piedmont could have been described in the years of first European contact, as a patchwork of adjacent, dissimilar communities with often indistinguishable boundaries between them.” – <http://www.philipjuras.com/thesis>.

Instead of soil type, the fire pattern that existed played a much more important role of where the Piedmont Prairie once existed. Where there are shrink-swell soils, this was once the location of the prairie, most likely because trees have a hard time growing here, and the soils are dry, making it a better soil condition for grasses especially when fire is very frequent. Schweinitz' sunflower stays around roadsides because the mowing frequency happens to coincide with the burn frequency.

Barnes creek – a very clean creek where Carolina Elktoe was found; thought to be extinct. Kevin Redding (staff member of Land Trust in central North Carolina) said it existed. It is the rarest of the rare – maybe one tiny population, like the ivory-billed woodpecker.

Present Use Value program – gives landowners a reduction in their property taxes if they do commercial management for agriculture, horticulture, or forestry. Have to make money off their land – maximum commercial production to return revenue to the county as well as to encourage landowners to stay on their land and not subdivide it or sell it to development. Want to add a new category – conservation.

Healy (advisor at Duke) – Land Use in the South book. Agriculture, forestry, row crops, then development in the 80's and 90's.

EQIP – Env Quality Incentives Program – landowner performs some environmental activity and gets reimbursed for some part of the cost – from 50 to 110%.

Also, Conservation Reserve Program – pays landowners to rent the land – whatever the landowner would get from someone to plant corn, that is paid to plant native plants. Federally funded program through the Farm Bill (4 billion dollars/yr conservation spending nationally) – by USDA. This reserve program are set up to take land out of row crops and pasture and return it back to some kind of native condition.

The Farm Bill is the piece of federal legislation that defines how rural areas are managed.

Private landowners are interested in restoring fire, and in adding their land to a larger prescribed burn block (instead of doing small fire lines around 30 acres, could do one bigger line around 200 acres, and can get the expertise of the USFS involved). Also, the USFS is searching for some kind of mission – are they a resource extraction agency, an agency responsible for conservation, etc.? Timber companies and environmentalists aren't very supportive of them. Ecological services could be something the USFS could help with.

Conservation easement – legal restriction a landowner puts on the property so they obtain ownership of the land, but the land use is restricted – can't do many things to the property. This reduces the property value, but can get a tax deduction for it.

Lawrence S. Barden – Historic Prairies in the Piedmont of N and S Carolina, USA –
www.bioweb.uncc.edu/faculty/barden/zimages/prairiePaper1997.htm

Field trip on Saturday – leave 7:30, get there at 9, get back 6:30. Will see Badin area – most recreationally used – from 9-1. Boone-Chesson – have been doing longleaf restoration – his private land is bordered on 3 sides by national forest, and a railroad on the 4th with some prairie area. After that, Black Ankle bog – Nature Conservancy site. More on the Sandhills site.

919-260-1891 (Gabe's cell)

Bring own lunch.

Carly – 336-491-4226

Liz – 828-337-2946