

Forest Resources Alumni Group News

News for alumni and friends of Penn State's Department of Ecosystem Science and Management (formerly Penn State's School of Forest Resources)

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President's Message



Currently, I am in the tail end of my term as President of the Forest Resources Alumni Group (FRAG) Board of Directors. I was looking forward to many of the activities the Board and the Department of Ecosystem Science and Management (ESM) are engaged in, especially our spring awards banquets. However, as pandemics will have it, it was not to be. Lost with the two cancelled banquets was the gathering of alumni, the stories, the alumni honoree ceremony, and a host of other interactions. As I reflect on this, I realize it is a small price to pay relative to the price paid by so many others who have suffered and are continuing to suffer. As I said in a previous newsletter, and I will quote myself again, "We are committed, with your participation and assistance, to moving this organization forward and improving upon past activities. Despite the constraints we are facing, there is a lot we can do moving forward." And so that is what we are doing.

Despite the cancellation of the banquets and several other activities we typically engage in, we have seen a period of progress relative to our activities now and those planned for the future.

Taking off from the December 2020 meeting Vice President Bill Donley and I with then incoming Department Head Dr. Bradley Cardinale, we moved ahead with a revitalized FRAG agenda. We expressed to him that the Board wanted a heightened level of interaction with the Department, and we felt the Department could in turn benefit from alumni participation. This wish is being realized as we have then moved ahead with various activities in those areas where we were most likely to succeed. Dr. Cardinale is committed to moving forward in our mutually beneficial directions.

What has been accomplished? Following the agenda items listed in the Board document titled “Strengthening Communications among Alumni and Fostering Alumni Engagement with the Department of Ecosystem Science and Management” we have seen progress. We have initiated a seminar series starting Spring 2022, which is alumni driven. We’ve promoted the LinkedIn website (more details below). Dr. Cardinale is actively participating in our activities, which includes attending our Board meetings, and our sub-committee meetings where we pick our annual alumni award winners. His inputs have been of great value. We also are exploring a name change for this group, which will better reflect graduates of the Department in the future. Last, and not least, we have revived this newsletter, which I know many of you look forward to reading.

In the document above we wrote about utilizing LinkedIn to aid in developing an effective alumni communications plan. As previously mentioned in the last newsletter, our Forest Resources Alumni Group LinkedIn website is not only up and running, but we are now seeing increased activities from our alumni. As a reminder, anyone interested in, or connected to, the ESM and former School of Forest Resources (SFR) in the College of Agricultural Sciences at Penn State is welcome to join. The group website was created to share related news, innovations, and employment opportunities. You can now log into LinkedIn and search for “Penn State Forest Resources Alumni Group” or go to <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12405836/>. Since it is a group website, you will be prompted to request membership. If you are new to LinkedIn, there are many online resources to help, including a site hosted by Penn State Student Affairs. It will still take time for our new LinkedIn network to grow but we are optimistic. Make a point of inviting your classmates and other alumni to join! Check the group website regularly for updates and new contacts.

In light of our ongoing and developing efforts, we are certainly looking forward to your inputs on all of our activities. With so much concern and over COVID-19 and its mutations, the current schedule of events are very much up-in-the-air so to speak. As activities or events are scheduled and/or reformatted or canceled, we will try to get the word out. While most of these events are on hold, we want to be ready to pick up in 2022 where we left off in 2019 and at the beginning of 2020. On a positive front, the annual [FRAG Alumni and Friends Meeting is scheduled for May 14, 2022](#). It is to be held outdoors under a large tent. We are excited to see this event once again become a reality. Register today!

Again, it is my hope that you will help keep the alumni group going by donating to either the Department, the RESOURCES newsletter, or the ESM Student Support and Alumni Relations Fund. Since we do not charge dues for membership in FRAG, we rely on contributions to support our activities including the publication and distribution of this newsletter. Also, keep in mind that if you can contribute to the fund, it will eventually help to support student travel to professional meetings, alumni receptions at those meetings, student registration

at the annual alumni banquet, class field trips, ESM's Career Fair, and other activities that foster student/alumni and Department/alumni relations.

I want to end this message on this note. I have always been grateful, and hold in high esteem, my connections with Penn State and, in my case, the forestry program and my peers. This is why it is always so hard when those we knew and interacted with leave us. I would be remiss here if I did not mention my 42-year friendship with Jim Finley, and what he meant to me, the Penn State forestry family, and Pennsylvania forestry as a whole, not to mention all of the family and friends he was tied to. Let's not forget Jim and his love of life!

Thanks for your continued support! I look forward to hearing from you and hopefully seeing you in 2022. It has been a distinct pleasure to serve as your President over the last almost two years. You should try it!

Steve Grado

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1992 Ph.D., Major: Forest Resources; Minor: Operations Research
1984 M.S., Dual Major: Forest Resources and Operations Research
1979 B.S., Major: Forest Science

Interview with the Department Head



Q: Back in June 2021 you shared with us five goals that outlined your vision for the department, and you referenced a visioning and planning process that would inform how those goals would be accomplished. What is the status of that process?

Brad Cardinale (BC): Last June I shared five goals for the Department of Ecosystem Science and Management that I believe will help the department become one of the world's most impactful groups working on the sustainable management of ecosystems: (1) Create a more interdisciplinary department that collaborates broadly with other units and institutes across Penn State; (2) Maintain the department's historical leadership in the conservation, restoration, and management of Pennsylvania's ecosystems while, at the same time, developing an even stronger reputation as international leaders in areas of global concern; (3) Be innovators in reconnecting academia with society by engaging a broader group of stakeholders in the co-design and co-production of knowledge to meet the needs of people; (4) Build a more diverse and inclusive community that can better engage those who create as well as suffer from ecosystem mismanagement; (5) Inspire more students to become the next generation of champions for sustainable use of Earth's ecosystems.

In 2021, ESM made considerable progress towards these goals. The department hired five new faculty who are leaders in their respective fields of resource management. Several were co-hires with the Huck Institute or Institutes of Energy and the Environment, and all are interdisciplinary scholars whose work spans local to international scales. These hires included Drs. [Chris Scott](#) as the Maurice K. Goddard Chair of Forestry and

Environmental Conservation, [Jill Hamilton](#) as the Ibberson Chair of Silviculture and Director of the Schatz Center for Tree Molecular Genetics, Assistant Professor [Daniel Allen](#), Assistant Research Professor [Ekaterina Bazilevskaya](#), and Assistant Research Professor [Jon Sweetman](#). We are very excited these individuals have joined the department.

ESM also spent much of 2021 working through a departmental planning process that will culminate in recommendations for new departmental vision and mission statements, updates to the department's areas of excellence in research, teaching, and extension, prioritization of additional faculty hires, proposed revisions to our degree programs and curriculum, and improvements to ESM's culture of diversity, equity, and inclusivity. I will soon organize town-halls with ESM stakeholders (e.g., students, alumni, partner agencies/organizations) to solicit feedback on ideas so that we can revise them and consider more input before any recommendations are implemented.

Q: Overall, how would you assess your first full year at the helm of the department? Are there particular insights or experiences from this past year that you want to share?

BC: ESM had a terrific year! Many faculty and students continue to be honored with awards for their great work. Examples of recent honorees include new fellows to the American Association for the Advancement of Science (Drs. Jay Stauffer and Elizabeth Boyer), a University Distinguished Professorship (Dr. Jason Kaye), a College of Agricultural Sciences Award for Excellence in Extension Programming (Dr. Sandy Smith), a Sea Grant Knauss Fellowship (Brian Redder), a Fulbright Scholarship (Jacob Johnson), and presentation/poster awards at professional conferences. More than a dozen stories were published about the amazing research ongoing in the department, some of which were picked up by the Associated Press and syndicated news outlets. We made significant improvements to our courses and classrooms to improve teaching, and even developed important new extension activities like the Broadening Extension through Student Training (BEST) program that funds graduate students to work with faculty who have extension appointments to add an extension component to their dissertations.

Importantly, nearly all of the department's faculty and staff participated in ESM's visioning and planning process that will take the department to the next level, and I was proud of how everyone came together to work towards a common vision for the department. But a challenge I see as we move forward is working to honor the amazing history of the department without being constrained by it. ESM is the outcome of a unique trajectory where once distinct, highly successful academic units were joined together to form a collection of individuals who now have broader interests and expertise than any of the units they came from. We must now decide how the fabric of this history can be woven together to create a vibrant tapestry that shows our future. That tapestry will need to display more disciplines working more closely together on even bigger, broader problems than any time in the past. That tapestry will need to illustrate ESM realizing a potential greater than anyone previously envisioned.

Q: What's in store for 2022?

BC: Even though we've made great progress in 2021, there is still much to do. In the coming year we need to vet the preliminary ideas that have been generated by ESM's Visioning and Planning Process, then revise them after getting a broader set of feedback before turning attention towards implementation. While this will take time and patience (especially considering the university is a slow-moving ship), we must keep up the positive momentum and not lose sight of our goals.

We also have exciting new hires pending in the coming year that will help us accomplish our goals. The department has ongoing searches for an Assistant Professor of Disease Ecology (a co-hire with the Huck Institute), Assistant Professor of Multifunctional Landscapes, Assistant Teaching Professor of Forestry, and an Extension Associate for Water Resources. We hope to open new searches this fall for an Assistant Professor of Invasive Species Biology and possibly an Assistant Professor in Soil Health. The energy and excitement of all these new hires will also help propel the department forward.

Student News

- Undergraduate student **Anna Pauletta** was featured in the inaugural issue of [Natural Resources Management Today](#) in August 2021. Anna graduated in December 2021, completing both the B.S. in Forest Ecosystem Management and the B.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries Science, as well as minors in Biology and Political Science.
- **Sadikshya Sharma** received the 2021 [Rob Olszewski Fellowship in Forest Policy and Analysis](#) from the Forest Landowner Foundation to pursue a doctorate in Forest Resources at Penn State. Sharma completed an M.S. in Forest Resources in 2021.
- **Paris Werner** received the 2021 [Pete and Linda Prutzman Scholarship](#) from the Forest Landowner Foundation when he was an M.S. candidate in Wildlife and Fisheries Science. Prutzman is a Penn State alumnus (B.S. Forest Science 1977).
- In June 2021, **Katie Gundermann**, M.S. student advised by Dr. Franny Buderman, won second place in the student poster session at 2021 EURING Analytical Meeting and Workshop for her poster, "Efficacy of positional and behavioral change-point models to determine ungulate parturition events."
- **Cassie Stark**, M.S. student in Forest Resources, was awarded second place in the [Virtual PA Botany Symposium](#) in November 2021.
- WFS senior **Eamonn Powers** and FOREM senior **Jonathan Nelson** are among 10 undergraduate students selected as College of Agricultural Sciences Alumni Society 2021 Internship Award winners. Eamonn was an intern at the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources in Vernal, Utah, and Jonathan was an intern at the Pennsylvania Game Commission in Jersey Shore.
- In January 2022 USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) announced the recipients of predoctoral fellowships, and our [College of Agricultural Sciences received seven](#) – more than any other university in the country! One of the awards went to **Marissa Kopp**, doctoral candidate in ecology who

works with Dr. Jason Kaye on “Minimizing Nitrogen Pollution Swapping Linking Root Traits to N2O Emissions in Edge-of-Field Forested Riparian Buffers.”

- **Katie Gunderman**, M.S. candidate in Wildlife and Fisheries Science, and **Arun Regmi**, Ph.D. candidate in Forest Resources were among four students [awarded scholarships by the Wildlife for Everyone Foundation](#) in March 2022.
- On March 31, 2022, two Wildlife and Fisheries Science undergraduates, **Eamonn Powers** and **Andrew Bucha**, placed first and second, respectively, in the Gamma Sigma Delta 27th Annual Research Exposition of the College of Agricultural Sciences. Andrew worked on the salinity tolerances of the Chesapeake Logperch to predict how far down the Chesapeake Bay this endangered fish could migrate. Eamonn used a website on which fisherman could upload images of Brook Trout to determine pigmentation and color differences of different geographically separated populations. Ph.D. candidate **Sara Mueller** conceived of this latter project, worked on developing the website, and mentored Eamonn.



Pictured left to right: Andrew Bucha, Eamonn Powers, and Sara Mueller. Photo by Sara Mueller.

Avery Corondi, Latham Award Winner

by Keith Smalley ('72 FORSC), newsletter contributor

The Roger M. Latham Memorial Graduate Award memorializes Dr. Roger M. Latham who devoted his career to promoting conservation and management of renewable natural resources. The award is given annually to an outstanding full-time graduate student advised by a Wildlife and Fisheries Science faculty member. The 2021 recipient is **Avery M. Corondi**, an M.S. candidate in Wildlife and Fisheries Science advised by Dr. W. David Walter.

I never met Roger Latham. As a matter of fact, before I prepared for this article, I had never heard of Roger Latham. After doing research on the man, I reached the conclusion that my life would have been fuller had I taken time to meet him earlier in my life. I have met Avery Corondi. My conclusion is, after interviewing her for this article, if Roger was anything like Avery, I really missed an opportunity!

The title of Avery's thesis is "Asynchronous Breeding of Elk and Subsequent Calf Survival." Avery is in the second year of a study that has her darting cow elk in the Pennsylvania elk herd. Once she has the cow elk on the ground, Avery assesses how likely it is that the subject is pregnant. With a high likelihood, she administers an ultrasound to confirm the pregnancy. If confirmed, she inserts a vaginal implanted transmitter (VIT) in the



cow's birth canal. This device transmits signals to the tracking collar Avery has put around the subject's neck. The VIT measures temperature and motion. When the VIT is pushed from the cow's body as the calf travels down the birth canal, the motion stops, and the temperature begins to fall. Either one of these events triggers an alarm on Avery's phone, setting her into action. The VIT transmits the coordinates, and all Avery must do is get to those coordinates before the calf leaves the scene! Once on the scene, Avery will equip the calf with a tracking device and monitoring of its life begins.

The reason this study is important is that it is believed that impregnation of elk cows has been spread over months duration rather than over weeks duration that was common in the past. This, of course, means that calf births are also spread over months duration. If this theory proves true, then predation on elk calves will have a greater effect on the elk population. By tracking the birth dates and following the calf mortality, this study should prove or disprove the theory and hopefully give insight into why this phenomenon is happening.

During our interview, Avery relayed the following story to me: On February 25 at 2 a.m. her alarm system notified her that one of the cow elk she was tracking had died. This notification occurs when no movement has been detected in the past 12 hours. When she finally located the cow at 9 a.m., Avery was surprised to discover that the cause of death was impact from a tree blown down by heavy winds the previous day. Avery was quite familiar with this cow elk as she had collared it the previous year and had eyes on it multiple times over the past two years. Avery located the VIT about six feet from the cow; the VIT had been ejected from the birth canal by the impact. Per Game Commission protocol, Avery decapitated the subject, strapped the head on her back and started the two-mile trek back to civilization. The head would be tested for chronic wasting disease. Walking down a railroad track on the final leg of her journey she saw two six-year-old boys sled riding ahead of her. She prepared herself for the obvious question, knelt down, and explained why she had an elk head on her back. It was not until she got back to her vehicle and looked in a mirror that she realized she had blood all over her face!

I want to thank Avery for taking time in her busy schedule to allow this interview to happen. I am looking forward to welcoming her as a fellow Penn State alum in the future!

Faculty and Staff News

- Here are a few achievements that were inadvertently not included in earlier newsletters:
 - **David Miller**, associate professor of wildlife population ecology, was among three recipients of the [Dr. William Henson Diversity Achievement Award](#) in the College of Agricultural Sciences in 2020.
 - **Patrick Drohan**, professor of pedology, received the 2020 Northeast Regional National Cooperative Soil Survey *Silver Spade Award*.
 - **Allyson Muth**, director of the Center for Private Forests, was honored with the Robert W. Bauer Outstanding Service to Forestry Award in 2020 by the Allegheny Society of American Foresters.

- **Mike Jacobson**, professor of forest resources, received the [2020 Kopp International Achievement Award](#) for significant contributions to the advancement of the international mission of the University.
- In August 2020, **Brian Redder**, a doctoral student studying soil science and biogeochemistry and advised by Dr. Beth Boyer, was [chosen by Pennsylvania Sea Grant](#) to participate in the National Sea Grant's John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship Program, class of 2021.
- **John Carlson**, professor of molecular genetics and director of the Schatz Center for Tree Molecular Genetics [retired](#) in June 2021.
- In July 2021, **Elizabeth Boyer**, professor of water resources, [received](#) the Alex and Jessie C. Black Award for excellence in research.
- Former Director of the School of Forest Resources, **Dr. Robert S. Bond** [died](#) on August 28, 2021.
- **Dana Grove** received the 2021 College of Agricultural Sciences Trailblazer Award that honors a staff member “who demonstrates creativity and innovation in the improvement of programs, services, products, and/or approaches in the workplace.”
- In September 2021, Assistant Research Professor **Tyler Groh’s** co-authored paper titled “*In Situ Denitrification in Saturated Riparian Buffers*” was selected as the [2021 Journal of Environmental Quality Award Winner](#).
- **James Finley**, Ibberson Chair and Professor Emeritus of Private Forest Management and Human Dimensions and Natural Resources, and Center for Private Forests co-founder, died unexpectedly in October 2021. [Remembering Jim Finley](#) is an article written by Jim’s friends and family. In February 2022, the Allegheny Society of American Foresters inducted Dr. Finley as the [first official member of the ANSAF Foresters Hall of Fame](#).
- In October 2021 **Daniel Allen** joined our department as Assistant Professor of Aquatic Ecology.
- **Joe Harding**, assistant teaching professor and director of forestlands, retired in January 2022. Forester **Brent Harding** has been appointed director of forestlands.
- **Ekaterina Bazilevskaya** joined our department on February 1, 2022, as an Assistant Research Professor and Director of the Soils Research Cluster Lab (SRCL). Dr. Bazilevskaya will teach an undergraduate course in the Soils program of ERM as well as a graduate class in use of instrumentation. She will also develop an extension program in soil science using the SRCL to serve clientele in agriculture, industry, and/or state and federal regulatory agencies.
- **Jay Stauffer**, distinguished professor of ichthyology, was elected as a [2021 Fellow](#) of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.
- In March 2022, administrative assistant **Mary Jo Schillings** achieved 25 years of service at Penn State, and **Sierra Fleck** and **Laura Sullivan** joined our department as financial assistants.
- **Sanford “Sandy” Smith**, teaching professor in forest resources and Natural Resources & Youth Extension Specialist, received the 2022 Excellence in Extension Programming Award.

ESM Faculty, Staff, and Students in *Penn State News*

[Novel study looks at nitrogen credit trading to spur growth of riparian buffers](#)

June 9, 2021

Watershedwide nutrient credit trading has been suggested as a mechanism for reducing pollution entering the Chesapeake Bay, but a new study by Penn State researchers suggests that the high cost of producing nitrogen credits through the establishment of riparian buffers on Pennsylvania farmland currently does not provide an incentive for buffer establishment.

[Ag Sciences student finds research, extracurricular opportunities abound](#)

June 21, 2021

Alyssa Curry, a junior majoring in environmental resource management, with minors in environmental engineering and entomology, is gaining various experiences at Penn State, including research and study abroad opportunities.

[Pioneer in tree molecular genetics, John Carlson, retires after four decades](#)

June 25, 2021

John Carlson, professor of molecular genetics in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences and director of the Schatz Center for Tree Molecular Genetics, is retiring this month after a career spanning four decades of pioneering research with forest trees.

[Loss of biodiversity in streams threatens vital biological process](#)

July 1, 2021

The fast-moving decline and extinction of many species of detritivores — organisms that break down and remove dead plant and animal matter — may have dire consequences, an international team of scientists suggests in a new study.

[Water resources professor receives 2021 Black Award for excellence in research](#)

July 8, 2021

Elizabeth Boyer, professor of water resources in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences, is the 2021 recipient of the Alex and Jessie C. Black Award for excellence in research.

[When fawns perceive constant danger from many sources, they almost seem to relax](#)

July 14, 2021

Burnout. It is a syndrome that is said to afflict humans who feel chronic stress. But after conducting a novel study using trail cameras showing the interactions between white-tailed deer fawns and predators, a Penn State researcher suggests that prey animals feel it, too.

[Nitrous oxide emissions, coming from legume cover crops, manure, can be reduced](#)

August 2, 2021

The application of manure after the growth and demise of legume cover crops in rotations is a recipe to increase nitrous oxide releases during ensuing corn growth, according to a team of Penn State researchers who conducted a new study. They suggest that innovative management strategies are needed to reduce these emissions.

[Researchers help track the growth of ginseng forest farming in Pennsylvania](#)

August 19, 2021

There is good and bad news about ginseng collection and production in Pennsylvania, and likely much of Appalachia, according to a new study conducted by Penn State researchers.

[By reducing forest floor temperature, invasive shrubs stifle native species](#)

August 31, 2021

Invasive shrubs in Northeastern forests that sprout leaves earlier in the spring and keep them longer in the fall not only absorb more sunlight than native shrubs, but their foliage lowers air temperatures on the forest floor, likely giving them another competitive advantage.

[Urban stormwater study finds little difference between managed, unmanaged flows](#)

September 14, 2021

At a time when many municipalities are seeking to control urban stormwater by investing heavily in green infrastructure — such as water-quality ponds, infiltration basins, porous pavement, and riparian plantings — a new study suggests that these expensive efforts may not have much of an impact.

[Software tool that finds spots for water-quality devices will work in Northeast](#)

September 14, 2021

A computer software package widely used in the Midwest to strategically position riparian buffers and other structures aimed at protecting water quality on agricultural land can be used effectively in the eastern United States, with some limitations, Penn State researchers report in a new study.

[College of Ag Sciences senior finds path in environmental academics and action](#)

September 24, 2021

Penn State senior Elka Hoelsken is exploring environmental and natural resource issues as a student in the Environmental Resource Management program.

[Warm, wet autumn could mute and delay foliage display in Pennsylvania](#)

October 5, 2021

Because of the warm, wet summer, trees in Pennsylvania are mostly in great shape. But for the state's forests to exhibit their most vibrant colors, conditions need to be cooler and drier in the next few weeks, according to a Penn State expert.

[Jim Finley: Forest protector, private forest center founder, professor emeritus](#)

October 19, 2021

Jim Finley long will be remembered for his simple but powerful message: take care of the woods. And in conveying that idea to thousands of people across Pennsylvania and the nation over a five-decade Penn State career, the professor emeritus of forest resources persuaded many.

[New faculty fellowship to help advance diversity, equity, inclusion](#)

November 1, 2021

Laura Leites, associate research professor of quantitative forest ecology, has been named Penn State's inaugural Equity Leadership Fellow. The new fellowship in Office of the Vice Provost for Educational Equity

aims to help faculty members develop as leaders in diversity, equity and inclusion while creating opportunities to make a positive impact at Penn State.

[Forestry extension educator wins Presidential Field Forester Award](#)

November 3, 2021

The Society of American Foresters recently named David Jackson, a forest resources educator with Penn State Extension, as a 2021 Presidential Field Forester Award recipient. He will be recognized at the virtual SAF National Convention, Nov. 3-6.

[Penn State Schuylkill Alumni Society announces 2021 Alumni Award winners](#)

December 7, 2021

Each fall, the Penn State Schuylkill Alumni Society announces the Alumni Award winners for that year. Honorees are selected based upon the impact they have in their communities, outstanding professional achievements, and embodiment of Penn State values. This year's cohort includes Michael G. Messina (class of 1979), Scott C. Price (class of 1985), and Abigayle Kaiser (class of 2020).

[Although most support avian conservation, few recognize current plight of birds](#)

December 15, 2021

The vast majority of Pennsylvanians responding to a recent survey conducted by Penn State researchers said they strongly support bird conservation and indicated they believe future efforts will be needed to protect avian species. But there is good and bad news in those responses to questionnaires that were part of a study to examine public attitudes toward bird conservation, government involvement in private lands issues, and private forest management.

[Noted ornithologist Margaret Brittingham retires from Penn State after 33 years](#)

January 7, 2022

Margaret Brittingham, professor of wildlife resources, extension wildlife specialist and one of the state's leading ornithologists, recently retired from Penn State after a 33-year, innovative career in the College of Agricultural Sciences.

[Penn State gets grant to teach private forest owners to adapt to climate change](#)

January 21, 2022

Researchers in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences will use a newly awarded \$1.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to work with 13 other land-grant universities in the eastern U.S. to create an education program that will help private forests owners adapt to and mitigate climate change.

[Agroforests in the tropics provide key conservation landscapes for amphibians](#)

January 25, 2022

Although tropical forest ecosystems around the world have been modified and fragmented by agroforests planted to produce commodities such as coffee, rubber and areca palm, amphibian communities can survive in those transformed landscapes — if the agroforests are managed to support biodiversity.

[Five Penn State faculty named AAAS Fellows](#)

January 26, 2022

Five Penn State faculty members in areas ranging from the ecology and evolution of fish and coral reef ecology to bone regeneration and intrinsically disordered proteins have been named fellows of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the world's largest general scientific society. This year a total of 564 individuals are being recognized with this lifetime honor, bestowed by their peers, for their extraordinary achievements in advancing science.

[Ash trees may be more resilient to warming climate than previously believed](#)

January 26, 2022

Since the 1990s, scientists have been predicting that North American tree species will disappear from portions of their ranges within the next 50 to 100 years because of projected changes in climate. A new study led by Penn State forest biologists found that when transplanted to warmer environments, ash trees can survive increased temperatures of 7 degrees Fahrenheit and sometimes even up to 18 degrees Fahrenheit, suggesting that these trees may be more resilient to climate warming than previously believed.

[Geneticists close to grasping how plant communities may adapt to climate change](#)

February 8, 2022

A century after scientists first noted that the environment contributes to the evolution of adaptive differences among plant populations, scientists are on the verge of figuring out how that adaptation happens — by combining results from huge “common garden” experiments with genomic sequencing.

[Ag. Sciences students top all US universities with \\$1.1M in USDA funding](#)

February 14, 2022

Seven students in Penn State’s College of Agricultural Sciences have received predoctoral fellowships from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture. The students received a combined total of nearly \$1.1 million — the most received for this year's fellowships among U.S. universities.

[New Goddard Chair finding Pennsylvania connections to his international work](#)

March 3, 2022

Christopher Scott's vast experience and expertise in water, climate change, energy, policy, sustainability, and agriculture has led to Scott’s appointment to the Maurice K. Goddard Chair of Forestry and Environmental Conservation at Penn State.

[Researchers to devise new, innovative strategies to manage Philadelphia’s soils](#)

March 21, 2022

A team of Penn State researchers will develop a long-term solution for the testing and management of urban soils for the safe production of garden and food crops in urban settings, funded by a \$100,000 grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

[Red-backed salamanders possess only limited ability to adjust to warming climate](#)

March 25, 2022

If average temperatures rise as projected in eastern North America in coming decades, at least one widespread amphibian species likely will be unable to adjust, and its range may shift northward, according to a new study led by Penn State scientists.

[Penn State's 'Living Filter' to be the focus of wastewater reuse conference](#)

March 28, 2022

More than a half-century of research on the use of treated wastewater for irrigation and groundwater recharge will be the focus of a three-day conference hosted by Penn State April 5-7 at the Wyndham Garden hotel in Boalsburg. The conference will highlight Penn State's "Living Filter," a year-round spray irrigation system that recycles the University's treated effluent.

[How would a nuclear winter impact food production?](#)

March 29, 2022

Effects of a nuclear winter or other sky-darkening global catastrophes on farming and agriculture make it "imperative that we better understand our food production, supply and value chains to make them less vulnerable and more adaptable in times of crises," according to Penn State researchers who recently published a timely study on "Food Resilience in a Dark Catastrophe."

2022 Outstanding Alumni

As announced via email to our alumni listserv in February, our 2022 Outstanding Alumni Award recipients are **Edwin R. Browning**, B.S. Forestry 1958, and **John D. Mood**, B.S. Forestry Technology 1967. Congratulations!

We plan to honor these Outstanding Alumni at our May 14, 2022, alumni gathering along with our 2020 and 2021 award recipients who have not yet been celebrated in person. Biosketches of our newest Outstanding Alumni will soon be posted [online](#).

Our Forest Resources Alumni Group honors up to four Outstanding Alumni and at most one Outstanding Recent Alum each spring. These individuals are recognized for professional achievement, excellence, impact, and recognition; service to the profession, to the department, and to the community; and demonstration of high personal and professional standards. We welcome your [nominations](#); the nomination deadline is September 30.

Alumni Board of Directors Election Results

In our spring 2022 election, **Corbin Rinehart** (2011 WP) and **Howard Wurzbacher** (1979 FORSC) were each re-elected to a second three-year term, and **Dave Jackson** (2007g FORR) and **Austin Noguera** (2017 FOREM) were each elected to a first three-year term. The new terms begin this spring. Congratulations!

Thank you to **Samantha Pedder** whose term as Immediate Past Chair ends this spring; Samantha also served two three-year terms as an elected board member including two years as president (spring 2018-spring 2020) and one year as vice president (spring 2017-spring 2018). We thank **Bill Donley** who is completing his second three-year term and who served as our vice president for two years (spring 2020-spring 2022). Thank you to **Stephen Grado** who is completing his second three-year term this spring; he has served as president

since spring 2020 and two years as vice president (spring 2018 to spring 2020), and he will continue his service on the board as immediate past president. We greatly appreciate everyone's service!

Alumni – In Memoriam

The name is linked to an online obituary, if available.

Degrees listed include only those earned in Penn State's former School of Forest Resources or current Department of Ecosystem Science and Management.

1940s

Thomas E. Russell (B.S. Forestry 1949) – we were notified of his passing in February 2022

1950s

[Heinz J. Heinemann](#) died February 16, 2022 (B.S. Forestry 1950)

[Maurice "Duke" Hobough](#) died December 27, 2021 (B.S. Forestry 1958)

1970s

[James C. Finley](#) died October 2, 2021 (B.S. Forest Science 1970, M.S. Forest Resources 1975)

2000s

[Richard D. Marther](#) died July 6, 2021 (B.S. Wildlife and Fisheries Science 2006)

Do you recognize this?



Brent Harding, director of forestlands, has this iron in his office. The iron has a PSC (Pennsylvania State College) inventory tag, which means it predates the creation of The Pennsylvania State University in the 1950s. The Stone Valley Forest sawmill did not come into existence until the early 1960s, so the iron also predates any lumber or log marking at that facility. If you have information on what this iron may have been used to label, please contact Brent Harding directly at bah173@psu.edu or 814-865-7422. Thank you!

2022 Alumni and Friends Meeting – May 14, 2022

We will gather outdoors for a reception and lunch under a tent by the Forest Resources Building at Penn State University Park. After lunch we will move inside to the Steimer Auditorium for a brief business meeting, an update on the department, and a celebration of our Outstanding Alumni.

[Register today!](#) Given the short time frame and possible delays in mail delivery, please let Ellen Rom know via phone (814-863-0362) or e-mail (exr2@psu.edu) if you plan to attend, and then put your registration in the mail. Thank you!

We have a small block of rooms on hold at The Penn Stater Hotel for overnight lodging (\$115 plus tax per night). Please make your reservation by contacting the hotel directly at 1-800-233-7505 and using the Block Code ECOS22A for the Penn State Forest Resources Alumni Group. Reserve your room by April 15 to get the block rate. To check other lodging options, contact The Happy Valley Adventure Bureau toll free at 800-358-5466 or online at <https://happyvalley.com/>.

Alumni News

1960s

Richard Schnure (B.S. Forestry 1963), news from July 2021: “Retired after 27 years in the Air Force and more than 13 years with the New Jersey Department of Labor.”

William Sharpe (B.S. Forest Technology 1966, M.S. Forestry 1968), news from February 2022: “I was fortunate enough to make the annual fishing trip to Utah where I bunked with Dave Webster (B.S. Forestry 1966). Dave was co-captain of the 1966 PSU lacrosse team, and he looks like he could still step into goal for the Nittany Lions. In September, we met up again in western Montana for another week of fly fishing. Dick Stevenson (B.S. Forest Science 1971) and former School of Forest Resources (SFR) faculty Bob Carline and Dave DeWalle also made the Utah trip. The SFR poker group remains active with several original members. The group dates to the '70s and now suffers from hearing and concentration issues making the monthly get togethers somewhat hilarious. In view of this, beer consumption at these events has diminished significantly, but the roasting of former administrators and colleagues continues albeit with frequent memory lapses. I published *Flash Point Tales* last year to go along with earlier publications of *Ups and Downs: Recollections of a Vietnam Helicopter Pilot* and *Gone to the Feathered Dogs* all of which are available from Amazon Books. I am in the process of putting the finishing touches on *Trout Fishing West of the Home Water*, which should be available this May. This book will have a couple of short essays about SFR water resources research conducted by myself and some of the aforementioned faculty. As of this writing, Utah 2022 is on as is a trip to the Wind River in western Wyoming set for September. In light of our various infirmities, we have all started to take a rather serious look at trip insurance. I maintain sporadic contact with a group of folks who were at Mont Alto in '62-'63 and enjoyed a day with a couple of those guys at Cortez Camp near Bradford last October.”

1970s

Robert S. Mazur (B.S. Forest Science 1974), news from February 2022: “I now enter my 48th year of full-time forest management employment, all as a field forester in the coastal plain of Eastern North Carolina. Starting first with Union Camp Corporation, I then moved on to self-employment as a consulting forester assisting the non-industrial, private landowner for 42 years. Age, and a strong hint from spouse, Ellen (Penn State, '73 - who continues to put up with me even after 47 years of marriage), I downsized to a more manageable, full-time clientele base.

“What an exciting career it has been, especially in this part of the forestry world! I have seen an industry and forest management grow at phenomenal rates in Southern coastal forests. I never imagined I would witness and manage stands of timber through two entire sawtimber rotations. The latest management tool in pine plantation is the explosion of genetically advanced seedlings. 4-foot pine seedlings after 1 growing season can be both exciting and scary at the same time. These seedling advances have forced yet again major plantation management changes over short time periods.

“I have no clue when it will be time to quit. A client who was very active at 98 said 'There is no way I can quit now. I am only half-way through my to-do list.'”

Robert Glennon (M.S. Forest Resources 1976), news from June 2021: Bob Glennon marked his tenth year as a private lands biologist with Virginia Tech's Conservation Management Institute, serving landowners on southeastern Virginia. He had retired from federal service in 2010 after 30 years, 8 moves, and having worked in 20 states – mostly as a regional plant specialist. As most forestry graduates in the '70s did, Bob expanded his plant expertise over the years to include native grasses and wildflowers, coastal dune and marsh plants, and freshwater wetland and stream bank stabilization plants. He currently serves cooperating landowners of USDA and the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources. Most of the work involves early successional habitat establishment and management. Some of that habitat is in the understory of loblolly and longleaf pines where thinning the trees to a low basal area and prescribed burning are the main management tools. He continues to volunteer at national wildlife refuges in northeastern North Carolina.

Thomas A. Young (B.S. Forest Science 1976) and his wife Mary Jo have [pledged an estate gift](#) to create the Woodland Gardens at The Arboretum at Penn State with a supporting endowment, as well as an undergraduate scholarship in the Department of Ecosystem Science and Management.

Peter Prutzman (B.S. Forest Science 1977), news from July 2021: Dr. Jim Guldin (B.S. Forest Science 1975) was elected SAF Fellow 2020; he will be inducted into [Arkansas Foresters' Hall of Fame](#) on August 31, 2021. Other Penn State foresters in Arkansas Hall of Fame are Hank Chamberlin (B.S. Forestry 1939) and Dr. John L. Gray (B.S. Forestry 1941). I received the [Ouachita SAF Lifetime Achievement Award](#) in December 2020.

Steve Narolski (B.S. Forest Science 1978), news from June 2021: “After 45 years in the industry as a professional forester working in the public and private sectors, I've spent the past 17 years working with utilities in vegetation management, culminating in 12 years with the U.S. Department of Energy. My integrated vegetation management programs working with power marketing administrations transmitting hydro dam energy have been identified as utility industry ‘best in class’ IVM programs. Last year,

my region survived the worst wildfire season that Arizona has ever seen, due to the management of vegetation under high voltage transmission lines. I am calling it a career and will be retiring on 6/30/2021.”

Eric Carlson (M.S. Forest Resources 1979), news from February 2022: “Enjoying being back as an Association Executive again after 5 years of retirement. Great seeing old friends from Penn State here in West Virginia.”

Rawland Cogan (A.S. Wildlife Technology 1979, MFR Wildlife and Fisheries Science 1992) received the Penn State Alumni Association’s [Alumni Fellow Award](#) in fall 2021.

Michael Messina (B.S. Forest Science 1979) is among the [honorees named by the Penn State Schuylkill Alumni Society](#).

Howard Wurzbacher (B.S. Forest Science 1979) was named Fellow in SAF. See related article on page 18 of the [Fall 2021 issue of *The Allegheny News*](#).



Members of the class of 1979 and their spouses met for dinner at Trails End in Clarion County, PA, in July 2021. Pictured, left to right: Suzy Messina, Howard Wurzbacher, Dave Kiehl, Jody Kiehl, Cindy Wurzbacher, and Mike Messina.

1980s

Kenneth Kane (B.S. Wood Products 1982) was named Fellow in SAF. See related article on page 16 of the [Fall 2021 issue of *The Allegheny News*](#).

Steve Koehn (B.S. Forest Science 1983) has been recognized for his work in public forest policy by having the National Association of State Foresters Current Achievement Award for Forest Public Policy [named in his honor](#).

Nicholas Lylo (B.S. Forest Science, 1989), news from February 2022: “District Forester, Pinchot Forest District, PA Bureau of Forestry”

Cecile Stelter (B.S. Forest Science 1989, MFR Forest Resources 1990) was named Fellow in SAF. See related article on page 17 of the [Fall 2021 issue of *The Allegheny News*](#).

1990s

Joseph Kellert (A.S. Forest Technology 1996, B.S. Forest Science 1999) was [appointed District Forester](#) for Elk State Forest in the Pennsylvania Wilds in summer 2021.

Andra Johnson (M.S. Forest Resources 1999, Ph.D. Forest Resources 2002) was [named Dean](#) of UF/IFAS Extension and Director of Florida Cooperative Extension Service in fall 2021.

2020s

Kalaia Tripeaux (M.S. Forest Resources 2020) is featured in an article, “The Future of SAF: the Value of Communication in Forestry,” in the [SAF College Guide](#).

Contribute News

Do you have news for inclusion in a future issue or our alumni newsletter? Submit news [online](#), or mail to Ellen Rom at 114 Forest Resources Building, University Park, PA 16802.

Support our Alumni Group

[Donations](#) to support our Alumni Group’s communications and engagement activities are welcome. In you prefer to write a check, please make it payable to “Penn State” and write “Forest Resources Alumni Group” on the memo line. Mail the check to Ellen Rom, 114 Forest Resources Building, University Park, PA 16802. Thank you!

Remember to join us on [LinkedIn!](#)

Calendar

- April 20 – 1-2 p.m. webinar. [College Connections – Follow the Carbon: Re-envisioning the Bioeconomy](#)
- April 21 – 9-10 a.m. [ESM Spring Seminar Series](#) – speaker Dr. Margaret Zimmer
- April 23 – 2 p.m. [Blue-White Game](#)
- April 29-May 1 – Penn State Commencement Celebration Weekend, Class of 2020
- May 6-8 – Penn State Commencement Weekend, Class of 2022
- May 14 – 11 a.m.-3 p.m. [Forest Resources Alumni Group Alumni and Friends Meeting](#) at the Forest Resources Building, Penn State University Park
- May 19 – 2-3 p.m. [ESM Spring Seminar Series](#) – speaker Dr. Arnab Bhowmik

- June 13-18 – [We Are Week](#): June 13-16 online events, June 17-18 University Park in-person events
- August 9-11 – [Ag Progress Days](#)
- September 30 – Forest Resources alumni Group Outstanding Alumni [Nomination](#) Deadline
- October 14-17 – [Tau Phi Delta Centennial Celebration](#)



Tau Phi Delta Fraternity Centennial

It began as the Pennsylvania State College’s Forestry Club over 100 years ago. On April 11, 1922, the club – with its 18 young student members – developed into the nation’s first professional and social forestry fraternity. Under the guidance of their faculty advisor, Professor John A. Ferguson, these charter fraternity brothers formed an organization built on solid ideals, core values and a genuine love for forest resources. This fraternity known over a century and today by nearly one thousand living Penn State alumni as Tau Phi Delta.

Tau Phi Delta alumni and student members will be gathering in Happy Valley to celebrate their centennial on October 14-16, 2022, followed with a recognition reunion at Penn State Mont Alto campus on October 17.

More details online at www.tauphidelta.org.