



2026 SPRING NEWSLETTER

Vol. 42, No. 1

From the Chair

By Terry Gordon, MOSAF Chair

MNRC 2026 was a return to normal...and maybe a bit abnormal (the good kind)! Attendance was up to just shy of 900 registrants, forestry had a commanding presence which included some of our heaviest hitters as presenters (including SAF CEO Terry Baker), over 200 students from all natural resources disciplines, and a record-setting silent auction effort that netted over \$2,100 bucks!



I credit Sam Kosark for getting us a DOUBLE SIZED booth space. We needed it for the sheer volume of donations, but the added bonus of having gathering space behind our tables was incredible! Sincerely reminded me of the 1990's MNRC where people simply gathered and visited. Sam has promised he will aim to repeat our allotted square footage for next year.

My favorite donation was Dacoda's fish-themed coffee table. Not only would this make Johnny Morris envious....donating it to our cause may have saved a marriage: HIS! I think the table, which resides in the Lohmann's home (no word on Chris's wife's reaction as of the time of this article), was just a few days from being chucked curb-style by D's better half.



Still, we live in odd times. As a profession, our salaries have not kept pace with many other trades/career tracks, and we have seen a decline in professional memberships and student interest....which MAY indeed signal a lessening of "society at large" reducing all things nature on their priority list. I have been conducting exiting interviews with retirees over the past year and, without prompting, this has been brought up by almost half of those interviewed.

Today's news (April 2nd) continues to be cause for concern as even those in high-level national positions wonder the fate of the U.S. Forest Service and public lands. We as a society recognize the significant impact restructuring at the Federal level will have on natural resources and those who have been charged both with the wise use and preservation of public lands/resources. My soul hurts for all this touches, including some long-time friends.

As with many of you, my job has me charged with doing more with less....layered on top of what our HR leader refers to the “age of rage”. Like the forest lands we manage, we are a resilient bunch. Also like a forest, we are stronger together. I believe that is why MNRC 2026 was so good for my soul: it felt like a calm between storms as well as a sip of cool spring water after a summer days hike.

Stay frosty....the battle is real.

Events ahead:

April 13th Mizzou Forestry Club mtg\Terry presents\Pizza feed

April 25th Mizzou Forestry Club Conclave...MoSAF to have a team

--Terry Gordon, MoSAF Chair

2026 Missouri Natural Resources Conference: “Innovations in Conservation”

By Sam Kosark, MNRC 2028 Chair

Attendance nearly doubled from 2025 to 2026 with 847 total registrations, 200 of those being students. The 2027 MNRC planning committee (Wildlife Society) is focused on keeping the momentum created by this year’s success. Having a high volume of student attendees is a recruitment opportunity for natural resource employers and professional societies. Our MOSAF silent auction raised \$2,100 thanks to the generosity of MOSAF members! We were fortunate to have SAF National CEO, Terry Baker, in attendance to give a nationwide perspective on current issues within the forestry sector. Terry was also the recipient of this year’s Blackjack award which will be displayed proudly in his Washington, D.C. office. A session lead by John Kabrick and Jim Guldin titled Missouri Forestry: Past, Present, and Future included an expert panel discussion with Terry Baker (SAF National CEO), Chris Lohman (MFPA Certification Manager and Consulting Forester), Michael Bill (MDC State Forester), Angela George (NRCS State Forester), Michael Goerndt (MSU Professor), and Hank Stelzer (MU Professor). The 2025 MOSAF Outstanding Forester Award went to Terry Gordon. The Karkaghne Award went to Jim Barresi. Thank you, Terry and Jim, for your dedication to MOSAF’s core values and objectives. If you attended this year and have input for the planning committee, or if you want more information on how to get involved with MNRC contact Sam Kosark (Sam.Kosark@mdc.mo.gov).



MU Student Chapter Update

By Riley Rupp, MU Student Chapter Social Media Manager

The 2026 spring semester has gotten off to a busy start. We started the semester off with a new slate of officers: President-Nick Herrmann, Vice President-Lily Slemmons, Secretary-Ally Jennings, Treasurer- Ryan Smith, Social Media Manager-Riley Rupp, Fundraising Chair-Ava Laws, and Conclave Captains-Luke Labenz & Dominic Gramolino

The club started the month of February by taking twelve members to the Missouri Natural Resource Conference (MNRC) at Margaritaville in Osage Beach. There, members got the opportunity to listen to guest speakers, attend sessions, network with professionals in the industry, and attend the MOSAF meeting, where our president, Nick Herrmann, received a scholarship and our members got to meet the Executive Director of SAF, Terry Baker! In late February, the club had a movie night where members did homework, snacked, and watched movies, and a bonfire later in the month. More recently, the club started having conclave practices again at South



Farm. On weekends we have also been working on reconstructing the club's 70+ year old Paul Bunyan statue, with a goal of being completed by the time we host the Missouri Conclave in late April. Our club has also recently been presented with some volunteer



opportunities. First is an opportunity to volunteer as part of the sustainability team at the True/False Film Fest in Columbia, and the other opportunity is helping cleanup Flat Branch Creek with the Missouri Conservation Corps. Our next big events will be Conclaves! We will be attending the Midwest Conclave in Carbondale, IL April 10th-12th, where we hope to bring home some hardware. A couple weeks later we are planning to host a Missouri Conclave with Missouri State and other

MOSAF members. We will have more information on that in the near future. Finally, our club will be celebrating arbor day on campus later in semester and hopefully finishing the semester off with a fun camping trip. We look forward to what the future holds!

MOSAF Members Recognized with Awards



The Karkhagne Award is presented to a forester for outstanding achievement in forestry and service to the forestry profession. The Karkhagne—a mythical beast reported to roam Missouri’s forests in the past century—is the subject of considerable folklore and legends about forestry in Missouri that symbolizes the importance of forests to all creatures. The recipient of this year’s Karkhagne Award was Jim Baressi!



The MOSAF Outstanding Forester of the Year Award is presented annually to recognize exemplary efforts and significant contributions to advance forestry or forest management in Missouri. The recipient of this year’s Outstanding Forester Award was MOSAF Chair Terry Gordon!



**Missouri Society of American Foresters
Winter 2026 Business Meeting Agenda****Date:** Wednesday February 4, 2025 Parasol II**Location:** MNRC Margaritaville; Osage Beach, MO**Attendees:** MOSAF Members, Guests

Purpose

To inform attending members about upcoming events and resolve business items that need to be addressed and to introduce the current MOSAF Leadership

Objectives

- Provide verbal committee reports
- Provide updates from agencies/consulting firms/NGOs/universities
- Discuss Spring technical tour

Agenda

Drawing for the \$800 Shade Tree Co Stihl MS311 chainsaw...and other raffle items

- 1. Welcome:** Terry Gordon, MOSAF Chair
Specific welcome to the student members in attendance.
Summary of Forestry Program, as presented earlier in the day
- 2. Minutes from last meeting:** Angela George
Motion and second to approve. Minutes pass.
- 3. Treasurers Report:** David Vance
- 4. Announcements**
 - Upcoming forestry related events
 - Tree Farm Conference in Mountain Grove, Oct 3-4
 - Forest health training 2/26 in Joplin, CFEs available
 - Currently working on a conclave between MU and MSU (April 10-12)
 - MCFA meeting in Jefferson City, Feb 26-27
 - Forest and Woodland Pike County Woodland Workshop, Bowling Green High School, Feb 7
 - Conservation Federation of Missouri 90th Annual Convention Lodge of Four Seasons, March 6-7
 - Walnut council meeting at Independent Stave\Pal Family tree farm, Callaway County MO, March 20-21
 - MCFC Conference in Springfield September 22-24,
 - TREE-MENDOUS Ride, Bike route Missouri River Center to Cooper's landing, in conjunction with The Conservation Expo at Coopers Landing
- 5. Committee Reports:** Committee Chairs
 - Audit (Megan Buchanan)
 - Communications
 - Website (Jon Skinner)

- Website is up to date. Traffic is mostly from chapter members.
 - The bylaws and the new handbook are posted.
 - Newsletter (Hayden Dorell and Hank Stelzer)
 - Thank you Chris Lohman!
 - Social Media (Tyler Bradford...whom is now Chair Elect)
 - MOSAF Instagram has 31 followers.
 - 30 followers on Facebook
- Council, Fellows and Awards (Jim Barresi)
 - 2 awards will be given tonight: Karkagne and Outstanding Forester
- Education (Mike Goerndt)
 - CFE system has changed; we have a new contact for proactive CFE approvals. Everything is moving smoothly and approvals are coming back swiftly.
- Long Range Planning (Michael Bill, Tyler Bradford)
 - Operation manual has been adopted!
- Membership (Hank Stelzer)
 - 141 current members in the chapter. 7 new members joined this last year.
- Nominating (Sam Kosark)
- Policy and Legislation (Jason Jensen)(Jason retired...need?)
 - Federal dollars are uncertain
 - Invasive species bill has been in affect for almost a year now
- Program (Tyler Bradford)
 - “Corporate sponsorship”?
 - Joint ventures fell short of expectations
 - “mini tours”...think ½ day, mid day
- Special Funds (David Massengale)
 - 2026 MNRC booth revenue?
- Tellers (Aaron Moore)
- Forest Science (Lauren Pile)
- MNRC Steering Committee (Sam Kosark)
 - Jon presented - 437 attendees at MNRC, which is lower this year. Student attendance is higher this year. Many people went to the Midwest fish and wildlife conference earlier in the month.
 - American Fisheries Society hosts in 2026; MOSAF next hosts next in 2028.
 - **Special thanks to Jon for putting in effort on MNRC for so many years.**
- Historian- Hank Stelzer has agreed to take over as Historian. A lot of our history is now on our website.

6. Old Business

- Discussion of the past Fall Technical tour with American Tree Farm System, Forest & Woodland Association of Missouri, MU Extension, and the Walnut Council with tours at The Oak Cooperage in Higbee and Missouri Pacific Walnut in Fayette.
- Scholarships - Jim Baressi
 - SAF scholarship recipient was in attendance

- Brief Update from HSD Meeting – Kristen Goodrich
 - Shrinking society: 26,000 members in the 1980s, now down to 9,000.
 - Demographics are changing, more diversity.
 - Partnerships are becoming more common.

7. New Business

- MOSAF Operations Manual
 - COMPLETED!! Thank you membership and Tyler Bradford!!!
Years in the making.

8. Agency/consulting firm/NGO/university news

- Mark Twain National Forest
- FS Northern Research Station
 - Dan Dey and John Kabrick retired?!?!? Suck...but am happy for them.
- Natural Resources Conservation Services
- University of Missouri (left old notes to gauge progress)
 - School of Natural Resources is in strategic planning. Will be looking at positional needs.
 - Student numbers are stable.
 - 1 staff tied to a federal grant might be involuntarily reduced.
- Missouri State University (left old notes to gauge progress)
 - Melissa Bledsoe is now the official dean (formerly interim).
Reorganization of the departments into 2 schools.
 - University and College legal strategic planning is going on.
 - Student enrolment numbers are stable, even starting to increase slowly.
 - Forestry program website is being redesigned to be more visible.
 - Working on establishing their SAF student chapter; only bylaws remaining
- Missouri Department of Conservation
 - 2025 was projected reduction in statewide revenues. Did it occur?
 - Timber harvest volume targets?
 - Notable field staff retirements have continued....are there more?
- Missouri Consulting Foresters Association
- Missouri Forest Products Association
- L-A-D Foundation/Pioneer Forest
 - Holding steady at 16 employees?
- Missouri Student Chapter of SAF
 - Sammie Hentrick-- President
 - Number of members in forestry club?
 - Conclave news?
 - MU still conducting Christmas Tree sales?
 - Goal for the next year is fund raising to send more students to conferences....how did we do?
- Utility Forestry
 - Fully staffed. Entry pay sweet spot hovers around \$60k year.
Still....BARELY fully staffed. None on deck for succession planning at many utilities.

9. Adjourn-Mixer to follow in the Forestry Suite followed by the dessert social and awards

(The following article is for you to share with your local paper. Modify as appropriate for your locality.)

Help Reduce Flooding, Plant A Tree

Flooding can happen in any season, but most often during spring rains. This affects both urban, suburban and rural areas. The effects can be temporary like short term ponding in a yard, field, or road. The effects can also be long term damage to buildings, roads, bridges, streambanks, agricultural fields, and more.

Water is needed for all life. Trees included. But too much of a good thing is a problem. Properly planting trees can reduce rainfall runoff and help slow floods depending on where they are planted.

An individual large urban tree can intercept 5,000 gallons and reduce runoff by 500 gallons a year. Now add up all of the trees in the area. This reduction in water going down the storm drain reduces flow into local streams which reduces flooding downstream. This also results in the community needing fewer or smaller water retention facilities.

Along the stream, a wide forested flood plain will accept flood waters allowing it slow reducing the energy it has to erode and do damage. This protects communities and farmland.

Whether you live in a community or in a rural area, a forester can assist you in planning for and then planting trees to slow the water and let it be used locally.

The Missouri Society of American Foresters (MOSAF) is a State Society of The Society of American Foresters (SAF). MOSAF (www.mosaf.net) and SAF (www.eforester.org) is a professional society dedicated to sound forest management and conservation.

