## The Clear Distant Horizon

**Pine River Hardwoods, LLC** Operating for Sustainability

## Introduction to Sustainability and the Future

**The History** Phase One to Phase Five

The Greatest Threat

Unintended Consequences Managing Timber by Computer

Getting Sustainable by Changing our Perspective

Changing the Perspective Industry and Environmentalists Have the Same Goals The History of Sustainability

Knowing our History we can define our future

Phase One- How it Began

Phase Two- Adaptation

Phase Three- Practice

Phase Four- Recognition

Phase Five- The Future

Phase One- How it Began

An un-Sustainable Past: 1872-1898

Auburndale, WI and Stratford, WI were company towns. The business plan was fairly basic and it was also short sighted.

Laona, WI- Is where W.D. Connor decided to make a real difference.

Purchased Timber in 1898 Complete Mill in 1902

Since then, 105 years later, we've sawn over 1 billion board feet of lumber and the site would produce more than 800,000,000 square feet of hardwood flooring. Yet today, there is more standing timber than there was in the original cruise data from 1898.

Phase Two- Adaptation

*The Early Years: 1904-1934* 

Why early logging methods weren't conducive to sustainable timber management:

- 1. Logging Camps
- 2. Transportation

Some of the early attempts meant cutting 70% of the basil area. Still, it was these attempts and the willingness to invest in the future that was unique.

**Phase Three- Practice** 

The Early Years: The Depression then 1940s-1970s

Major factors that led to success:

- 1. Talent was available because of the depression
- 2. Logging by truck changed it all

**Phase Four- Recognition** 

The Decimation of the Rainforest: 1995-1998

Creation of Forest Stewardship Council- FSC<sup>TM</sup>

Then:

Sigurd Olsen Institute Fighting Over the management of the Federal Forest Now:

Today Have Embraced and Promote it

Creation of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative- **SFI<sup>TM</sup>** Then:

Embraced because it was sensible

Does the best job training and educating contractors

Now:

Too Much "Green Washing"

Phase Five- The Future

Consumers Decide: Today- Tomorrow

The importance for the future is that those few of us that are practicing and promoting sustainable timber management be recognized and compensated for our effort in the market place.

Two of our three operating companies are are FSC<sup>TM</sup> Certified.

We received the **SOLEC** Award for our contribution to the Eco-system of the Great lakes.

The Greatest Threat to Sustainability: Unintended Consequences Unintended Consequence:

By myopically focusing on shutting down our national forests to timber management the environmental movement created environmental disaster.

The resource that is most threatened today is Private Wilderness

What is Private Wilderness?

Industrial Forest Land: 25-500,000 acres

Large Private Land owners: 10-100,000 acres

Small to Mid-size Landowners: 1-5,000 acres

Within that, what are the Different Types?

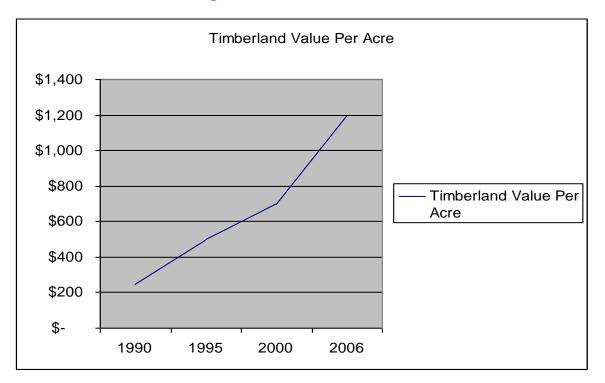
REITs

TIMOs

Last of the Independents: Wisconsin Timber Associates

### What has caused this threat?

Escalating Timber Values

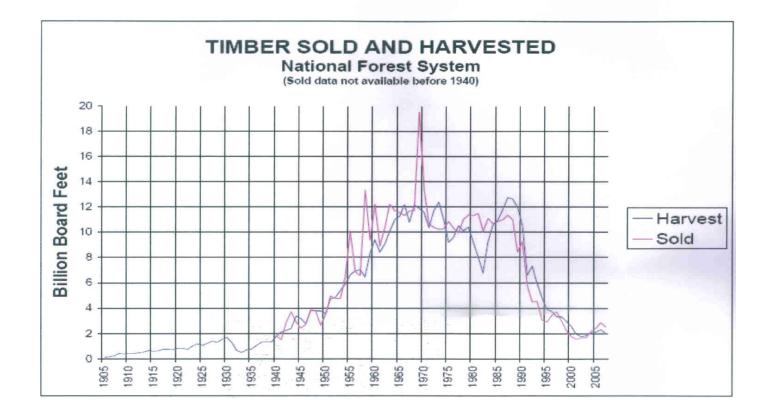


Escalating Timber Values created a fat margin whereby profiteers could cut and run- to disastrous effect. The reality is timber cannot be bought on margin and must be purchased with cash because you cannot cut the timber fast enough to pay the interest – i.e. holding cost.

What has caused this escalation?

Reduction in the timber harvesting on our Public Lands

## FS Sales 1905 to Present



# What is the best hedge against the destruction of private wilderness in the future?

Opening up Federal Forests to Timber Harvesting

Why is this so:

Decrease the price of timberland- make cut and run less tenable

Decrease the price of timberland- make it possible for small to midsize landowners to pass down private wilderness to future generations.

### Management techniques that threaten the future of our forests:

You cannot manage timber from a computer:

Boundary Waters, Minnesota

Other idiotic theories:

Shelter Wood Cuts

Clearing Out the Poll Trees

Promoting Small Diameter Harvesting

Getting Sustainable by Changing our Perspective Changing the Perspective It is imperative that we change the discourse and conversation. In reality, our philosophy and attitude is in congress with groups like the Nature Conservancy. We want to hold and manage timber land for the "far distant horizon"- the next five generations.

The following is a speech that I gave to the on Arbor Day some 7-8 years ago. However, I believe the sentiment as much today as I did then and believe it is the kind of conversation we, industry and environmentalist alike, must continue in order to met common goals and objectives: we aren't that far apart.

#### **GOOD MORNING**

Today is Arbor Day and we are here to recognize exult, celebrate and cheer the wonders of our forests- our community of trees.

Specifically we are here to rededicate the Laona School Forest the oldest such School forest in the state of Wisconsin. Dedicated some 72 years ago by W.D. Connor long before any such thing as Arbor Day existed.

The Laona School Forest is a monument to the belief that man and nature live together in a continuos revolving relationship of give and take. Since that giving of our school forest much has been taken from it and much has been given back. It is a symbiotic relationship one of which has sustained itself for generations past, present and future.

Today is the day we recognize and appreciate the knowledge and perspective our School Forest gives us by recognizing it through this rededication.

Forests, in our modern society, provide sustenance. Not just for practical matter such as printing paper, pencils, paychecks and livelihood but for more mystical and less tangible sustenance as well. For the sustenance of our human soul and our soulful wellbeing.

We rely on our forests for wondrous walks down long winding logging roads and for hunting trips with our fathers and grandfathers. We are not the only ones who rely on the forest but so do other species, too numerous to count but not too many to appreciate. Today is the day we appreciate our forests and all they encompass and so must recognize, respect and guarantee its glory for the years, decades and generations to come.

When I reflect on the bounty of our forest and all that the forest which surround us now have given us a tale comes to mind. It is a tale read to many of us, both of mine and now your generation, by our mothers, fathers and teachers. It's a kind of icon or lexicon not only of our literary foundation but our social foundation as well. Many of you, I am sure, are familiar with this tale.

The tale is by Shel Silverstien and is called The Giving Tree:

Once there was a Tree ... and she loved a little Boy. And every day Boy would come, and he would gather her leaves and make them into crowns and play king of the forest. He would climb up her trunk, and swing from her branches, and eat apples. And they would play hide-and-seek. And when he was tired, he would sleep in her shade. And Boy loved Tree...very much. And Tree was happy!

#### But time went by. And Boy grew older. And Tree was often alone. Then one day Boy came to Tree and Tree said, "Come Boy! Come and climb up my trunk and swing from my branches and eat apples and play in my shade and be happy."

"I am too big to climb and play," said Boy, "I want to buy things and have fun. I want some money. Can you give me some money?"

"I'm sorry," said Tree, "but I have no money. I have only leaves and apples. Take my apples, Boy, and sell them in the city. Then you will have money and you will be happy."

And so Boy climbed up Tree and gathered her apples and carried them away. And Tree was happy!

But Boy stayed away for a long time ... and Tree was sad. And then one day Boy came back and Tree shook with joy and she said, "Come Boy! Climb up my trunk and swing from my branches and be happy."

"I am too busy to climb trees," said Boy. "I want a house to keep me warm," he said. "I want a wife and I want children, and so I need a house. Can you give me a house?"

"I have no house," said Tree. "The forest is my house, but you may cut off my branches and build a house. Then you will be happy."

And so Boy cut off her branches and carried them away to build his house. And Tree was happy!

But the Boy stayed away for a long time. And when he came back, Tree was so happy she could hardly speak. "Come Boy!" she whispered, "Come and play!" "I am too old and sad to play," said Boy. "I want a boat that will take me far away from here. Can you give me a boat?"

"Cut down my trunk and make a boat," said Tree. "Then you can sail away, and be happy."

And so Boy cut down her trunk, and made a boat, and sailed away. And Tree was happy ... but... not really.

And after a long time Boy came back again. "I am sorry, Boy," said Tree, "but I have nothing left to give you --- My apples are gone." "My teeth are too weak for apples," said Boy. "My branches are gone" said Tree. "You cannot swing on them." "I am too old to swing on branches," said Boy. "My trunk is gone," said Tree. "You cannot climb ... " "I am too tired to climb," said Boy. "I am sorry," sighed Tree. "I wish that I could give you something, but I have nothing left. I am just an old stump. I am sorry ... " "I don't need very much now," said Boy, "just a quiet place to sit and rest. I am verv tired." "Well," said Tree, straightening herself up as much as she could. "Well, an old stump IS good for sitting and resting. Come Boy! Sit down. Sit down and rest." And the boy did ... And the tree was happy .....

The Giving Tree is a justly famous tale, but the tale it tells is not a complete one as it fails to capture the fullness of the interdependence and regeneration of the relationship between man and nature and, more specifically between man and his forests.

As the dedication of the Laona School Forest today testifies to, for this as I have said is the oldest Forest of it's kind in Wisconsin, the truly special nature of man's relationship with trees and forests is the idea of interdependence and regeneration.

For as forests age, they can provide valuable and nurturing sustenance from which man can draw, be it simply beauty or through its harvests for our use as housing, warmth, furniture and art.

But the harvests of a tree or trees within a forest is not the end of that forest any more than an individual's is the end of all mankind. The falling of a generation of trees can be likened the death of one generation of a human family and is the end of one generative life.

For as in the story of the Giving Tree as the man matures and fades away so does the tree. This is the perspective one must retain to understand the fruitfulness of life.

A forest, carefully managed, cared for and protected by mankind can thrive and grow and provide not only for trees and humans but other species as well.

But it is necessary that we take this charge very seriously, for unlike the story of The Giving Tree, we, unlike the boy, cannot simply take without giving back. For life requires giving in at least equal measure to taking.

In the end, it is this vital interdependence and the fullness of the relationship between man and nature and forest and man and tree that is missing from our tale but so much more richly told in the history of the forests we are here today to celebrate and rededicate.

The forest is a testimony to the generations of us who were here, both of men and women and of trees, when this forest was first dedicated and to those of us who are here today to now appreciate it and to those of us who will be here tomorrow.

We, the forest and the community, are still drawing from each other in a life affirming story of regeneration; a story evident here and in all of the trees in all of the forests in Northern Wisconsin which have provided prodigiously for all of us for generations and yet today are more abundant, more healthy and more beautiful than at any time since before the turn of the last century.

This is truly a special story, more special than the one in The Giving Tree, and one that is not told in written word but captured each day

by the lives of our community and in the forests as we live symbolically.

Enjoy, nurture and take care of your Forest today just as those have before you and then, so too will those will after you.