

Common Ground Between Forestry and Silvopasture

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My Perspective



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My Goal Today

- Demonstrate similarity of pasture management with forest management.
- Increase likelihood of good forestry practices utilized by graziers
- Focus on forest more so than pasture



Photo credit – Jeff Jourdain



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Define Forestry

A science-based system that attempts to manage (woody) vegetation for sustainable production of benefits that support the objectives of the owner.

Similar to pasture management.

A subset of silvopasture.



Point 1. Forest Management is Similar to Pasture Management

- Species mixture
- Plant health
- Establishment and growth
- Productivity
- Environmental constraints



Similarities of Pastures and Forests

- Perennial plants in an environment that have value to humans and livestock.
- Mixtures of desirable and undesirable species.
- Plant size, age, vigor and abundance vary.
- Principles the same, methods different.



Point 2. Most Foresters Were Taught to Exclude Livestock

- Foresters are an important resource, but may need to recalibrate.
- Training and practice emphasizes timber management.
- Foresters think “continuous grazing” when you say “silvopasture”



Silvopasture is to Continuous Grazing



D. Moorhead, Univ. GA, www.bugwood.org
Cornell University
Cooperative Extension

S. Katovich, USFS, www.bugwood.org

Foresters and Silvopasture

- Interview several foresters
- Be clear in your description of your objectives
- Be clear about your desired outcomes
 - Economic benefit
 - Livestock benefits



Point 3. Forestry and silvopasture should be deliberate.

- Start with the owner's objectives and written metrics of success.
- Written management plans
 - Document the resource(s)
 - Prioritize management actions
- Anticipate the need to adapt and adjust



Be Deliberate

- Talk with family members about why they own woods and what is desired.
- Write a silvopasture plan with a forester, and other specialists as needed.
- Implement the plan



Point 4. Stress matters to a tree.

- Trees can manage single stressors
- Single stressors are common
- Sequential or accumulated stressors increase likelihood of growth decline and mortality

Examples

- Logging damage
- Off-site planting
- Ice storms
- Insect defoliation
- Continuous grazing
- Drought

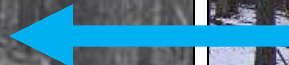


Stress Matters

- Manage duration, stocking, and timing of grazing to limit grazing as a stress
- Avoid adding to existing natural stressors
- Assess potential interaction of stressors and rotational grazing;



Point 5. Forests develop over decades



Forests Develop Over Decades

- Know what the woods will offer and how to optimize silvopasture
- Have realistic expectations
- Seek alternative strategies when necessary
- Mistakes may take decades to correct
- Plan ahead to optimize interactions with expected forest patterns



Point 6. Silvopasture Options and Management Change as the Forest Ages



Management Varies Through Time

- Work with a forester to understand your options
- Some management costs money
- Some management generates money
- Take the correct actions to ensure long-term sustainability



Point 7. Forest and pasture include different species with different properties.



Differences Among Forest Trees

- Shade tolerance
- Shading
- Soil and site demands
- Deer palatability
- Longevity
- Economic value
- Ease of regeneration
- Abundance of pests



Differences Among Forest Trees

- Good information on how trees differ
 - http://www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/silvics_manual/table_of_contents.htm (*Silvics Manual*)
- Use species biology and specific management tools to favor or constrain certain species



Point 8. Any disturbance may increase the potential for interfering species



Manage Problem Plants

- Be able to identify problem plants
- Be alert to risks and problems that problem plants may create
- Look for problem plants before manipulating the forest (anticipate problems and solutions)
- Manage problem plants sooner than later
- Strategically assess and manage problem plants



Point 9. Mix and match tools for creative solutions.



Creative Solutions

- Network with others to learn potential strategies
- Learn, think, adapt, apply



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www.ForestConnect.info (publications)

<http://silvopasture.ning.com> (social network)



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