

HIDDEN



TREASURES

ALBERT MORRIS:

Practicing Good Stewardship in Every Activity

By *Dana McReynolds*, Outreach Forester, Alabama Forestry Commission, Birmingham

We are all familiar with the TREASURE Forest concept of being good stewards of the land, but some of us repeatedly adhere to the stewardship principle in everything we do. This holds true for the TREASURE Forest landowner, Albert Morris. As a native of Eufaula, Alabama, he is familiar with “working the land.” He and several family members all together own several hundred acres of forestland in Barbour County. They are well aware of the importance of managing their property and have done so for many years. They work together and share knowledge of the latest land management information.

Albert also receives a significant amount of assistance from his alma mater, Alabama A & M University, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Horticulture. Even his educational background would suggest his love and knowledge of the natural sciences. Today, Albert uses that background in his profession as owner and operator of a flower shop and greenhouse in Huntsville, Alabama.

The TREASURE Forest Landowner

Albert knew about the TREASURE Forest program and the TREASURE Forest Association for many years. He completely agrees with the concept of being a good steward by diversifying his land management practices. Already man-

aging his property, he wanted to know what additional activities were necessary in order for him to become a TREASURE Forest landowner. With the assistance of Morgan County Manager, Roger Nichols, Albert was clearly on his way to achiev-



Albert Morris and daughter Margaret.

ing his goal. Accustomed to pleasing people aesthetically with floral arrangements, he was also “geared in a new direction” when it came to managing his property.

After clarifying his goals, he decided that his objectives would be timber first and then wildlife management. With continuous hard work and instrumental efforts from everyone involved, Albert became a TREASURE Forest landowner in 1999.

Most of Albert’s land ownership lies in Barbour County, 265 acres to be exact. The coastal plain soils are typical for growing southern pines and he, like most landowners in the region, planted his land in genetically improved loblolly pines. He has created openings and streamside management

zones that will enhance wildlife. He started his pine stand by participating in Mead Corporation’s Forest Management Assistance Program. The program allows the company to purchase the seedlings for the landowner, then hire venders to plant them. The landowner pays the venders for all the silvicultural activities, but does not reimburse Mead for the seedlings. Mead then continues its obligation by assisting the landowner in managing the property. In return, Mead receives first right to purchase or refuse the timber at harvest time.

Albert also owns a 94-acre tract in Morgan County that is managed for timber and wildlife. It consists primarily of a 15-year-old genetically improved loblolly

pine stand. Scattered food plots lie within the stand to enhance wildlife. The Riverbottom Hunting Club leases the land for deer and turkey hunting, and club members are responsible for establishing most of the wildlife food plots in food like corn, clover, and winter wheat. They also maintain and occasionally upgrade the roads on the property. Work to maintain the timber stand is also performed. As an improvement, the Alabama Forestry Commission completed a prescribed burn on the stand last winter to control vegetation competition. Although existing on piedmont soils, this tract of land is managed similarly to the one in Barbour County.

(Continued on page 30)

Natural Resources Conservation Planning

(continued from page 29)



In addition to providing the slope and contour of the land, streams identified on a **Topographic Map** are beneficial in planning streamside management zones and wildlife food plots.

tion, etc. The landowner uses the maps and technical information to decide the combination of conservation and management practices he/she wishes to implement over the next several years. This information is recorded and becomes part of the Natural Resources Conservation Plan.

The Natural Resources Conservation Plan can also address other land uses such as crops, pasture, hayland, and live-

stock operations. For more information on Natural Resources Conservation Planning, contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District/Natural Resources Conservation Service office. ♣

The U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM

Are you receiving *Alabama's TREASURED Forests* at the correct address? If not, please complete this form and return to:

Alabama's TREASURED Forests Magazine, P.O. Box 302550, Montgomery, AL 36130-2550

New Address

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Old Address as it appears on mailing label

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please check here if receiving duplicate copies and enclose both mailing labels.

E-mail changes of address to: tfmag@forestry.state.al.us

Albert Morris

(Continued from page 10)

Additionally, Albert owns a small tract of land in Madison County that is also managed for timber and wildlife. Most of its 28 acres are planted in loblolly pines, but approximately seven acres are kept in their natural state of native trees and shrubs due to the low-lying bottomland topography. This idle piece of property is wonderful for wildlife habitat. The main reason for deciding to manage this property in timber and wildlife is because of its location and acreage. With it being several miles from Huntsville and only 28 acres, the most convenient and economically feasible management regime is to have it remain in trees.

The Horticulturist

As a horticulturist, Albert applies his stewardship knowledge when managing Albert's Flowers Inc., and Morris Greenhouses, Inc. In his greenhouses, he plants and grows the majority of the ornamental vegetation that supplies his floral shop and other florists in north Alabama, but occasionally he purchases exotic flowers from other countries to augment his diverse floral inventory. He is very proud of his floral business and the fact that his shop is the second oldest in Huntsville. Albert's beautiful floral arrangements make his shop a favorite with local citizens.

Albert continues to work hard towards accomplishing his goals as indicated by both his floral businesses and his forestland. He hopes that the results of all his efforts, knowledge, and experience can one day be passed on to his daughters, Margaret and Amoretta Morris. Perhaps his daughters will continue the practice of good stewardship and pass it on to the next generation. Incidentally, his oldest daughter Margaret is learning about the floral business.

It is reassuring to know people like TREASURE Forest landowner, Albert Morris, who is doing his part in protecting our natural resources. ♣