



Welcome to July!

As we welcome a new month, we're reminded that every season brings new opportunities to grow, learn, and strengthen our commitment to family land ownership and stewardship.

Across the Southeast, our Network continues to support landowners through education, leadership and partnerships that help ensure family land remains in family hands for generations to come. Thank you for being part of our journey. We hope this month's newsletter keeps you informed, inspired, and connected to the work happening across the SFLR Network.

Let's dive in 🌱



Caring for Our Land and Ourselves

July is *Minority Mental Health Awareness Month* which serves as a reminder that caring for ourselves is just as important as caring for the land we steward.

Many of the landowners I meet carry tremendous responsibility. They're preserving family legacies, making difficult decisions, and navigating challenges that can sometimes feel overwhelming. It's easy to focus so much on taking care of the land that we forget to make space for our own well-being.

I've come to believe that healthy land and healthy communities go hand in hand. When we invest in our mental and emotional well-being, we're better equipped to make thoughtful decisions, care for our families, and continue the important work of protecting the land we love.

This month, I encourage you to take a moment to pause, reconnect with what grounds you, and remember that caring for yourself is also an act of stewardship.



Policy Updates Impacting Landowners

As policy conversations continue at both the state and federal levels, SFLR remains committed to tracking the issues that matter most to family landowners and rural communities.

At the federal level, discussions around the next Farm Bill continue, with proposals that would expand support for sustainable forest restoration, strengthen reforestation efforts, and create new opportunities for private forest landowners. Meanwhile, the ongoing **U.S. Forest Service** reorganization may influence future technical assistance and program delivery.

Across the Southeast, states are also advancing legislation that supports family land ownership. Efforts in Georgia focus on strengthening the forestry economy, while proposed legislation in South Carolina and North Carolina would help families resolve heirs' property issues and protect against forced partition sales.

These developments highlight the growing commitment to supporting working forests, protecting family land, and expanding opportunities for landowners. We will continue to monitor these changes and share updates that matter most to the communities we serve.



UAPB Launches Agricultural Finance Assistance Program

SFLR site partner, **UAPB Small Farm Program**, in partnership with the **East Arkansas Enterprise Community (EAEC)**, has launched the **Agricultural Finance, Tax Asset Protection (AgFTAP)** Program to help producers strengthen their financial future.

The program assists individuals seeking farm loans, landowners who need help restructuring existing agricultural debt, and producers working to rebuild their credit. Participants receive one-on-one support with USDA loan applications, including **Farm Service Agency (FSA)** Loan Servicing Packages, as well as guidance in developing farm business plans and financial strategies.

In addition, the program provides education and technical assistance to help producers create customized enterprise budgets, cash flow statements, balance sheets, break-even analyses, and income projections, giving them the tools they need to make informed financial decisions and build more resilient farming operations.

For more information about the AgFTAP Program, contact Alexis Cole with the East Arkansas Enterprise Community at (870) 630-2005.

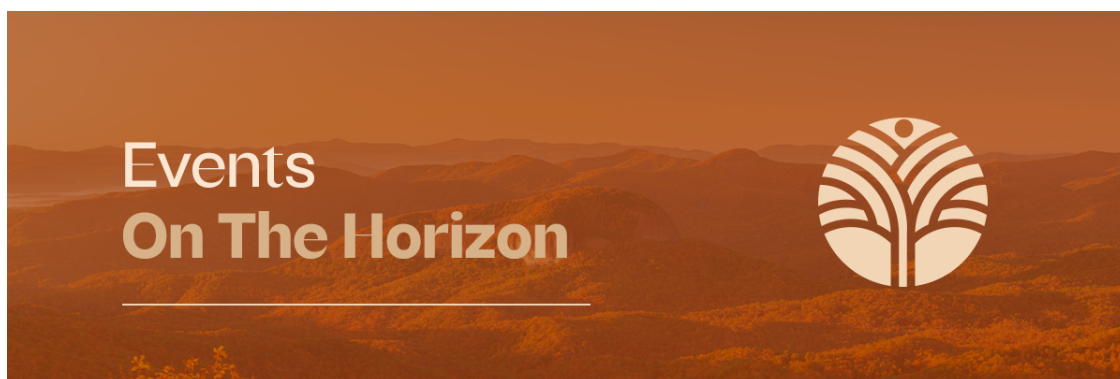


Job Opportunity: Heirs' Property Forester

Our friends at the **Mississippi Center for Justice (MCJ)** are seeking a mission-driven Forester to support its Heirs' Property Campaign.

The Forester will provide forestry education, technical assistance, land management support, and outreach to underserved heirs' property landowners while contributing to MCJ's legal, policy, and community engagement efforts.

To learn more or apply, please contact Andrea Barnes, Director of the Heirs' Property Campaign, at MCJCareers@mscenterforjustice.org.



McIntosh S.E.E.D. Presents: Teas & Trees

McIntosh S.E.E.D.'s Teas & Trees is an educational program designed to empower women landowners with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to become effective stewards of their land and forests.

Through engaging discussions and expert guidance, participants explore topics such as agroforestry, forest conservation, and sustainable agriculture while gaining practical tools to protect their natural resources and ensure their land remains healthy and productive for future generations.

More than just an educational program, Teas & Trees creates a welcoming space where women can connect, share experiences, exchange ideas, and build lasting relationships with others who share a passion for caring for the land.

Upcoming virtual sessions will be held on Thursday, August 13 ([register here](#)) and Thursday, September 10, 2026 ([register here](#)).

To learn more, contact McIntosh S.E.E.D. at (912) 437-7821 or email: info@mcintoshseed.org.



SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY AND AFRICAN AMERICAN LAND RETENTION NETWORK

Honoring the Life and Legacy of Ron Harris

This month, we pause to honor the life and legacy of Ron Harris, a founding supporter and trusted advisor whose leadership helped shape SFLR into what it is today.

Ron was deeply committed to conservation and dedicated much of his career to helping communities access the resources and programs needed to protect their land.

For more than a decade, Ron championed the sustainability of the SFLR program through his work with NRCS, helping connect underserved landowners with conservation opportunities and technical resources. His wisdom, generosity, and unwavering commitment to family land ownership have left a lasting impact on our Network and the communities we serve.



While Ron will be deeply missed, his legacy lives on through the people, partnerships, and places he helped strengthen. We are grateful for his service, friendship, and enduring commitment to conserving our natural resources for generations to come.

Closing Reflections

Thank you for being part of this work. If this newsletter resonates with you, we encourage you to share it with your network and help us expand the reach of resources that strengthen land legacies.

With gratitude,
The SFLR Team



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