

by Rien Visser

Here are some updates from our IFO program.

### 2008 IFO COOP Meeting Date Set

We have set the 4<sup>th</sup> of April as the IFO Coop meeting date. We will not only share some of the latest research information, but the meeting will also provide an opportunity for industry input into the future of the IFO program at VT. An agenda should be attached and we hope you can make the meeting.

### Bob Shaffer retires after 26 years at VT



After 26 years of exceptional service to the IFO program at Virginia Tech, Bob Shaffer has retired. Although technically

retired in December last year, Bob has come back this semester to teach Procurement one last time. Bob joined the original IFO team of Doc Walbridge and Bill Stuart back in 1982. Bob worked closely with groups such as the VA Forestry Association, VA Loggers Association, the Virginia Department of Forestry and the Southwide Safety Group. In addition to his extension duties, Bob made significant scientific contribution, focusing on both Safety as well as BMPs. We wish Bob and his wife Lyn all the best.

### Student updates

- **Joe Currie** completed his MF in June 2007 and is working on

protecting and restoring urban forests in Louisiana.

- **Ben Bradburn** completed his MF in May 2007 and is working at the Virginia Department of Forestry, Charlottesville.
- **Bill Lakel** has 'almost' finished his PhD. He studied SMZ effects on Water Quality with Mike Aust. He is working as the Water Quality Program Supervisor with the Virginia Department of Forestry.
- **Brandon Martin** is in the process of trying to finish up his M.Sc, working on a project that looks at the benefits of Geo-referencing market information in a web-based environment.
- **Andy Horcher** – has submitted a final draft of his dissertation and is looking to finish up this semester. His project determined the feasibility of using GPS on helicopters to improve overall productivity. Andy continues to work at the Forest Service San Dimas Technology and Development Center.

### IFO considers change of focus to include more 'Business'

The IFO program has traditionally focused on the operational aspects of forestry. With the new and considerable changes in both forest company structure and forest landownership the IFO program is considering a change to "Operations and Business". The undergraduate curriculum would then include a few more business/finance and management courses. Possible changes will be discussed at the IFO coop meeting in April.

### Heidi Metz receives 'Doc Walbridge' Scholarship



Heidi Metz, an IFO senior, is the second recipient of the Doc

Walbridge scholarship. More information about both the scholarship as well as Heidi can be found on the IFO coop website.

### Visser to return to New Zealand



After 8 wonderful years here at VT, I will return to NZ to take up the Director of Forest Engineering position at

Canterbury University. I am grateful for all the support I have received from the people at VT as well as industry.

Note: We are currently in the process of interviewing a possible replacement; we hope to have a new person on-board in time for the Fall Semester!

### IFO Newsletter

If you would prefer to receive this newsletter by email in the future, and, or, if you have colleagues that would like to receive this update, please contact Tracey at (540) 231-7671 or email her at [tracey@vt.edu](mailto:tracey@vt.edu).