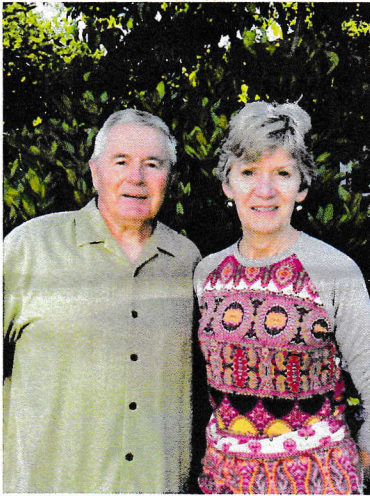


Minnesota State Tree Farmer of the Year: *Michael Dobb*



Michael and Marcy Dobb

The name 'Dobb' is short, succinct, one syllable and easy to say.

Choosing two words to describe Michael Dobb, Minnesota's 2017 Tree Farmer of the Year, is just about as quick, precise, (and two syllables): try the words "passion" and "planning."

This Koochiching County Tree Farmer is overseer of the land owned by his grandfather; land that has been in the family since 1919. Michael, the third generation owner, took over the stewardship of the 320 Koochiching County acres in 1997 and, despite residing in the State of Washington, has kept a close watch on, and invested a near-lifetime of tending that forested land.

A near-100-page document, "*My Memoirs of the Dobb Property*" has been written by Michael, summarizing the property's history from the time he was born through his ownership of the land.

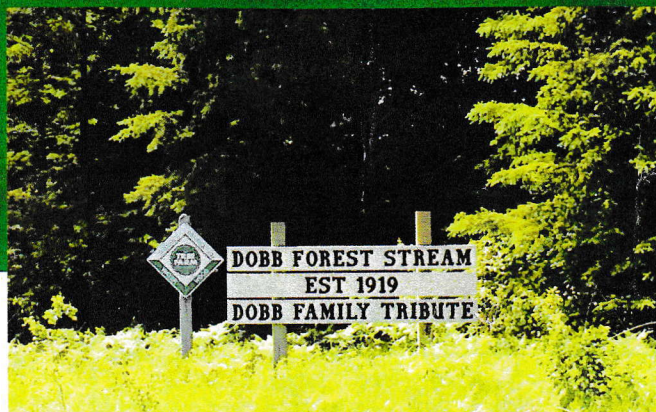
Let's take a read of Chapter I:

"My earliest recollection of the land is of the later 1950s and 1960s when, each summer, my parents George and Joan Dobb, would drive from Washington State to Minnesota to visit their parents (my grandparents). My grandparents lived in Littlefork. Depending on the seasons, family members would walk the 320 acres, take pictures, and pick wild strawberries or blueberries, chat about the first homestead and the life they lived on this property.

"In the early 1960s, my grandfather would talk about gifting me a portion of the property so I would one day move back and live on the land and raise my family. I was probably around 15 years old. The property tax was based on less than \$1 per acre!"

By 1997, Michael and his wife, Marcy, were in ownership of the entire acreage and began their annual trips to explore, manage, and enjoy the land. Many trips included daughter Briana. Annual visits to the land throughout the decades of ownership, are nearly always preceded by contacts to natural resource consultants who he schedules to meet with, prior to his arrival in Koochiching County.

"In January 1997, I received a copy of my Woodland Stewardship Plan. I was impressed with the volume of information and how site specific it was to the land. I immediately focused on the description of tree types, their age, and harvest recommendations I called DNR Forestry Technician Mike Eilers to find out who could remove timber that was ready for harvest. Now I had to learn how to prepare a Timber Removal Agreement. It just so happened I had completed the American Forest Foundation Pioneer/Certified Tree Farm Certification Record and became a member of the American Tree Farm System. The property would receive the diamond-shaped sign stating the land was a Certified Tree Farm."



That 'diamond-shaped' Tree Farm sign was the start. Michael is now on his third 10-year plan. His primary objectives for the woodlands are to improve timber quality and obtain future income while considering resource values, including: aesthetics, wildlife and recreation; and to be a top-notch steward for timber and wildlife management in a balanced fashion maintaining natural continuity. Along with the work on the Tree Farm, the Dobb family wants to establish a songbird sanctuary and study area.



Timber harvests in 2003, '08, '12, '13, '14, '16 have resulted in approximately 2,000 cords from 70 acres including aspen, birch, Balm of Gilead, spruce, and balsam. Taking advantage of a cost-share program in 1998, Michael planted 38,000 bare-root white spruce on 48 acres. In 2008, Michael and daughter Briana planted 500 black ash, Norway pine, and white spruce including an aerial seeding project involving black spruce

"There are several tasks I need to do on the next trip: 1. Inspect the timber removal project by Mike Timmer (I found it to be perfect); 2. Visit Raymond Johnson and talk to him about a planting project, walk the land and have lunch at the Hometown Café; and 3. Check on the well site.



"I am excited about having finally decided on the Dobb Forest Stream name of the Tree Farm. To maintain a strong family interest and pride in the property, I will have a Dobb Forest Stream hat designed, featuring trees, a stream, and the words "Dobb Forest Stream." This first edition embroidered hat will be beige and

green in color and family members will all receive one!"

Michael's memoirs chronicle 20 years of Tree Farm passion, and include details on harvesting, walking, berry picking, planting, and collecting wood for special forest projects (birch hot plates, candle holders, and table coasters!).

Follow the years of the Dobb Forest Stream Tree Farm by going to the following Web site:
http://koovichingswcd.org/wpcontent/uploads/2016/10/DOBBWordDoc_2016.pdf

The Minnesota State Tree Farm Committee honors the Dobb family for its commitment to, and passion for the woodlands of Minnesota!