Field Tech

An iPhone Paired with a Laser Rangefinder?
This and More at SAF's National Convention

By Steve Wilent

The presentations on forest resilience and the many scientific and technical sessions on various topics at SAF's National Convention in October were as good as or better than those at any other national convention, and you'll find extensive coverage of the event in the December edition. For "Field Techies" like me, the Exhibit Hall was at least as interesting, with an array of cool new toys (er, hardware) to play with (test). Here's a brief look at a few of the products on display.

An iPhone-TruPulse Connection

If you have an iPhone, you know it can take great (for a cell phone) photos. And if you have a Laser Technology TruPulse 360, you know it is an excellent laser rangefinder. See my review in the March 2009 edition of *The Forestry Source* and an update on the 360R model (the R is for rugged) in February 2012. What if you could somehow marry the two, so you'd be able to take photos and videos of the objects you measure with the TruPulse? According to Joe Cronn, Laser Tech's western regional sales manager, one of the company's military customers built an iPhone adapter for night-vision scopes and the

Laser Technology western regional sales manager Joe Cronn demonstrates an iPhone mounted on a TruPulse laser rangefinder at SAF's national convention, held in October in Spokane, Washington.

TruPulse. Laser Tech saw the value for foresters in an iPhone-to-TruPulse mount, so the company recently began offering the hardware needed to make that connection.

When Cronn demonstrated the paired hardware at the convention, I was impressed. He started out by showing me iPhone photos of a bull moose he'd seen in Washington last fall. With the TruPulse's 7x-magnification, the beast was just visible—the photo showed the rangefinder's crosshairs on the moose along with the distance—383 yards. Zooming in on the moose revealed an impressive rack. Joe let me use his iPhone and a 360R to target the freshly cut Douglas-fir at the center of the exhibit hall, and I measured and photographed not only the distance to the tree and its height, but also of several people standing nearby.

I can imagine lots of uses for this hardware combination in natural-resources management. You might, for example, take a geotagged photo of a witness tree and its distance from a property corner, or record a narrated, 360-degree video of a permanent plot, with distances to all "in" trees as well as other measurements.

The hardware needed to join an iPhone and a TruPulse comes in two types: a rugged iPhone case with an adapter that mounts on the TruPulse's eyepiece, or a "stow-away" folding bracket for caseless iPhones, along with an eye-

A photo taken with an iPhone through a TruPulse aimed at a power pole.

piece adapter. These products are available through Laser Tech partners, such as Electronic Data Solutions (www.elecdata.com) and Stakemill Measuring Systems (www.stakemill.com). Retail price for either model: $299.

Note: This an excerpt from the full article.