

Spatial Feature FAQ Updated July 2019

Contents

What technology tool is being affected?	1
What Change is Occurring?.....	1
When Did This Project Start?	1
Why Is A Tool Like This Needed?	2
What If Our State Has Spatial Data Readily Available?	2
Can AFF Help My Committee Develop Spatial Data?.....	2
How Does This Project Fit In With The Transition to Strengthen, Grow and Increase the Impact of Tree Farm?	3
Will Trainings be provided?	3
I have privacy concerns.....	3
I Have Other Questions, or Have Feedback For This Tool. Who Do I Contact?	3

What technology tool is being affected?

The ATFS database. The ATFS database is the central repository for information related to landowners and their properties that are enrolled in the American Tree Farm System (ATFS) program.

What Change is Occurring?

The ATFS database is gaining spatial capabilities that will allow State committee members and ATFS inspectors to input Tree Farm boundaries. The same permission rules that exist currently for Tree Farm editing will apply for viewing, creating, modifying Tree Far boundaries.

For example, State program admins can make edits and create new Tree Farms in their state, but not for other states. The same will apply to boundary creation/editing.

For example, inspectors cannot create new Tree Farms, but can edit/enter Tree Farm property information as part of an inspection. Inspectors will not be able to create boundaries for properties they are not assigned to.

When Did This Project Start?

In recent years, the ATFS program has been facilitating collection of spatial data for committees, through grants and creation of tools to facilitate landowner outreach and data updates. Through 2017-2018 ATFS worked with several states to do massive landowner outreach and capture spatial data points as well. Starting in early 2019, adding functionality to the ATFS database to capture and store spatial data began.

Why Is A Tool Like This Needed?

Having high quality data and spatial data benefits the entire system in several ways.

- Facilitates location of property for regular reinspections and during assessments.
- In the future this information can be overlaid with landscape management plans or other tools to streamline the entry of inspections.
- Allows for in GIS analysis on Tree Farms for more effective outreach, field days, determining Tree Farm hot spots or dead zones, implementation of conservation initiatives, etc.
- Prevents duplicate enrollment of same property
- Prevents enrollment of noncontiguous parcels

What If Our State Has Spatial Data Readily Available?

With the help of our database programmer, shape files with digitized Tree Farms can be imported. If you have added new fields to your spatial data, there is no guarantee that additional data and fields will be imported in as well, but those situations will be handled individually. The main data of interest are the Tree Farm boundaries. Please contact Nephtali Chavez at nchavez@forestfoundation.org to begin the process and with any questions.

Required Fields:

- State
- Tree Farm number

Formatting Details:

- Zipped shapefile or geodatabase
- Projection must be defined for the dataset
- Each tree farm should only have 1 contiguous boundary. If a Tree farm boundary is duplicated, or a tree farm number is repeated but has different boundaries, that property will not be imported.

Instructions

1. Please email Nephtali a zipped shapefile with the dataset
2. Provide an estimate of when the dataset was last updated
3. Folder can be shared through a file sharing site if it is too large for email

Can AFF Help My Committee Develop Spatial Data?

State committees can apply for AFF's outcome-based grants to help support collection and processing of spatial data. Grants will be awarded based on quality of proposal and availability of funds. The outcome supported would be the heading "Quality and accuracy of the landowner, Tree Farm, and/or inspector information in the ATFS Database will be improved."

If the grants application period has passed, you can still approach ATFS Staff with your proposed project and funds may be available to assist. Please get in touch with your [Regional Manager](#) with any project ideas and for proposal submission advice.

How Does This Project Fit In With The Transition to Strengthen, Grow and Increase the Impact of Tree Farm?

The goals outlined in Tree Farm's transition are intended to Grow, Strengthen and Increase the impact of ATFS. Having Tree Farm spatial data lays the foundation for tools that will streamline inspections, improve communications with landowners, relieve administrative burdens for state committees.

Will Trainings be provided?

Yes, webinar trainings will be available in August of 2019. Recordings of those webinars as well as web resources (tutorials) at <https://www.treefarmssystem.org/atfs-tech>

I have privacy concerns.

Information held within the ATFS database is closely guarded and only authorized users (ATFS volunteers, AFF staff, subscribers and authorized partners. This can be broad so I wouldn't elaborate on it too much unless specifically asked) can access that information. This website (ATFS Database) is owned and operated by the American Forest Foundation (AFF) and is intended to provide useful information to those individuals managing records of the American Tree Farm System® (ATFS) in their respective state(s). AFF is committed to ensuring the privacy of persons (Tree Farmers) participating in ATFS and will take every precaution to protect Tree Farmer information, both online and offline. Each user of the database is required to agree to the ATFS nondisclosure agreement before being able to access the information within.

I Have Other Questions, or Have Feedback For This Tool. Who Do I Contact?

Contact Tree Farm's Information Manager at Nchavez@forestfoundation.org.