

# tree farmer

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AMERICAN  
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AMERICAN  
TREE FARM SYSTEM®

The guide to sustaining America's family forests

# Estate Planning:

Ensuring the Future of Your Legacy

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

Forest Certification Update  
12th Annual Convention  
Update on the Jobs Creation Act  
Considering a Family Sale  
Coverboards Reveal Life Under Ground

**Annual Complimentary Issue**

# tree farmer



## THE AMERICAN TREE FARM SYSTEM®

*Tree Farmer* is the official magazine of the American Tree Farm System (ATFS), a program of the American Forest Foundation. It is published six times a year for private forest landowners and volunteer foresters. Opinions do not necessarily represent those of ATFS.

### MISSION

To promote the growing of renewable forest resources on private lands while protecting environmental benefits and increasing public understanding of all benefits of productive forestry.

*Tree Farmer* magazine is a forest enhancement publication by Tree Farmers for Tree Farmers and all who benefit from their endeavors. *Tree Farmer* espouses the environmental benefits of sustainable production of forest products through responsible forest stewardship on private forestlands. With information, advocacy, and practical advice, the magazine promotes sustainable forest practices for multiple benefits to society.

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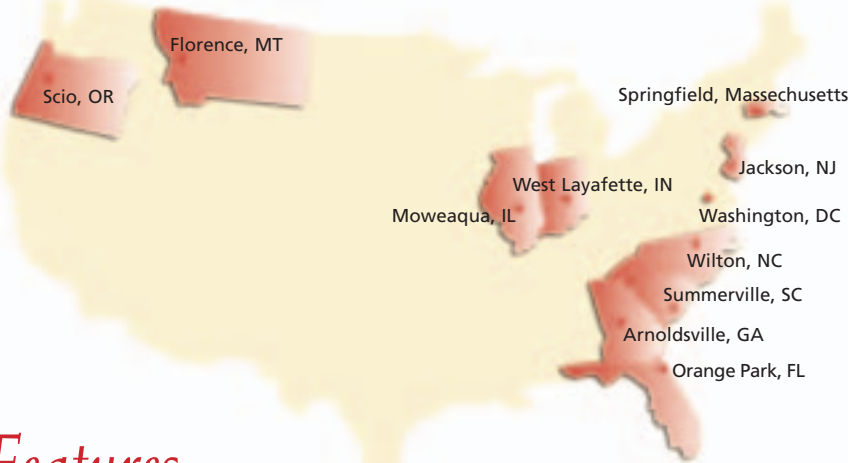
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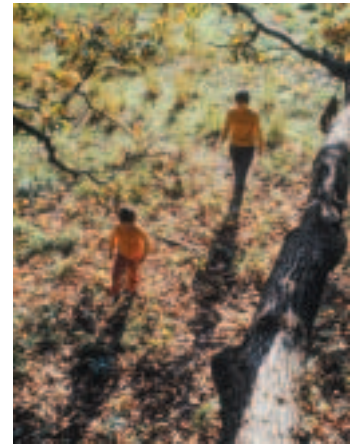


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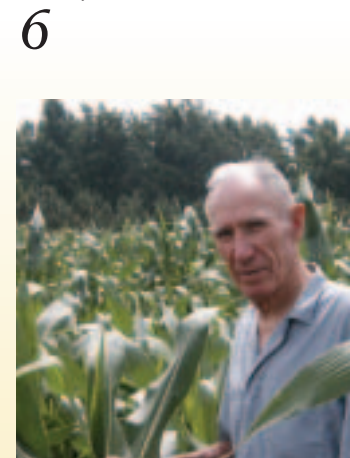
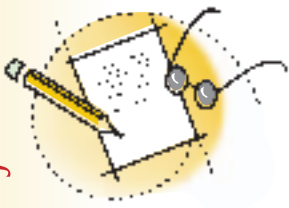


Photo by Chris Brown



Photo by Jeff Jackson

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COVER: A FEMALE MOOSE AND A WHITETAIL DOE SHARE A SMALL POND ON A CERTIFIED TREE FARM IN WESTERN MAINE. PHOTO BY NED THERRIEN



# Preparing for your Next Reinspection

By **STEPHANIE  
Brown**

**Editor's Note:** This new column will highlight issues and activities from the field operations side of the American Tree Farm System.

Do you remember your very first Tree Farm inspection? Your last reinspection? You probably didn't even think of them as "inspections." Spending time with your forester - an expert who can answer questions, survey your accomplishments, and give advice on future management activities - that's an opportunity most Tree Farmers savor. It was a friendly conversation, a walk in the woods, some good recommendations, a handshake, and a signature on the reinspection form.

Today, Tree Farm inspections are just as friendly and helpful as ever, but the form for documenting your forester's decision to recertify or decertify your property has been expanded. The new form is designed to capture all of the information needed to document your conformance to the 14 Performance Measures outlined within the 2004-2008 American Forest Foundation Standards for Sustainability for Forest Certification on Private Lands (Standards).

For each Performance Measure, your forester will be looking for evidence, or "Indicators," found during the inspection that show you are managing your Tree Farm in a way that meets or exceeds the AFF Standards. You can help your forester with the reinspection process by keeping track of documents that support your forest management efforts. For example, you'll need to produce a copy of your management plan and be prepared to talk about any needed revisions. If you know your plan is in need of revision, take care of that in advance of your next reinspection if at all possible.

Before your next reinspection, you should be aware of several recent modifications that could affect your continuing certification as a Tree Farmer. It's not that you necessarily need to manage your forestland differently than in the past - these new requirements have more to do with helping the inspecting forester verify a job well done.

*For each performance measure, your forester will be looking for evidence, or "indicators," found during the inspection that show you are managing your Tree Farm in a way that meets or exceeds AFF standards.*

The most recent changes regarding interpretations have to do with rare species and special sites, found in Standards 6 and 8, respectively. The Performance Measures haven't changed, but additional indicators have been added to clarify the evidence that your forester will be looking for to show that they have been met.


To demonstrate that you are meeting Performance Measures 6.1 and 8.1, you or your forester need to have made a reasonable effort to find out if rare species or special plant and animal communities exist on your property. Appropriate sources for this type of information vary from state to state. They may include, but are not limited to county, state, and federal agencies,

universities and extension programs, and local knowledge.

In most cases your forester will be familiar enough with your property to provide this assurance based on local knowledge and his or her professional training. In those few instances where this is not the case, your forester will be able to advise you of what sources of information are available. Omit remaining sentence(s) referring to databases in this paragraph

And what do you do if you find you have one of these special sites or critters on your property? You do what you have always done. Manage for them accordingly with all the pride and respect you have always shown for your land. That's why you are a certified Tree Farmer.

Today's world calls for greater assurances that products from certified family forests are coming from some of the best managed forests in the world. We already know that America's Tree Farmers are a cut above the rest. Now we can prove it.

An updated version of the 2004-2008 AFF Standards of Sustainability, with footnotes containing the additional interpretation guidelines, can be found on the Tree Farm website: [www.treefarmssystem.org](http://www.treefarmssystem.org) 



*Stephanie Brown is Field Operations Director for the American Tree Farm System.*



from the director

# The Big Picture:

## Why We've Done What We've Done

By **BOB Simpson**

In 1997 we began hearing about a "new concept" -- forest certification. New? Hardly. Tree Farm began certifying family forests in 1941. But this was a global movement, and folks were saying certification would determine whose wood was "good enough" to reassure consumers who cared about sustainability.

Soon, a single certification system began to argue theirs was the only acceptable program the world needed. But European family forest organizations [close kin to Tree Farm] feared this single system didn't fit the needs or circumstances of their family owners. No global monopoly, they concluded, should dominate the emerging world of forest certification.

So the Europeans agreed to work together (an eye-opening feat in itself) to establish another internationally-credible system, PEFC. ATFS attended early meetings as an official observer; we barely understood we were witnessing the birth of a new era in forestry. It wasn't long before we realized that Tree Farm too would have to rebuild itself so our members could participate in the "new world" of certified forestry.

In 2000, ATFS hired PriceWaterhouse-Coopers, Inc. (PWC) to determine how we measured up to international criteria for credible certification systems. At the same time, environmental groups began a campaign against companies like Home Depot and Lowe's -- insisting they sell only products certified by a single system. In short, the pressure was on.

And the PWC report confirmed we had a lot of work to do. Tree Farm needed to rebuild itself before we could claim to be a credible system for assuring our members practiced sustainable forestry. We were in a race, and losing wasn't an option.

Fortunately, we weren't running alone. You've read in these pages how state committees and our national leadership and countless individual Tree Farmers helped develop new documentation requirements for states, modernized and strengthened AFF's Standards of Sustainability for Forest Certification (See Cliff Schnieder's article), set higher qualifications for inspectors and developed our group certification program. It was hard work, but we can now say with confidence that Tree Farm is truly a credible, world-class certification system.

Was it worth it? You bet. In her column, Stephanie Brown catalogues some of the dividends. Time Inc., the largest paper purchaser in the United States, formally recognized ATFS group certified forests as a source of certified content for their products. New groups are queuing up for Tree Farm certification. And, through their national trade association, U.S. wood and paper manufacturers committed themselves to increase the percentage of raw material they source from certified land over the next five years. Wood from ATFS will count toward this goal -- precisely the sort of market recognition we had hoped to earn for our 51,000 Tree Farm members.

Eight years ago, I couldn't have imagined how many hours of hard work, grueling travel and endless meetings our program volunteers would commit toward making Tree Farm a credible certification system. Their goals were simple: to give Tree Farmers a choice of

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certification systems, and assure their access to timber markets. They've won the race. And we are deeply grateful. 🌿



*Bob Simpson is Senior Vice President, Forestry Programs, American Forest Foundation.*