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We provide you the on-the-ground tools you need to help validate the work that family woodland owners are doing to keep their forest healthy and productive.

Working together, we help provide outreach to landowners and promote better forest stewardship.

Contact Us

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We grow stewardship from the roots

Dear Amanda,

We hope you enjoy the August edition of Sightline Express, the e-newsletter exclusively for American Tree Farm System Inspectors.

Special Announcements

Dates and Deadlines

November 1, 2012 - Required sample inspections completed and entered into the database

July 25-27, 2013 - National Tree Farmer Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota

Tools

New Function in the ATFS Database

A valuable new function was recently added to the ATFS Database. *Inspections can now be exported to writable PDFs!* These electronic inspection forms resemble those manually printed for Required Inspections but are in a writable electronic format. Forms can be generated via the ATFS Database by Inspectors and State Committees and provide an easy way to complete inspections and send them through the chain of command via email (instead of snail mail). State Committees can use this new function to disseminate inspections electronically, including Required Inspections. Interested in how it works? For a brief tutorial contact [Justin Lindenberg](#). To give it a try yourself log in and use the following path:
Inspections→Print Inspection Forms→Search→Select→Create

Follow Us



PDF→Save.

Press Release Template Available to Help You Announce Newly Certified Tree Farms

In an effort to provide you with the most up-to-date communications tools for outreach, a new press release template is available to help you announce the certification of land in your state to local media outlets. If you would like access to this Word document, please email [Amanda Cooke](mailto:Amanda.Cooke).

ATFS Webinar Series

The [ATFS webinar series](#) provides important information to our Tree Farmers and ATFS Inspecting Foresters and covers a range of topics from invasive species to legacy planning. Here is what's coming up:

[Good Forest Management Equals Good Forest Health](#)

August 29, 2012

[Basics of Estate Planning and the Tools Available for Family Forests](#)

September 27, 2012

If you cannot participate in a webinar, live recordings will be posted [online](#) after the completion of each webinar. Suggestions for future webinars should be sent to [Caroline Kuebler](#).

[On the Ground](#)

Facilitator Training

Facilitators (with the approval of State Committee) initiate and host the Inspector trainings that are crucial to grow our network of on-the-ground professionals. Please plan to join us for a two-part Facilitator Training webinar series: October 9th at 2:30pm and October 10th at 9:30am, EDT. Each webinar training session will last approximately 2.5 hours. The training is designed for current facilitators looking for a refresher as well as Inspecting Foresters seeking further professional development opportunities.

To register, click the link for your selected session:

[ATFS Facilitators' Training: Tuesday, October 9, 2012, 2:30-5:00pm EDT](#)

[ATFS Facilitators' Training: Wednesday, October 10, 2012, 9:30am-1:00pm EDT](#)

For inquiries regarding this upcoming training please contact [Sarah Crow](#).

Reduce the Risk to America's Wildland Fire Fighters

Last month, President Obama recognized the need to provide America's wildland firefighters with health insurance benefits. This recognition of their service is a good start; however, we are encouraging President Obama to take even more action to keep America's heroes safe while maintaining healthy forests. In an effort to thank the President and to encourage more action along this front, [AFF published its Reduce the Risk letter to the President](#). We hope that you will read the letter and sign the petition by visiting forestfoundation.org/reduce-the-risk. Please share this link with others you know who care about ensuring more fire-resilient family woodlands. [The petition](#) is only available for signatures during the month of August; we will send a copy of the letter with all signatures to the President during the first week of September. Thank you for your support!

AFF Public Affairs Team Updates

AFF's public affairs team continues to work aggressively in Congress to represent our woodland community. Here are some activities going on this month:

Estate Tax Update

The estate tax is a hot topic right now and AFF is using this opportunity to highlight our proposal, [Keep the Forest in the Family Act](#), which would provide estate tax relief for family forest owners and encourage forest conservation and stewardship planning. If you haven't already done so, please urge Tree Farmers in your state to write to their members of Congress, urging them to remember family forest owners and the public benefits their stewardship provides, when they consider the estate tax. Take action at www.familyforestation.org.

Farm Bill Update

The House Agriculture Committee passed their version of the Farm Bill out of Committee earlier this month, including a number of improvements at our request:

- Includes [the Forest Products Fairness Act](#) (cosponsored by Reps Thompson (R-PA) and Schrader (D-OR) which will open up new potential market opportunities for forest owners in a government purchasing and labeling program.
- The Beginning Farmer and Rancher program specifically lists nonindustrial private forest landowners as eligible recipients of program opportunities;
- Includes more money for pest and disease control.
- Similar to the Senate version, the House Farm Bill also:
 - Improves forest owner access to conservation tools and programs.
 - Maintains support for research and cooperative extension programs.
 - Strengthens the direction for forest inventory

and analysis programs, providing market and forest health trends.

Unfortunately, House leadership has not allowed a vote on the Farm Bill, [even after a number of groups, including AFF have weighed in](#) to support the legislation. The House Rules Committee removed the one year Farm Bill extension from the August 2nd agenda and instead passed a separate drought relief and disaster assistance package. It's not clear yet how, or if, the full Farm Bill gets to the finish line this year but AFF continues to encourage full reauthorization.

Forest Roads Update

Many forest owners are still looking for certainty about whether or not their forestry activities will require Clean Water Act permits. The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee unanimously reported [H.R. 2541, Silviculture Regulatory Consistency Act](#) out of Committee. This bill would permanently make forest roads-and all forestry activities for that matter-a nonpoint source of pollution. If your House Member sits on the [Transportation and Infrastructure Committee](#), thank them for their support and hard work, and stay tuned for further updates on this important piece of legislation.

Election Tool Kit

The [election tool-kit](#) is available for use during the August recess and beyond by our Tree Farm Grassroots Action Network. It outlines steps that can be taken to educate candidates and background on issues of importance to family woodland owners. While AFF will not endorse candidates, we do provide tools for our Grassroots to educate all candidates, both incumbents and new candidates.

Moving Towards the Future

Start Your Monthly Gift to the American Forest Foundation Today!

Earlier this year, the American Forest Foundation was awarded a four-star status on Charity Navigator, America's largest independent charity evaluator, recognizing AFF's sound fiscal management and commitment to accountability and transparency. This stellar rating gives our donors confidence in their choice to support us. Help show your confidence in the American Forest Foundation with a monthly gift-you can support us every month, without lifting a finger. You designate the amount (as little as \$10!) and your donation is automatically charged to your credit card each month. This is a cost-effective way for you to make a meaningful gift to the American Forest Foundation Please visit <http://www.forestfoundation.org/donate> to start your monthly gift today! Contact Laura Tuel, Vice President of Development, at 202-463-2585 or

ltuel@forestfoundation.org if you have any questions.

Stumped?

Email inspectors@forestfoundation.org to get your *Stumped?* questions answered!

Question: What are some examples of ways landowners can manage for aesthetics?

Answer: Forest aesthetics considerations can be incorporated into management planning with little cost to the forest owner. Employing forest aesthetics considerations into the management plan can produce a much more visually appealing experience on the property for owners, their guests and passers-by using nearby public roads. Some examples might include placing log truck-loading zones out of public view, leaving islands of mast or roost trees within harvest areas, including a bend in the entrance road to block view of tract interior and following contour lines and timber type margins with roads and harvest boundaries. Forest owners can access a very good Forest Aesthetics Guide at <http://www.aces.edu/forestry/aesthetics/>.

Thank you for your participation as an inspector with the American Tree Farm System! Your interaction with family woodland owners is helping to improve the sustainability of our forest resources across the U.S.

As always, check out the latest news of what's happening at the American Tree Farm System on our website - www.treefarmsystem.org.

Please feel free to contact us at any time with any questions or concerns.

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