



Michigan Tree Farm - 2019 Annual Report

Community - Recognition - Legacy

2019 Accomplishments

70th anniversary. Michigan joined the American Tree Farm System 70 years ago when Governor Mennen Williams presented certificates to 18 Upper Peninsula landowners in Munising on June 10, 1949. Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed a Special Tribute on September 13, 2019 to celebrate the 70th anniversary of Tree Farm in Michigan.



Michigan Forest Celebration. The Michigan Tree Farm Committee partnered with the Michigan Forest Association to host the Michigan Forest Celebration in Grand Rapids in September. **The 2020 Forest Celebration will be in Petoskey on September 18-19, 2020.** Photo: Cok Family Tree Farm in Sparta host the 2019 Forest Celebration.

too. Michigan Tree Farm hosted three Field Days in 2019 in partnership with local Conservation District foresters.

Site Visit. Another benefit of Tree Farm is a visit with a professional forester in your woods every five years or so. Michigan has 129 “inspecting foresters” and 36 of them provided 143 free site visits to Tree Farmers in 2019.

Wheels to Woods. Michigan Tree Farm gave \$37,311 in grants to 105 schools to visit a forest or forest products company for an educational field trip. Wheels to Woods impacted 9,341 students, 440 teachers and 1,235 parents in 2019.

Assessment. American Tree Farm System is a national forest certification system that is audited annually by independent reviewers. Michigan participates in the national audit every five years. Bob Radspinner, a forester from Virginia contracted by PricewaterhouseCoopers, visited 17 Michigan Tree Farms in June. Bob was very impressed with these Tree Farmers whose great work in their woods exemplified and exceeded the 2015 Standards of Sustainability. Opportunities for improvement include accurate acres of certified forest, keeping management plans current, following best management practices for water quality and identifying Forests of Recognized Importance. **A big THANK-YOU to all the Tree Farmers and foresters that helped us pass the 2019 assessment!!** Photo: Chad Foster and family in Charlevoix County got a new sign during the 2019 audit.



2019 Awards



Outstanding Tree Farmers of 2019. Paul and Maude Bigford won the award for Outstanding Tree Farmers of 2019. Their Tree Farm, Tank Creek Ranch LLC, is a beautiful 150-acre forest with four thousand feet of frontage along the Pere Marquette River in Lake County. Tank Creek runs through the woods just before it empties into the Pere Marquette River. Six generations of the Bigford family have lived on this land. The woods are now co-owned by Paul, his brother Doug and his son Kyle. Paul and Maude have a balanced approach to forest management using conservation practices that create revenue from

timber sales while also enhancing wildlife habitat, recreation and water quality. The Bigford family uses the trees in their woods for firewood, maple syrup production and even building projects on their property. The Bigfords are passionate advocates in their community for natural resources and Paul serves on several local boards.

Outstanding Forester of 2019. Stephen Begin, a consulting forester in Manistee, won the award for Outstanding Forester of 2019. Stephen provides a full range of services for his clients including forest management plans, tree planting, wildlife habitat, timber sales and Tree Farm inspections. He is a Forest Stewardship Plan Writer for the DNR, Technical Service Provider for NRCS and a Tree Farm inspector for 26 years. Stephen enjoys educating landowners about their many options to manage and improve their woods. Stephen did five Tree Farm inspections in 2019 for his clients.



2019 Finances

The Michigan Tree Farm Committee, a 501c3 nonprofit organization, had \$32,282 at the beginning of 2019 and \$32,877 at the end of the year. Gross income was \$42,187 and total expenses were \$41,692 for a net gain of \$495 in 2019.

The Michigan Tree Farm Committee operates on donations; it does not charge dues or fees to Tree Farmers. The American Forest Foundation donated \$15,410 for expenses such as Field Days, inspections and attending the National Leadership Conference. The DNR's Forest Stewardship Program donated \$25,158 to support free inspections and committee administration (with funding from the US Forest Service). Interest earned \$24 and Tree Farmers gave \$1,595. Wheels to Woods transportation grants of \$37,311 for 105 schools to visit a forest are accounted for separately in 2019.

Please consider a tax-deductible donation to help deliver Tree Farm or Wheels to Woods in Michigan. Please send your check payable to "Michigan Tree Farm Committee" to 110 West Michigan Avenue, Suite 100, Lansing, MI 48933.

Contact Information

Michigan Tree Farm Committee, January 2020
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The Michigan Tree Farm Committee is an equal opportunity provider in 100% of Michigan.