

Michigan Tree Farm – 2024 Annual Report

Field Days & Site Visits. Michigan Tree Farm hosted eight field days all over the state in 2024 from Barry County to Baraga County. In 2024 twenty-eight inspecting foresters provided 96 site visits for Tree Farmers too.

2024 Michigan Forest Celebration. Many Tree Farmers joined Michigan Forest Association for the 2024 Michigan Forest Celebration in Petoskey on September 13-14. Participants learned from interesting speakers, attended a variety of field tours, and celebrated the 2024 award winners.

Outstanding Tree Farmers of 2024. Bill and Patrice Bobier of Oceana County are the Outstanding Tree Farmers of 2024. The Bobier's Earthscape Farm totals 415 acres and includes 200 acres of forest. The Bobier Tree Farm is a multi-generation family and community forest. Bill and Patrice have two adult children, five grandchildren and a great-grandchild. Their grandchildren have planted white pine and red pine seedlings in the woods, and everyone helps with cutting firewood. The Michigan Tree Farm Committee is pleased to award Bill and Patrice Bobier as Michigan's Outstanding Tree Farmers of 2024 for their decades of great work in the woods, advocating for good forestry policy at all three levels of government, and inspiring neighbors by sharing their love of the land with their community.



Tree Farm Inspector of 2024. James Gray of Natural Capital Forestry in East Lansing is the 2024 Inspector of the Year. James served as regional coordinator for the Michigan Tree Farm Committee where he led the Next Generation Project to designate a contact for future ownership changes. James worked on the spatial data initiative to map noncontiguous Tree Farms in ATFSdatabase.org. James is an active inspector encouraging his clients to enroll in Tree Farm. He enjoys working with school forests and cities like Battle Creek. James serves on the Forestry for Michigan Birds committee and is active with international forestry after working in Guatemala a decade ago. James is on the left in the photo; committee chair Josh Isaac of the Dickinson Conservation District is on the right.



2024 Financial Report. Michigan Tree Farm Committee, a 501c3 nonprofit, had \$44,600 at the start of 2024 and ended with \$48,116. Gross income was \$31,630 and total expenses were \$28,114 for a net gain of \$3,516. Michigan Tree Farm operates on grants and your donations - it does not charge dues or fees to Tree Farmers. Our biggest expense in 2024 was \$12,900 to pay 28

foresters for 93 site visits provided at no cost to Tree Farmers. American Forest Foundation granted \$11,079 for program administration, site visits and travel. DNR Forest Stewardship provided a grant of \$19,946 (USDA Forest Service funds) for site visits, field days, audits, and marketing. Interest earned \$5 and five Tree Farmers donated \$600. Tree Farm administers Wheels to Woods transportation grants and those funds from USDA Forest Service are accounted separately. Tree Farm transferred the Wheels to Woods grant program to Michigan Sustainable Forestry Initiative at the end of 2024. *Over the past nine years, Wheels to Woods has invested \$238,698 in 619 school field trips for 66,821 students, teachers and parents to visit a nearby forest or forest products company.*

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Michigan Tree Farm – 2025 Summer News

2025 Michigan Forest Celebration. Tree Farm continues to partner with Michigan Forest Association to co-host the **Michigan Forest Celebration which will be October 3-4, 2025 in Midland**. Michigan Forest Association has a new Executive Director, Nicole Frost, who started in January. Nicole is hiring three new staff this summer (with grant funding from the USDA Forest Service) so please attend the Michigan Forest Celebration to learn about the exciting things Michigan Forest Association is planning. This celebration is also a great time to chat with the Tree Farm Committee about whether to stay “certified” or return to a “recognition” program in 2026.

Field Days. The Michigan Tree Farm Committee is planning several field days in 2025, including one in Mason County on July 11. Would you like to host a field day at your Tree Farm? Call your Tree Farm forester or committee vice-chair Nicole Frost of MFA at 517-816-7879 or Nicole.Frost@MichiganForests.org.

Certification or Recognition? The American Tree Farm System has been helping family forest landowners take good care of their woods since 1941. For most of the last 85 years Tree Farm has been a “recognition” program that rewards landowners with a cool sign for their good forest management. Since 2000, the American Tree Farm System has been a forest “certification” program where an independent third-party auditor verifies that landowners and Tree Farm are living up to their Standards of Sustainability that are updated every five years. The dozen large forest products companies in Michigan who participate in forest certification programs get all the certified wood they need from huge landowners like the State of Michigan (4 million acres) and corporate landowners (3 million acres in the Upper Peninsula) who are certified by Sustainable Forestry Initiative or Forest Stewardship Council. Michigan Tree Farm Committee is considering giving up forest certification and returning to a recognition program in 2026 that no longer provides free inspections or requires independent audits. **Before we make that decision later this fall, we want to hear from YOU. What do you value about Tree Farm?** Would you be willing to pay \$100 annual dues to cover the cost of certification (inspections & audits)? Or would you prefer a free recognition program that offered fewer services and requirements? Please provide your input to committee chair Josh Isaac at dmfapforester@gmail.com or 906-779-8112.



Outstanding Tree Farmers of 2025. Rexx and Maria Janowiak of Houghton County are Michigan’s Outstanding Tree Farmers of 2025. Rexx is a forester for Green Timber Consulting Foresters in Baraga and administers their Tree Farm group. Maria is a forester for USDA Forest Service with Northern Institute of Applied Climate Science (NIACS) on campus at Michigan Tech. Rexx and Maria’s 18-acre Otter Point Tree Farm is on the northeast shore of Otter Lake. Maria and Rexx are practicing adaptation and climate resilience in their own woods by replacing ash killed by the Emerald Ash Borer with red oak, white oak, basswood and white pine.

Tree Farm Inspector of 2025. Todd Miller of Newberry is the Outstanding Tree Farm Inspector of 2025. Todd has worked for Grossman Forestry Company for 35 years and administers the Grossman Forestry Tree Farm Group to certify 259 Tree Farmers and 168,800 acres. In the last five years Todd provided 145 Tree Farm inspections for members of Grossman Forestry Tree Farm Group. Shortly after Todd won the award, Green Timber Consulting Foresters announced the acquisition of Grossman Forestry Company, and the two firms merged at the end of 2024.



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