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## TREE FARM BULLETIN, January 2009

Greetings;

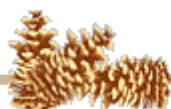
Hope the New Year is off to a good start for everyone.

Many Tree farmers have participated in federal cost-share programs in the past. These programs split the cost for forest improvement work (thinning, fuel reduction, wildlife habitat improvement, etc.) between the landowner and the federal government. In 2008 congress passed a new Farm Bill that will direct funding to agricultural programs for the next five years. The main cost share program for forest landowners Forest Lands Enhancement Program has been eliminated. The bill gives the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) new programs to help forest landowners conserve and manage their forests.

NRCS has been around for a long time and has primarily served agricultural interests. NRCS uses local work groups of landowners and a State Technical Committee to offer guidance on how cost share funds are spent. The new Farm Bill now mandates that forest landowners serve on these advisory committees so that forestry interests are represented.

The Tree Farm committee is looking for Tree Farmers that would be interested in serving on one of these advisory committees. This is a volunteer assignment. Without good representation on these committees forestry interests may get the short end of the stick. Cost share programs have proven to be an effective tool to encourage forest landowners to actively manage their property and since the money is spent "on the ground" is a good use of government funds.

Please let me know if you would like more information about cost share funds or if you would be willing to serve on a local working group or on the State Technical Committee of the NRCS. It is important that forest landowners are part of this process and their voice be heard.



## HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT TREES?

**Did the Coal Age forests have any animal inhabitants?** Yes. The principal inhabitants were giant salamanders and crocodiles, dragon flies with a 29-inch wing spread, enormous scorpions, spiders, and cockroaches 4 inches long.

**Is the Forest Service on its own in carrying out these vast responsibilities?** Other government bureaus cooperate in special problems such as the control of insect and tree diseases, and the forecasting of fire weather.

**What home trees are characteristic of southern Florida?** This section of our country, generally free of frost the year round, has some very unusual trees. Among others are the cabbage palm, beefwood, royal Poinciana, orange, grapefruit, albizia, papaya, crape myrtle, cypress, slash pine, sapodilla, and fig.

**How many taps can be made on a mature maple?** Two to four, depending on the size of the tree, but buckets must be about the same height above the ground, and never one above the other. Sap flows up and down-not sidewise.

**What is "root girdling"?** This is simply a phrase used when trees are transplanted without giving the roots plenty of breathing space. The result is that one root will entwine another, thus strangling both roots.

**If heartwood is the most indestructible part of a tree trunk, why are there so many hollow trees?** In an undamaged live tree, heartwood is well protected from fungi and wood-boring insects. Damage by lightning, or where branches break off, may give entrance to the bacteria of decay. In the moisture of the interior, decay may go on for years and cause a hollow tree. This happens chiefly to trees like apple, willow and linden the heartwood of which does not contain resin and tannin. Evergreens like red cedar, bald cypress and redwood do not become hollow.

Platt, Rutherford 1992. 1001 Questions Answered About Trees. Dover Books. 318pp.

