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Greetings;

The month of February is always legislative season here in Santa Fe. There is little to report of interest to Tree Farmers happening in the legislature. Our State Forester, Butch Blazer has resigned and Tony Delfin is acting State Forester until a new one is appointed by the new administration.

On the federal level Obama's 2012 budget is out. Programs of interest to Tree Farmers within the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) budget include:

- Forest Inventory and Analysis Program for state forestry data collection, \$5 million reduction, essentially eliminating this function.
- Reduces funding for forest health activities on state and private lands by over \$4 million, a 10 percent reduction.
- Reduces funding for fire management activities on state and private lands by almost \$6 million, a 15 percent reduction.
- The Forest Stewardship program which supports many state Tree Farm Committees did get an \$80,000 increase. I'm surprised they can even keep track of \$80,000 in a \$3.7 trillion budget.

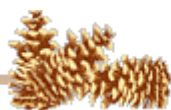
Programs of interest to Tree Farmers within the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) include:

- Increases funding for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) to \$1.41 billion, a \$234 million from 2010 levels.
- Increases the Conservation Stewardship program to \$788 million.

The NRCS has traditionally worked with agricultural interests but now many of their programs include cost-share funds for forest practices. It is interesting to note how much larger these programs are than the USFS programs that fund state and private forestry activities. These traditional forestry programs have always been modestly funded relative to other federal spending.

Of course Congress is still trying to figure out what will be spent this year so these budget numbers can change substantially. Federal cost-share funds can be a valuable tool for forest landowners to treat acres of forest to increase productivity and reduce fire danger so let's hope these programs aren't reduced any further.

Harry A. Morrison, Vice Chairman, NM Tree Farm Committee





The 2011 National Tree Farmer Convention will be held August 9-11 in New Mexico, at the Hyatt Tamaya Resort & Spa, situated between Santa Fe and Albuquerque. The resort is at the base of the Sandia Mountains and reflects the rich history of the Tamayame people. Located on several thousand acres of native land, this property features amazing mountain views, the Rio Grande River, and an expansive cottonwood forest. We are

planning programming for Tree Farmers of all ages, so bring the young Tree Farmers in your family. With room rates at just \$89/night negotiated especially for our convention goers, this is one you can't miss! Look for registration information in the March/April edition of Tree Farmer Magazine. Be sure to check www.treefarmssystem.org for the most up to date information. We hope you and your family can join us!



(Hyatt Tamaya Resort & Spa)

