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TREE FARM BULLETIN

Greetings;

The Tree Farm System is a program of the American Forest Foundation (AFF) based in Washington D.C. The AFF has taken a leading role this year on advocating for private forestry before Congress. It has spearheaded a coalition of over sixty forest and conservation groups in making members of Congress aware of forestry issues in the 2012 Farm Bill. The Farm Bill is a massive 60 billion dollar bill passed every four years to fund agricultural programs of which forestry is a part. Since forestry is such a small sliver of the whole it would be easy for forestry funds to be cut completely out of the budget as interests compete for funds. We're lucky to have the AFF and their partners there to make sure the case is made for private forestry assistance. In the United States there are over 10 million private forest land owners who combined own more forest land than the U.S. Forest Service. The over fifty million acres in private hands are often in the path of development and are part of the urban-wild land interface. Properly managed they can provide wood, water and, wildlife for our growing population for generations to come. Cost share funds provided by Farm Bill programs can be a real incentive for private landowners to manage their forests and while the timber market is down provide some needed employment for forest workers.

During the month of April the AFF is having a Farm Bill Helpline @ (202) 463-2734 open to any Tree Farmer who has a question about the Farm Bill or wants to learn more about the various cost share funds that are available. You can also e-mail them at farmbill@forestfoundation.org. This is a good opportunity if you are interested in talking with someone who really knows what's going on in Washington.



Message from the Chairman: MARK your calendars for our field day, 09 June, at Gene Harling's Tree Farm in the East Mountains outside of Albuquerque. We will start at 10:00 AM and have a program that consists of chainsaw use, maintenance, and safety; invasive insect pest's progression in New Mexico; a discussion of the direction of the New Mexico Tree Farm Program; and a tour of Gene's Tree Farm. Items to be discussed are: instituting a membership fee for being a tree farmer; the value of certification of your timber; timber markets; grants available; and inspections/re-inspections. Lunch will be served. Please call me no later than 01 June so we can order the chow. It will be a beautiful day in the forest.

