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## TREE FARM BULLETIN

### FIELD DAY 10 MAY, CARRIZO VALLEY RANCH TREE FARM

The Carrizo Valley Ranch Tree Farm is located approximately 11 miles northwest of Capitan, NM and 5 miles east of White Oaks, NM on the east side of the Carrizo Mountains with elevations ranging from 6,500' to 7,680'. The total land ownership is 3,380 acres. Approximately 323 acres consists of ponderosa pine and mixed conifer. The remaining is open savanna, grassland and managed pinyon/juniper woodlands.

The Carrizo Valley Ranch is owned by Sid and Cheryl Goodloe. Sid purchased the property in spring of 1956. The land base that Sid bought in 1956 was much different, comprising mainly crowded pinyon/juniper woodlands and dog haired thickets of ponderosa pine. There was minimal forage for cattle so Sid reduced his cattle to 40 head. Heavy rainfall in the summer resulted in sheet erosion and intense flooding in the intermittent streams.

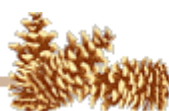
Sid began the task of restoring the vegetative composition and arrangement of the land base to its historic condition by removing most of the pinyon/juniper, leaving a few larger trees. Many of the commercial forest species found at the higher elevations appear to be about 100 yrs. old, with such trees becoming established in the 20's during the advent of active wildfire suppression in the area. Since the 1960's, Sid has used both thinning and fire use to treat the higher elevation stands. A major goal has always been to create growing space and access for sunlight for grasses, forbs and brush species. Sid has compared the difference in tree growth between thinned areas and untreated forests with the treated stands often possessing diameters of 15 in. and untreated at 6 in. diameter.

From 1991 to 1995 the ranch harvested large sawtimber which were sold or used to build the existing ranch house and other structures. Slash is broadcast and burned the following year.

With all of the vegetative treatments and improvement of forage over the years, the ranch now sustains 100 head of cattle. In addition the streams that feed Carrizozo Canyon have run perennially since the mid 80's. The Goodloe's have found that fall burning and early summer browsing by deer and cattle stimulates the production of fresh, green sprouts of oak brush, which are at their peak potential in early May. Left undisturbed, older oak plants will become tough and less palatable.

In 1969 the Carrizo Valley Ranch implemented the first short-duration grazing (SDG) system used in America. Based on principals developed in Zimbabwe (formerly Rhodesia), the system involves dividing the land base into individual pastures and controlling the timing, intensity and frequency of grazing in each pasture, thereby giving the forage plants in each individual pasture sufficient time to recover before grazing occurs again.

In 1998, the Goodloe family was instrumental in the establishment of the Southern Rockies Agriculture Land Trust (SRALT). The SRALT is a non-profit, non-governmental entity which promotes the



protection of family ranches and farms from wholesale, commercial or urban development by creating conservation easements.

Through the years, the Carrizozo Valley Ranch has hosted countless field trips, workshops, seminars and private tours which have served to enlighten land managers and laymen alike in the benefits of active resource conservation. The activities on the ranch have been the subject of many published articles and presentations about rangeland restoration.

The Goodloe family joined the American Tree Farm System as a certified member in February 2001.

### **CONTINUING THE AG PROPERTY TAX SAGA**

Continuing the saga I received the following two documents from Roger Badash and Harry Morrison to keep you informed. If any of you can provide further insights and experiences, please provide. I am working with the New Mexico Association of Counties to see what type of assistance they can provide in educating county assessors on what a tree farm is and why they should be eligible for the Agricultural property tax exemption. Perhaps if we all contact our state and county legislators, we can make some progress.

Roger Badash, letter to Rep. Bobby Gonzales.

Dear Rep. Gonzales:

Thanks for returning my call last week.

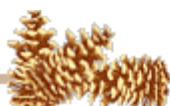
I'm writing in connection with the proposed changes from the county tax assessor's office concerning the agricultural dry land and grazing land property tax categories. In my neighborhood of the Llano de la Llega in the Penasco area, most of the property owners have acreages from ten to hundreds of acres of forest land, currently assessed as either dry land or grazing. If this is changed to a "recreational" or some other named status, people's tax bills may shoot up into the thousands of dollars annually.

Some of the property owners are actively doing thinning, which increases forest health, decreases fire danger, and produces firewood, poles, and vigas. However, the rate of activity does vary widely among the owners, and some people's forest land is simply "growing", with no current work ongoing. My point is that this land obviously is in an agricultural category, as standing timber only increases in size and future value, while absorbing carbon dioxide and preventing water run-off.

To dramatically increase a tax burden that will be impossible for some owners to bear will only hasten the sale of land, some of which has remained in family ownership for generations. We shouldn't be in a rush to encourage the division and sale of property, which then encourages more demands on resources and infrastructure, such as new water wells, roads and other projects which accompany more population density.

Our assessor, Darlene Vigil, made a visit to this area recently, and I believe she received an eye-opening education about the agricultural value of forest land, but she is leaving office soon. The tax status of this type of land needs protection at the State level to provide guidance and regulation for county assessors' offices State-wide, so landowners won't have to constantly struggle on a piecemeal basis against unfair tax increases.

I appreciate any help you and your colleagues can provide. Roger Badash



## THOUGHTS FROM OUR VICE CHAIRMAN, HARRY MORRISON

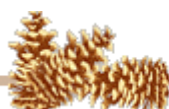
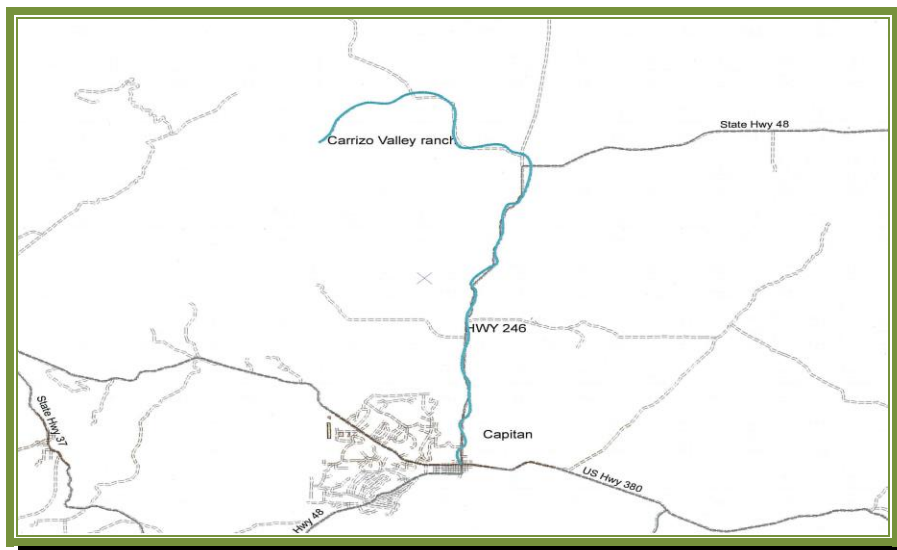
I read with interest the latest bulletin concerning forest property tax valuation. It is interesting how different counties interpret a state statute in different ways. I know in Rio Arriba county where I have a sawmill and also assist landowners in preparing forest plans they have a special tax rate for forest lands. The tax rate is based on a land value of \$165 per acre. This is a higher rate than for grazing land but much lower than if the land is valued as recreational as some forest land is because hunting is their main income source. To get this rate the property must have a plan and must be a member of the Tree Farm system. The county assumes that by signing off on a plan and becoming Tree Farm members the landowner is actively managing their forest for greater growth and productivity and for some product if not now than in the future. Unclear is if the county has a plan for monitoring these properties to see if they are actually carrying out whatever goals were set in the plan or if the Tree Farm re-inspection every five years will suffice. This seems to be a reasonable approach and could act as a model for other counties. This issue has been around for a while and it may be difficult to get every county on the same page. It would be interesting to look at each county where there are Tree Farm members to see what the differences are. After that a Tree Farm policy can be developed and presented to counties of interest. Forest management can be a hard sell in New Mexico so any advantage that can be gained needs to be exploited.

**FROM THE CHAIRMAN:** We hope you will be able to join us for our 2014 spring field day. Besides the normal tour of Sid and Cheryl's Tree Farm, we will have a talk on timber markets in New Mexico by Jose Varella Lopez and forest pests and pathogens followed by lunch.

Continuing another saga: We are still in need of a committee secretary. I really would like for someone to step up to the task. Believe me, with Doug as our advisor, it is not an onerous task.

I would like more Tree Farm stories and features to highlight in our bulletin the varied and professional tree farmers we have. Also, if you have any questions about our program you would like addressed, please let me know.

Put 16 - 19 July on your calendar for the National Tree Farm Convention in Pittsburg. It is a fun event with about 200 attendees from about 40 states. If you would be interested in attending please let me know.





# You are invited to attend the New Mexico Tree Farm Program

Spring Field Day  
May 10th, 2014

10:00 am to 2:00 pm

At Carrizozo Valley Ranch Tree Farm

-  Ranch tour
-  Timber markets in New Mexico discussion
-  Forest Pests and Pathogens discussion
-  Lunch will be provided



Please RSVP by 5pm on May 6th  
contact Frank Silva or Lynn Lovelace @  
[Frank.Silva@state.nm.us](mailto:Frank.Silva@state.nm.us) or [Lynn.Lovelace@state.nm.us](mailto:Lynn.Lovelace@state.nm.us)  
or call 575-354-2231

**Directions to ranch:** We will meet at the Shell gas station on main street in Capitan at 8:30 am and leave at 9:00 am to go to the Tree Farm. If you arrive late, directions are as follows: Go north on Hwy 246 off of Hwy 380 (junction is at Washington Federal Bank). Travel about 10 miles north and at the sharp 90 degree turn go straight onto county road B001. In about 200 yards turn to the left onto county road A040. Stay on that road until you see the sign for Carrizozo Valley Ranch. Turn left, you will go past the first house and go another two miles to the Goodloe Ranch.

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