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## TREE FARM BULLETIN

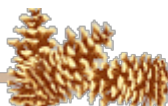
### IMPACT OF THE CORONA VIRUS

*By: Joe Stehling, Hidden Lake Firewise Coordinator  
Secretary, NM Tree Farm Committee*

I have written several articles in past years on actions you should take to prepare your land and structures to survive a wildland fire. As many of my forester friends have often said, in most areas, it is not a question of IF, but WHEN a wildfire will occur. You can find these past articles on the American Tree Farm System web site: [www.treefarmssystem.org/new-mexico](http://www.treefarmssystem.org/new-mexico), bulletins link on right side of the page. If you go back to the Tree Farm System site you will find several interesting items to include the My Land Plan link where you can map your property and put in features that support your management plan. ATFS says: "My Land Plan is a great place to organize your thoughts, goals, activities, photos, and documents related to your land".

In this article I would like to focus on a couple of issues vis-a-vis the impact of the Corona Virus, near term outlook for wildfire, what to do with "stay-at-home" orders, and other facets as it affects the state as a whole.

The Forest Service is taking actions and implementing plans to decrease first responder activities in the event of a wildland fire. They are actively hiring firefighting personnel, adjusting training practices to minimize contact and slow COVID-19 spread potential. Fighting a wildland fire maintaining six feet of "social distancing" will be virtually impossible. The Forest Service has prohibited campfires in the National Forests and are reassessing their prescribed fire operations. The wildland firefighting agencies are updating plans and responses for various disease outbreak scenarios in the United States, including the "Pandemic Response and Preparedness Plan for the Federal Wildland Fire Agencies," and the "Infectious Diseases Guidelines for Wildland Fire Incident Management Teams." These plans institute appropriate mitigation activities during wildland fire response actions to ensure national wildland fire response capability. It is incumbent more than ever at this time for all of us to implement our own plans to prevent wildfire from happening and to mitigate its damage if it occurs. Refer to the articles on Preparing for Wildland Fires, Developing Defensible Space, and Identifying Hazards in the Home Ignition Zone in past bulletins. Taking even some of the actions outlined in those articles can assist the Forest Service in decreasing first responder activities.



In addition to the campfire ban, the Forest Service has implemented selective closure orders in alignment with federal guidance and state public health orders to limit the spread of COVID-19. Although the Forest remains open to the public, social distancing and restrictions on group size still apply. Currently:

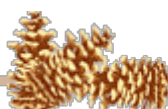
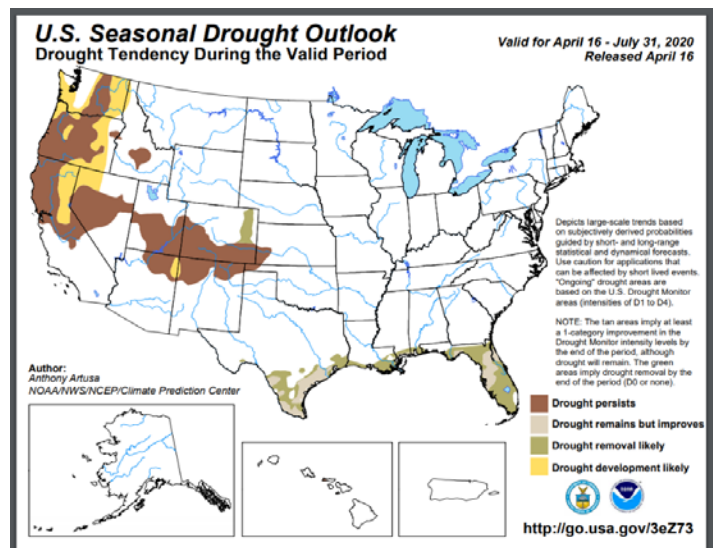
1. All developed campgrounds on the Carson National Forest are closed to overnight camping.
2. All toilet facilities on the Forest are locked.
3. Campfires, charcoal grills, and coal and wood burning stoves are prohibited.
4. Some picnic/day use sites are closed to the public.
5. Trash collection is suspended. Please take your garbage home.

New Mexico has experienced up/down drought over the past six months. There is severe drought over northeast Arizona and northwest New Mexico with modest drought going Eastward. However, there was a good snowpack in north central New Mexico for the 2019/2020 winter. The lack of moisture in late summer and early fall, before the snow began falling, resulted in a below normal carry-over of warm season fine fuels so current loading of fine fuels is normal to below normal except in Southern New Mexico where loading is above normal and the grasses are curing out.

The current forecast for the next three months is for overall warm temperatures and dry conditions. Several counties currently have burn bans in effect. Further, the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department, Forestry Division announced restrictions on fireworks, smoking, campfires and open fires on all non-municipal, non-federal, and non-tribal lands statewide. Due to warmer temperatures, lower humidity, high winds, and an abundance of dry, fine fuels, the fire danger is increasing throughout the state. The current COVID-19 pandemic only amplifies the current danger by putting an additional strain on firefighting resources. Northwest New Mexico

will be particularly susceptible to drought conditions. The fire season is expected to wind down in early July with a normal to significant wildland fire potential in New Mexico prior to that. The forecast is for a normal to neutral El Niño summer to fall with a possibility of a weak La Niña in the fall. It is uncertain at this time, but the monsoons are expected to be normal for timeliness and activity. More information on the latest outlooks can be found on <https://www.nifc.gov/> and on [https://www.predictiveservices.nifc.gov/outlooks/monthly\\_seasonal\\_outlook.pdf](https://www.predictiveservices.nifc.gov/outlooks/monthly_seasonal_outlook.pdf).

The Nov/Dec 2011 issue of the *Tree Farmer Magazine* had an interesting article that would be apropos at this time. (I may run the entire article in a future bulletin if there is interest). If you have time on your hands because of the “Stay-at-Home” orders, this would be a good time to take a walk in your



forest and think about your long-term and short-term goals. Have any of your life circumstances changed that will require your management plan to be updated? Think about whether you met your forest management goals this year. What were some of your achievements and setbacks? As you look around your woods, are they as healthy, productive, and well-managed as you would like them to be? What repairs are needed to paths, roads, culverts, and drainage. What areas of your forest need special attention for habitat improvement, thinning, and general cleanup from winter storms to mitigate wildland fire risks. Look for signs of stress, such as unnaturally yellowing or browning leaves, as well as damage from winter storms. Check the condition of all your Tree Farm's resources - not just the trees themselves, but the soil, vegetation, water sources, and drainages, and wildlife as well. Any one of these elements can tip you off to underlying problems.

This may all sound like a lot to think about, but it does not have to be. It can be enjoyable - a time to slow down and reflect on your Tree Farm's progress and your plans and hopes for the year to come. And while it does take a bit of discipline, this review can reward you in real, tangible ways.

Stay safe and pray for a rapid resolution of this crisis.

## 1) NMTFC 2020 RAFFLE

### NEW MEXICO TREE FARM COMMITTEE 2020 RAFFLE

Drawing to be held at the August 2020 NMTFC Meeting

**First Prize: Un-guided Private Ranch Cow Elk Hunt Landowner Tag**

**Second Prize: Large Custom-made Metal Art Piece**

**Donated by Carl and Lisa Bartley**

**Third Prize: \$100 Cabela's Gift Card**

**Cow Elk Landowner tag donated by the Bartley Ranch**

**Unit 45, Hunt dates, any five days between 11/7 and 12/10/2020**

Winner will be responsible for NMDGF license and tag

# \$10.00 Each

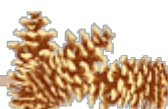
To purchase your 2020 Raffle ticket(s) send a letter and check (payable to NMTFC) to:

Doug Boykin  
1118 Hope Farms Road  
Socorro, NM 87801

Doug will in turn send you your numbered 2020 Raffle ticket stub(s).

## 2) SAVE THE DATE

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the New Mexico Tree Farm Committee has postponed this year's Spring Field Day scheduled for May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020. We look forward to seeing you all later in the year.



New Option "Call-In Service"

### 3) COMMITTEE MEETING

All Tree Farmers are invited and encouraged to attend our 2<sup>nd</sup> New Mexico Tree Farm Committee Meeting of the year (three held annually). Please join us at 1:30 pm on Wednesday, August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish office located at 7816 Alamo Road. NW, Albuquerque, NM 87120. Come out and hear what other tree farmers have been up to and share your tree farm accomplishments with the group. **If you are unable to attend the committee meeting in person, we have set up a new option "Call-In Service" for your convenience. Call 1-515-606-5169 & use password 305180#.** We look forward to visiting with you. If you have any questions, please contact Arnie Friedt at [arnie.friedt@state.nm.us](mailto:arnie.friedt@state.nm.us)

### 4) BUY, SELL OR TRADE

Are you looking for forestry related equipment to buy (i.e. chipper, splitter, chainsaw, etc.)? Or do you own forestry related equipment you would like to sell or trade? Forestry related equipment only, please, no homes or land. We would like to help you make the connection with other New Mexico Tree Farmers. Provide us with a description of the equipment, price, photo and contact information and we will post it in the New Mexico Tree Farm Bulletin. If you would like us to help you make the connection, please provide information to Arnie Friedt at [arnie.friedt@state.nm.us](mailto:arnie.friedt@state.nm.us)

The Roland Tree Farm is selling a 2003 Woodmizer LT40HDD33 Sawmill located in the McGaffey Area of the Zuni Mountains. Diesel engine, fully hydraulic with debarker, lube system and extra blades. Excellent condition with approximately 460 hours.

\$22,000 or will consider trading for good working Skid Steer/Bobcat with tracks.

Call or text Dave Roland at 512-983-5500 or email: [dr@daveroland.net](mailto:dr@daveroland.net) for more information.

**FOR SALE OR TRADE**



### 5) E-MAIL INSTEAD OF SNAIL MAIL

Would you prefer to receive your Tree Farm Bulletin by e-mail instead of snail mail? If so, contact Arnie Friedt at [arnie.friedt@state.nm.us](mailto:arnie.friedt@state.nm.us) and provide him with your contact information. By receiving your Tree Farm Bulletin by e-mail our operating costs are reduced. Thank you for considering this option.

