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Greetings;

This summer, as in summers past, Boy Scouts, from throughout the nation, have been streaming in to the Philmont Scout Ranch to enjoy the challenge of a ten day trek through the Philmont's backcountry. At 137,000 acres the ranch has lots of country. Scout troops select an itinerary and set off on trails that connect camps scattered throughout the 214 square mile ranch. Located near Cimarron, the Philmont is dedicated to providing to Boy Scouts an experience that few get to enjoy. No doubt many of them have never been so far removed from civilization or immersed in the natural world. 90,000 acres of the ranch is forest so it is an ideal setting for teaching scouts about forest management. Several years ago the New Mexico Tree Farm Committee sponsored the establishment of a "demonstration" forest on the Philmont. This 45 acre forest is along one of the major hiking trails and is visited by more than 5,000 scouts and their adult advisors every year. Harvests using different techniques were done to show how forest management works and interpretive signs were placed to explain the practices and other features of the forest the hikers were seeing. The Tree Farm System is dedicated to educating the general public on the benefits of good forest management so this has been a good venue for us to reach a large number of young people and their adult advisors. The demonstration forest also has seen visits of school groups after the scouts have gone. This year, the Tree Farm Committee is participating with the Philmont and New Mexico State Forestry to bring a "visiting forester" to the Philmont during hiking season (June-August). To date we have had six volunteer foresters come from different backgrounds and parts of the country to spend a week camping at the historic Hunting Lodge and being available to answer questions and engage in discussion with groups hiking through. Six more are scheduled to come before this season ends. The Tree Farm Committee thanks these visiting foresters for their efforts and the Philmont and New Mexico State Forestry staff that have volunteered time to get this program off and running. It is truly a unique opportunity to reach a wide segment of the public and also familiarize foresters, who often have little knowledge of the Tree Farm System, to the program.



Visiting Forester, Alan Kelso (from Wenatchee, WA) with a group of Boy Scouts at the Philmont Scout Ranch Demonstration Forest.



Cimarroncito Reservoir at the Demonstration Forest.

