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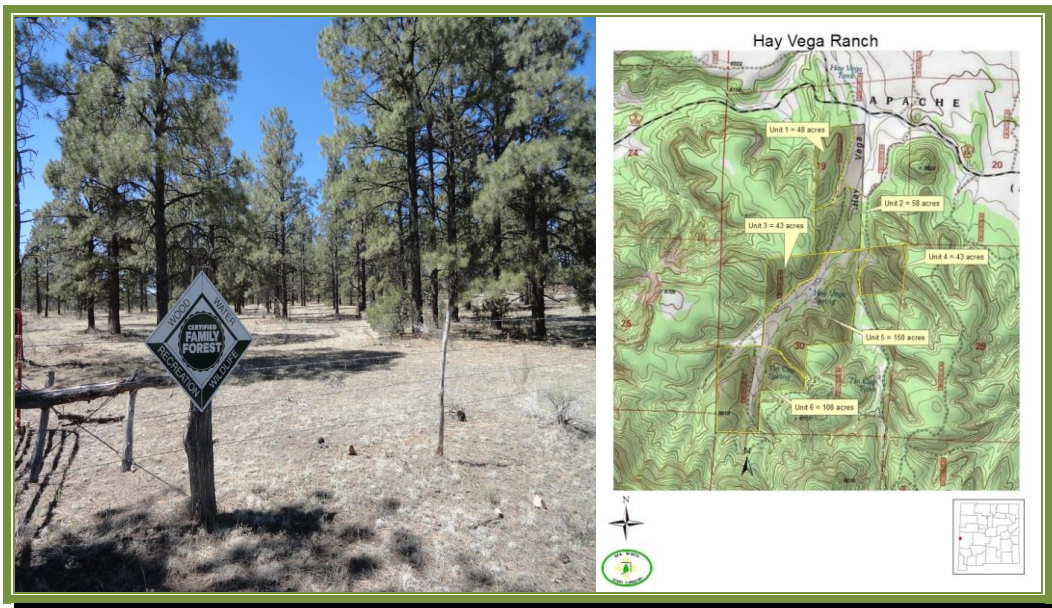
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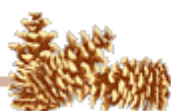
TREE FARM BULLETIN

Hay Vega Ranch – Certified Tree Farm

One of the new certified tree farms for 2013 in New Mexico is the Hay Vega Ranch located in Catron County, about 25 miles southwest of Quemado. The Ranch is owned by Mr. Nelson Shirley who also owns several other ranches in the area. The Ranch is bounded on the east, south and west by public lands (US Forest Service-Gila National Forest).



The ranch encompasses about 500 acres of private forest lands, made up primarily of Ponderosa Pine on the foothills and open Ponderosa Pine meadow along the Hay Vega drainage. Historically, Hay Vega was a seasonal wet meadow with a small seasonal stream channel that fed underground springs that allowed early inhabitants to cut and harvest natural grasses for winter feeding of livestock (Vega is a Spanish word for wet meadow, also sometimes called cieniga). With the increase in livestock grazing in the late 19th Century and with the lack of periodic wildfires to keep the Ponderosa Pine from invading into the deep soils of the Vega, the Vega had lost its open park like stand structure and had become overly dense, thus lowering the water table, drying up the surface water and choking out the natural grasses and riparian species found along the water course.



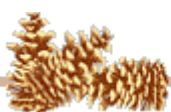


(Examples of densities of invading Ponderosa Pine into Hay Vega)

Landowner Nelson Shirley contacted Socorro District Forester and Tree Farm Inspector Doug Boykin in the winter of 2011/12 about possibly trying to set up a timber sale at Hay Vega to try to restore the Vega to more natural densities while also thinning the associated foothills on the east and west sides of the property. In the spring of 2012, Boykin and fellow state forestry foresters Nick Smokovich and Tonya Vowles completed a standard inventory to determine pole timber and sawtimber volumes, diameter classes, site index and species composition. About 100 variable plot points were established that yielded the following information:

- 1) An estimated volume of 4.5 million board feet of timber was on the ranch, with 99% being ponderosa pine.
- 2) Most of that volume was in the 5-18" diameter class, which is perfect for the small sawmills in the area as well as the pulp mill in neighboring Arizona.
- 3) Average age class of most of the Ponderosa Pine growing in the Vega was 90-100 years old, a fact that supported the theory that the Vega bottom was much more open than it is now and that by removing a large part of these stems, we could recreate historical conditions that supported the haying tradition of the property.
- 4) There were a large number of seedlings and saplings that were beginning to choke out the remaining grasses in the Vega, which in turn, would have continued the degradation of the riparian and wet meadows.

Boykin had a concern that to do the restoration correctly, a large percentage of the seedlings and pole sized age classes needed to be removed before an actual timber sale could take place. Working with the Santa Fe Office of NM State Forestry, left over funds from vegetation treatment projects in other parts of the state were made available, with Catron County serving as the fiscal/contact agent and as of June 15th of this year, about 444 acres of the property has been thinned.





(Panoramic view of treated stands along the edge of Hay Vega)



(Panoramic view of upper part of the restored Hay Vega after treatment. Actual timber sale activities are now in full swing)

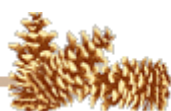
We are very proud to welcome Mr. Nelson Shirley and the Hay Vega Ranch as a Certified Tree Farm in New Mexico. In a future edition of the *"New Mexico Tree Farm Bulletin"*, I will follow up with information concerning the timber sale that is underway, actual volumes harvested and more before and after pictures of the Hay Vega Ranch.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN: I'd like to welcome Nelson Shirley, our new Tree Farmer, and the Hay Vega Ranch to the fold.

Our next Forest Stewardship and Tree Farm Committee meeting is 14 August in Albuquerque. Please plan on attending to find out what we are up to. There is a state Forest Stewardship meeting in the morning starting at 1000. The Tree Farm committee meeting is in the afternoon starting at 1330. We can reimburse your mileage. More details will be sent out early next month

We are reaching the end of our Elk Tag raffle and fund raising for this year. If you have not sent in a donation, please do so. We will be drawing for the elk tag at our 14 August meeting.

Secretary nominations are still open. Please consider filling this position on the committee.



**New Mexico Tree Farm Committee
Pays Tribute to the Fallen Granite Mountain Hotshots**



Andrew Ashcraft, 29
Robert Caldwell, 23
Travis Carter, 31
Dustin Deford, 24
Christopher MacKenzie, 30
Eric Marsh, 43
Grant McKee, 21
Sean Misner, 26
Scott Norris, 28
Wade Parker, 22

John Percin, 24
Anthony Rose, 23
Jesse Steed, 36
Joe Thurston, 32
Travis Turbyfill, 27
William Warneke, 25
Clayton Whitted, 28
Kevin Woyjeck, 21
Garret Zuppiger, 27

