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TREE FARM BULLETIN

FOREST HISTORY SECTION OF A LANDOWNER'S MANAGEMENT PLAN

One of my favorite parts of a forest management plan is the forest history section. Even though I love the research for this section, I usually encourage the landowner to write the first draft for this piece of the plan. The section should include both the human history as well as a focus on natural resources. Who has owned the property? Are there connections between previous and present day owners? What kind of natural resource activities have occurred there? Information about old fires, timber sales, planting and/or seeding projects, grazing history, and hunting all inform the kinds of activities needed to help a landowner meet his/her objectives. A good starting point for gathering information is asking questions of the previous landowner, relatives, neighbors, etc. All property has had some form of management activity, even if that is only fire suppression. In addition to learning about past timber sales, fire wood collecting may have also influenced the landscape. If cattle, sheep and/or horses have spent time on the property their browsing/grazing may have dictated tree species and spacing that exist today.

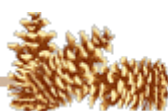
This collection of oral history often points to searching for specific references. Deeds are valuable documents for tracking ownership history. Often regional historical accounts of railroads, logging, and such can help a landowner understand more about old stumps and railroad grades on their property. One of my favorite sources was finding some old letters dating back 50 years describing the owner's goals for the property.

Occasionally there is a file on the property at State Forestry. The agency has now been around more than 50 years and there are often gems from the past tucked away in landowner files. Old forest management plans can be referenced and summarized in this forest history section.

Often, one can find information about the region that is not specifically tied to the particular piece of property. This regional description of logging activity, grazing trends, fires, or other events helps foresters and landowners interpret what they may encounter in the woods.

A well-researched and written history of the property provides a firm foundation for a forest management plan.

Mary Stuever, NM State Forestry Division, Chama District Forester



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THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT, NEW MEXICO TREE FARM COMMITTEE.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN: Please join us at our next, three times a year meeting, on Wednesday, 12 August, 2015 at the USDA building at 6200 Jefferson, NE, Albuquerque. The Forest Stewardship meeting starts at 1000, the Tree Farm Committee meeting starts at 1330. Please consider running for one of our offices at elections this December.

