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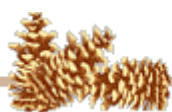
### TREE FARMER SURVEY RESULTS

First off, I would like to apologize for being late with this letter. I had written it to be included in the Tree Farm committee's biannual newsletter due out in June. Our newsletter editor, John Harrington, had an assignment in Afghanistan to teach Afghans how to plant and care for tree seedlings. John's untimely death has put the newsletter on hold until we can find a new editor willing to take on the task. That being said, I would like to thank everyone who took the time to return the Tree Farmer Survey. I received 35 Tree Farmer surveys, one inspector, and one district forester. If you did not return the survey, it is not too late to send it in so I know what your ideas are for improving the program. Contact me with ideas or if you need a copy of the survey, e-mail preferred.

We currently have about 170 tree farmers on our roles. Of those, approximately 116 have not been inspected in over five years and certification has been reduced to Pioneer status. I would like to get re-inspections and re-certifications up to date. This will not be possible this year with the foresters concerned with and working wildfires most of this summer. My goal is to get everyone certified in the next two years and to purge our roles of those who are no longer interested in retaining their certified Tree Farmer status. Please contact your District Forester or inspector to arrange an inspection. Below is a sampling of the major comments. Some comments were rather cryptic and more information is needed on what is meant. Many of the issues identified can be addressed with attendance at our quarterly meeting in Albuquerque. Two responses were from tree farmers who had sold their land; neither names, addresses, nor return addresses on envelopes were provided.

Specific Comments:

- 1. Not enough interaction with small tree farms in Southern New Mexico; no sharing of plans and ideas; should have sample plan on web:** I am planning on holding local/regional meetings with tree farmers to determine what type of interaction is needed. Our monthly bulletin has information on plans and ideas. We regularly ask for input from tree farmers to share their thoughts and ideas. A template for developing a Forest Stewardship Plan and instructions and ideas on content is available on the web at [www.treefarmssystem.org](http://www.treefarmssystem.org) under **New National Management Plan Template**. All tree farmers are required to keep their management plans up to date on accomplishments, future actions, and new plans for management. The plan will be inspected when re-inspections are conducted to assure they are being kept up-to-date. The plans do not need to be redrafted unless major changes are being implemented. Dated pen and ink notes on activities and changes to management are acceptable. Now that the rains have come and our foresters work on wildfires has diminished, I will be setting up a regional meeting (mini-field day) in September. Please check the September bulletin for details, date and time.
- 2. Miss the point. Thinning of private land is number one objective.** The Tree farm program is not a thinning program. The mission of the ATFS is to promote the growing of renewable forest resources on private lands while protecting environmental benefits and increasing public understanding of all benefits



of productive forestry. Thinning and cleanup of hazardous fuels is the tree farmer's responsibility and should be reflected in the management plan. The Tree Farm magazine and the committee at its quarterly meetings regularly provide information on grants that are available. It is up to the tree farmer to take the initiative to get the grants. Attendance at quarterly meetings is encouraged by all tree farmers. Information on the program and grants is discussed. Most of the experts on all programs attend the meetings and a lot of information can be obtained

3. **Is Tree Farm magazine available?** The Tree Farm Magazine is an informative tool for tree farmers. It can be ordered from the tree farm web site noted above.
4. **Communication is good; quarterly meeting are good; need more educational programs and training.** Attendance at quarterly meetings will offer the opportunity to get information on the program and offer an opportunity to provide your input on what educational programs are needed. We are always looking for input from tree farmers on specifically what they want and need. We are planning on holding regional meetings and workshops with tree farmers.
5. **Trees dying; seedlings not survive over winter; wind breaks.** This could be included in one our workshops or educational programs. But the first thing to look at is watering of seedlings. I live at 10,000 feet elevation and have been very successful in planting approximately 300 seedlings. But, I water each month when rain does not fall and be sure the seedlings are well hydrated before the ground freezes in winter. Development of windbreaks could also be one of our educational programs. Keep the ideas coming, please.
6. **Lack of follow through.** An example of lack of specifics. I need to know what we are not following through on. (Although the delay in submitting this letter is a prime example.) Without participation in our meetings this type of information is lacking.
7. **What are successes and failures and why? Need ideas on projects and labor saving methods.** Again, these items could easily be covered at our quarterly meetings. Tree farmers need to attend to accomplish these goals.
8. **Has thinned property and does not see how he fits into the TF program; seems industry driven, not land owner driver; like ranch to be venue for outdoor education; thinks not supported by TF program; What is benefit.** The tree farm program is about Forest Management for forest health – wood, water, recreation, and wildlife. The program is about promoting forest health for the above mentioned objectives. Thinning furthers forest health, but the program is not only about thinning; Firewise is about thinning. Attending the quarterly meetings would provide information of benefits of program and how to develop outdoor educational programs. We actually have little industry involvement in the program and would welcome more. Most of our tree farmers manage more for forest health issues than actual timber production, due to the small acreage, and long rotations, also there is a lack of sawmills that could handle large volumes.
9. **Does P-J forest fit into program?** Any forested area over 10 acres fits into the program. A management plan must be developed in conjunction with your district forester and your property inspected to determine tree inventory and density.

Once again, thank you for your input. I look forward to seeing you at the quarterly meetings. The meetings are held the second Wednesday of the first month of each quarter in the Department of Agriculture building on Jefferson street in Albuquerque. The Forest Stewardship Committee meeting is held starting at 1000. The Tree Farm Committee begins at 1315.

One final item, I would like to increase the use of e-mail to correspond with our tree farmers. Postal costs are high and we do not have a large fund balance. Besides when I get a thought, I like to get it out NOW, not via snail mail. Also, I can provide more timely updates on our activities. Our roster has only about 50% with e-mail addresses. Please e-mail me a note so I can update the roster. Do not worry about the SPAM notice as I will get the message as long as you put Tree Farm in the subject line.

