



Joseph M. Stehling Jr.
Chairman,
NM Tree Farm Committee

HC 70 Box 109
Ocate, NM 87734

(575)-377-0546

joestehling@earthlink.net

www.nmtreefarmers.org

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TREE FARM BULLETIN

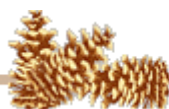
Next month on Friday, 18 October, starting at 10:00 AM, we will honor our 2012 Tree Farmers of the Year, Elauterio (Terry) and Antonia (Toni) Vigil in Gascon, NM. I will be providing directions in next month's bulletin. Please put that date on your calendar to honor the Vigils.

The two top priorities for this 236 acre property are to protect the forest from devastating wildfire and to promote forest health. The second two management objectives include maintaining a long-term supply of firewood and promote healthy wildlife habitat across the property. All of these objectives are in-line with the Tree Farm program goals of wood, water, wildlife and recreation.

This property serves as the full time residence for Elauterio and Antonia. Since purchasing the property in 1986 the Vigils dreamed of being able to begin working on thinning to improve forest health. The forest had not been managed on a large-scale in quite some time and the stands were very dense and unhealthy. In 2010 they worked with NMSF Las Vegas District Office to pursue a Forest Health Improvement Project to have a Stewardship Plan completed. The plan was completed in December 2010 by consulting forester Rachel Wood. This plan and the coordination with professional foresters opened the flood-gate when it came to forest management. Elauterio immediately began work on the first 100 acre thinning project which was also funded by the FHI program. After completing several of the initial tracts of thinning through hand-falling and piling slash, Elauterio made the decision to purchase a Fecon Mastication machine for the huge task ahead. Since purchasing the machine in 2011 the Vigils have completed approximately 130 acres of thinning through several cost-share programs (FHI and WUI).

This property is directly adjacent to two other Certified Tree Farms one to the south (Ramirez) and one to the north (Bartley). The western boundary borders the Santa Fe National Forest. The work being completed on these 3 contiguous Tree Farms has helped to build "landscape scale" continuity of treatment that is giving much needed protection from wildfire and insect/disease infestations that face this region's forests. The three Tree Farmers have very different management styles and treatment implementation, but it is very clear when you look across the fence at the untreated National Forest - that these forests are much healthier.

Since beginning the treatment on the Vigil Tree Farm, the landowners have been able to access portions of their land that were inaccessible before thinning. They can enjoy the vistas, wildlife and utilize more of their property because the stands have been opened up and low-impact, 2-track roads are now in place for recreation as well as emergency access. Ground cover and understory species diversity has



shown that opening the canopy has both reduced competition among trees and improved wildlife habitat by increasing vegetative species diversity.

Specific treatments, programs and dates:

- December 2010: Management Plan completed for 236 acre property
 - Funding provided by Forest Health Improvement (FHI) Program
 - Consultant hired to complete plan
- October 2011: Became Certified Tree Farm through ATFS
- October 2011: Completed ~80 acres of thinning treatment (FHI funding)
 - Initial treatment: heavy thinning and slash piling. Landowner began hand-falling trees and removing firewood, and timber for latillas.
 - Slash piles were burned during winter 2011-2012
 - Landowner then purchased Fecon masticator to complete treatments
- May 2012: Completed ~24 acres of thinning treatment (FHI funding)
- June 2012: Completed 11 acres of thinning treatment (WUI funding, Western Mora SWCD)
- August 2013: Awarded NFL grant to complete ~110 acres of thinning + mastication (will start work on this project this winter, which will complete treatment across this entire ownership)



FROM THE CHAIRMAN: In addition to putting the Tree Farmer of the Year event on your calendar do not forget the Tree Farm committee meeting on 11 September, 10:00 AM. The meeting will be held at the new Northern Pueblos Agency Headquarters. Their office is located just north of Espanola, NM on the Okay Owingeh Pueblo (FKA San Juan Pueblo) on U.S. Highway 68/291 (the road going to Taos). Just to the north of the Okay Owingeh Casino there is a road (name unknown) on the east side in between the Phillips 66 and the Fireworks stand. Offices are located ¼ mile from the junction, you will pass straight through a turnabout, and the building will be on the left. If you get lost, here is the number for their office: (505)753-1400.

