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TREE FARM BULLETIN, November 2009

Greetings;

A couple of weeks ago, Tree Farmers, on our mailing list, should have received a fund-raising letter from the American Tree Farm System. The New Mexico Tree Farm Committee which sends out this bulletin is one of the forty-six state committees, each with their own charters and by-laws, which make up the system. The national ATFS and the NM committee are both registered with the IRS as 501C-3 non-charitable organizations. As such, any contributions to the ATFS or the New Mexico committee are tax-deductible, if you itemize your deductions.

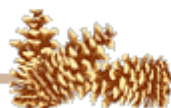
If you contributed, thank-you. Half of what the ATFS collects comes back to our state. If you didn't contribute but are thinking it might be worthwhile here are some things we are doing in New Mexico.

We continue to maintain and operate a series of forest demonstration areas throughout the state. Last year we needed to replace signs on our Philmont Demonstration Forest that had been damaged by bears. We now have signs which are bear-proof (we'll see). Last year several school groups from the area toured the forest as well as several thousand scouts and their adult advisors who were there during the summer for the Philmont's premier outdoor treks. We also were able to purchase signs for the Starfire Demonstration Forest in the East Mountains. This is a day camp for New Mexico children that has been a Tree Farm member for decades. We now have interpretive signs in pinyon-juniper areas that have been thinned.

Something new to the Tree Farm System this year is certification. That means your Tree Farm is certified to have a management plan that meets "standards of sustainability". That means if you sell products from your land they can be certified as sustainable or "green". It also means that your land is or will be eligible for what are called "environmental services" such as certain cost-share programs or carbon credits (if this develops). It's sort of like a Good Housekeeping Seal of approval or Underwriters Laboratory's seal.

Certification comes with a cost. Last summer we hosted a forest auditor on a 600-mile two day journey to see a dozen Tree Farms scattered throughout the state. Certification adds an additional regulatory burden to our State committee and the national office. Forest management has been so controversial that certification is the way to go if you want to be a credible voice at the table on forest management issues so the cost is worth it.

These are just some of things we're doing on a state level. Let me know if you would like to know more.



HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT TREES?

What is “virgin forest?” Primeval forest unchanged by man.

How do people travel in wilderness areas? By walking the trails with a back pack, by horseback, burro or canoe. A popular way is to walk the trails leading a burro with a camp pack on its back. Horses, pack animals and guides, if desired, are available near most wilderness areas.

What civic-minded association set out to spread the redbud across two states? The Texoma Redbud Association whose aim is to plant “beauty in hearts” by planting the beautiful redbud tree through Texas and Oklahoma. In one year alone, 5,000 of the trees were planted around Lake Texoma, on the state line. The redbud trail now runs along major highways from Oklahoma to the Gulf of Mexico.

How fast does maple sap drip? If the day is cold and overcast, very slowly, if at all. If a warming sun appears after a cold night, it flows faster. But it always drips, never runs. The drops may come in rapid succession, as many as 100 per minute.

What is gibberellin? A chemical that stimulates growth, derived from a fungus identified in Japan in 1926, named *Gibberella fujikuroi*. It is now produced commercially by growing on special food under laboratory conditions the way penicillin is produced. A minute quantity works marvels. Tulip tree, oak, maple grow much taller when treated with gibberellins; others, such as pine and spruce, are stimulated very little. Gibberellin can also be used to break the dormancy of peach trees and thus quicken drop production.

What force causes food to flow down through the tree? Food-supply lines are made of elongated living cells, with beveled ends fitted together. These ends are perforated so that threads of protoplasm flow from cell to cell. Tree food travels through this system by diffusion, a phenomenon by which solutions move from greater concentration to less concentration. (A drop of ink in a glass of water spreads, or diffuses, through all the water.) With living cells this happens through cell walls known as permeable membranes. This is the famous process of osmosis by which living cells are in communication. Thus, sugar in solution made in leaves flows along the threads of protoplasm that communicate through the perforations of the sieve tubes, as well as by osmosis.

Platt, Rutherford 1992. 1001 Questions Answered About Trees. Dover Books. 318pp.

