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Greetings;

The end of the year is always a good time to reflect on the past and assess the prospects for the future.

The Tree Farm organization began in Portland, Oregon in the late 1940's. It began as an effort by a group of foresters to assist and encourage landowners to manage their forests for long-term production of wood products. After World War II the nation was building houses for veterans and their young families at a rapid clip. The foresters recognized that to meet this demand for wood products forest owners needed to be committed to the long-term management of their property. Selling wood products was easy. The money earned provided a real incentive to manage their property long-term.

In New Mexico in the late 1940's our forests were producing upwards of 200 million board feet of saw logs a year to meet this demand. There were millions of board feet of timber coming from private lands that encouraged landowners to manage their forests.

For over forty years this production model worked very well and the volume of timber harvested in New Mexico stayed over 200 million feet per year. Then in the 1990's a slow decline began in harvests both here and nationwide. Now in 2011 in New Mexico the harvest is 10 million feet per year; less than 5% of what it had been.

As long as the housing market stays in its current depression things won't change but eventually the housing market will recover. Housing is a basic need and housing inventory needs to be replaced. When this inevitable recovery occurs there will be renewed interest in harvesting products from our forests in New Mexico. When that happens Tree Farm can be a force for the wise use of our forest resources. The goals of the Portland foresters of encouraging and assisting landowners for wood production are still important.

Harry A. Morrison, Vice Chairman, NM Tree Farm Committee

Message from Chairman: Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Looking forward to seeing you at our meetings and field days in 2012. Watch the Bulletins for dates and times.

