



NEW MEXICO TREE FARM NEWS



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for the past 46 years. In addition, since 1990, the camp has been host for the New Mexico Forestry Camp every June.

From the beginning, the Council recognized that they would need to actively manage the forests of the camp to ensure a healthy and sustainable forest for current and future generations of campers. The council embarked on a program of forest thinning shortly after taking ownership of the property and this program continues today. Where possible the camp has harvested and marketed sawlogs as part of their overall management of the camp. Such activities have been helpful in demonstrating to the thousands of campers that have and continue to visit the camp of the need for good forest management to ensure a healthy forest. Furthermore, the camp provides an excellent example of how commercial forestry and recreation can be compatible when done properly.

Rancho del Chaparral Girl Scout Camp – 2008 New Mexico Tree Farm of the Year

The Rancho del Chaparral Girl Scout is a 1,034 acre camp managed by the Rancho del Chaparral Council of the Girl Scouts of America. The camp is located in the Jemez Mountains and consists of mostly ponderosa pine and mixed conifer forests. The camp has hosted girl scouts from throughout the country

Tree Farm Audit, 2009

Doug Boykin, NM Tree Farm Committee Program Advisor

As many of you know, The American Tree Farm System, in an effort to maintain its sustainability certification, hired PricewaterhouseCoopers to complete a 3rd part audit on the certified tree farms in the system, nationwide. New Mexico was selected as one of 3 western states (the other two being Colorado and South Dakota) to be audited in 2009. I am pleased to report that while we did not pass with flying colors (yes, a major non-



Bernalillo District Forester Todd Haines (left) presents the 2008 Tree Farm of the Year Award to Mary Holman of the Rancho del Chaparral Girl Scout Camp. Standing by are New Mexico Tree Farm Chairperson Harry Morrison and Ranch Manager Ed Parsons.





conformity was found which I will explain later), 8 of the 15 tree farms that were audited had no issues, 5 had incomplete management plans and two had missing plans (the major non-conformity).

It was a grinding audit. We started in western New Mexico, where we inspected 3 tree farms in the Zuni's, then went to the Las Vegas/Mora area where we inspected 2 more, then went to Truchas, and the Jemez where we inspected 5 properties. Then it was around by Cuba and up to Chama where we inspected 3 in New Mexico and one, to save backtracking for Colorado, all in 3 days,

While I am disturbed that we did have this one non-conformity, I feel that it is a process issue, not a system issue. Both missing plans were written (the district forester who reviewed the plans for completeness remembers signing them both), but we just could not be found for the audit. This teaches us that it is very important not only for the consulting forester who writes the plan to keep a copy, but it is more important that the landowner keeps a plan, keeps it updated and at his fingertips so that recommendations and treatment options can be followed.

Another lesson is that we need to constantly update our management plans with new ideas, accomplishments standards of sustainability and ideas. This was evident in the 5 plans that were found to be "incomplete". A simple "what has been accomplished to date" and what is planned for the next 5 years, attached in the form of an attachment or appendix would have kept the other 5 tree farms off the "incomplete" list.

All in all, I am proud of the way we came out of the 2009 audit, and look forward to our next audit, tentatively planned for 2013. That gives us all time to look at our tree farms, our tree farm management plans, our activities and our processes to be sure that we hit the mark,

grow the program the right way, but also maintain quality and accountability. That is what it really is all about, "getting good forestry on the land, and keeping it there".

Thanks everyone who was involved in the audit, tree farmers and consulting foresters, and I hope you all have a wonderful holiday season.

2009 Western Regional Tree Farm Inspector of the Year Awarded

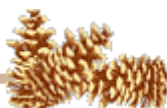
*Harry A. Morrison – Chairman
NM Tree Farm Committee*

The New Mexico Tree Farm Committee is pleased to announce that Arnie Friedt, New Mexico State Forestry has been recognized by the American Tree Farm System as the Western Region Tree Farm Inspector of the Year for 2009.

As you know, the Tree Farm System is a partnership between forest landowners and volunteer foresters (inspectors) who work with Tree Farmers to improve their management practices and ensure that their forest land meets the current standards of the program. Now that Tree Farm System standards have been certified as sustainable forestry the role of inspecting foresters takes on added importance.

Arnie has been actively involved in the Tree Farm program since he began work with the New Mexico Forestry Division in 1994. He has been the Timber Management Officer (TMO) for the Cimarron District in Ute Park since he began work with the Division. As the TMO he is responsible for ensuring that all harvests done on private lands are done in accordance with State best management practices.

His volunteer work for the Tree Farm program is an indication of the dedication he shows to





forestry. Although most of our volunteer foresters come from the ranks of State Forestry, there is no requirement that State foresters participate in the program. Those that do demonstrate their commitment to good forestry by going beyond their official duties.

Arnie has participated in all aspects of the Tree Farm program from recruiting new Tree Farmers, working on management plans for Tree Farm certification, event planning, and serving on the New Mexico Tree Farm Committee. He also publishes and mails out our monthly bulletin. He has been instrumental in establishing our system of demonstration forests, particularly on the Philmont Scout Ranch. Our demonstration forests have been established to teach good forestry principles to public and Arnie has led hundreds of school children and others through our Philmont demonstration forest so they can learn about forestry. He has always shown a selfless dedication to the program and is always ready to lend a hand with new projects.

This is the first time that an inspector from New Mexico has been recognized on a regional level. It is truly an honor for him and the New Mexico Tree Farm program.

Arnie accepted his award at the National Tree Farm Convention that was held in Washington D.C. at the end of September. We congratulate him and look forward to his participation in future Tree Farm activities.



Above: Arnie Friedt accepts award from Bob Simpson (Senior Vice President AFF)

A Trip to the Hill

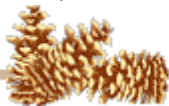
Arnie Friedt, EMNRD – Forestry Division – Cimarron

I found myself, a forester from New Mexico, looking through a small window atop the Washington Monument surveying the countless natural and manmade historical features and visualizing the events that had taken place over the last several hundreds of years, am I dreaming, please someone pinch me. No, I wasn't dreaming, I was invited by the American Forest Foundation to Washington D.C. to attend the 16th Annual National Tree Farmer Convention and to accept the 2009 Western Region Inspecting Forester of the Year Award. What an honor, first to be nominated and second to actually receive this award in our nation's capitol, I am humbled.

Tree Farm Inspector of the Year Arnie Friedt preparing to visit the New Mexico congressional delegation at the US Capitol. Note Arnie is sporting his urban forestry uniform.



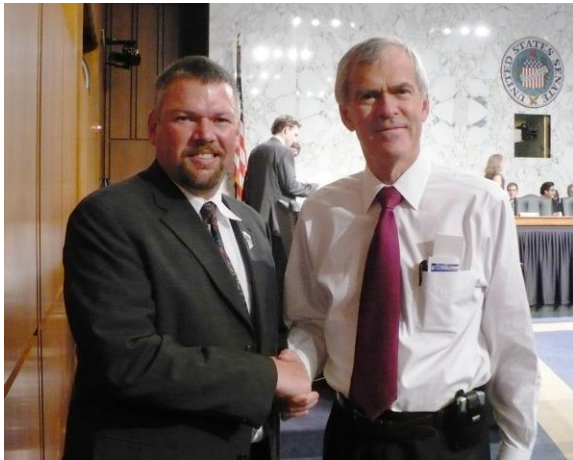
The convention was attended by over 250 tree farmers coming together for a common goal from throughout the United States. The convention was held at the L'Enfant Plaza from September 28th through September 30th, 2009. The Keynote Speaker was Tom Martin, President and CEO of the American Forest Foundation. The convention featured a general session, educational concurrent sessions, exhibits, silent auction, a visit to Capitol Hill and finally an awards banquet. The educational concurrent sessions included:





Tools for Engaging Landowners Effectively; Conservation Easements and Forestry; Preserving Your Family Forest Through the Generations; Protecting Your Trees from Invasive Insects and Diseases; Taking Advantage of New Opportunities in the 2008 Farm Bill; Key Tax Updates for Tree Farmers; Carbon 101; Prescribed Fire; Engaging Your

If you have never been to Washington D.C. and you are planning to go for a visit be prepared to do a lot of walking. I was lucky enough to be accompanied by my wife, Joyce on this trip. We arrived several days prior to the convention in order to do some sightseeing. Our sightseeing highlights included the Lincoln Memorial, Washington Monument, WWII Memorial and the White House. Joyce and I plan on returning to Washington D.C. in the future to share this wonderful experience with our two sons, Dylan (10) and Joshua (8).



Above: Forester Arnie Friedt meeting with US Senator Jeff Bingaman in Washington DC.

My trip to Washington D.C. was a memorable event I will not soon forget. I encourage each and every one of you to attend the 17th Annual National Tree Farmer Convention in Burlington, Vermont on July 13-15, 2010. For additional information on past and future American Forest Foundation events visit www.treefarmssystem.org.

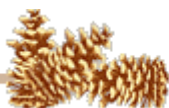
The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQUIP) – A New Resource for New Mexico Tree Farmers

Jessica Ouzts, Watershed Health Specialist / State Staff Forester--NM State Forestry / Natural Resources Conservation Service

Family; Timberland Liability; Exploring New Project Learning Tree (PLT) Programs; and Forest Adaptation to Climate Change. The awards banquet highlighted National and Regional Outstanding Tree Farmers of the Year and National and Regional Inspecting Foresters of the Year.

Spring is here, what are you doing to manage your forest land? Buying seedlings, cleaning out the acequias, thinning out your woods? Well if you hadn't heard, the 2008 Farm Bill has opened up new opportunities for family forest owners around the country. If you're reading this newsletter, there is a very good chance you're already interested in working on your private forest land. There's also a good chance you've already taken advantage of one of the USDA – Forest Service funded cost-share programs, like the Forest Land Enhancement Program, or the Forest Health Incentives Program. Fitting with the new theme of change in Washington, these

By far the convention highlight was the visit to Capitol Hill. Convention attendees were asked to meet with their elected officials to ask them to do the right thing for America's family-owned woodlands. I had the opportunity to meet and discuss items of concern with The Office's of Mr. Jeff Bingaman, Mr. Tom Udall and Mr. Ben R. Lujan. Talking points included: Fix Energy Standards to Allow Biomass from Sustainable Woodlands; Support Environmental Education; and Support Tax Policy Improvements.





programs are being phased out and replaced with programs sponsored by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) has been given the most funding, though there is no specific dollar amount set aside for forest lands. Historically in New Mexico, NRCS has put about 3% of its EQIP allocation toward forestry practices. With more family forest owners requesting technical assistance and funding, we hope to see this percentage rise.

EQIP is a voluntary program administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). It offers financial assistance to eligible participants to perform management practices on private land that restore and enhance resource health. Traditionally, the agricultural production requirement was difficult for the forest land owner not producing timber products on their land.

“We’re really pleased that nonindustrial private forest land is now eligible for this program,” said NRCS State Resource Conservationist George Chavez. “This program has now been expanded to enable greater assistance for the private forest landowner and works to further our goal of improving forest and watershed health and resource conservation as a whole.”

To qualify, private landowners must meet certain financial and conservation criteria, and must have a stewardship or forest management plan. EQIP dollars can be used to pay for a certified contractor (called a Technical Service Provider) to write an NRCS-approved management plan.

“Approximately 45% of forested land that guards our water and soil is privately owned nationwide,” said New Mexico State Forester Arthur “Butch” Blazer. “With eleven percent of land in New Mexico existing as privately owned forest acres, a partnership between New

Mexico State Forestry and the NRCS is integral to serving the needs of the private forest land owner.”

Forestry practices available to forest land owners include site preparation, tree planting, forest stand improvement (including thinning to reduce fire hazard, thinning to improve understory vegetation, and pre-commercial thinning), and forest slash treatment.

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and the Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP) are three other programs for which the nonindustrial private forest land owner is broadly eligible, with specific caveats for each program.

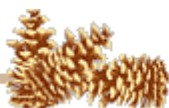
The NRCS has partnered with the NM State Forestry Division for the administration of this landowner incentive program. Both agencies are providing technical assistance.

Interested landowners should contact their local NRCS office or visit the NRCS web site at www.nm.nrcs.usda.gov and click on the Programs tab for more information.

Tree Farmers Visit Biophilia Foundation Pritzlaff Ranch

Joe Stehling, Tree Farmer and Vice Chairman, NM Tree Farm Committee

On 20 May, 2009 a group of tree farmers joined New Mexico State Forester Butch Blazer, Harry Morrison, Chairman and Joe Stehling, Vice-Chairman of the New Mexico Tree Farm Committee, and New Mexico State Foresters from Las Vegas, Cimarron, and Socorro, on a visit to the Pritzlaff Ranch located near San Ignacio north of Las Vegas. The ranch is owned by the Biophilia Foundation, a non-profit foundation that since 1997 has worked to improve land productivity





and species diversity on private lands. The mission of the Foundation is to support efforts that protect, restore, enhance, and preserve wildlife habitat, and efforts which can help reconnect individuals with nature. The ranch facilities are being restored, to include Pueblo frescos painted in the 1940s by Ma Pe Wi.



The facilities are used to house ongoing collaborations with researchers, educators, and other land conservation professionals to further the art and science of land management and conservation. The scenically located facilities are available for meetings and conferences. The tour of the ranch demonstrated forest management in action. The ranch has begun an extensive program of habitat and forestry restoration on the 3,300 acre forest to improve diversity, goshawk habitat, soil, and water conservation. Students and faculty from the New Mexico Highlands University, Ecological Restoration Institute have assisted in marking restoration plots and in monitoring the aftereffects of the restoration work. The work has been accomplished with the assistance of several agencies which include the Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage, The Natural Resource Conservation Service, the Farm service Agency of USDA, and the New Mexico Natural Resources/Forestry Division. For information on the New Mexico Tree Farm program contact Joe Stehling [575-377-0546].



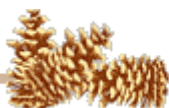
Meeting at the Pritzlaff Ranch (left to right): John Bartley, Harry Morrison, Joe Stehling and NM State Forester Arthur "Butch" Blazer

New Mexico Big Tree Recognized

Nick Smokovich, EMNRD – Forestry Division – Socorro

I would like to draw attention to the newest addition to New Mexico's BIG TREE PROGRAM (*pictured below*), www.emnrd.state.nm.us/FD/bigtreeprogram/index.htm, a Ponderosa Pine, *Pinus ponderosa var. scopulorum* 192 ½ inches in circumference, 114 feet in height and 57 ½ feet average width of crown. Nominated by Paul and Chris Haese, the property owners in Apache Creek, Catron County where the tree is growing. The Haese's were immediately impressed by the size and beauty of the tree growing in their front lawn. They attempted to measure and wondered if it might become the new state champion Ponderosa Pine.

The practice of keeping records on the largest tree species is not new. The American Forest Foundation www.americanforests.org/resources/bigtrees/ has been keeping a United States list since 1940 and New Mexico Forestry Division's Big





the past we enjoy today. Why? Because without intervention in the form of thinning; insects, disease or **fire** (the one thing that could have prevented this condition) will have killed off that chance.

Do something hopeful for the future, plant a tree where one is needed - or find out how to be a steward of your existing forest, so that the next generation can look up and be inspired.

Drought and Insects Kill Piñon Forests

Joe Stehling, Tree Farmer and Vice Chairman, NM Tree Farm Committee

Re: “New Laws Will Help N.M. Deal With Climate Change,” commentary by Terry Sullivan, Director, The Nature Conservancy, N.M.

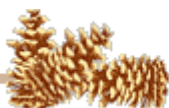
I am a supporter of the Nature Conservancy. They do good work protecting our open spaces. However, I would like to see the evidence supporting Sullivan’s statement that “we have already seen a significant piñon forest dieback affecting tourism, wood cutting, and real estate” due to climate change.

That assertion is a political statement and a gross distortion of facts. Where has tourism, wood cutting and real estate been affected?

Further, the dieback in the forests is caused by unhealthy forests, caused by poor forest management. A dense, improperly maintained forest forces the trees to compete with one another for available moisture and sunlight.

Tree Program lists the largest known trees growing in the state since 1980. The main purpose of these lists is not to collect and categorize scientific data for posterity, or act as the basis for a scavenger hunt to find a new champion (although very fun). No, the main purpose is to stop and contemplate the diversity of tree species that New Mexico soil is blessed to grow, and the awe inspiring size potential that they can reach.

To a forester like me, these Big Trees also represent the stewardship mindset of those who came before us that left us a legacy when they planted or passed by with ax and allowed a tree to reach its full potential. Big trees also tell a forester, or to anyone willing to listen, what we need to do to grow another generation for Big Trees in New Mexico. In today’s forests that are overstocked with small stunted trees fighting for water, light and growing space we cannot expect in any length of time that one of these trees will emerge to rival the Big Tree of





Under drought conditions, the trees are stressed, which makes them more susceptible to insect attack and damage.

Drought and insects are causing the dieback, not climate change.

--Printed April 22, 2009 in the Albuquerque Journal

Forest Health in New Mexico – An Accident in Progress

*John Harrington – New Mexico State University
Mora Research Center*

Have you noticed that in today's culture we are obsessed with finding a single cause or responsible party for an accident or an event? Recent examples include vaccination shortages, public budget failures, traffic jams and the list goes on. In this issue you will see a copy of a letter to the Albuquerque Journal written by our Chairperson Joe Stehling, in response to article in the Journal by the Nature Conservancy regarding declining forest health. The issue of the original article and Joe's response was "what is the cause of decline in forest health that we have experienced recently?" Is the cause climate change, regular old drought, forest management or lack of forest management, etc.? In particular both authors referenced the large piñon die off that occurred in northern New Mexico several years back.



Beetle killed piñon 2004.

While this discussion was playing out, I viewed a training video detailing an automobile accident involving two motorists on their way to work. The video started off with the moments (seconds) right before the accident where one driver was putting their coffee cup down and the other was talking on a cell phone. One driver veered into the others path and crunch!...an accident. Then the video goes back in time for each of the two drivers. One driver was running late due to a power failure that night that resulted in a faulty alarm clock, no hot water and a disastrous breakfast. The start of the day for the other driver was not much better with an ill child keeping him up much of the night along with two misbehaving and overexcited children at breakfast. So both drivers start their trips to work late with a whole suite of issues on their mind, least of which was what they were doing at the moment, driving. Well after the crash and during the police interview, both drivers faulted the other for either talking on the cell phone or for fumbling with their coffee. When in reality it was a whole series of seemingly unrelated events that leads to this accident.

I think this is a perfect analogy for how we may interpret how climate change may impact our forests. Let's take the large piñon die off in northern New Mexico several years back. The actual causal agent was a little bark beetle (the coffee cup or cell phone in the story above). However, those who have worked and studied this problem realized the die off was a little more complicated than that. The overall region was in the second, third or fourth year of a drought, depending on exactly where in this area, that had followed several decades of higher than average rainfall. Most of the severely impacted stands were at stocking levels (tree per acre) much greater than historic levels. How did these higher than normal stocking levels arise? During this same period the management of these woodlands transitioned from a predominately grazing and fuel wood harvesting strategy to one of





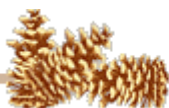
reduced grazing and fuel wood harvest. The end result of the overstocking and the drought was to create an environment or food source, ideal for the bark beetle to thrive. In terms of the beetle itself, the warmer than usual winters recently may have helped the insect populations to stay high and expand in range.

In short, it was the culmination of a lot of factors that contributed to the piñon die off of a few years back, not just any one force or factor. A similar scenario is playing out with our neighbors to the north in Colorado where they are experiencing a tremendous die off of lodgepole pine due to bark beetle. Again, not just due to the mild winters that have allowed the insect population to be sustained at higher levels, not just due to the result of uniform stand structures resulting from logging (management) activities and fires of 100 years past nor not just due to the recent droughts these forest have experienced. Rather these “accidents” are the culmination of a series of seemingly unrelated forces or actions coming together at a point in time much like the two cars coming to the same place on the road at the same time.

Was the accident in the training video avoidable? Like most automobile accidents it was. Are the impacts of a changing climate avoidable, probably or least the effects can be mitigated. This is where Joe’s letter hits the nail on the head. If we manage our forests and woodlands to reduce stress or future stresses, than while we might not eliminate the effects of a changing climate, we can surely reduce the impact on our forests and woodlands. This approach goes back to one of the most fundamental tenants of forest management that by reducing stress levels you can enhance productivity, resistance to pests and resilience following disturbance.



Beetle killed piñon 2004





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New Mexico Tree Farm News is published once or twice a year, depending on funds. Distribution includes over 150 Tree Farmers throughout New Mexico along with over 50 forest product producers. If you would like to advertise your Tree Farm, your products, or your company, please send us the information and we will be glad to include it in the next newsletter.

Donations to cover printing and mailing cost are always appreciated.

Dear New Mexico Tree Farmers:

I want to again encourage all New Mexico Tree Farmers who wish to submit their writing to do so. Also, if you come across an article you think others might like, please send a copy to me with information on how to contact the author or publisher for permission to reprint the article. The easiest way is to submit your article, poem, etc. via electronic mail to John Harrington (joharrin@nmsu.edu) or by regular mail at:

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