



NEW MEXICO TREE FARM NEWS

NEW MEXICO TREE FARMER OF THE YEAR

"I always wanted to do more on our property than we have done," said Sara Jo Patterson, New Mexico's 1998 Tree Farmer of the Year and also our nomination for Regional Tree Farmer of the Year. We went to visit her the day before her 80th birthday. According to Sara Jo, New Mexico Forestry Division forester, Bill Duemling and White Sands Forest Products forester, Brett Billesbach, have helped her greatly with managing her property and harvesting the trees.

"The trees have grown so much and so much faster!" Sara Jo says of the remaining trees after the thinning projects.

Sara Jo's property has been a New Mexico Tree Farm since 1986. But management practices have been going on for a very long time. "Our very first sale was years ago. It was around 1935 or 1936. My grandfather and my father cut the timber for the first sale. And the trees were hauled right down the canyon to a local operator.

There was none of the brush that we have today. And the trees were so much more open."

In 1962 and 1963 the Pattersons cut smaller trees and sold them to a company that sold trees as poles. Unfortunately, according to Sara Jo, they left a mess. However, since becoming a Tree Farmer, management and harvest practices have been excellent. Commercial thinning was conducted in 1996-97. Reforestation followed immediately afterwards. Forest improvement was done on forty acres in 1997 under the Stewardship Incentive Program.

Nominating forester, Bill Duemling received a B.S. in Forestry from the University of Washington. He has worked for the USDA Forest Service and has spent the last nine years with New Mexico State Forestry as the Timber Management Officer for the Capitan District. His duties include timber sale planning and regulation, wildland/urban interface, forest health, urban forestry, fire fighter and of course the Tree Farm Program. He was also New Mexico's Tree Farm Inspector of the Year for 1992 and 1993.





According to Bill, "The Tree Farm System is one way that landowners receive recognition for the forest management work they have done on their property. Tree Farmers are some of the most active land managers we have in New Mexico. I wish we could clone them."

Brett Billesbach from White Sands Forest Products received his B.S. in Forestry from Northern Arizona University. He started his career in Oregon and was happy to come back to the Southwest since he is a native of Arizona. He has worked for White Sands Forest Products for the past five years as their procurement forester. He has been secretary for New Mexico's Tree Farm Program for the past two years.

"I think the Tree Farm Program is an outstanding program," says Brett. "Tree farmers who do commercial work on their land follow stewardship practices and good land management. I would really like to see more people we work with following the Tree Farm Program's standards."

"Commercial harvesting is just the first step. What landowners really need to do is to take the money they make from commercial thinning and put it back into their property to manage their forest properly and to keep it healthy. Again, being involved in the Tree Farm Program helps landowners reach the goal of healthy forests.

OUR TREE FARM IMAGE

By: Will Stapelton, Chair

If you have been in the Tree Farm System since the early 90's, you may have seen a copy of the findings of "A Survey on the Image of Tree Farms and Tree Farmers", that was conducted among 300 adults in the general population by telephone, by the American Forest Foundation, during 1990. The following

is a summary of the survey results:

- About half of those surveyed were aware of Tree Farms.
- Most see Tree Farms as reforesting/tree replacement businesses.
- Most (83%) considered tree farming to be a good thing because cut trees are replaced and trees are good for the environment.
- Most (94%) thought that Tree Farms should be strongly encouraged.
- About half expected Tree Farms to have little trees planted in rows; the other half expected natural forests.
- Most were not sure who owned Tree Farms, although owners were seen as primarily private (companies).
- About half saw "making money" as the prime motivator for being a Tree Farmer; the other half saw Tree Farmers as willing to protect the environment even if less money is earned.
- Their choice of goals for Tree Farmers, if they could set them, would be as follows:
 - a. 64% said, "preserve healthy forests and protect the environment".
 - b. 26% said, "meet consumer needs for forest products".
 - c. 9% said, "provide a natural home for wildlife".

It is interesting to note that the survey responses became public in January of 1991, the American Tree Farm System celebrated its 50th anniversary on June 14, 1991.

The Tree Farm System started with one Tree Farm in 1941, a Weyerhaeuser property in Washington state, covering 120,000 acres. Fifty years later, there were 70,000 Tree Farms covering more than 95 million acres. At this rate of growth, there could be 83,000 Tree Farms by the year 2000.

The Tree Farm System appears to be healthy and thriving, with no hint of an image problem. If the survey had encompassed a greater





Number of respondents, the results may have been different.

New Mexico joined the Tree Farm System in 1947, with three Tree Farms. Fifty-two years later, New Mexico has 150 Tree Farms, covering 184,285 acres. At the present average growth rate of three Tree Farms per year, New Mexico could have 153 Tree Farms by the year 2000.

The Tree Farm System, may not be thriving so well here in New Mexico. Is it possible that we may have an image problem? We have never been subjected to public scrutiny, so we really don't know how the public views us. However, that should not prevent us from scrutinizing ourselves:

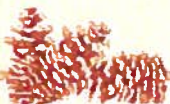
- Are we aware of the Tree Farms around us? Do we take the initiative to visit them and to be neighborly, or to exchange ideas?
- Do we speak on the behalf of the Tree Farm System whenever there is an opportunity, especially in the midst of landowners who are not Tree Farmers?
- Are our Tree Farms showplaces where the interested public can come and learn about Tree Farms and forest land management?
- Do we maintain certification on our Tree Farms?
- Do we support our State Tree Farm Committee by attending meetings, serving as officers, etc.?
- Would we help support local Tree Farm committees by helping to organize and keeping them active?

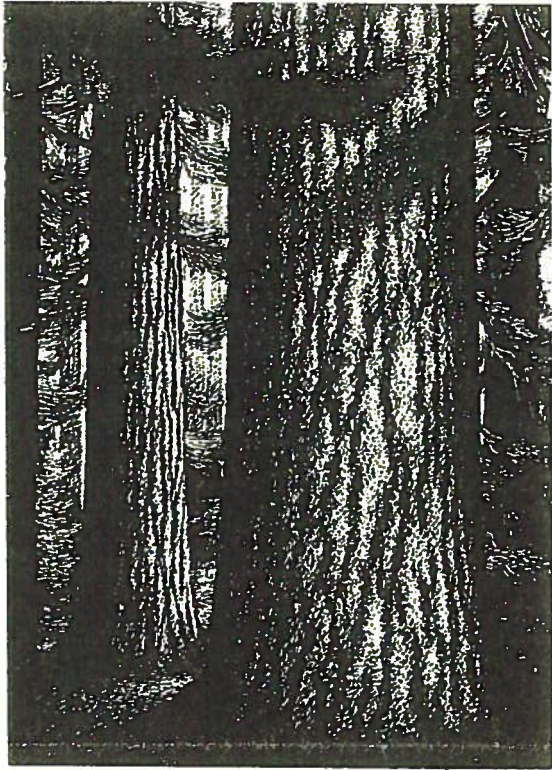
TREE FARMERS OF THE YEAR FOR NEW MEXICO

YEAR	TREE FARMER	COUNTY
1980	Delfin Quitana	Rio Arriba
1982	Alfredo Mirabel	Cibola
1983	James Bartley	Mora
1984	Col. E.L. Ritchie	Otero
1985	Pat Wester	Torrance
1986	Gerald O. Bailey	Otero
1987	Betty Jane Curry	Sandoval
1988	Chama Land & Cattle (The Lodge at Chama)	Rio Arriba
1989	Elaine & Jack Woods	McKinley
1990	Harper & Effie Simms	Mora
1991	William & Karen Armstrong	McKinley
1992	Jack & Dorothy Cates	Otero
1993	Mr. & Mrs. Robert Bell	Otero
1994	Pat & Julie Jenks	Catron
1995	Will & Jeanne Stapleton	Cibola
1996	Charles & Thelma Walker	Otero
1998	Sara Jo Patterson	Otero
1999	COULD BE YOU	

When we can answer these questions and others affirmatively, we will have a dynamic Tree Farm Program here in New Mexico we can be proud of and an image that is unparalleled anywhere.

OLDEST TREE FARMS IN NEW MEXICO				
NAME TREE	FARM #	COUNTY	DATE	ACRES
The Lodge at Chama	#4	Rio Arriba	4/63	18,225
Delfin Quintana	#6	Rio Arriba	4/63	317
Mundy Ranch	#7	Rio Arriba	4/63	11.877





**FOREST HISTORY 101:
THE SUBALPINE TREES OF
NEW MEXICO
By: Brad Ball**

The subalpine forests of New Mexico are a special place to many people. Englemann spruce and subalpine fir dominate these stands. In the lower subalpine zone, found at approximately 9,500 feet, spruce-fir forms as extensive, relatively homogeneous, closed stands. These are dark, cool forests that inspire reverence and mystery. In the upper subalpine zone, found at approximately

11,500 feet, the forest forms an open woodland of scattered tree islands and ribbon forests. Summer's arrival in this environment is a visual delight of sun, wind, water and wildflowers.

The spruce-fir forest was absent in New Mexico until relatively recently. Around 50 million years ago, in what is known as the Tertiary Period, North America had a much warmer, wetter climate. Mixed temperate forests comprising of both conifers and deciduous trees covered the continent from the Arctic Circle to the northern part of what is now the United States. Most of the region south of this area (New Mexico included) was covered with a subtropical forest.

Two natural events, the uplift of the Rocky Mountains and a subsequent climatic cooling, allowed spruce-fir to "migrate" to New Mexico from far northern latitudes. The cooling of the climate allowed these forests to shift southward along migrational avenues created by newly uplifted mountains. By the end of the Ice Age—about 10,000 years ago—spruce-fir forests had reached their southern most extent.

All communities are dynamic systems that change through time in response to both small and large-scale events. The southward migration of spruce-fir is an interesting example of how geology and climate have interacted to form the present-day New Mexican sub-alpine forest.





NEW MEXICO TREE FARM COMMITTEE
CALANDER OF EVENTS
1999

WEEK OF JULY 19, 1999
RECOGNITION OF TREE FARMER OF THE YEAR
SARA JO PATTERSON
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
SANTA FE

JULY TO SEPTEMBER, REGIONAL TREE FARM ACTIVITIES

OCTOBER 9, 1999 FALL MEETING AND FIELD DAY
SARA JO PATTERSON'S TREE FARM
EAST OF CLOUDCROFT, NEW MEXICO

NOVEMBER 1, 1999 TREE FARM INSPECTIONS DUE FOR 1999

NOVEMBER 2, 1999 NOMINATIONS DUE FOR 1999 TREE FARMER OF THE YEAR

NOVEMBER 15, 1999 FALL NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTION DEADLINE

DECEMBER 31, 1999 NOMINATIONS DUE FOR TREE FARM INSPECTOR OF THE YEAR (1998-99)



NEW MEXICO TREE FARM NEWS
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1999 Tree Farm Officers

Chairman- Will Stapleton
Vice Chairman-Delfin Quintana
Secretary-Brett Billesbach
Treasurer-Charles Wicklund
Advisor-Doug Boykin
Editor-Terri Wildermuth

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