



American Tree Farm System

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For Immediate Release:

08/10/2021

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Georgia Tree Farm Program Announces 2021 Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year

Macon, GA, August 10, 2021

The Georgia Tree Farm Program is proud to recognize Mike Harrison and Harrison Woodlands as Georgia's 2021 Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year. The American Tree Farm System® (ATFS), a program of the American Forest Foundation, is administered locally by the Georgia Tree Farm State Committee. Each year, one Tree Farmer, among 1,797 Tree Farms in the state, is selected who exhibits exceptional forest stewardship to protect and improve our forest resources and promotes forest stewardship within their community.

“Harrison Woodlands is a shining star of what other Tree Farms could be. Mike had a vision in his mind of the woods he wanted and made it happen on his property,” said Aaron Burton, Georgia Tree Farm Program Chair.

The Harrison property has been in the family since 1948 and has steadily increased with acquisitions that began in 1981 with the most recent purchase being 2019. The Harrison family owns and manages several timber tracts spread throughout Schley and Marion counties with a primary interest in timber and wildlife, while also managing for aesthetic, soil and water conservation and recreation. They conduct approximately 75 percent of the work on the property themselves with the other work being completed by consulting forester Jeff Greene and the Georgia Forestry Commission. To learn more about Harrison Woodlands along with other past Georgia Tree Farmers of the Year, visit our website at <https://www.treefarmssystem.org/georgia-awards>.

“Whether prescribed burning, overseeing timber harvests, maintaining woods roads, or spending time with family on the farm, Mr. Harrison and his family work hard to make their property a special place. It is a genuine representation of a true family Tree Farm,” said Lisa Duncan, Stewardship Specialist, Georgia Forestry Commission.

In addition to the Georgia Tree Farm Program, the Harrison family is active in a number of forestry programs and groups including: the Georgia Forestry Commission's Forest Stewardship Program, the Forest Landowners Association, the Georgia Forestry Association, the Longleaf Alliance, the Georgia Prescribed Fire Council, and the local West Central Georgia Forest Landowners Association where Mike serves on the board. Additionally, they open their property to landowners and other parties interested in viewing and discussing their stewardship practices.



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Across the U.S., family forest owners like Mike Harrison own and manage more than one-third of America's forests. Their efforts are crucial to the sustainability of our country's natural resources, such as clean water, wildlife habitat, carbon storage and a wood supply for the products Americans use every day.

The ATFS, established in 1941, is the largest and oldest sustainable woodland program in the United States designed specifically for family forest owners. The program provides over 69,000 family forest owners with tools, education, and a community of shared interest to support their conservation goals. Enrolled Tree Farmers, in return, care for their land, meeting rigorous Standards of Sustainability that are internationally endorsed and recognized to assure the provision of wood supplies, wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, and clean water. Collectively, there are nearly 18 million forested acres within the ATFS program in the United States. The ATFS's mission is to deliver meaningful conservation impact through the empowerment of family forest landowners.

