Michigan Tree Farm Committee Inspection Timeline Guidance

In an effort to clarify the process and to complete all required inspections in a timely manner, please review this guidance on completing reinspections.

1. Regional Chairs will receive their regional list of required, optional, and priority inspections from the chair within 7 days of receiving the list from National. Regional chairs will reach out to inspectors in their area to assign/ask for volunteers to complete these inspections. Priority will be given to the last inspector.
2. When assigned/volunteering to completing an inspection, inspectors will make initial contact by phone or email within 5-7 days of assignment.
3. If no return contact has been made within 2 weeks, inspectors will make secondary contact by opposite contact (ex. if you tried email first, try a phone call).
4. If no return contact within an additional 2 weeks, inspectors will contact Regional Chair. Regional chair will then try a method of contact with a stronger message.
5. If no return contact made to Regional chair within 2 weeks, Regional Chair will decertify the Tree Farm as “No Interest”.
6. If Tree Farmer makes return contact to either Regional Chair or original inspector after decertification, inspect and recertify the tree farm.

When contact has been made, ask to see a copy of the plan (hard copy or digital). Use the following rules to complete the inspection:

If a Tree Farmer has a plan, make sure it’s up to date and includes important points such as T&Es, Special Sites, and Forests of Recognized Importance. If those things are missing, please use designated Plan Addendum. This may be typed and emailed, or printed and handwritten by the Inspector. This Addendum should be sent/given to the Tree Farmer to keep with their plan.

If the Tree Farmer does not have a plan, but wants to actively obtain one, designate this Tree Farm as Pioneer status. They may stay in this status for up to two years. Regional Chairs will recheck on this type of Tree Farm each year.

For Regional Chairs:
Situations where they may stay in Pioneer: has contract with plan writer but plan isn’t completed yet; landowner waiting on grant funding from USDA, etc.
Situations where they may NOT stay in Pioneer and should therefore be Decertified: contacted plan writer but no contract has been signed, has made no active efforts to obtain a written forest management plan, etc.

If the inspection is not completed within 90 days of initial assignment date, the inspection will be reassigned. Inspections need to be completed in order to receive funding from national, as well as building and maintaining a credible program for landowners. This will also help us move on to more inspections in our database to keep it current and credible. The more inspections we complete, the better our program becomes. Our number one job is to provide good customer
service to our volunteer landowners and getting their inspections done in a timely manner is a way to provide that.

To maintain active as an inspector, at least 2 inspections (of any type) must be done per year. If an inspector needs assistance in finding two inspections to do, contact the Regional Chair for an assignment. Regional chairs will complete 1 initial, 1 required, 1 priority, and 1 optional inspection per year.

Something to note:
Decertification by no means is a “ding” against the landowner or ourselves. What is a “ding” against us is when the 3rd party audit comes around and the auditor selects a Tree Farm that does not return contact. We need tree farms to be in compliance (and in contact) to pass these audits so we may retain our status as a Certified Tree Farm program. We are not doing the landowner nor ourselves a favor by leaving these people in our database as a Certified Tree Farm. We want to provide the best service and opportunities possible to our Michigan landowners who want to be apart of Tree Farm. Being a credible program is the key to providing the best service.

When a Tree Farm is listed as Pioneer, they will come back up for reinspection as a “Priority” inspection. However, if within 6-8 weeks no contact has been returned to the original inspector, likely they are not interested in being an active and engaged Tree Farm. We will be assessed $10 per tree farm (up to $7000) starting in 2019 each year. We are interested in supporting engaged and active tree farms, not a certain raw number of Tree Farms.