



montana TREE FARM news

Fall 2017



PricewaterhouseCoopers Assessor Shawn Ellsworth listens to a Tree Farmer describe his stream restoration efforts while examining the "water gap" that allows cattle to have a drink while protecting the creek bank. Photo by Kristina Duff.

With Flying Colors

Highlights from the Montana Tree Farm Third Party Assessment

By Angela Wells, Certification Coordinator, Montana Tree Farm

While it's not exactly accurate to equate the Tree Farm third party certification assessment to a test, for me watching our Tree Farmers represent the Montana program felt like having the valedictorian of the class take my calculus final.

The purpose of the third-party assessment process is to verify that Montana's Tree Farm program continues to meet the Standards of Sustainability for Forest Certification. This year, the assessment team selected 15 Tree Farms at random from three broad geographic areas: Gallatin County, the greater Helena area, and the Blackfoot Valley. They ranged in size from 10 to 3,400 acres.

The random nature of the selection process assures that we aren't cheating by selecting our best and brightest to represent the program. This makes it more gratifying that over the course of four days in late June, our Tree Farmers absolutely blew the national third party assessment team away with their mastery of sustainable active management, comprehensive stewardship plans, and unique approaches to getting work done in their woods.

The diversity of activities on Montana's sample Tree Farms was as broad as their ownership demographics. One Tree Farmer in the Bangtail Mountains east of Bozeman has established a network of cross-country running trails that he opens to the public through

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Letter from the Chair

Allen Chrisman, Chair, Montana Tree Farm Program

What an action-packed year for Montana Tree Farm!

Montana Certification Assessment

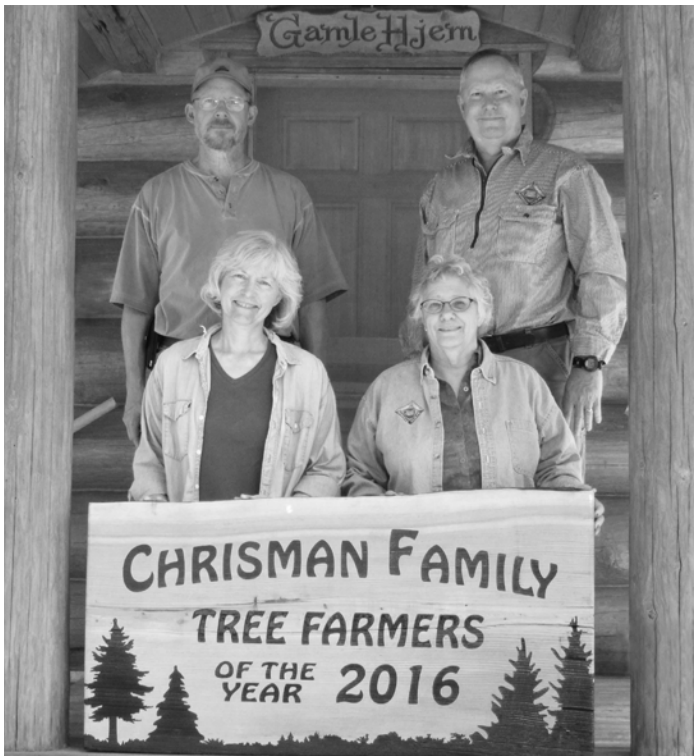
With the leadership of past chair Angela Wells and an incredible effort by committee members, Inspectors, and of course our dedicated Tree Farmers, the Montana Certification Assessment Review by PricewaterhouseCoopers in late June went extremely well. The review team visited 15 Tree Farms in a four-day period – and was impressed with what they saw! They had no “findings” for Montana, which means we had no deficiencies to be corrected. We’ll get the final report later, and I am sure we will be able to improve the way we serve Montana Tree Farmers. But it was nice to know that we are on the right track. Thanks to all of those involved and the extra effort everyone made to make sure our documentation was in order.

Membership Fees

Our other big news is that while we had planned implementing our Membership Fee of \$30 per Tree Farm owner in January, 2018, the National Office asked us and the other states to pause in our implementation. They have had numerous responses from state programs to the \$10 per Tree Farmer certification assessment fee that was scheduled to be implemented by National in January 2019. They want to make sure they are not throwing states into turmoil in trying to cover the financial needs that fee will create. In our case, because a good portion of the membership fee is designed to support our part-time administrator position, we foresee the need to implement a minimal fee system in the future. However, we agreed to pause our implementation until we see what National recommends and incorporate any changes into our plan.

Annual Tree Farm Meeting

The plans and preparation for our Annual Tree Farm Meeting are nearing completion. We'll be gathering at the Senior Center in Thompson Falls on September 30 beginning at 8:00 a.m. We'll load buses at 8:30 a.m. and visit both the Naegeli and Haywood Tree Farms in the morning. Our Guest Speaker is Tree Farmer Carl Haywood, who will share with us about David Thompson and the history of Thompson Falls. Carl is an excellent speaker and we are looking forward to him sharing the story of one of the great explorers in our area. Thanks to Vice Chair Peter Pocius for his hard work in organizing this meeting for our benefit.



Western Region Tree Farmers of the Year

I have to mention how honored the entire Chrisman Family was when selected as the Western Region Tree Farmers of the Year for 2017. It is a tremendous tribute to the foresight our parents had in purchasing our property in 1958. What makes it special to us is that only two years ago, our neighbors and close family friends the Hoilands, only 1.5 miles away in the North Fork of the Flathead, were also the Western Region Tree Farmers of the Year. I think Montana is showing the strength of our Tree Farm Program with such competitive nominees, and I know we have many more deserving Tree Farmers out there. As one of four finalists for the National Tree Farmer of the Year, we

would be proud to bring that award back to Montana. We think Montana and the Montana Tree Farm Program deserves it.

Fire Season 2017

As I am writing this letter in early August, I have already had a twelve-day fire assignment to the Sunrise Fire near Superior, Montana, and the Incident Management Team I was with will go to their next assignment after three days off. This is turning into a significant fire season in all parts of the state. I appreciate the effort our Montana Tree Farmers have made to modify fuels on their Tree Farms, actions which may well protect their neighbors as well as themselves. My heart goes out to those who are suffering such devastating losses – especially the farmers and ranchers in Eastern Montana under such drought conditions. Remember we are all in this together. Thanks for helping out your neighbor, and please watch out for the safety of yourselves, your family, and those around you. Your support and prayers for the firefighters across the state and the nation are always appreciated.

Do you have questions, comments, or want more information on Montana Tree Farm? Please feel free to contact me at achrisman52@gmail.com or by phone at (406) 249-6130.

Sincerely,

Allen

Allen Chrisman,
Chair, Montana Tree Farm Program



The Montana Tree Farm System, Inc. is a non-profit 501.(c)(3) organization.
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continued from page 1: Flying Colors

organized events. Just up the road from him, two brothers on adjacent properties make their own boards on a portable sawmill and have constructed an eclectic set of cabins and outbuildings on their woodland playground. In the hills above the Missouri River just outside Helena, ponderosa pine flourishes on a site with barely enough moisture to support cactus, thanks to the devoted attentions of its inventive owner and his family. In the Blackfoot Valley, a Tree Farmer has implemented stream restoration on several miles of critical bull-trout habitat over a decade on his working ranch, including a water gap (pictured) which allows his cows to drink without destabilizing the creek bank. Several of these actions were recorded by the assessment team as exceptionally good management practices to be shared with other states. Most importantly, Montana had ZERO findings of non-conformance with the Standards of Sustainability, nor were any areas for improvement cited by the assessors. This means that we will maintain our bragging rights among Tree Farm programs around the country. JUST KIDDING! I was just checking to make sure you were paying attention. What it actually means is that we will continue to retain our status as a certified program, while helping to substantiate ATFS's role as the primary pathway to low-cost third-party certification for

family forest owners in the United States.

Passing the assessment with flying colors doesn't mean we stop looking for ways to improve our program though! One persistent issue I have observed is Montana Tree Farmers' reluctance to use contracts for work completed on their property. Using contracts and reputable contractors is a "should" rather than a "shall" in the Standards of Sustainability, but contracts are a tool to ensure instructions are given and understood, reasonable timelines are established, and terms and amount of payment are agreeable to all parties. Contracts can be simple and perfectly attainable for the do-it-yourself types. To aid you in developing contracts for work on your land, a contract checklist is featured in this issue on page 7. Use it. Contracts protect you, the people working for you, and your Tree Farm.

In closing, coordinating the assessment this year was one of my most gratifying experiences with Montana Tree Farm. It won't be our turn to represent the ATFS Western Region certificate for another few years. In the meantime, we will continue to work hard to make sure that our program comprises the best and the brightest among Montana's hard working forest stewards. ♦

Work Safe in the Forest vs. "Hold my Beer and Watch This"

Text and Photos by Chris Town, NRCS Forester

About ten years ago, a neighbor of mine failed to consider his own safety even though he had the experience and shop set-up to work in a controlled, secure environment. His lapse of judgment cost him his life and his young family lost a father and breadwinner. I watched his children the evening of that unfortunate event and had plenty of time to digest the ramifications of his decision-making process. I may be a 2X4 kind of guy, but from that moment, safety was no longer a burden to be ignored.

I reflected on that lesson this summer, when my strapping teenage son graduated from thinning seedlings on our place with loppers to thinning pole size trees with a chainsaw. I have been fortunate to receive formal training and experience in logging, so the boy's coaching was my responsibility. I imagined

I would be able to work alongside him and we would make great inroads together. I was mistaken. The coaching process demands complete focus. The myriad of variables considered during the process of working in the woods came in waves as I observed the kid's technique: heavy equipment, horsepower, chainsaws, cables, tension, slope, fatigue, mass, weight measured by the ton, wind and other environmental factors. Lions and tigers and bears, oh my...and as a father I recalled an oft-cited statistic that the average chain saw accident causes 110 stitches. Son, perhaps you could find a seasonal job stuffing pillows.

With forestry safety being paramount on my mind, this article began taking shape. But obviously an article on forestry safety could become a book, and that book would be a dry read indeed. Instead, I prepared a

bullet list of primers to stimulate your awareness, using as a catalyst the one task common to us all, falling a tree:

- Identify and clear a path of retreat before you begin falling any given tree, discretion being the better part of valor and all.
- Learn how to fall a tree properly. Are face-cut, back-cut, and holding wood terms that you are intimately familiar with? The dreaded wood cutter's stump in Photo 1 and slicked off stump are tell-tale signs of uncontrolled tree felling and are unfortunately ubiquitous throughout the western forest (although I re-cut my stumps at ground level so all the stumps in my forest look slicked). Photo 2 shows a properly cut stump with face-cut and back-cut in proper proportions and plenty of holding wood.



1) Wood Cutter's Stump

- Work at least two tree lengths away from others. Why? It's not the tree you're cutting, but what that tree disturbs that is the unexpected agent of injury.
- Listen to your body when it tells you fatigue is setting in, this is when we get careless.
- Have a well-stocked first aid kit close at hand, know what's in it and how to use it.
- Just like hunting alone, make sure someone knows where you are working.
- Maintain your saw. Just like a sharp knife is safer than a dull one, a saw in good working order with chain adjusted and sharpened properly is too.
- Ropes have a stretch factor and cables have a recommended work load tensile strength.
- Know when to call in a professional. Working close to infrastructure is not the time to say "hey, hold my beer and watch this."



2) Properly Cut Stump

- Predict what the bole of the tree will do once it's horizontal; will it hit a rise, a stump, or a log that may cause the butt to rise violently in the air? May only the road rise up to meet you.
- Be willing to sacrifice the saw when things go gunny-sack. Yanking on a pinched bar while a tree is falling is a sure sign you've not in control. Drop the saw and walk away, it happens to the best. Yes, I know what a new saw costs, and yes, I too have a deep personal relationship with my 25-year-old 044, but the cost of a bar or saw won't compare to the potential consequences to your person.

This list is woefully incomplete. The intention is to raise awareness and motivate us to search out more knowledge. Compiling a list garnered from tree farmers would be an instructive exercise. In the meantime, a quick internet search will render a host of videos on safe chainsaw handling including one produced by MSU Extension Forestry (https://youtu.be/nQr7awP_TB0). Both Stihl and Husqvarna produce a whole series on the subject. Everyone that cares about you will be thankful that you take the time to learn and execute safety. For the time being I'm still worth more to my wife alive than dead. ♦



montana TREE FARM system

ANNUAL MEETING

You're Invited!

Montana Tree Farm's Steering Committee cordially invites you to join the statewide Annual Tree Farm Meeting. The event kicks off with coffee and pastries at the Thompson Falls Senior Center followed by two tours of local tree farms. Transportation will be provided. The tours will be followed by lunch, a silent auction, and short business meeting.

Saturday, September 30, 2017

8:00 am to 3:30 pm in Thompson Falls, Montana

Draft Agenda

- 8:00 am** Meet at Thompson Falls Senior Center, enjoy coffee, pastries, & browse silent auction items
- 8:30** Travel to Haywood Tree Farm (transport. provided)
- 8:45** Visit Haywood Tree Farm
- 10:00** Depart to Naegeli Tree Farm (transport. provided)
- 10:30** Visit Naegeli Tree Farm
- 12:30 pm** Depart to Senior Center
- 1:00** At Senior Center for Lunch and Awards Presentation.
Featured Speaker: Carl Haywood
The Life and Times of David Thompson
- 2:00** Business Meeting
- 3:30 pm** Adjourn

Directions

**Thompson Falls Senior Citizens Center
1191 Mt Silcox Dr, Thompson Falls, MT 59873**

From Missoula on I-90 West:

Take exit 96 toward U.S. 93 N/MT-200 W/Kalispell
Travel for 27 miles
Turn left onto MT-200 W and travel 63.7 miles
Follow MT-200 W to Golf St in Thompson Falls
Turn right onto Golf Street
Turn right onto Mt. Silcox Drive

Montana Tree Farm Annual Meeting Registration Form

Saturday, September 30, 2017 in Thompson Falls

Registration form and \$25 per person fee are due to Montana Tree Farm by September 18th.

Attendance limited to 100. Pre-registration required.

*If tour is filled, late applicants will be notified as soon as possible.

Name(s): _____

Postal Address: _____

Phone *: _____ e-mail: _____

Entrées include salad, corn bread, beans, drinks, and dessert.

Please indicate how many of your preferred lunch option:

_____ Pulled Pork BBQ Sandwich

Total # of persons attending: _____

_____ Vegetarian Lasagna

Amount enclosed: \$ _____

**Mail this form along with a check for registration to:
Montana Tree Farm Program, PO Box 17276, Missoula, MT 59808**

Contract Checklist for Private Forest Owners

The following is a checklist of issues private landowners and contractors want to consider on contract for services to be performed on private forest land. Each of the items should be addressed in a contract to allow for a minimum probability of a dispute. Contract elements may be general or very detailed, as landowner and contractor needs dictate. This checklist was originally developed by MSU Extension Forestry for timber sale contracts and has been edited to be more broadly relevant for many types of work on forest land for this publication.

- Property location and legal description are clearly defined. Include Tree Farm certification number if applicable.
- Property boundaries and treatment units are clearly and accurately marked.
- Property ownership is documented and type of ownership is specified. Individual, partnerships, corporations, trusts, etc.
- Insurance is documented. Any contractor working for a landowner must have Commercial General Liability Coverage, Workers Compensation Coverage or an Independent Contractor Exemption, and Automobile Liability Coverage. Loggers Broad Form Property Damage Liability Coverage is required for timber sales.
- Access to the property/harvest unit are specified and documented. To avoid trespass or the disturbance of sensitive area access routes should be clearly delineated. If access across other ownerships is required, written and notarized documentation of access permission should be obtained.
- Type of treatment is clearly specified for each treatment unit. This means that you have described where and how activities should be completed and also your method for designation on the ground (e.g. flagging, painting, prescription).
- Timing of work is specified. Dates when activities should be conducted or completed by.
- Residual property specifications should be defined. This is where you want to outline your expectations for issues such as extent of residual logging debris disposal, burn pile rehabilitation, grass seeding, skid trail rehabilitation, noxious weed control, tree planting, noncommercial thinning, and access road improvement or mitigation.
- Best Management Practices (BMP's) responsibilities are designated. Compliance to state BMP's is ultimately the landowner's responsibility but should be specified in the contract.
- Method of payment is clearly defined.
- Method of scaling is defined (for timber harvest only) Either direct scaling or weight scaling are used. Reputable contractors will be able to specify what scaling method will be used by the processing facility receiving the logs.
- Notification. This means establishing terms for when the contractor or landowner needs to notify the other party about when activities are to start or end and the type of format - written, e-mail, or telephone. This is to avoid issues with blocked access, noise, impacts to special sites, etc.
- Expiration date. Any contract should have a defined end date after which the contract is no longer valid.
- Notarization. Any legally binding document should have signatures notarized.

Montana Forest Owners Association Reports on Montana's 2017 Legislative Activity

By Mike Christianson, President, Montana Forest Owners Association

The Montana Forest Owners Association (MFOA) serves as an advocate for Montana's nonindustrial private forest landowners (NIPFLs). MFOA, being a 501(c)(6) non-profit organization, is allowed to lobby for Montana's NIPFLs at all levels of governmental activity. From January to April 2017 MFOA monitored proposed legislation in Montana's House and Senate, and took the following positions to protect the rights of nonindustrial private forest landowners. MFOA presented these positions by appearing and testifying at Senate and House committee hearings and by providing written position letters to committees and to individual Senators and Representatives.

Prescribed Burning

Presently, anyone who undertakes burning in Montana (prescribed or otherwise) which gets out of hand and harms property of others, is liable for the loss to others. This means that the party who lights the match is liable for any and all harm caused from the resulting fire. A bill was introduced attempting to create a sea change in liability. See HB587.

HB587 – a bill allowing for release of liability (except for negligence) from a person performing a prescribed burn if that person used a prescribed burn plan, prescribed fire burn boss, and prescribed fire manager (yet undefined) approved by the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC). MFOA testified against this bill because the bill failed to describe in sufficient detail the steps a lighter of the match would have to take to enjoy this reduced liability. MFOA told the legislative committee that MFOA supported prescribed burning as a forest management tool; however, the bill needed considerable more thought and detail on what one must undertake to achieve reduced liability. The bill was tabled in the House Natural Resources committee and did not proceed.

Property Taxation

The Montana Code Annotated specifies different classes of property for assessment purposes. Land under residential, commercial and industrial buildings

is class four. Agricultural land is class three. Forest land is class ten. The Department of Revenue is responsible for classifying each parcel of land. Forest lands enjoy low taxation in relation to other lands. Class four property is assessed at market value. For decades, the Department of Revenue has extracted one acre of forest land that has a residence, and changed its classification from class ten to class four property, leaving the remaining property as class ten (so long as there remained 15 acres). The Department of Revenue has also extracted forest land under commercial and industrial buildings and reclassified the real estate from class ten to class four property. This land reclassification resulted in higher property taxes for the extracted land under the residential, commercial or industrial buildings. This has been the practice of the Department of Revenue for decades, but in December 2016 the Montana Tax Appeal Board ruled that the Department of Revenue had no legal authority to reclassify one acre under residential property, and the acreage extracted under commercial and industrial properties. See HB583.

HB583 – a bill allowing for change of class of assessment if designated forest lands are being used as other than forest lands. If the lands contain a residence, one acre is to be allocated as class four (market value) for the residence. Other uses are to be allocated on the actual acreage used (such as ¼ acre under a commercial building). MFOA testified that the “one acre” size under a residence was arbitrary, and actual acreage should be determined by the footprint of the residence. MFOA also suggested excluding reclassification of forest lands that were being used “for associated forest land management practices.” The Senate Taxation committee did not accept MFOA's request to not use an arbitrary “one acre” under a residence. However, the Senate Taxation committee did amend the bill to not reclassify property being used for “associated forest land management.” (Such land might include a shed for a tractor and winch, weed spray equipment, or tools for forest land management.) The revised bill passed the Senate and House and was signed by the Governor on May 4, 2017.

Access

Access across private property to reach public or private properties remains contentious and probably will intensify with the ever-changing landownership. There is a push-and-pull between those who think they have legal access, and the property owners who disagree. Today, if someone has a dispute and he cannot resolve it, he may file a suit to determine whether he has a prescriptive easement, or whether the road is actually public. A bill was introduced in the Senate in an attempt to have these issues resolved by the board of county commissioners. See SB262.

SB262 – a bill prohibiting the restriction of public access on certain roads. This bill restricts a person from installing a fence, other barrier, or sign intended to prevent vehicular travel by the public on a road or right-of-way that has no proven legal status, that is used for normal vehicular travel by the public, and that appears to meet the conditions necessary to qualify for a prescriptive easement or other public road designation, unless the person first applies to and receives permission from the board of county commissioners. MFOA testified against this bill as an infringement of property rights. Further, MFOA contended that any such disagreement would ultimately end up in court, and that getting the county involved was not beneficial. This bill was tabled in the Senate Highways and Transportation committee and did not proceed.

Rural Improvement Districts

Montana Code Annotated 7-12-2102 allows for the creation of a rural improvement district if all landowners in such district-to-be petition to create such district. Once a district is created, the costs are assessed to all landowners in that district. Rural roads are otherwise maintained by the owners or homeowner associations. See SB79.

SB79 – a bill allowing for the creation of a rural improvement district solely for road maintenance upon petition of the owners of more than 60% of the area in the proposed district. During the legislative proceedings, the 60% requirement was changed to 85%. MFOA advised and warned its members of a possible legislative maneuver to take action on the House floor to change the 85% back to 60%. The bill passed at 85%. Further, the bill was restricted to

residential subdivisions. MFOA is working to keep additional taxes from being charged to its forestland members who may not agree with the creation of a rural improvement district. Hopefully, such a district, if created, will indeed be desired by all the landowners. The bill was signed by the Governor on April 3, 2017.

Fire Assessments

Montana Code Annotated 76-13-201 provides for the collection of a fire fighting assessment on the real estate tax bill for “an owner of land classified as forest land that is within a wildland fire protection district or that is otherwise under contract for fire protection by a recognized agency...” This is not a tax, but instead a fee for fire protection. If your property is in a Fire Protection District you may see an assessment such as “State Forester” or “Fire Assessment” on your real estate tax bill. Different counties list the assessment under different names. See SB72.

SB72 – a bill creating a fund for firefighters’ disease benefits. Version 2 of this bill included \$125,000 of funding from the wildland fire protection districts. This could have resulted in increased assessments to forest land owners. MFOA started watching this bill after the bill was amended to use funding from wildland fire protection districts. MFOA supports a fund for fire fighters but it opposes the potential assessments to forest land owners. MFOA was prepared to testify against this bill; however, a committee amended the bill to use other funds. Later, the bill was tabled in the House Business and Labor committee and did not proceed.

Noxious Weeds and Public Access

Noxious weeds and public access go hand-in-hand, and usually not in a good way. That is why MFOA was concerned about a last-minute attempt by the Senate to slip public access requirements into a good noxious weed bill. See HB434.

HB434 – a bill using federal funds to combat noxious weeds and thus improving wildlife habitat. The Senate amended this bill to add language from HB651 which had died by not passing the second House reading. The added language regarded improving public access, setting up a public access advisory council, identifying opportunities to increase public access, proposing access projects with an emphasis on land exchanges,

and procuring access easements. MFOA opposed the public access amendment. MFOA testified against the Senate's amendment at the conference committee meeting. The bill was revised to remove the public access wording. The bill passed and was signed by the Governor on May 7, 2017.

The Montana legislature meets in odd numbered years. The next legislative session will start in

January 2019. Montana Forest Owners Association will be there to protect the interests of non-industrial private forest landowners. Anyone interested in furthering MFOA's purposes can become a member. See www.montanaforestowners.org and select Join/Renew or scan this QR code. ♦



Native Fungal Disease, Comandra Blister Rust, on Pines

Text and Photos by Katie McKeever, Forest Pathologist, Montana DNRC

The DNRC Forest Pest Management program has been observing a number of incidences of the native fungal disease comandra blister rust (CBR) this past spring. This disease, which occurs throughout the ranges of 2- and 3-needle pines, commonly causes branch dieback and spike tops in otherwise healthy trees. Common observations include a defined margin between senescing (dying) and healthy foliage, often as high as 15 - 25 feet up the stem (Photo 1).

Tree tops may be off-color, thinning, or completely dead; and there may be dieback of individual branches close to the margin of disease. Similar damages may be caused by the pine engraver insect (*Ips pini*) which can bore into small-diameter materials resulting in mortality of leaders or branches; however, Ips-

attacked trees tend to be weakened from prior stressors or may stand in areas where idle slash piles have allowed populations to build up and spill over onto healthy individuals. To distinguish comandra from other potential causes of top dieback (i.e. insects or lightning), a good pair of binoculars is essential for observing the characteristic heavy resin flow near the canker margins; and, during a short window in early summer, one may observe the diagnostic spores associated with colonization by the CBR fungus (Photos 2 and 3).

The complex lifecycle of this fungus (*Cronartium comandrae*) includes five spore stages that alternate between hard pines (the primary host) and the native perennial, bastard toadflax (*Comandra umbellata*)



1) Dieback at Top



2) Debarked Section



3) Pitch Tubes Indicating Heavy Resin Flow

(the alternate host). In late summer and fall, spores are blown from the undersides of the leaves of the alternate host where they travel through air currents to contact and infect pine needles. The fungus grows through the needles to colonize the inner bark of twigs, branches, and ultimately back into the main stem of the tree. The fungus will produce two spore stages on the pine in spring and early summer, appearing first as thick reddish ooze that weeps from diseased bark, followed by diagnostic orange powdery pustules that burst outward and warrant the name blister rust (Photo 4). These orange spores are disseminated back to the bastard toadflax where the disease intensifies



4) Blister Rust Fungus

before the cycle begins anew. CBR is perennial and as years progress, the cankered tissues in the pines expand and coalesce to girdle the circumference of the branch or stem resulting in dieback of affected parts.

This disease affects trees of all ages and is particularly damaging in young, regenerating stands. Larger trees may survive despite the loss of the upper crown, if enough lower branches remain to adequately photosynthesize. In large trees suffering from CBR infection, growth is significantly reduced and efforts should be made to harvest any merchantable timber in accordance with stand objectives. Stand replacement with a non-host species may be necessary in areas with pervasive occurrence. Since the spores that are produced on the pines do not infect other pines, the decision to remove infested trees is up to the landowner and may be desirable for aesthetics or to reduce spore transmission to the alternate host during the short window of sporulation. Removal of the alternate host from forest environments is considered impractical and is not a recommended method of control.

More information can be found on the DNRC website at <http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/forestry/docs/assistance/pests/fidls/062.pdf> or by contacting the Forest Pest Management Program at (406) 542-4330. ♦

Book Review: *A Hidden Life of Trees*, by Peter Wohlleben

Review by Chris Town, NRCS Forester

As the title suggests, this is a book that offers an anthropomorphic view into the inner workings of a forest ecosystem. The author is a German forester, so his reference is the mixed conifer/hardwood forests of Europe. As such, specific examples are out of place with our western woods, but it doesn't take much of a leap to relate his reference to a similar western species of flora or fauna. I believe the author's purpose is to motivate us to be observant and cognizant of complex systems using layperson terms and a hint of his sense of humor.

As a forester myself, I needed to check my preconceptions and be patient with another's perspective. Upon doing so, each chapter offered a deeper understanding of the subject being explored, or at least the discussion forced me to consider the concept with a furrowed brow.

If you are curious about all forests, looking to increase your understanding of forest ecosystem function, are willing to find imaginative commonalities, I think most tree farmers will find this an informative read that offers a subject of contemplation after the chapter is closed and you stare past your stockings into the fire. ♦

272 pages. Published by Greystone Books Ltd www.greystonebooks.com. suggested retail price \$24.95 hardback, \$16.96 on Amazon.

Montana Tree Farm News
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SILENT AUCTION ITEMS NEEDED!

The Montana Tree Farm System is requesting donation of items for a silent auction to be held at the Annual Meeting on September 30th. Donations are tax deductible and proceeds will benefit the Tree Farm System.

Please contact Elizabeth at montanatreefarmssystem@gmail.com for details on how to contribute!

DENNIS SWIFT MEMORIAL Tree Farm Inspector Recognition Award

Each year the Montana Tree Farm System recognizes the top Tree Farm Inspectors at the annual meeting. Many Montana Tree Farm Inspectors volunteer their time, equipment and vehicle use in promoting the Tree Farm System through their certification and inspection activity. Are you willing to support Montana Tree Farm Inspectors by contributing to the Dennis Swift Inspector Recognition Award?

YES, I would like to show my support in recognizing the importance of our Montana Tree Farm Inspectors in promoting the Tree Farm Program by contributing to the Dennis Swift Inspector Recognition Award. I have included a donation of \$_____.

Please make your check payable to Montana Tree Farm System and return it with this slip to:

Montana Tree Farm System, Inc.
P.O. Box 17276
Missoula, MT 59808-7276

The Montana Tree Farm System is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization, and donations are tax deductible.