

Washington Tree Farmer

August 2008

A Newsletter for Certified Tree Farmers in Washington



15th National Tree Farmer Convention in Portland, Oregon, October 16-18

Don't miss the opportunity to join tree farmers from around the country at the National Tree Farmer Convention! The Washington and Oregon Tree Farm committees have been working with the American Tree Farm System national office to make this a memorable event! The convention opens at the Portland Hilton Thursday evening, October 16, with a Kick-Off reception. Friday is filled with educational sessions about tree farming. Breakfast, lunch and an evening reception are included in the registration fee.

Throughout the convention, vendor exhibitors will be showing their products, and a silent auction of items made by and donated by tree farmers will be open for your bids. All proceeds from the silent auction will be returned to the Washington and Oregon Tree Farm Committees to support their activities. Saturday activities will move to the Little Beaver Creek Tree Farm, which will be transformed into Camp Doneen, a replica of a logging camp from the "glory days" of harvesting western timber. Live demonstrations of many styles of logging will take place and you will be entertained by the Fred Scheer Lumberjack Show, sponsored by Stihl USA. The convention will wrap up Saturday evening with a banquet and awards ceremony where the National Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year will be announced.

Details and registration information are in the July/August issue of "Tree Farmer" magazine which you should have recently received. You also may register online at www.treefarmssystem.org. Registration is already $\frac{3}{4}$ full, so register soon! This is an excellent opportunity to meet and visit with Tree Farmers such as yourselves from other areas, as well as be educated and entertained.

PEFC Endorsement

After a 5 year process and a 14-month rigorous review, the American Tree Farm System has been given international approval by the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC). PEFC is an international, independent, non-profit, non-governmental organization which promotes sustainably managed forests through independent third party certification. Endorsement by PEFC is a step that will open the door to new green markets for wood. The market for sustainably produced wood has changed dramatically over the last few years and PEFC endorsement of ATFS means that family forest owners who voluntarily commit the extra time and expense to be ATFS certified now qualify for access to international markets that they never had before, as well as many U.S. markets that are demanding certified wood. For more information on PEFC, see their web site www.pefc.org

SFI Mills want certified wood

If you have harvested timber in the last year, you may have already noticed that SFI-certified mills are interested in knowing if timber comes from a certified Tree Farm. Some mills are asking sellers for their Tree Farm number or copy of their certificate, and other mills have contacted us to check names. If you are asked and don't know your number or have your certificate, just contact the WTFP office and someone will provide the information to you.

Carbon Credits

You may have read in the newspaper about tree farmers in the Midwest being paid for the carbon that is sequestered in their trees. The American Tree Farm System is working hard to make sure that family forest owners have the opportunity to participate in this new market. It is likely that the chance to participate will come to Washington and Oregon tree farmers very soon but many details still have to be worked out. The one thing that is certain is that the first requirement to meet will be to have a certified Tree Farm. This is a new issue that is changing weekly. We will keep you posted as we learn more.

Re-Inspection of Your Tree Farm

With the international recognition given by PEFC endorsement, it is even more important that the American Tree Farm System members meet the ATFS Standards of Sustainability. One of those standards is to have a written management plan. If you don't have one, please start taking steps to put one together. In earlier newsletters, ways of preparing one have been described. If you need this information again, please contact us now rather than waiting until we call you!

Instead of requiring re-inspections of all members every 5 years, ATFS has gone to a sampling program where a representative number of tree farms are selected for inspection each year. These tree farms must be inspected in the year that they are selected, even if they had been re-inspected less than 5 years ago. If an inspector calls and says that you are one of the sample tree farms, your cooperation would be greatly appreciated.

The Washington Tree Farm Program would like to have an inspecting forester visit each property every 5 or 6 years, but right now we are working hard to catch up with a backlog of people who haven't been contacted in more than 6 years. At the very least, we want to be in contact with you to confirm that your address and ownership information is correct and that you are still interested in the program. If your tree farm hasn't been inspected in the last 5 years, then you may receive a phone call this fall from a WTFP representative.

We have had several Tree Farmers who thought they could refuse to be re-inspected when a forester calls because the re-inspections are not "required". This is not true. If you decline to be re-inspected, you will be decertified from the program. Our volunteer inspectors do not have time to try to re-sell unwilling Tree Farmers on the program.

Forest Stewardship Coached Planning Courses

If you are interested in taking a Forest Stewardship Coached Planning Course to learn how to write your own Management Plan, sessions are being planned in September in Colville, Bremerton, and Mercer Island and in February in Everett. For more information, call your local Extension office or go to <http://ext.nrs.wsu.edu/forestryext/CoachedPlanning/index.htm>

Contact Information

We would like to send you this newsletter in an e-mail format which is more attractive and also saves money. If you are receiving this printed copy, it means that we don't know your e-mail address. If you have one, please send it to us at info@watreefarm.org so we can send the next newsletter via e-mail. It also will help us get in touch with you when a re-inspection is due.

Washington Tree Farm Program, PO Box 1010, Chehalis, WA 98531
Phone: 360-736-5750 E-mail: info@watreefarm.org

Web: www.watreefarm.org

Washington Tree Farm Program
P.O. Box 1010
Chehalis, WA 98532

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