



# American Tree Farm System

## Inspector Manual



American Forest Foundation



# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction to the Inspector Manual.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Section 1: The Tree Farm Inspector Training Workshop.....</b>	<b>3</b>
1. Presentation slides.....	3
2. Program Participation and Policies.....	23
3. 004 Form.....	32
4. Completing the 004 Form.....	35
5. ATFS Resources.....	43
6. ATFS Logo Use Rules.....	45
<b>Section 2: AFF Standards of Sustainability</b>	
Standards of Sustainability 2010-2015 Guidance.....	51

# ATFS Inspector Manual

Welcome to the American Tree Farm System! As an ATFS inspector you are helping to get more good forestry implemented on the ground. The ATFS network of state committees, partner organizations and ATFS staff are committed to assisting you in your important role.

This manual is a guide for how to be an Inspector with the American Tree Farm System program. It contains important information on the American Forest Foundation Standards of Sustainability, requirements of the program for landowners and inspectors, the ATFS certification program, other outreach and educational activities, and how to conduct ATFS inspections.

Section I includes the ATFS Inspector Training workshop. It is designed to be a guide during your workshop and a reference resource as you work with the program. Section II includes the complete American Forest Foundation Standards of Sustainability 2010-2015 and instructions on how to submit a request for a Standards interpretation.

We give our sincere thanks to all of you who have chosen to become an integral part of the ATFS network.

## American Tree Farm System Inspector Training Workshop



Date/Location:  
Presenter Name:  
Contact information:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Inspector Training Workshop

- Introduction to the American Tree Farm System
- AFF Standards of Sustainability
- The role of a Tree Farm inspector
- Certification
- Recognition
- Resources
- Wrap-up

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Part 1: Introduction to the American Tree Farm System

---

---

---

---

---

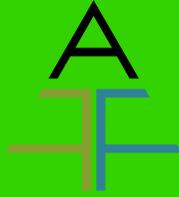
---

---

---

## American Tree Farm System

- Program of the American Forest Foundation
- Other AFF programs:
  - Project Learning Tree
  - Conservation Solutions



American Forest Foundation

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## ATFS Core Mission

To Get More Good Forestry on  
More Acres and Keep it There



Sustainability is end result of a  
long process of education,  
outreach, technical assistance  
and professional contact.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Who is Tree Farm's Key Audience?



Clint Bertz and Family, Chair, AFF Board of Trustees

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Who is Tree Farm's Key Audience?

Four types of potential Tree Farmers

1. Woodland retreat owners
2. Active land managers
3. Supplemental income owners
4. Unengaged landowners



- [www.engaginglandowners.org](http://www.engaginglandowners.org)

\* Data from Sustaining Family Forests Initiative research (SFFI)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Benefits to Landowners

- Information on practical sustainable forestry
- The Tree Farm community
- Affordable, accessible third-party certification
- Advocacy and representation
- Recognition of excellence



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Lets hear from some Tree Farmers!

“I have visited over 100 Tree Farms and have never failed to bring away a useful idea. This sharing of ideas is the reason we have invited over 1,000 people to walk through our forest with us, continually emphasizing the necessity of active forest management”.

Bob Playfair, 2007 Regional Tree Farmer of the Year,  
Western Region

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Benefits to Inspectors

- Connection to landowners
- Supporting sustainable forest management
- Recognition
- Communications



Inspector Wayne Pfluger, 2009 Southern Inspector of the Year, working on a prescribed fire in Texas

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Lets hear from some Inspectors!

“Tree Farmers are more than happy to show off the results of the hard work they’ve done, especially with a forester or resource manager that can really appreciate their efforts... they have a story to tell. They also appreciate your insight and knowledge along with recommendations for future management”.

Everett Young, 2007 Regional Tree Farm Inspector of the Year, Western Region

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Lets hear from some Inspectors!

"Becoming a tree farm inspector is an excellent way for consulting foresters to expand their business. All Tree Farmers need quality forest management plans and consulting foresters are in a position to provide them at competitive rates."

Jerry Grossman, ACF, CF, Tree Farm group manager

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Part 2: AFF Standards of Sustainability

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### The AFF Standards in the Field

“From my perspective, strengthening our standards offers all of us value and benefits. Twenty years ago, none of us had ever heard of forest certification. Yet today, forest certification is recognized worldwide as a measure of sustainable forest management.”

David Ford, chaired the Standards Review Panel and is a professional forester, a Tree Farmer, and executive director of the Oregon Small Woodlands Association.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Who will use these Standards?



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## 2010 – 2015 AFF Standards

- Standards Prologue
- 8 Standards
- Glossary
- Guidance Document

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Standards Prologue

- Key points:
  - Encourages adaptive management
  - The responsibility rests with the forest owner
  - **“Must” = core requirement**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Standard:** overarching guiding principle

**Standard 1: Commitment to Practicing Sustainable Forestry**

**Forest owner** demonstrates commitment to forest vitality by developing and implementing a sustainable forest management plan.

**Performance Measure:** Conformance shown through Tree Farmers actions.

**Performance Measure 1.1**

**Forest owner** must have and implement a written forest management plan consistent with the **size** of the forest and the **scale** and intensity of the forest activities.

**Underlined “must”:** required element

**Indicator:** Example of Tree Farmer’s action.

**Indicator 1.1.1**

**Management plan** must be active, adaptive, and embody the landowner’s current objectives, remain appropriate for the land certified, and reflect the current state of knowledge about forestry and natural resource management.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Standard 1

- Commitment to Practicing Sustainable Forestry
  - Must have a written management plan



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Required Plan Elements

- Forest health
- Soil
- Water
- Wood and fiber production
- Threatened and endangered species
- Special sites
- Invasive species
- Integrated pest management
- High conservation value forests

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Optional Plan Elements

- Prescribed fire
- Wetlands
- Desired species
- Recreation
- Aesthetic quality measures
- Biomass
- Carbon

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Standard 1: Case Study

- The landowner can not find his/her plan.



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Standard 1: Case Study

- The landowner has researched threatened and endangered species found around her Tree Farm using the Woodland Owners Resource on the Tree Farm website.
- No species were listed in her area.



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Standard 1: Case Study

- The landowner has researched threatened and endangered species found around her Tree Farm using the Woodland Owners Resource on the Tree Farm website.
- Species were listed in her area.



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Tree Farm Management Plans

- The management plan requirements of the 2010-2015 AFF Standards reflect the current forest stewardship plan guidelines



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Standard 2

- Compliance with Laws
  - Must comply with relevant laws
  - Must correct conditions that led to adverse regulatory actions



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Standard 2: Case Study

- The landowner was cited for not submitting a harvest permit for a past harvest.



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Standard 3

- Reforestation and Afforestation
  - Must ensure adequate stocking levels
  - Use of desired species



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Standard 3: Case Study

- A stand was harvested in 2005 and you see that it has not yet reached a proper stocking level.



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Standard 4

- Air, Water and Soil Protection
  - Must follow Best Management Practices (BMPs)



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Standard 4

- Air, Water and Soil Protection
  - Must consider Integrated Pest Management



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Standard 4

- Integrated Pest Management Techniques
  - Silvicultural
  - Mechanical
  - Biological
  - Chemical



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Standard 4: Case Study

- Landowner has applied Roundup to rid his forest of Tree of Heaven.



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Standard 4

- Air, Water and Soil Protection
  - Prescribed fire



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Standard 4: Case Study

- The landowner performed a prescribed fire last winter.



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Standard 5

- Fish, Wildlife and Biodiversity
  - Threatened and Endangered species
    - Research
    - Habitat
    - Management Activities



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Standard 5

- Fish, Wildlife and Biodiversity
  - Tree Farmer's desired species



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Standard 5

- Fish, Wildlife and Biodiversity
  - Should prevent, eradicate or control invasive species



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Standard 5

- Fish, Wildlife and Biodiversity
  - Rare species
  - High conservation value forests



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Standard 5: Case Study

- The Tree Farm has a stand of Hemlock that the landowner values because they consider it an old growth stand. They have identified the stand as a high conservation value forest.



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Standard 6

- Forest Aesthetics
  - Should apply visual quality measures
  - Compatibility with appropriate silvicultural practices



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Standard 6: Case Study

- The landowner has recently completed a clearcut on a portion of his tree farm that borders a busy interstate. He left a buffer strip of trees as a wildlife corridor and to block the view of the cut.



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Standard 7

- Protect Special Sites
  - Maintenance
  - Research, locate and identify



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## What is included in Special Sites?

- Historical
- Archeological
- Cultural
- Geological
- Biological
- Ecological



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Standard 7: Case Study

- The landowners have an old family gravesite on their Tree Farm. They have marked it off to protect it from any equipment to be used in their next thinning.



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Standard 8

- Forest Product Harvest and Other Activities
  - Using qualified professionals and contractors
  - Using contracts for harvests and other activities



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Standard 8

- Forest Product Harvests and Other Activities
  - Monitoring
  - Management plan
  - Sustainability



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Standard 8: Case Study

- The landowner would like to conduct a thinning on a stand that may be home to gopher tortoise.



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Standard 8: Case Study

- The landowner shows you a contract from their most recent harvest. It specifies that the logger will have completed an SFI logger training course offered by the SFI State Implementation Committee (SIC) before the harvest begins.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Standard 8: Case Study

- The landowner does not ask his logger for a contract for any harvests or other operations.



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Standard 8: Case Study

- You see that a landowner recently finished a harvest and the property has been high graded.



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Size  
Scale  
Intensity

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Guidance Document

- [www.treefarmssystem.org/2010Standards](http://www.treefarmssystem.org/2010Standards)
- Send questions to [certification@forestfoundation.org](mailto:certification@forestfoundation.org)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Part 3: The Role of a Tree Farm Inspector

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Who is eligible to be an Inspector?



Gene Newell, 2006 Western Regional Tree Farm Inspector of the Year

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Overview of Inspector Activities

- Engage Landowners
- Tree Farm Inspections
- Outreach and Education
- Recognition Nominations



Ryan Dawson, 2007 North Central Region Tree Farm Inspector of the Year

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## How do you maintain your Inspector Status?



Josh Stevens, 2008 North Central Regional Tree Farm Inspector of the Year

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Tree Farm Inspections

- Three Types of Inspections
  1. Initial
  2. Required sample
  3. Optional re-inspection



Connie Robinson-Clemons, 2009 North Central Regional Tree Farm Inspector of the Year

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Tree Farm Inspections

- Inspection protocol
  1. Review requirements of the Tree Farm program
  2. Review AFF Standards
  3. Inspect property
  4. Inspect management plan

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Tree Farm Inspections

- 1) Review requirements of the Tree Farm program
  - Does the landowner meet the program requirements?



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# Program Participation and Policies

## 2010

### CATEGORIES OF TREE FARM PARTICIPATION

There are six categories of participation in the American Tree Farm System: Certified, Pioneer, Member, Heritage, and Windbreak.

**Certified Tree Farm**: meets the AFF Standard, current inspection, within acreage limit (or falls under grandfather clause), non-industrial private forestland and meets AFF Board of Trustees approved Eligibility Rules.

**Pioneer Tree Farm**: designed for new Tree Farmers that do not meet AFF Standard, not ATFS Certified

**Member Tree Farm**: Tree Farms not inspected within the traditional five-year reinspection cycle. No additional properties have been added to the member category since December 31, 2005. These properties are no longer ATFS Certified. States have the option of reaching into the pool to bring the Member Tree Farms back into the system with an inspection.

**Heritage Tree Farm**: recognizes industrial forestland participation in ATFS, not ATFS Certified

**Windbreak Tree Farm**: recognizes properly placed windbreaks or shelterbelts, not ATFS Certified

**Demonstration Tree Farm**: recognizes sustainably forestry and outreach and education activities conducted on non-eligible lands.

#### **CERTIFIED TREE FARM – for most current certification documents, see [www.treefarmssystem.org](http://www.treefarmssystem.org)**

The Certified Tree Farm category is the highest level of participation in the program. ATFS Certification requires landowners to meet the AFF Standard and remain subject to an inspection under a yearly national sampling system after required initial inspection. Landowners must meet the ATFS eligibility requirements and own between 10 acres and no more than 20,000 contiguous acres. Properties between 10,000 – 20,000 contiguous acres must be certified through an Independently Managed Group (IMG) Organization or individually third-party certified by an ANAB accredited certification body. State committees may not bring new Tree Farms exceeding 10,000 contiguous acres into ATFS. All ATFS certified properties must meet the ATFS eligibility requirements.

The American Tree Farm System offers third party certification to lands meeting the ATFS Eligibility Requirements. Landowners have three options to ATFS certification. *Please refer to the Tree Farm website ([www.treefarmssystem.org/certification](http://www.treefarmssystem.org/certification)) for more information.*

1. Individual Third Party Certification
2. Group Certification through Independently Managed Group (IMG) Organizations
3. Group Certification through ATFS Regional State Programs

#### **PIONEER TREE FARM**

The Pioneer Tree Farm category allows interested landowners, who may not quite meet the AFF Standard, to participate in the American Tree Farm System. The Pioneer category also serves as a corrective action program for landowners who were found through an inspection or other contact to be out of conformance with the Standards and program requirements. Tree Farms out of conformance may be assigned to the Pioneer category if the landowners are committed to taking the steps necessary to bringing their management into conformance .

The goal of the Pioneer Tree Farm category is to provide landowners an opportunity to work towards certification, whether they are new to the Tree Farm system or were previously certified but must update their management. Pioneer status is an introductory level of participation in the program, however, is not a mandatory starting point for Tree Farmers meeting all requirements of ATFS Certification. Landowners meeting the AFF Standard should be considered for ATFS Certification.

#### **Requirements of Pioneer Tree Farm:**

1. Minimum of 10 and Maximum of 10,000 contiguous forested acres.
2. Meet the ATFS Eligibility Requirements.
3. Pioneer Tree Farms may have a written forest management plan, but the plan is not required prior to initial inspection and designation as a Pioneer Tree Farm. In order to achieve ATFS Certification, a Pioneer Tree Farmer must begin following a written plan that meets the AFF Standard before graduation to Certified status can occur.
4. Pioneer Tree Farms must meet the AFF Standard within five years or be removed from the program.
5. Pioneer Tree Farms may not display the Certified Tree Farm Sign. State committees may voluntarily develop a special letter or certificate acknowledging the Pioneer status. If Certified at a later date, Tree Farm Sign and certificate are provided.

### **MEMBER TREE FARM**

The Member Tree Farm category is a probationary level to maintain communications with previously Certified Tree Farms whose inspection has lapsed. Tree Farms could only lapse to Member status prior to the implementation of the national required sampling system in 2006. **There are no new Member Tree Farms.** State Tree Farm Committees are not responsible for maintaining communications with remaining Member Tree Farms, but may choose to do so. These properties are no longer considered Certified, but can be reinspected and if appropriate, recertified at any point. Member Tree Farms were those which had entered into this category automatically after the 6<sup>th</sup> year since last inspection (prior to implementation of sampling system).

### **HERITAGE TREE FARM**

The Heritage Tree Farm program recognizes industrial forestlands that have historically supported the American Tree Farm System. The forest industry has been a valued and supportive element of ATFS for over 65 years, and the Heritage Tree Farm program seeks to recognize these properties and organizations. Heritage Tree Farms are not ATFS Certified, yet may display the Heritage Tree Farm Sign for public relations purposes.

#### **Requirements of Heritage Tree Farm:**

1. Must currently be supporting ATFS.
2. Heritage Tree Farm Signs, if displayed, are purchased at cost by the participating company.

### **WINDBREAK TREE FARM**

In wide-open spaces such as the Plains States, wind can erode soils and cause problems for people, crops and animals. Properly placed windbreaks or shelterbelts can help reduce these effects. State Tree Farm Committees can choose to recognize Windbreak Tree Farms; however, these properties are not considered ATFS Certified unless they encompass at least 10 forested acres and meet the AFF Standard.

#### **Requirements of Windbreak Tree Farms:**

1. Area should be at least one (1) acre. Smaller areas of special merit can be considered at the committee's discretion.
2. Planted windbreaks must be at least three (3) years old.
3. The windbreak must be designed to protect soil, water, range, aesthetic quality, recreation, timber, fish and wildlife resources.
4. The planting must be protected from livestock damage, wildfire, insects, disease, rodents and other destructive influences.
5. Windbreaks should be properly maintained to enhance long-term health and productivity. In the process of thinning, weeding or replacing trees, every effort should be made to make use of cut trees for useful products.

### **DEMONSTRATION TREE FARM**

Whether small or large, State Tree Farm Committees may recognize excellent forestry on lands which do not meet the ATFS eligibility requirements as "Tree Farm Demonstration Areas." These properties may display the Tree Farm sign, but must carry an additional sign identifying the area as a demonstration area and include the wording, "Tree Farm Demonstration Area". Tree Farm Demonstration Areas will not be ATFS Certified and will not be

assigned a Tree Farm number.

**Requirements of Tree Farm Demonstration Areas:**

1. Area must be used to demonstrate sustainable forestry concepts.
2. State committee must apply to CFF Operating Committee for any new demonstration areas. *Reference document 1.4.4 for application.*

## Tree Farm Inspections

### 2) Review AFF Standards of Sustainability

- All Tree Farms must meet the AFF Standards to be certified



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Tree Farm Inspections

### 3) Inspect Property

- Look at the results of any recent management activities
- Be aware of water features, special sites, wildlife habitat
- Fill out the 004 form
- Include management recommendations on the 004 form

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Tree Farm Inspections

### 4) Inspect management plan



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Tree Farm Inspections

### 3 types of inspection results

1. Certified Tree Farm
2. Pioneer Tree Farm
3. Not appropriate for certification through ATFS (de-certification)



Wayne Young, 2009 National Tree Farm Inspector of the Year

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Tree Farm Inspections

### • 5 Reasons **not** to certify a property

1. Substandard
2. Deceased
3. Sold
4. Missing owner
5. No interest



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Inspection – Case Study 1

- Situation: Former Tree Farmer sells the property. Tree Farm property is decertified
- Why?



2009 STIHL photo contest submission

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Tree Farm Inspections



Arnie Friedl, 2009 Regional Tree Farm Inspector of the Year, Western Region

- Be the gate-keeper

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Initial Inspections

- Important step in verifying that a landowner meets the program requirements and is eligible and willing to participate
- After passing this inspection, the landowner is considered certified
- If the landowner is interested in the program but doesn't meet all the Standards, they can be placed in the Pioneer category

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Inspection – Case Study 2

- New landowner inquires about the Tree Farm program and arranges for an initial inspection. There is not a current management plan for the property. Landowner wants to become a Tree Farmer.
- What would you do as their inspector?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Required Sample Inspections

- Randomly sampled list of inspections that **must** be completed within the calendar year that they are assigned
- **Must** include a **field visit** unless the property was visited in the last 180 days and there has been no management activity since the visit.
- Incentives are available on a state by state basis for completion of the required sample inspections.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Inspection – Case Study 3

- The management plan lists management for commercial timber harvest as the primary objective. The landowner says that her main objective for the Tree Farm is to keep the property as a retreat for her family.
- What would you recommend as the inspector?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Optional Reinspection

- Initiated through the following:
  - 5 or 6 year rotations
  - Landowner request
  - State Committee determines additional need for inspections
  - Forester already on property, inspection can be done at any time

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Using the 004 Form

- What is the 004 form?



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## What parts are necessary for initial inspections?



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## What parts are necessary for required sample and optional inspections?



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## 004 Form: Using the Standards Checklist

- What is the Standards Checklist?
- How do you use it?
- Filling out the checklist

A small thumbnail image of the 004 Form Standards Checklist, showing a grid of checkboxes and text fields for various standards.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Tree Farm Inspections

Key parts of the form for inspections

1. Landowner and property information
2. Inspecting forester information
3. Field inspection and Tree Farmer interview dates
4. Forest Management activity descriptions
5. Management recommendations
6. Management plan location
7. Signatures

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Data Quality

- The ATFS database contains information on Tree Farmers and their Tree Farms
- The 004 Form must be filled out correctly and completely to help us maintain a credible set of data in the ATFS database

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# American Forest Foundation

## Tree Farm Inspection Record

AFF Form 004 Revised 3/10

State \_\_\_\_\_ Tree Farm Number \_\_\_\_\_

**Reinspection Only:**  Recertification  Pioneer  Decertification  
*Select a reason below*

**Initial Inspection Only:**  Pioneer  Certified  Deceased  Sold  No Interest  Substandard  Missing Owner

\*Field Inspection Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
 \*Tree Farmer Interview Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Type:  Field  Phone  Email

### Tree Farmer

Owner \_\_\_\_\_  
 Last or Organization Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_ MI \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ ST \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

### Tree Farm

Ownership  Private (Non-Industrial)  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Acreage \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

Property Legal Address\* \_\_\_\_\_

Directions to Property \_\_\_\_\_

GPS Coordinates \_\_\_\_\_

Absentee landowner?  Yes  No

### Inspecting Forester

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_ MI \_\_\_\_\_

ID # \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

### Recommendations

Harvest Method.....

Stand Improvement.....

Reforestation.....

Protection.....

Wildlife.....

Recreation/Access .....

### Management Plan Location:

### Notes:



### Recent Forest Management Activity \*

Harvest Method	Acres	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Coppice.....	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Even-Aged.....	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Uneven-Aged.....	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Other.....	_____	_____
Total Volume MBF	_____	_____
<b>Stand Improvement</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Thinning.....	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Pruning.....	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Fertilization.....	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Vegetation Control	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Other.....	_____	_____
<b>Reforestation</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Natural.....	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Seeded/Planted.....	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Other.....	_____	_____
<b>Protection</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Fire.....	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Insect.....	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Disease.....	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Erosion Control.....	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Other.....	_____	_____
<b>Wildlife</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Food Plots.....	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Shelter/Habitat.....	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Other.....	_____	_____
<b>Recreation/Access.....</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Trails/Roads.....	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Scenic Value.....	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Other.....	_____	_____

### Authorization

\* State Approval \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Certification Approved:  Yes  No

Regional Approval \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Certification Recommended:  Yes  No

\* Inspecting Forester<sup>1</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Certification Recommended:  Yes  No

Tree Farmer<sup>2</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

1. See last page for AFF Standards of Sustainability Standards Checklist.  
 2. Signature affirms compliance with all relevant laws/regulations and permits agents of ATFS ingress and egress for inspection/verification purposes.  
 + = Optional Info \* **Must fill out for required sample inspections**

# American Forest Foundation Standards of Sustainability - Standards Checklist

Performance Measure / Indicator	Y	N	N/A
---------------------------------	---	---	-----

**PM 1.1:** Forest owner **must** have and implement a written forest management plan consistent with the size of the forest and the scale and intensity of the forest activities.

I 1.1.1: Management plan **must** be active, adaptive, and embody the landowner's current objectives, remain appropriate for the land certified, and reflect the current state of knowledge about forestry and natural resource management.

I 1.1.2: Management plans **must** include: clearly state landowner's objectives, describe desired forest condition, include management activities aimed at reaching the desired forest condition and landowner's objectives, document a feasible strategy for activity implementation, and include a tract map accurately depicting significant forest related resources.

**REQUIRED:** Where present, and relevant to the property, the plan **must** address the following resource elements: forest health, soil, water, wood and fiber production, threatened and endangered species, special sites, invasive species, integrated pest management, and high conservation value forests.

**SUGGESTED:** Where present, relevant to the property, and consistent with landowner's objectives, the plan preparer may consider, describe and evaluate the following resource elements: fire, wetlands, desired species (fish, wildlife and plant), recreation, aesthetic quality, biomass and carbon.

I 1.1.3: Forest owner should monitor for changes that could interfere with the management objectives as stated in management plan (e.g., presence of invasive species, pest outbreaks, and indications of trespass). When problems are found, reasonable actions are taken.

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

**PM 2.1:** Forest owner **must** comply with all relevant federal, state, county, and municipal laws, regulations, and ordinances.

I 2.1.1: Forest owner **must** comply with all relevant laws, regulations and ordinances and will correct conditions that led to adverse regulatory actions, if any.

I 2.1.2: Forest owner should obtain advice from appropriate professionals, or contractors who are trained in, and familiar with, relevant laws, regulations and ordinances.

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

**PM 3.1:** Reforestation or afforestation **must** be achieved by a suitable process that ensures adequate stocking levels.

I 3.1.1: Harvested forest land **must** achieve adequate stocking of desired species reflecting the forest owner's management objectives, within five years after harvest, or within a time interval as specified by applicable regulation.

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

**PM 4.1:** Forest owner **must** meet or exceed practices prescribed by State Forestry Best Management Practices (BMPs) that are applicable to the property.

I 4.1.1: Forest owner **must** implement specific BMPs that are applicable to the property.

I 4.1.2: Forest owner **must** minimize road construction and other disturbances within riparian zones and wetlands.

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

**PM 4.2:** Forest owner **must** consider integrated pest management to control pests, pathogens and unwanted vegetation

I 4.2.1: Forest owner should evaluate alternatives to manage pest, pathogens and unwanted vegetation to achieve specific management objectives.

I 4.2.2: Pesticides used **must** be EPA-approved.

I 4.2.3: Pesticides must be applied, stored and disposed of in accordance with EPA-approved labels and by persons appropriately trained, licensed and supervised.

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

**PM 4.3:** When used, prescribed fire **must** conform with forest owner's objectives, the forest management plan and pre-fire planning.

I 4.3.1: Prescribed fire **must** conform with the management plan and state and local laws and regulations.

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

<i>Required Information</i>	33
Landowner's Last Name _____	
State _____	Tree Farm Number _____
Inspector's Initials _____	

# American Forest Foundation Standards of Sustainability - Standards Checklist

Performance Measure / Indicator	Y	N	N/A
<b>PM 5.1:</b> Forest management activities <b>must</b> maintain or enhance habitat for threatened or endangered communities and species.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I 5.1.1: Forest owner <b>must</b> confer with natural resource agencies, state natural resource heritage programs or review other sources of information to determine occurrences of threatened and endangered species on the property and their habitat requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
I 5.1.2: Forest management activities <b>must</b> incorporate measures to protect identified threatened and endangered species.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments _____			
<b>PM 5.2:</b> Forest owner should address the desired species (fish, aquatic, wildlife, and plant) and/or desired forest communities in the management plan and forest management activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I 5.2.1: Forest owner should consult available and accessible information on management of the forest for desired species (fish, aquatic, wildlife, and plant) and/or forest communities and integrate it into forest management.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments _____			
<b>PM 5.3:</b> Forest owner should make practical efforts to prevent, eradicate or otherwise control invasive species.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I 5.3.1: Forest owner should make practical efforts to prevent, eradicate or otherwise control invasive species using a range of integrated pest management methods	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments _____			
<b>PM 5.4:</b> Forest management activities should maintain or enhance rare species and high conservation value forests.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I 5.4.1: Appropriate to the scale and intensity of the situation, forest management activities should incorporate measures to protect or mitigate impacts on rare species and identified high conservation value forests.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments _____			
<b>PM 6.1:</b> Forest owner should manage the visual impacts of forest management activities consistent with the size of the forest, the scale and intensity of forest management activities and the location of the property.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I 6.1.1: Forest management activities should apply visual quality measures compatible with appropriate silvicultural practices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments _____			
<b>PM 7.1:</b> Forest management activities <b>must</b> maintain special sites.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I 7.1.1: Forest owner <b>must</b> make a reasonable effort to locate and protect special sites appropriate for the size of the forest and the scale and intensity of forest management activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Comments _____			
<b>PM 8.1:</b> Forest owner should use qualified natural resource professionals and qualified contractors when contracting for services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I 8.1.1: Forest owner should seek qualified natural resource professionals and qualified contractors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I 8.1.2: Forest owner should engage contractors that carry appropriate insurance and comply with appropriate federal, state and local safety and fair labor rules, regulations and standard practices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I 8.1.3: Forest owner should retain appropriate contracts for forest product harvests and other management activities to demonstrate conformance to the AFF Standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments _____			
<b>PM 8.2:</b> Forest owner <b>must</b> monitor forest product harvests and other management activities to ensure they conform to the management plan objectives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
I 8.2.1: Harvest, utilization, removal and other management activities <b>must</b> be conducted in compliance with the management plan and maintain the potential of the property to produce forest products and other benefits sustainably.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments _____			

<b>Landowner's Last Name</b> _____	<i>Required Information</i>	34
<b>State</b> _____ <b>Tree Farm Number</b> _____	<b>Inspector's Initials</b> _____	

# Completing the Tree Farm Inspection Form

(004 Inspection Form including Standards Checklist)

*Print all information except signatures*

## General Guidelines:

- 1) **Signatures** – Inspecting forester and state representative signatures are required on all forms. Inspecting forester initials are required on the Standards Checklist. All initial inspections must have the Tree Farmer’s signature on the form.
- 2) **Contact information** – Unless the information is recorded in the pre-populated portion of the form (unless the form is blank for an initial inspection or optional reinspection) be sure to fill in the necessary information.
- 3) **Form completeness** – Please review all items on the 004 inspection form. Please be sure to check all appropriate boxes on the Standards Checklist, fill in all dates necessary and include comments where appropriate. *If the form is not complete, a state committee representative or ATFS staff will be in contact for the missing information.*

## Form Sections:

### 1) Pre-populated information

- Required sample forms and some optional inspection forms (5-6 year reinspections) will have pre-populated information in upper left-hand box below the Tree Farm number information. Review the pre-populated information for completeness and correctness. If the information is correct, leave the Tree Farmer and Tree Farm boxes blank (right side of the form below the inspection information). If necessary, update in the Tree Farmer and Tree Farm boxes.

### 2) Inspection

- For initial inspections, fill in the appropriate checkbox in the Initial Inspection box.
- For National Required Sample and optional inspections, indicate if the inspection results in a recertification, decertification (if so, indicate reason), or if the Tree Farm has been designated a Pioneer Tree Farm (more information under *Program Policies and Procedures*).

### 3) Tree Farmer contact

- For initial inspections, record landowner’s name (Organization or Tree Farm name must be accompanied by a contact name) and primary mailing address.
- For reinspections, confirm contact information with landowner.
- If available, be sure to record additional information such as email and phone.

### 4) Tree Farm

- Record ownership type (if other, please provide details).
- Acreage refers to forested acreage to be certified.
- If the Tree Farm lies in multiple counties, please include primary county in this section, and detail additional counties with acreage in the **notes** section.
- “Property Legal Address” refers to the legal location of the property, e.g. section, township and range

- “Directions to Property” refers to the local directions to help guide future inspectors and third-party assessors to the property if necessary
  - GPS coordinates – please record in any form if available. Central point locations are sufficient.
  - Be sure to indicate if the landowner is an absentee owner.
- 5) Inspecting Forester**
- May be left blank if the pre-populated information in the left-hand side box is correct.
- 6) Forest Management Activity**
- Check all boxes that apply to recent forest management activity (in past five years or since last inspection).
  - Be sure to include descriptive comments on the activity performed if applicable.
- 7) Recommendations**
- Enter brief description of recommendations as appropriate.
- 8) Management Plan Location**
- Use this space to indicate if the landowner holds a current copy of the management plan, or if there it is held by a representative, such as a consulting forester or state agency office.
  - Indicate when the plan was last reviewed, updated or revised.
- 9) Notes**
- Provide any necessary explanations or general notes
  - Include any interesting information about the Tree Farm or Tree Farmer not appropriate elsewhere on the form (e.g. Landowner hosts field days for the local
- 10) Authorization**
- Tree Farmer must sign form if it is an initial inspection. Recommended for all other inspections as well.
  - Inspecting forester must sign all forms, and initial Standards checklist.
  - State approval is required on all forms
  - Must include dates of approval.
- 11) Standards Checklist**
- Review each Standard element (Performance measures and indicators) and check appropriate response box.
    - i.** Y (yes) – Indicates that an activity pertaining to the element has been completed and was in conformance (e.g. landowner has a management plan that meets the requirements of PM 1.1)
    - ii.** N (no) – indicates that an activity pertaining to the element has been completed but was not in conformance (e.g. landowner has not reforested within five years and is not in conformance with I 3.1.1)
    - iii.** N/A (not applicable) – No activity has been completed that pertains to the element (e.g. landowner does not conduct any prescribed burning on the Tree Farm and inspector checks N/A for PM 4.3)
  - All lines must have some check in any of the three checkboxes. Be sure to check the boxes for indicators (I) as well as performance measures (PM)

## Phone only inspection guidelines

- Phone only inspection guidelines apply to eligible required sample inspections and optional reinspections

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Questions – Inspection Types



2002 National Tree Farmer Convention – North Carolina

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Part 4: Certification

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## The Value of ATFS Certification

“A growing number of consumers prefer wood and paper that come from internationally recognized certified forests”

David Ford, chaired the Standards Review Panel and is a professional forester, a Tree Farmer, and executive director of the Oregon Small Woodlands Association.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Three Options for Certification

1. State Tree Farm Committees
2. Independently Managed Group (IMG) programs
3. Individual Third-party Certificate Holders

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Two levels of Certification



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Third-Party Assessments

- Why do we have third party assessments?
- What happens during third party assessments?

---

---

---

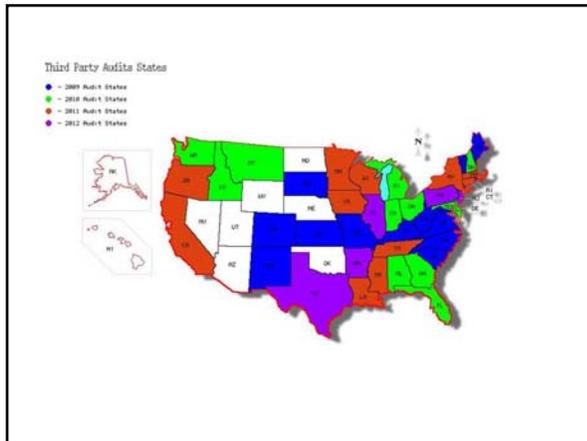
---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

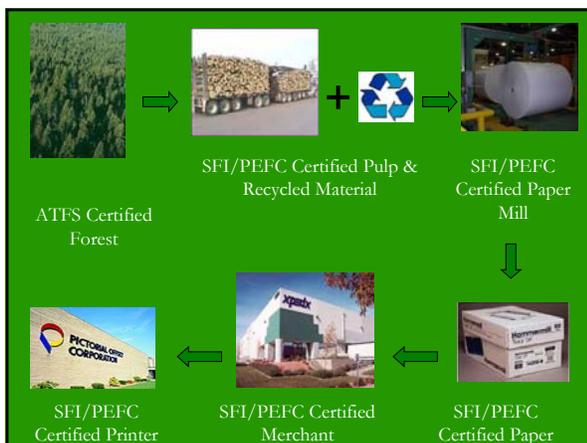
---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Chain-of-Custody

- ATFS Online Verification Database
- ATFS logo



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Part 5: Recognition

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Recognition Programs

- Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Recognition Programs

- National Tree Farm Inspector of the Year



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Recognition Programs

- ATFS Leadership Award



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Recognition Programs

- Hard Hat Awards
- Conservation Forestry Award
- National Association of State Foresters

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# Part 6 - Resources

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Inspector Resources

- Inspector Manual
- ATFS Website:
  - Inspector's Corner ([www.treefarmssystem.org/inspectorscorner](http://www.treefarmssystem.org/inspectorscorner))
  - Woodland Owners Resource ([www.treefarmssystem.org/woodlandresources](http://www.treefarmssystem.org/woodlandresources))
  - Certification ([www.treefarmssystem.org/certification](http://www.treefarmssystem.org/certification))
- State Tree Farm Committees
- Communications:
  - Sightline
  - Sightline Express
  - *Tree Farmer* Magazine
  - Forests and Families

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Landowner Resources

- Communications
  - *Tree Farmer* Magazine
  - Forest and Families Newsletter
- National Tree Farmer Convention
- Farm Bill Brochure for Forest Landowners
- Woodland Owners Resource:  
[www.treefarmssystem.org/woodlandresources](http://www.treefarmssystem.org/woodlandresources)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# ATFS Resources

The following is a list of available resources for Inspectors and Tree Farmers. If you have any questions at all, please contact ATFS staff at [inspectors@forestfoundation.org](mailto:inspectors@forestfoundation.org).

## **Websites:**

American Forest Foundation Website – [www.forestfoundation.org](http://www.forestfoundation.org)

Tree Farm Website – [www.treefarmssystem.org](http://www.treefarmssystem.org)

- Certification – [www.treefarmssystem.org/certification](http://www.treefarmssystem.org/certification)  
*Look here for information on certification programs and procedures*
- Recognition programs – [www.treefarmssystem.org/recognition](http://www.treefarmssystem.org/recognition)  
*Look here for information on Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year, Inspector of the Year, and Hard Hat awards*
- Standards – [www.treefarmssystem.org/2010standards](http://www.treefarmssystem.org/2010standards)  
*Look here for more information on the 2010-2015 Standards and associated documents such as the Standards Guidance document*
- Woodland Owners Resource – [www.treefarmssystem.org/woodlandresources](http://www.treefarmssystem.org/woodlandresources)  
*The Woodland Owners is your one stop shop for researching special sites and other items covered by the 2010 Standards. This site is organized by state and includes primary contact information for each state committee.*
- Inspectors' Corner – [www.treefarmssystem.org/inspectorscorner](http://www.treefarmssystem.org/inspectorscorner)  
*Visit the Inspectors' Corner for past issues of the Sightline and Sightline Express newsletters, award nomination forms, and 004 inspection forms.*

## ***What are these various resources?***

### Standards Guidance Document

The Standards Guidance document is a guide for landowners on how to implement the 2010-2015 Standards on their Tree Farm and for inspectors on how to assess Tree Farmer conformance to the Standards.

### Tree Farmer Magazine

All ATFS inspectors receive a free, annual subscription to the Tree Farmer Magazine. This magazine provides practical, how-to and hands-on information that helps Tree Farmers get the most out of their woodlands.

### Forests & Families

The Forests & Families newsletter is published 2-3 a year and sent to all certified Tree Farmers. Forests & Families includes ATFS programmatic updates and other informative articles.

### Sightline

The Sightline newsletter accompanies the Forests & Families newsletter and is developed exclusively for ATFS inspectors. Read here for information on the ATFS program and for answers to your questions in the “Stumped” column.

### Sightline Express

New in 2009, Sightline Express, our e-newsletter to inspectors, is a quick monthly update on all things Tree Farm.

## Grassroots Network

- Stay up-to-date on current legislation that will affect you and woodland owners
- Have your voice heard on Capitol Hill
- Join our Grassroots Network:  
<http://www.forestfoundation.org/public.html>

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Tree Farm Signs

- 2 types available:
  - Certified Family Forest
  - Certified Tree Farm
- Landowners can order additional signs online:  
[www.treefarmssystem.org/ordersigns](http://www.treefarmssystem.org/ordersigns)



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Logos

- Tree Farm
- Family Forest
- PEFC Logo



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## **RULES FOR USE OF AFF's AMERICAN TREE FARM SYSTEM® OWNED LOGO REGISTERED MARKS**

The American Forest Foundation, Inc. (AFF) is the owner of the following service and collective marks (hereafter referred to as the “marks/registered marks”).



American Tree Farm System®

Wood Water Wildlife Recreation Certified Tree Farm®



Wood Water Wildlife Recreation Certified Family Forest®

### American Tree Farm System Marks

AFF owns all right, title and interest in the foregoing marks and exercises legitimate control over the use of the marks.

The purpose of these marks is to indicate membership in the American Tree Farm System (ATFS) collective group that is dedicated to the promotion of forest management. Any other use of these marks by individuals, organizations, or businesses is strictly prohibited.

1. AFF authorizes its ATFS state committees, qualified trained ATFS inspectors, certified ATFS Tree Farmers, Certification bodies that are ANAB accredited to perform ATFS audits, and certified Independently Managed Group (IMG) Organizations, and designated others to use the above listed marks provided the following conditions and limitations are strictly adhered to:
  - A. “American Tree Farm System®” the diamond shaped logo, and “Wood Water Wildlife Recreation Certified Tree Farm” and “Wood Water Wildlife Recreation Certified Family Forest” are registered marks and must be accompanied by a registration symbol ® to indicate that AFF owns the marks.
2. The registered marks may be used by ATFS state committees, qualified trained ATFS inspectors, certified ATFS Tree Farmers, certification bodies that are ANAB accredited to perform ATFS audits, certified IMG organizations, and designated others:

- A. In marketing/advertising materials that focus on a summary of ATFS accomplishments or values, community activities, or any combination of the above. Such marketing and/or advertising may not endorse or promote product attributes or make value propositions. If the marks appear on any marketing/advertising materials, the following text must also appear (8 point type is acceptable).

**No endorsement of this product or service by the American Forest Foundation or the American Tree Farm System® is implied or intended.**

- B. In communications which explain and/or promote the American Tree Farm System, its services and/or participation in ATFS to various external and internal audiences.
- C. On business letterhead and business cards.
- D. In annual reports.
- E. On websites. However, individuals of ATFS state committees may not use the marks unless they meet the requirements of ATFS.

See Appendix for examples.

4. When making written reference to membership in ATFS, ATFS dedication to the promotion of forest management, or when otherwise using the registered marks, the following statement **must** be included (8 point type is acceptable):

**The American Tree Farm System® is a program of the American Forest Foundation.**

5. AFF grants permission to ATFS state committees, qualified trained ATFS inspectors, certified ATFS Tree Farmers, certification bodies that are ANAB accredited to perform ATFS audits, certified IMG Organizations, and designated others to link to the ATFS website, [www.treefarmssystem.org](http://www.treefarmssystem.org) and the AFF website [www.forestfoundation.org](http://www.forestfoundation.org).
6. The registered marks may **not** appear or be used directly on any:
- Commercial product
  - Commercial product packaging
  - Commercial advertising or marketing materials
  - Commercial wood products
7. The registered marks may be used on promotional items (e.g., clothing, hats, desk/ office accessories, and mugs) provided that written permission is obtained from the American Forest Foundation prior to design and production. Layout, design, and artwork must be submitted to AFF's Communications Department to obtain written permission.

8. Use of the marks must comply with following requirements:
  - A. In presentations of the registered marks the color can be either black or green PMS 349. A reverse out of the diamond shaped logo mark is **not** allowed.
  - B. The ATFS marks may **not** be recreated or altered in any way. The marks are available in high resolution for production purposes.
  - C. The marks may not be combined with any other logo or image in such a way as to create a third logo or mark.
  - D. The mark should have adequate clear space around it to ensure its clarity.
9. AFF reserves the right to request samples of all uses of the registered marks. AFF has the right to disapprove the use of the marks. Each ATFS state committee, qualified trained ATFS inspector, certified ATFS Tree Farmer, certification bodies that are ANAB accredited to perform ATFS audits, certified IMG Organization, or designated others may be asked to identify a “registered mark contact” to whom AFF may direct inquiries and requests for sample use.
10. If AFF determines that an ATFS state committee, qualified trained ATFS inspector, certified ATFS Tree Farmer, certification bodies that are ANAB accredited to perform ATFS audits, certified IMG Organization, or designated others shall immediately report such improper use to the ATFS state committee, qualified trained ATFS inspector, certified ATFS Tree Farmer, ANAB accredited Certification Body, or certified IMG Organization thirty (30) days in which to make a correction. Failure to make the correction will result in revocation of the right to use the marks.
11. In the event of misuse of the ATFS registered marks, an ATFS state committee, qualified trained ATFS inspector, certified ATFS Tree Farmer, certification bodies that are ANAB accredited to perform ATFS audits, certified IMG Organization, or designated others shall immediately report such improper use to the AFF Communications Department.
12. The American Forest Foundation strictly prohibits the use of its marks for any purpose by individuals, organizations or businesses other than ATFS state committees, qualified trained ATFS inspectors, certified ATFS Tree Farmers, certification bodies that are ANAB accredited to perform ATFS audits, certified IMG organizations, and designated others.

For more information on usage of these marks please contact:

Brigitte Johnson, APR  
Director of Communications  
American Forest Foundation  
1111 Nineteenth Street, NW  
Suite 780  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
Phone: 202.463.5163  
Fax: 202.463.2461  
Email: [bjohnson@forestfoundation.org](mailto:bjohnson@forestfoundation.org)

# Part 7: Wrap Up

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

- ### What we have covered!
- 2010-2015 AFF Standards of Sustainability
  - What it means to be a volunteer Tree Farm inspector.
  - How to conduct a Tree Farm inspection.
  - What is certification?
  - Recognition programs
  - Resources

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

- ### Benefits of the Tree Farm Program
- Benefits for landowners
    - Information on sustainable forest management
    - Community of Tree Farmers
    - Newsletters, magazines, Tree Farm website
    - Representation on important policy issues



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Remember: Benefits to Inspectors

- Connection to landowners
- Supporting sustainable forest management
- Recognition
- Communications



Inspector Wayne Pfluger, working on a prescribed fire in Texas

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Questions after this workshop

- Tree Farm website – [www.treefarmssystem.org](http://www.treefarmssystem.org)
- State Tree Farm Committee
  - [www.treefarmssystem.org/stateleaders](http://www.treefarmssystem.org/stateleaders)
- ATFS staff

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Inspector Manual

- The ultimate resource on how to be a Tree Farm inspector
- Includes information on:
  - Inspections
  - Forms
  - Recognition programs
  - General program information

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Final questions?



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### ATFS Core Mission

To Get More Good Forestry on  
More Acres and Keep it There



Sustainability is end result of a  
long process of education,  
outreach, technical assistance  
and professional contact.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Thank You!



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# American Forest Foundation (AFF) 2010- 2015 Standards of Sustainability for Forest Certification

## Standards Prologue

The American Forest Foundation's (AFF) 2010-2015 Standards of Sustainability for Forest Certification promote the vitality of renewable forest resources while protecting environmental, economic and social benefits and work to increase public understanding of all benefits of sustainable forestry. They are based on North American and Pan-European guidelines for **sustainable forest management**, encourage **adaptive management**, and serve as the basis for the American Tree Farm System® (ATFS) certification program. **Forest owners** and managers who follow the AFF Standards of Sustainability are encouraged to promote the American Tree Farm System® program by displaying appropriate signs and participating in relevant program activities.

The AFF 2010-2015 Standards of Sustainability address aspects of **sustainable forest management** and incorporate eight standards with various performance measures and indicators. ATFS **qualified Tree Farm inspectors, group managers, and accredited third-party assessors** will conduct field verification of **landowner** conformance to the AFF Standards as prescribed by ATFS policies and procedures. All AFF **sustainability** elements (standards, performance measures and indicators) are important and will be considered in reviews. Responsibilities, task, or obligations that are phrased with the word "*must*," are core elements that are required to be certified by the American Tree Farm System. *Note: **Bold type** throughout this document denotes words or phrases defined in the attached glossary. An asterisk symbol (\*) indicates guidance provided in the appendix document.*

This document was prepared at the direction of the AFF Board of Trustees. It was developed by the 2008-2009 Independent Standards Review Panel under the process described by the AFF Standards Setting Procedures. Guidance documents (third-party auditing, internal monitoring, and **landowner** guidance) for implementation and interpretations will be used to clarify requirements of the Standards.

Guidance: Please note that all of the indicators for a Performance Measure apply to each property being certified to the 2010 Standard.

The guidance statements are intended to inform the landowner, the inspector and the third-party auditor as to the intent of the Standard. Guidance statements are not the Standard.

Inspectors and auditors are cautioned to apply the Standard as written, avoiding personal preference. Inspectors and auditors are urged to respect the forest owner's opportunity for creative solutions embodied in the Standard.

## Standard 1: Commitment to Practicing Sustainable Forestry

**Forest owner** demonstrates commitment to **forest vitality** by developing and implementing a sustainable forest **management plan**.

### Performance Measure 1.1

**Forest owner** must have and implement a written forest **management plan** consistent with the size of the forest and the **scale** and intensity of the forest activities.

Guidance: Landowner objectives for managing the subject property must be stated in the plan document. The management plan may be comprised of several separate documents that, taken together, comprise the management plan.

#### *Indicator 1.1.1*

**Management plan** must be active, adaptive, and embody the **landowner's** current objectives, remain appropriate for the land certified, and reflect the current state of knowledge about forestry and natural resource management.

Guidance: The management plan must conform to the intent of the landowner's objectives. For example: if the landowner's objective is to increase the occurrence of wild turkey on the property, the management plan is expected to prescribe management activities that will enhance, or at least maintain, suitable wild turkey habitat. Landowner objectives are concise, high-level, statements of what the landowner hopes to accomplish through their management. The detail for achieving the objectives will be reflected in the body of the plan.

Plan detail should reflect the forest and habitat complexity of the property as well as the management intensity planned for the property. The Standard does not require a prescribed management plan information structure or hierarchy. The plan preparer has considerable latitude in developing the plan at a level of complexity that meets the landowner's objectives and provides for an accurate method of prescribing any planned treatments or activities to the forest property or its component parts.

The nature of adaptive management requires that the landowner not be bound to follow the management plan prescriptions when circumstances influencing the property and its management have changed or when the landowner's objectives change. Examples of such changes would include regeneration-harvest of significant portions of the timber, the sale or acquisition of lands included in the certificate and major damage from: storms, fire, pest or disease outbreaks.

Handwritten notes to the plan are acceptable as indications of updates to the plan for individual properties. A more formal or structured system for recording plan changes is to be expected with larger collections of properties whether under one ownership or part of a Group Management structure. A Group Manager is expected to have a system in place that will allow timely retrieval and editing of management plans under its authority and responsibility.

While the plan is not expected to address all possible facets of state-of-the-art forestry or habitat management, the plan is expected to avoid commonly accepted poor forestry or wildlife management practices. For Example: A plan that prescribes practices to maximize short term income should not compromise long term forest health or productivity.

*Indicator 1.1.2*

**Management plans must:** clearly state **landowner's** objectives, describe desired forest condition, include management activities aimed at reaching the desired forest condition and **landowner's** objectives, document a feasible strategy for activity implementation, and include a tract map accurately depicting significant forest related resources.

Where present, and relevant to the property, the plan must address the following resource elements: forest health, soil, water, wood and fiber production, threatened and endangered species, **special sites, invasive species, integrated pest management, and high conservation value forests.**

Where present, relevant to the property, and consistent with **landowner's** objectives, the plan preparer may consider, describe and evaluate the following resource elements: fire, wetlands, **desired species** (fish, wildlife and plant), recreation, aesthetic quality, biomass and carbon.

Guidance: The plan must clearly state what type of forest conditions (i.e. fast growing conifer plantations, mixed hardwood bottomland forests, older forests of longleaf pine, etc...) the landowner is attempting to achieve, as well as the practices that will be used to achieve the conditions.

The plan must specifically mention the required topics (landowner objectives, forest health, soil, water, wood and fiber production, threatened and endangered species, special sites, invasive species, integrated pest management, and high conservation value forests). If there is no occurrence of an attribute on the required topic list (threatened and endangered species, special sites, invasive species, high conservation value forests) the plan may simply say that the attribute is not present on the subject property. (see Standards 4, 5 and 7)

Integrated Pest Management (see glossary) needs only to be addressed if there is a pest or disease outbreak on the property that warrants management action.

The plan may mention attributes from the optional list (fire, wetlands, desired species, recreation, aesthetic quality, biomass and carbon) if they are present or desired by the forest owner. If the topic is mentioned, the plan must address that property attribute in some way.

There is no requirement for level of detail in the plan. Addressing the attribute may be as simple as saying that "the attribute will be protected during all forest operations in compliance with applicable regulations". Alternately, the plan preparer may provide a detailed description of the management actions or protections specific to the attribute.

It is understood that property recently covered by a written management plan will not necessarily have evidence of plan performance.

*Indicator 1.1.3\**

**Forest owner** should monitor for changes that could interfere with the management objectives as stated in **management plan** (e.g., presence of **invasive species**, pest outbreaks, and indications of trespass). When problems are found, reasonable actions are taken.

Guidance: Monitoring for individual landowners can be achieved by visiting the property at least once per year, riding through it or walking the trails. Landowners are encouraged to walk their property boundary lines.

Landowners are encouraged to keep a written record of monitoring observations to defend themselves from adverse possession claims, substantiate any casualty losses and enable them to make timely response to trespass, illegal dumping, timber theft and insect or disease outbreaks. Records of monitoring may be informal and can be included in the management plan documentation.

Landowners may commission someone else to do their monitoring for them.

Landowners who cannot readily visit their property(s) on a regular basis, as well as Independently Managed Groups, are expected to have a documented record of property visits and monitoring observations.

Landowner records of management activities, over time, should give evidence that the landowner is responding to information inputs from monitoring.

## Standard 2: Compliance with Laws

Forest management activities comply with all relevant federal, state and local laws, regulations and ordinances.

### Performance Measure 2.1

**Forest owner must** comply with all relevant federal, state, county, and municipal laws, regulations, and ordinances.

Guidance: It is recommended that landowners employ the maxim “When in doubt, ask”.

Common forest management activities that are regulated in many states include: state and federally protected species and their habitat, prescribed burning, herbicide and insecticide application, harvesting, road building, pond construction and stream crossings.

Excellent professional resources are available to the forest owner at local natural resource agency offices. Please consult the resource pages for forest owners, on the ATFS website, for additional help on relevant federal and state laws and regulations.

Compliance with all relevant (applicable) laws can be verified in a three-tiered process:

- Step 1 – Observation of conditions on the subject property
- Step 2 – The landowner’s own verbal or written claim of legal compliance
- Step 3 – Research with the state Department of Natural Resources, local Natural Resource Conservation Service office or State Forestry Commission offices

If Step 1 and Step 2 do not raise any issues, then the inspector or auditor is not required to employ Step 3.

### *Indicator 2.1.1*

**Forest owner must** comply with all relevant laws, regulations and ordinances and will correct conditions that led to **adverse regulatory actions**, if any.

Guidance: Full legal compliance to relevant laws, regulations and ordinances is the intent of the Standard. Mistakes may occur in carrying out forest management activities. Forest owners must be committed to correcting inadvertent violations. A pattern of willful violation of relevant laws, regulations or ordinances is not acceptable.

If there is evidence of past non-conformance (see Guidance for 2.1), then the landowner must show proof of a good-faith effort to remedy the non-conformance. If the matter is tied up in court, then the landowner is only disqualified when a final adverse judgment is rendered AND the landowner refuses to comply with the ruling.

*Indicator 2.1.2*

**Forest owner** should obtain advice from appropriate professionals, or contractors who are trained in, and familiar with, relevant laws, regulations and ordinances.

Guidance: Regulatory compliance advice from untrained, non-professionals is discouraged and can lead to costly mistakes.

### **Standard 3: Reforestation and Afforestation**

**Forest owner** completes timely restocking of **desired species** of trees on harvested sites and non-stocked areas where tree growing is consistent with land use practices and the **forest owner's** management objectives.

Performance Measure 3.1

Reforestation or afforestation must be achieved by a suitable process that ensures adequate stocking levels.

*Indicator 3.1.1*

Harvested forest land must achieve adequate stocking of **desired species** reflecting the **forest owner's** management objectives, within five years after harvest, or within a time interval as specified by applicable regulation.

Guidance: The landowner should ask their natural resource professional or check with the state agency responsible for forestry assistance to find out if there is a reforestation law in place, and if so, to ensure compliance with it.

Adequate stocking levels for planted tree stocks are prescribed by federal and state reforestation cost-share programs and can be used as a guide even where cost-share funds were not used. However, certain wildlife habitat management regimes may favor lower stocking rates than the cost-share program guidelines do. Therefore, it is important to make sure the chosen guidelines fit the forest conditions and are consistent with landowner objectives.

Natural regeneration stocking assessments should account for both softwood and hardwood regeneration.

Please refer to the ATFS website for further stocking guide resources.

## Standard 4: Air, Water, and Soil Protection

Forest management practices maintain or enhance the environment and ecosystems, including air, water, soil and site quality.

### Performance Measure 4.1

**Forest owner must meet or exceed practices prescribed by State Forestry Best Management Practices (BMPs) that are applicable to the property.**

Guidance: State Forestry BMP compliance is required by the Standard in all states. Forest owners are urged to secure a copy of the state forestry BMP guide from their state forestry agency and to familiarize themselves with the guidelines in it for harvesting, road building, reforestation, habitat management and other forest activities. For many states this information is available free on-line and in printed format.

For states with Forest Practice Acts the statutes, administrative rules, and guidance for the Acts is considered the equivalent of BMP's. Where the AFF standard reads BMP, the inspector or auditor should reference the Forest Practice Act in states where present.

### *Indicator 4.1.1*

**Forest owner must implement specific BMPs that are applicable to the property.**

Guidance: When planning management activities that will cause any soil disturbance or require chemical application, the BMP manual for the state that the property is located in should be consulted and applicable BMP methods employed. Examples of activities requiring BMP application:

- Harvest planning – including block design, haul roads, skidder trails, stream crossings and truck-loading areas
- Reforestation design – mechanical or chemical site preparation, machine or hand planting
- Road maintenance or construction – all facets
- Prescribed burning plans – fire lane construction, smoke management, agency notification

No field evidence of BMP implementation is to be expected where no management activity has occurred. However, if the property shows evidence of water quality impairment originating on the property, that is not caused by the forest owner's actions, the forest owner is strongly encouraged to have plans for remediation.

Examples:

- Forest owner purchases a tract with a forest road that is eroding soil into a water body.
- ATV riders are trespassing on the property and are crossing a stream causing the banks to erode
- Garbage is being dumped on the property near a stream crossing and some of it is getting into the stream during high-water conditions
- Storm damage has impaired the performance of road culverts

*Indicator 4.1.2*

**Forest owner** must minimize road construction and other disturbances within riparian zones and wetlands.

Guidance: State BMP manuals are generally quite detailed on recommended practices for road construction and other disturbances of riparian zones. If there is a point of confusion, the forest owner is advised to consult with a natural resource professional who is experienced in forest road design and installation. In some states, permits may be required for forest roads or other disturbances that intersect a riparian zone.

Forest owners should specify with contractors that state forestry BMPs must be adhered to.

In all cases, the primary concern is to avoid contaminating watercourses that are adjacent to the forest activity.

Performance Measure 4.2

**Forest owner** must consider **integrated pest management** to control pests, pathogens and unwanted vegetation.

*Indicator 4.2.1*

**Forest owner** should evaluate alternatives to manage pest, pathogens and unwanted vegetation to achieve specific management objectives.

Guidance: Integrated pest management (IPM) can take many forms, some of the most effective measures are preventative. Measures that improve forest health or in some other way protect the property from injurious organisms are very cost-effective. Forest Chemical applications are often used only when other control measures are ineffective.

Forest owners should consult with their state forestry agency or natural resource professional to learn about recommended IPM techniques for any particular disease or pest outbreak on their property.

**Examples:**

Southern Pine Beetle outbreaks are most economically controlled by cutting down all of the affected trees, as well as a buffer of green trees around the zone showing evidence of infestation. Merchantable trees should be hauled to market immediately and the rest laid flat on the ground. SPB outbreaks are discouraged by maintaining healthy stands that are free to grow. Prompt thinning is a good preventative measure.

Annosus root rot outbreaks can be controlled by applying Borax to the freshly cut stumps of harvested trees when thinning softwoods in the affected area. Annosus root rot can be discouraged by avoiding partial cutting in infection areas, favoring less susceptible species in regeneration and use of prescribed fire in certain situations.

*Indicator 4.2.2*

**Pesticides** used must be EPA-approved.

Guidance: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approves the use of pesticides for specific situations and on specific plants or animals, at specified application rates. The forest owner is responsible for ensuring that the planned use of a pesticide is in compliance with the EPA label limitations. Please consult the resource pages for forest owners, on the ATFS website, for additional information on EPA-approved pesticides

*Indicator 4.2.3*

**Pesticides** must be applied, stored and disposed of in accordance with EPA-approved labels and by persons appropriately trained, licensed and supervised.

Guidance: In most states, forestry chemicals must be applied by a licensed applicator. The forest owner is responsible for ensuring that anyone applying forestry-use chemicals is in compliance with state and federal regulations. In some states landowners can apply certain pesticides on their land without any special permits or licenses. In others they can apply for and receive, a license or permit to apply forestry chemicals on their own lands according to the EPA label limitations. In any event, the requirements for safe use, storage and disposal must be met by forest owners and /or their agents.

Performance Measure 4.3

When used, **prescribed fire** must conform with **forest owner's** objectives, the **forest management plan** and pre-fire planning.

Guidance: In many states the state forestry agency employs a permit system for prescribed burning. Many of these agencies provide training for prescribed burning that is available to forest owners. Successful completion of a prescribed burning course is often required before the state forestry agency will issue a burning permit. Many states regulate the amount of open burning that can be conducted on a given day in a county or multi-county zone.

Prescribed burning includes controlled burning of piles, windrows and broadcast fire applications.

A prescribed burning plan is recommended, which will include: reconnaissance of the burning block, estimates of fuel condition, required weather conditions and adequate means of controlling the fire after it is set. Oral discussion of a burning plan with all of the parties involved, before the burn is started on the property, is acceptable – a written burning plan record is not required by the Standard but may be required by the state agency that regulates open burning in the state.

Inspectors and auditors may test for compliance with PM 4.3 by interviewing the forest owner and observing the property. The forest owner may have written records to support conformance claims, but is not required to do so.

*Indicator 4.3.1*

**Prescribed fire** must conform with the **management plan** and state and local laws and regulations.

Guidance: The intent is that the forest owner's plans and good-faith actions in using prescribed fire conform to the management plan and the relevant laws and regulations.

It is recognized that the best laid plans may go awry on any given day. The inspector or auditor is to look for a pattern of wise use of prescribed fire where it is used

## Standard 5: Fish, Wildlife and Biodiversity

Forest management activities contribute to the conservation of **biodiversity**.

### Performance Measure 5.1

Forest management activities must maintain or enhance habitat for threatened or endangered communities and species.

Guidance: State or Federally listed threatened or endangered species and their habitats are protected in the relevant laws and regulations. If landowners become aware of the presence of a threatened or endangered species on their property, it is their duty to become aware of the requirements for protecting the habitat for that species and to take appropriate actions in the management of their property.

### Indicator 5.1.1

**Forest owner** must confer with natural resource agencies, state natural resource heritage programs or review other sources of information to determine occurrences of threatened and endangered species on the property and their habitat requirements.

#### Guidance – Threatened or Endangered Species:

Forest owners are not required to do an exhaustive search for threatened or endangered species on their property. Forest owners are expected to make a good-faith effort to find out if there are known occurrences of a threatened or endangered species on their property.

If there are known occurrences of threatened or endangered species on the property, then the forest owner may be required to make provisions for their protection if specified by regulation.

Contacting the state Natural Resource or Fish & Game service representative is usually an effective way to find out if a forest property is known to contain a threatened or endangered species.

Threatened or endangered species lists are maintained by the US Fish & Wildlife Service in accordance with the Endangered Species Act [ [http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\\_public/](http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/) ].

Nationally listed threatened or endangered freshwater fish that migrate to sea are listed by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) [ <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/esa/> ].

Some threatened or endangered species are also listed separately by the State Agencies. Please consult the ATFS website for additional resources on threatened or endangered species.

*Indicator 5.1.2*

Forest management activities must incorporate measures to protect identified threatened or endangered species.

Guidance: Forest owners are encouraged to consult with a natural resource professional for assistance in planning to protect threatened and endangered species.

Measures for habitat protections may include:

- no mechanical entry in the habitat area
- restricted pesticide use in the habitat area
- residual tree maintenance in the habitat area
- buffer zone establishment and maintenance around the habitat area
- hunting or fishing restrictions
- signage or marking of the habitat area

Performance Measure 5.2

**Forest owner** should address the **desired species** (fish, aquatic, wildlife, and plant) and/or desired forest communities in the **management plan** and forest management activities.

Guidance: Forest owners may wish to increase the presence, on their property, of one or more desirable species such as deer, persimmon trees or large-mouth bass. While these goals may have been mentioned in the Landowner Objectives, the body of the plan should give some detail on management activities planned to achieve the stated objective(s)

*Indicator 5.2.1*

**Forest owner** should consult available and accessible information on management of the forest for **desired species** (fish, aquatic, wildlife, and plant) and/or forest communities and integrate it into forest management.

Guidance: Several good sources for desired species management are readily available to the forest owner:

- Non profit organizations that focus on the desired species
- State and Federal agencies that focus on fish and game species
- Extension Service publications

Please consult the resource pages for forest owners, on the ATFS website, for additional information on desired species management.

Performance Measure 5.3

**Forest owner** should make practical efforts to prevent, eradicate or otherwise control **invasive species**.

*Indicator 5.3.1*

**Forest owner** should make practical efforts to prevent, eradicate or otherwise control **invasive species** using a range of **integrated pest management** methods.

Guidance: On monitoring visits to the property, forest owners should be alert to the presence of forest-invasive species.

Natural resource professionals can supply the forest landowner with up-to-date information on forest invasive species. When reasonably available, the forest owner should take advantage of learning opportunities about forest-invasive species. Integrated pest management techniques may provide a cost-effective method of control that will avoid forest chemical use.

If control measures for forest-invasive species require the use of forest herbicides, all herbicide applications should be conducted by trained applicators, in accordance with state and federal regulations.

Invasive species are most commonly associated with plants, but in reality can include a wide range of plants, animals and fungi.

Examples: Kudzu, Japanese Privet, Chinese Tallow Tree, Multi-flora Rose, Norway Maple, Scotch Broom, Himalaya Blackberry, Tree of Heaven, feral hogs, Gypsy Moth, Nutria

Performance Measure 5.4

Forest management activities should maintain or enhance **rare species** and **high conservation value forests**.

Guidance - Rare species:

Forest owners are not required to do an exhaustive search for rare species on their property. Forest owners are encouraged to make a good-faith effort to find out if there are known occurrences of a rare species on their property.

Rare species may not be listed on state or federal Threatened & Endangered species lists but may be considered by the landowner to be a rare occurrence on their own property even if regionally abundant. This often happens because the landowner's property is out of the main range for a given species or past management practices have extirpated the species from the local area.

If there are known occurrences of rare species on the property, then the forest owner may be required to make provisions for their protection if specified by regulation.

NatureServe has an on-line database that can be searched at the county level for rare plants and animals

[ <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer/servlet/NatureServe> ]

Examples of rare species occurrence;

- A bear's den
- A patch of natural ginseng
- A morel mushroom patch
- A champion tree

Guidance - High conservation value forests

Most high conservation value forests in the United States that are globally, nationally or regionally significant have been identified and protected by Federal or State government, or have been put under conservation easement by an environmental non-profit organization.

There is no single central clearinghouse of information on high conservation value forests. There is, at this time, no state or federal agency that regulates high conservation value forests on private forest lands.

High conservation value forests are evaluated at the landscape level rather than the forest stand level.

Several organizations have listed areas that they believe merit high conservation value forests status.

Please consult the resource pages for forest owners on the ATFS website for additional help on high conservation value forests.

**Indicator 5.4.1**

Appropriate to the **scale** and intensity of the situation, forest management activities should incorporate measures to protect or mitigate impacts on **rare species** and identified **high conservation value forests**.

Guidance: Forest owners who have identified some or all of their forest property as containing rare species should delineate the area on maps associated with the management plan. Management activities on or adjacent to the designated rare-species-area should not harm or diminish the habitat for the rare species. For rare species identified on the property, the forest owner is urged to confer with relevant state wildlife agencies to gain a better understanding of the legal requirements for habitat protection, as well as protection of the organism(s).

Forest owners who have identified some or all of their forest property as high conservation value forest should delineate the area on the maps associated with the management plan. Management activities on or adjacent to the high conservation value forest should not harm or diminish the high conservation values that lead to the designation of the area.

A more likely scenario, for family forest owners, is that the forest owner's property is adjacent to a state or federally protected area that is identified as a high conservation value forest. Forest owners should consider the impact, to a neighboring high conservation value forest, of planned activities on their forest property.

## Standard 6: Forest Aesthetics

Forest **management plans** and management activities recognize the value of forest aesthetics.

### Performance Measure 6.1

**Forest owner** should manage the visual impacts of forest management activities consistent with the size of the forest, the **scale** and intensity of forest management activities and the location of the property.

#### *Indicator 6.1.1*

Forest management activities should apply **visual quality measures** compatible with appropriate silvicultural practices.

Guidance: Forest aesthetics considerations can be incorporated into management planning with little cost to the forest owner. Employing forest aesthetics considerations into the management plan can produce a much more visually appealing experience on property visits for owners, their guests and passers-by using nearby public roads.

Forest owners can access a very good Forest Aesthetics Guide at <http://www.aces.edu/forestry/aesthetics/>

Print copies can be ordered from Forest Resources Association at [http://www.forestresources.org/PUBLICATIONS/print\\_pubs.html](http://www.forestresources.org/PUBLICATIONS/print_pubs.html)

The guide was produced jointly by American Forest and Paper Association and Forest Resources Association

#### Examples:

- Place log truck-loading zones out of public view
- Leave islands of mast or roost trees within harvest areas
- Put a bend in the entrance road to block view of tract interior
- Follow contour lines and timber type margins with roads and harvest boundaries
- Close and re-vegetate idle roads with wildlife-friendly plants

## Standard 7: Protect Special Sites

**Special sites** are managed in ways that recognize their unique historical, archeological, cultural, geological, biological or ecological characteristics.

### Performance Measure 7.1

Forest management activities must maintain **special sites**.

#### *Indicator 7.1.1*

**Forest owner** must make a reasonable effort to locate and protect **special sites** appropriate for the size of the forest and the **scale** and intensity of forest management activities.

Guidance: Special sites are generally smaller in size than high conservation value forests. Special sites are evaluated at the forest stand or sub-stand level. Most special sites will be a small portion of the property. Special sites may be designated for purely sentimental reasons, or may be sites with significant cultural or archeological significance. Special sites may not be found on every property. The probability of a special site occurrence increases in proportion to the size of the forest ownership.

It is recommended that the forest owner identify special sites on management planning maps and, where appropriate, on the ground. However, the forest owner may choose not to identify some special sites on the ground in an effort to protect them from vandalism or overuse.

Special sites can be identified during property reconnaissance prior to preparing the management plan, from old property maps, from local lore and during monitoring reconnaissance. The forest owner may wish to contact the State cultural heritage program for additional information on local sites that have special historical significance.

Please consult the resource pages for forest owners, on the ATFS website, for additional resources on special sites.

Any special site identified in the management plan must include provisions for its protection, especially during forest management activities.

#### Examples:

American Indian burial sites, historical building ruins, old cemeteries, cave entrances, spring heads, rare mineral outcroppings, Civil War battle ground, a champion tree, a bear's den, a pitcher plant bog, a covered bridge

Inspectors and auditors may test for conformance with PM 7.1 by interviewing the forest owner for awareness, reviewing plan documents and associated operating records, and by observing the property.

## Standard 8: Forest Product Harvests and Other Activities

**Forest product** harvests and other management activities are conducted in accordance with the **management plan** and consider other forest values.

### Performance Measure 8.1

**Forest owner** should use **qualified natural resource professionals** and **qualified contractors** when contracting for services.

#### *Indicator 8.1.1*

**Forest owner** should seek **qualified natural resource professionals** and **qualified contractors**.

Guidance: The services of a qualified natural resource professional can prove very cost-effective for the forest owner. Costly mistakes that involve wasted time, resources or regulatory violations may be avoided.

Many states have registration, or licensing systems for foresters and wildlife managers. The people listed by these systems have passed rigorous entrance exams and are required to regularly obtain continuing education.

State forestry and wildlife agencies often can provide referral-lists of natural resource professionals who are working in the state or county.

The Society of American Foresters has a Certified Forester program  
<http://www.safnet.org/certifiedforester/index.cfm>

The Wildlife Society has a Certified Wildlife Biologist program  
[www.wildlife.org/certification/index.cfm](http://www.wildlife.org/certification/index.cfm)

The Association of Consulting Foresters is a national association of forestry consultants:  
<http://www.acf-foresters.org>

A qualified natural resource professional often will be familiar with the contractors who are doing forestry-related work in the area and can make recommendations.

Please consult the resource pages for forest owners, on the ATFS website, for help in finding contractors who are well trained in BMP and regulatory compliance, as well as, assistance in finding natural resource professionals.

*Indicator 8.1.2\**

**Forest owner** should engage contractors that carry appropriate insurance and comply with appropriate federal, state and local safety and **fair labor rules**, regulations and standard practices<sup>1</sup>.

Guidance: Forest owners are encouraged to stipulate that contractors are required to be in compliance with all relevant laws and regulations. A natural resource professional can help with this process.  
Forest Owners are encouraged to discuss liability issues with their insurance agent and their attorney to gain a perspective on appropriate insurance minimums that they might require of contractors.

*Indicator 8.1.3*

**Forest owner** should retain appropriate contracts for **forest product** harvests and other management activities to demonstrate conformance to the AFF Standards.

Guidance:  
Forest owners should review the Standard before planning management activities. Forest owners should specify in contracts for forestry activities that appropriate BMPs must be adhered to.  
Other contract specifications might include:

- Protection of special sites
- Adherence to labor laws
- Requirements for adequate insurance
- Protection of soil and water integrity
- Residual tree damage
- Forest road maintenance and restoration
- Fence and gate protection and/or restoration
- Litter control
- Hazardous material spill prevention and clean-up

Examples of forestry activities requiring review for AFF Standards compliance:

- Harvest operations including timber and non-timber products
- Site preparation and reforestation
- Forest road construction and maintenance
- Mineral extraction
- Hunting and fishing
- Invasive species control
- Pest management

---

<sup>1</sup> Auditors shall consider any **complaints** alleging violation of **fair labor rules** filed by workers or organized labor since the previous third-party certification audit. The auditor shall not take action on any labor issues pending in a formal grievance process or before Federal, State or local agencies or the courts, however, until those processes are completed. Absent a record of documented **complaints** or non-compliances, contractors and managers are assumed to be in compliance with this indicator.

Performance Measure 8.2

**Forest owner** must monitor **forest product** harvests and other management activities to ensure they conform to the **management plan** objectives.

*Indicator 8.2.1*

Harvest, utilization, removal and other management activities must be conducted in compliance with the **management plan** and maintain the potential of the property to produce **forest products** and other benefits sustainably.

Guidance: The forest owner may monitor harvesting and other activities personally or they may employ someone else to do it for them. Many forest owners engage a natural resource professional for this function.

The intent of Performance measure 8.2 is to ensure the maintenance of “the potential of the property to produce **forest products** and other benefits sustainably” Good planning, utilizing natural resource professionals, engaging competent contractors and using an effective contract go a long way toward this end.

## Glossary of Terms

**accredited third party assessors** – A natural resource professional who has completed ATFS required training for third party assessors and is contracted or employed by an International Accreditation Forum (IAF) accredited certification body.

**adaptive management** – A dynamic approach to forest management in which the effects of treatments and decisions are continually monitored and used to modify management on a continuing basis to ensure that objectives are being met (Helms et al, The Dictionary of Forestry, Society of American Foresters, 1998)

**adverse regulatory actions** – Written warning, citations or fines issued by law enforcement or regulatory bodies.

**biodiversity** – The variety and abundance of life forms, processes, functions and structures of plants, animals and other living organisms, including the relative complexity of species, communities, gene pools and ecosystems at spatial scales that range from local through regional to global (Helms et al, The Dictionary of Forestry, Society of American Foresters, 1998).

**complaint** – Labor complaints are those with formal documentation filed through the state's fair labor practices board or similar body.

**desired species** – Those species of flora and fauna designated in the landowner's management plan and not known to cause negative impacts on the local environment.

**fair labor rules** – Include federal, state and local labor legislation and international labor standards cited in Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC) Annex 3, Chapter 3.3.

**forest owner** – Landowner or designated representative such as, but not limited to, professional resource manager, family member, trustee, etc.

**forest product** – [Forest Produce] Any raw material yielded by a forest. Generally defined in Forest Acts or Ordinances, and subdivided conventionally into major forest products, i.e. timber and fuelwood, and minor forest products, i.e. all other products including leaves, fruit, grass, fungi, resins, gums, animal parts, water, soil, gravel, stone and other minerals on forest land (F. C. Ford –Robertson, Terminology of Forest Science Technology, Practice, and Products, Society of American Foresters, 1971.

**forest vitality** – The health and sustainability of a forest.

**group manager** – The individual(s) designated by the Independently Managed Group organization to manage the administrative affairs of implementing and achieving the AFF Standards and Standard Operating Procedures for group programs (SOP-01) for an ATFS certified independently managed group program. Please refer to the ATFS Group Certification Process documentation.

**high conservation value forests** – Forests of outstanding and critical importance due to their environmental, social, biodiversity or landscape values. Due to the small scale and low-intensity of family forest operations, informal assessment of HCVF occurrence through consultation with experts or review of available and accessible information is appropriate.

**integrated pest management** – The maintenance of destructive agents, including insects, at tolerable levels by planned use of a variety of preventative, suppressive, or regulatory tactics and strategies that are ecologically and economically efficient and socially acceptable (Helms et al, The Dictionary of Forestry, Society of American Foresters, 1998). A pest control strategy that uses a variety of complementary strategies including: mechanical devices, physical devices, genetic, biological or cultural management and chemical management (US EPA).

**invasive species** – Non-native species whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health (Executive Order 13112 (Feb. 3,

1999).
<b>landowner</b> – Entity that holds title to the property to be certified.
<b>management plan</b> – Documents that guide actions and that change in response to feedback and changed conditions, goals, objectives and policies. Management plans may incorporate several documents including, but not limited to, harvest plans, activity implementation schedules, permits, research, etc. For the purposes of the American Tree Farm System® eligible management plans, plan amendments may include letters, notes, and other forms of informal updates in addition to formal plan revisions.
<b>pesticide</b> – Pesticides include chemicals commonly known as herbicides and insecticides.
<b>prescribed fire</b> – A fire ignited by management to meet specific objectives (Helms et al, <u>The Dictionary of Forestry</u> , Society of American Foresters, 1998).
<b>qualified contractor</b> – Forest contractors who have completed certification, licensing, recommended training and education programs offered in their respective states.
<b>qualified natural resource professional</b> – A person who by training and experience can make forest management recommendations. Examples include foresters, soil scientists, hydrologists, forest engineers, forest ecologists, fishery and wildlife biologists or technically trained specialists in such fields.
<b>qualified Tree Farm inspector</b> – A natural resource professional who has completed ATFS required training for certifying forested properties and is eligible to inspect properties on behalf of ATFS. ATFS requires all trained inspectors meet approved eligibility requirements.
<b>rare species</b> – A plant or animal or community that is vulnerable to extinction or elimination.
<b>scale</b> – The extent of forest operations on the landscape/certified property.
<b>special sites</b> – Those areas offering unique historical, archeological, cultural, geological, biological or ecological value. Special Sites include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Historical, archaeological, cultural and ceremonial sites or features of importance to the forest owner;</li> <li>B. Sites of importance to wildlife such as rookeries, refuges, fish spawning grounds, vernal ponds and shelters of hibernating animals;</li> <li>C. Unique ecological communities like relic old-growth, springs, glades, savannas, fens and bogs; and</li> <li>D. Geological features such as terminal moraines, cliffs and caves.</li> </ul>
<b>state forestry best management practice(s) (BMPs)</b> – Forestry BMPs are generally accepted forest management guidelines that have been developed by state forestry agencies with broad public stakeholder input.
<b>sustainability</b> – The capacity of forests, ranging from stands to ecoregions, to maintain their health, productivity, diversity and overall integrity, in the long run, in the context of human activity (Helms et al, <u>The Dictionary of Forestry</u> , Society of American Foresters, 1998).
<b>sustainable forest management</b> – The practice of meeting the forest resource needs and values of the present without compromising the similar capability of future generations (Helms et al, <u>The Dictionary of Forestry</u> , Society of American Foresters, 1998). <i>Note</i> – AFF’s Standards of Sustainability reflect criteria of sustainability based on the Montreal Process, 1993, and the Pan-European Operational-Level Guidelines (PEOLGs).
<b>visual quality measures</b> – Modifications of forestry practices in consideration of public view, including timber sale layout, road and log landing locations, intersections with public roadways, distributing logging residue, tree retention, timing of operations and other factors relevant to the scale and location of the project.

## Standards Interpretations

The 2010 – 2015 American Forest Foundation Standards of Sustainability for Forest Certification (2010 Standards) were approved by the AFF Board of Trustees on November 3, 2009. All Tree Farmers, those in state programs, group programs or with individual third-party certificates, are required to meet the 2010 Standards from December 31, 2010 onwards.

To assist landowners with their implementation of the 2010 Standards and inspectors and third-party assessors with their inspections, ATFS has released a Standards Guidance document. This document contains clarification on how the 2010 Standards should be implemented on the ground, and will contain any official interpretations developed by the National Interpretations Committee (NIC).

Any party within the American Tree Farm System may request an interpretation of the Standards by the NIC. Requests must follow the procedure below to be considered by the NIC.

### **Interpretations Request Procedure:**

- 1) Submit request by letter to ATFS staff
- 2) Request should reference the Standard element to be interpreted (e.g. Indicator 1.1.1)
- 3) Include an example to illustrate the need for an interpretation for the Standard element in question

Standards interpretations requests will be processed within 60 days of receipt of the letter by ATFS staff.

The National Interpretations Committee (NIC) is composed of members of the ATFS Certification Committee and is charged by the AFF Board of Trustees to provide official interpretations. Once finalized, interpretations shall be distributed among the ATFS community. Inspections and third-party certification assessments will include review of official interpretations.