

Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee

Part 2

Tree Farm Certification Policy and Procedure Manual



Prepared by
The Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee
In compliance with the Requirements of the
American Tree Farm System

Approved June 14, 2021
Direct questions about the Manual to
PFA@paforestry.org

Table of Contents

I.	Introduction	4
II.	Communication with Woodland Owners and Inspectors	5
III.	Certification by the American Tree Farm System	6
IV.	New Tree Farm Certification Procedure	8
	A. Interest Inquiry Letter	10
	B. Flyer—Why Should You Pursue Certification?	11
	C. New Tree Farm Congratulations Letter	12
	D. Decertification Letter	13
V.	ATFS Required Sample Inspections	14
	E. Required Sample Inspection Letter	16
	F. Required Sample Inspection Thank You Letter	17
VI.	Required 5-Year Reinspection	19
	G. Required 5-Year Reinspection Letter	21
	H. Recertified Tree Farmer Congratulations Letter	22
VII.	ATFS Third Party Assessment	24
VIII.	Inspector of Record	26
IX.	Moving Tree Farm from Certification to Pioneer Status	27
	I. Move from Certified to Pioneer Letter	28
X.	Decertification of Tree Farms	29
	J. Move to Decertified Letter	30
XI.	PA Inspector Training and Certification	31
	L. New and Recertified Inspector Congratulations Letter	33
XII.	Certified Inspector Payment	34
	M. Inspector Incentive Payment Query Letter	36
	N. Inspector Incentive Thank You Letter	37
	O. Inspector Contribution Thank You Letter	38

XIII.	Moving Inspector from Expired to Inactive	39
	R. Expired to Inactive Status Letter	40
XIV.	Forests of Recognized Importance for PA	41
XIV.	Endangered Species Review Procedure	42
XV.	Pennsylvania Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year	43
	Pennsylvania Tree Farmer of the Year Nomination Form	45
XVI.	Pennsylvania Tree Farm Inspector of the Year Award	47
	Pennsylvania Tree Farm Inspector of the Year Nomination Form	48
XVII.	Regional and National Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year	49
XIX.	Committee Evaluation of Tree Farm Program	50

I. Introduction

This document is Part 2 of a three part Manual for use by the Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee. The policies and procedures in Part 2 focus on three broad areas of Committee responsibility:

- The inspection, certification, and recognition of woodland properties that comply with the standards of the American Tree Farm System.
- The recruitment, training, certification, and recognition of Tree Farm Inspectors.
- The periodic assessment by the American Tree Farm System (ATFS) of Pennsylvania's tree farm certification program.

Key contributors to the information in the Manual—Part 2 are:

- The Tree Farm Inspection Coordinator,
- The Tree Farm Inspector-Training Coordinator,
- The Chair (and as appropriate the past Chairs) of the Tree Farm Committee, and
- The Program Administrator.

Any proposed changes in the Manual should be made in consultation with the individuals serving in the capacities listed above.

Manual Part 2 should be reviewed and updated as necessary to reflect changes in ATFS policies, standards, and/or other relevant information.

II. Communication with Woodland Owners and Inspectors

Policy

All letters related to the American Tree Farm System (ATFS) and the Pennsylvania Tree Farm Program (PATF) are placed on official letterhead and mailed by the Program Administrator unless otherwise specified.

All Congratulatory letters are mailed as a hard copy.

Unless the letter is specified to be sent by US Mail, e-mail should be used whenever possible.

Non-congratulatory communications may go by the least cost/most effective mode.

Procedure

The procedures for communicating with woodland owners and inspectors are based on the policy being addressed. Therefore, communication procedures are included throughout the Manual in relation to the specific policy. Templates for required correspondence are included for specific procedures.

III. Certification by the American Tree Farm System

Policy

Certification by the American Tree Farm System is a voluntary program available to forest landowners who seek verification of sustainable forest management practices by a nationally and internationally recognized, independent, third party. Tree Farm Certification connects forest landowners with a national network of like-minded individuals committed to conserving our country's forests.

In Pennsylvania, third-party tree farm certification is offered as a program under the auspices of the Pennsylvania Forestry Association and managed by the PA Tree Farm Committee.

Eligibility for ATFS Certification is based on the following criteria:

- 10 – 10,000 contiguous wooded acres,
- Private ownership,
- Conformance to American Tree Farm Standards,
- Written management addressing required plan elements,
- Agreement to participate in periodic 3rd party assessments, and
- Agreement to pay annual PFA/PA Tree Farm membership fee.

Certification Classification

Woodland properties that undergo inspection for certification receive one of the following classifications:

Certified: The Tree Farm meets all standards of the ATFS and pays annual PFA/PA Tree Farm membership fee.

Pioneer: The Tree Farm meets most, but not all, ATFS standards; the owner continues to work toward full compliance, and the owner pays annual PFA/PATree Farm membership dues.

Previously certified Tree Farms may be reassigned to Pioneer status, if upon reinspection, they no longer fully meet the ATFS standards.

Decertified: Previously certified Tree Farm whose owner:

- (1) declines reassignment to Pioneer status when their management practices fall below ATFS standards;
- (2) decides to withdraw from the ATFS certification program; and/or
- (3) fails to pay annual PFA/PA Tree Farm membership dues.

PFA/PA Tree Farm Membership Fees

1. Membership fees are based on the number of acres in the Tree Farm
2. If a woodland owner has multiple tree farms, the fees are based on the total aggregate acreage enrolled in the ATFS program.
3. A portion of each year's membership fee is reserved to cover the cost of inspecting the Tree Farm.
4. A portion of each year's membership fee is transferred to the PFA to cover dues for Tree Farmer's membership in PFA
5. Membership Fees are calculated and managed according to the following chart.

Annual Membership Fee - Based on Total Aggregate Acreage				
# of Acres	Annual Fee	Allocation of Membership Fees		
		Inspection Reserve	PFA Membership	Operating Budget
10-50	\$70	\$20/year	\$30	\$20
51-100	\$80	\$30/year	\$30	\$20
101-500	\$90	\$40/year	\$30	\$20
501+	\$100	\$50/year	\$30	\$20

Certification Cycle

1. Tree Farm Certification operates on a 5 year cycle.
2. During the final year of the 5-year term of certification, the Tree Farmer can maintain certification by undergoing a reinspection. This cycle of reinspection and recertification can continue as long as the Tree Farmer wants to remain certified in the ATFS program, meets ATFS standards, and pays the annual membership fee.
3. Maintaining the certification cycle on a timely basis requires planning a schedule for inspections and reinspections. Therefore the PTF Committee Chair and the Inspection Coordinator develop a 5-year Tree Farm Inspection Schedule based on the following priorities:
 - 1st Priority—Required Inspections (Details are provided in a separate procedure)
 - 2nd Priority—5 Year Reinspection of dues-paid, Certified Tree Farms that are in the final year of their 5-year term of certification, starting with the oldest certification
 - 3rd Priority—Reinspection of dues-paid Pioneer Tree Farms that are in the final year of their eligibility for Pioneer status, starting with the oldest designation as Pioneer.
4. The schedule of projected inspections is updated on an annual basis.

IV. New Tree Farm Certification Procedure

Expression of Woodland Owner Interest

Interest inquiries with contact information may be submitted by anyone and from any source.

Response to Expression of Interest

Name and contact information are forwarded to the Program Administrator.

The Program Administrator sends the *Interest Inquiry Letter (A)* and *Why Should I Get Certified Flyer (B)* to the interested party.

The Administrator archives the request.

Formal Request for Certification

After reviewing the information provided in the letter and flyer, the woodland owner schedules a visit from a certified Tree Farm inspector by selecting one from the online listing of inspectors serving their county.

Scheduling and Completing the Inspection

Tree Farmer and Inspector – both complete and sign the completed ATFS approved form and forwarded to the administrator/PFA office.

Program Administrator – verifies that the Inspector is current and updates the ATFS data base and creates the new Tree Farm Certificate.

Issuing Certification

Program Administrator – assembles the New Tree Farm Package and sends it to the new Tree Farmer. The New Tree Farm Package consists of:

- A. *New Tree Farm Congratulations Letter (C)*
- B. Invoice for membership fees payable to “PFA-Tree Farm”

Upon receipt of the woodland owner’s membership fees (and only upon receipt of payment), the Program Administrator sends the newly certified Tree Farmer:

- The official ATFS Tree Farm sign
- Letter of congratulations (with an email copy to Area Chair, Inspector, and Inspection Coordinator).
- Tree Farm Certificate with the Tree Farm # included.

If the woodland owner has not paid the invoice of membership fees within 30 days of receiving the New Tree Farm Package, the Program Administrator sends the woodland owner:

- A reminder letter
- Copy of the invoice

Notice of Decertification

If membership fees are not received within 30 days of the reminder letter, the Program Administrator issues a *Decertification letter (D)*

An email copy of the letter is sent to the Area Chair.

Record Keeping

Upon receipt of membership fee, Program Administrator sends certification information to the PTF Committee Database Manager.

A. INTEREST INQUIRY LETTER

Date

«OrganizationName»

«FirstName» «LastName»

«Address»

«City», «State» «PostalCode»

Dear

Thank you for your interest in The Pennsylvania Tree Farm System! Information about the steps to becoming part of the system is included in this letter. A little background about our organization: there are over 300 Pennsylvania Tree Farms reflecting over 150,000 acres! In addition, there are over 87,000 Certified Tree Farms nationwide in the American Tree Farm System. Tree Farmers recognize the importance of natural resource management and how we all can make a difference within the management of our own properties.

What it means to be a Pennsylvania Tree Farm:

A Certified Tree Farm is a property that is managed to the highest standards of sustainability for multiple uses including wood, water, wildlife, and recreation. Certified Tree Farm members are qualified to market their timber for the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI, Inc.) and Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Systems (<https://www.treefarmssystem.org/third-party-tree-farm-certification>). You also become a member of the Pennsylvania Forestry Association which provides you with the opportunity to belong to a group of like-minded individuals who are active in their forest communities. You will receive the excellent quarterly magazine *Pennsylvania Forests* included in your membership fee and a monthly e-Newsletter that keeps you updated on many activities to be found in PA.

Who Qualifies?

10 – 10,000 contiguous wooded acres

Private ownership

Agree to conform to Tree Farm Standards and in periodic assessments

Written management plan considering timber production, water quality, wildlife benefit, and recreation value which helps to maintain your forest

The first step is to identify a certified Tree Farm Inspector who will assist you. A local Tree Farm Inspector can be found online at <http://paforestry.org/inspectors>, by phoning the Tree Farm administrator for assistance at 800-835-8065 or by emailing Bridget Cole at bcole@versantstrategies.net. Pennsylvania has an abundance of technical support to aid you in your efforts. Your Certified Tree Farm Inspector can assist you in assembling a team of resource professionals to help you realize your woodlot goals.

More information about the American Tree Farm System can be found at www.treefarmssystem.org/. We look forward to working with you to realize the potential of your woodlot.

Regards,

Signature of Current Committee Chair
Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee

Signature of Current PFA President
Pennsylvania Forestry Association

B. Flyer—Why Should You Pursue Certification?

For less than the cost of one gallon of gas per week you receive all of the benefits of the PA Forestry Association (PFA) and American Tree Farm System (ATFS) Certification.

You have Tools

As a woodland owner, you want to do right by your land. Yet, you face more challenges than ever: pests, weeds, drought, catastrophic fire, severe weather, and development pressures. Meeting these challenges requires **ongoing information, tools, and on-the ground assistance** to help make the best decisions.

- Evolving, up to date Standards of Sustainability for Forest Certification
- Membership in the PA Forestry Association with access to information and educational resources (1-800-835-8065 - PFA Office / thePFA@paforestry.org)
- Publications: *Pennsylvania Forests* magazine, *Forest Leaves* newsletter, News You Can Use e-newsletter, Facebook updates, etc.
- Meetings, field days, etc. with Tree Farmers
- “*My Land Plan*” self-guided planning tool (mylandplan.org)
- Frequent on-site visits inspections from **your** forester (At least once every 5 years)
- State and National legislative updates and action
- Expanded and improved market access
- Established standards supporting negotiations with third parties on your property and county land use planning
 - Access to government programs (Farm Bill – EQIP)



You Have Recognition

The ATFS Certification system is internationally recognized, and the certified ATFS sign tells your community, and the world, that you stand among the best woodland stewards in America. We at PTFS and ATFS stand with you as part of your team.

You are committed to doing the best for your land and PTFS can give you the road map to help you manage your land for long term sustainability. PTFS **recognizes and validates family forest owners for their work and commitment to sustainable stewardship** of their land.

You are also eligible to participate in the Outstanding Tree Farmer of the year at the state, regional, and national levels.

You Are the Future

Your woods are part of your family legacy. You've worked hard to ensure that your family can continue to enjoy the many benefits that come with woodland ownership. As part of the American Tree Farm System, you will have the **tools and support to help keep your woods thriving for generations to come.**

The effort you are making is so important to conserving Pennsylvania's forest. That's why The PTFS (patreefarm.org) and ATFS (trefarmsystem.org) are your voice with political leaders, industry and the public to tell the story of family forest owners.

C. NEW TREE FARM CONGRATULATIONS LETTER (BY US MAIL)

Date

«OrganizationName»

«FirstName» «LastName»

«Address»

«City», «State» «PostalCode»

Re: TREE FARM # «T_F_number»

Dear [Tree Farmer]

Congratulations! On behalf of the Pennsylvania State Tree Farm Committee, we would like to welcome you to the American Tree Farm System.

Enclosed you will find:

- 📄 Your Tree Farm Certification Certificate – Suitable for framing
- 📄 An invoice for your membership dues

Your Tree Farm Sign – Mount it on your Tree Farm with Pride – will be sent on receipt of your dues.

You now belong to an organization of hundreds of Pennsylvania landowners and over 80,000 Tree Farmers nationwide who recognize the importance of wise natural resource management. More information is available online at the American Tree Farm System (www.treefarmssystem.org/) and PA Tree Farm Program (<http://patreefarm.org/>)

What it means to be a Certified Pennsylvania Tree Farmer:

- 📄 A Certified Tree Farm is a property managed to the highest standards of sustainability for many benefits including wood, water, wildlife and recreation.
- 📄 As a Pennsylvania Tree Farm, you have met the standards for certification. You are eligible to receive a Tree Farm sign that demonstrates your commitment to sound forestry practices to the community at large. In exchange for the pride, pleasure and profit of being a Tree Farmer, you must adhere to the standards of the program to remain certified.
- 📄 Certified Tree Farm members are qualified to market their timber for the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI, Inc.) and PEFC chain of custody programs
- 📄 An added benefit of being a certified PA Tree Farmer is that you automatically become a member of the Pennsylvania Forestry Association (<http://www.paforestry.org/>) with all of their benefits. This organization sponsors the PA Tree Farm Program and is the oldest Forestry Association in America and is another resource to assist you in your woodland management goals.

The Pennsylvania State Tree Farm Committee congratulates you for your commitment to the future management of your forest resources.

Regards,

Signature of Current Committee Chair
Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee
cc: «Forestry Inspector name»

Signature of Current PFA President
Pennsylvania Forestry Association

D. DECERTIFICATION LETTER

Date

«OrganizationName»

«FirstName» «LastName»

«Address»

«City», «State» «PostalCode»

Re: TREE FARM # «T_F_number»

The Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee is writing to inform you that your Tree Farm # _____ has been decertified within the American Tree Farm System. We regret the loss of a fellow Tree Farmer from the program.

If circumstances change, we encourage you to take the steps necessary to recertify your farm and continue to receive the benefits of being a certified member of the PA Tree Farm Program and the American Tree Farm System. Please contact your Tree Farm Inspector to discuss what is needed to promote your woodlot to a certified status.

You can continue to keep in touch with forestry activities and news for managing your woodland by maintaining your membership in the Pennsylvania Forestry Association (<http://www.paforestry.org/>). You'll continue to be involved in Penn's Woods, keep yourself up to date with various communications, and experience the many membership benefits.

Should you have further questions, please feel free to contact us.

Regards,

Signature of Current Committee Chair
Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee

Signature of Current PFA President
Pennsylvania Forestry Association

Cc: Area Chair (If appropriate)

V. ATFS Required Sample Inspections

Policy

To validate the efficacy of PTFC's certification program, ATFS requires an annual inspection of a randomly selected, statistical sample of certified tree farms.

In the year when an audit of the State Program is being conducted, ATFS allows the State to substitute the Required Inspections for the Randomly Selected Audit Inspections.

To assure timely completion of this important requirement, Pennsylvania is divided into six Tree Farm Areas. Three are across the northern tier; three are across the southern tier of the Commonwealth. (See Map below for counties included in each Area.)

Procedure

Notification of Inspection

No later than the middle of January, the American Forest Foundation sends a list of Tree Farms to be inspected to the Pa Tree Farm Committee. This list is also available from the ATFS database and is accessible by committee members with database access including the Inspection Coordinator.

If this arrangement cannot be made, the required inspections are sent to the Chair of the PA Tree Farm Committee.

After the Program Administrator verifies that the selected Tree Farmer has paid all required membership fees, the Inspection Coordinator sorts the forms by the Area in which the Tree Farm is located.

Within three weeks of receiving the current ATFS Required Inspection form(s), the PTFC Inspection Coordinator emails a list/spreadsheet showing the required Tree Farm inspections due in their area to the appropriate Tree Farm Area Chair.

If an Area Chair position is vacant, the Inspection Coordinator takes on the responsibilities of the Area Chair or delegates them to another qualified individual.

Arrangements for Inspection

The Inspection Coordinator in conjunction with Area Chair (if appropriate) contacts the Tree Farm Inspecting Forester of record and arranges to forward the current ATFS form to the Inspector of Record.

If no Inspector of Record is listed or if the listed inspector is no longer able or willing to do the inspection, then the Area Chair selects another Inspecting Forester from their Area to conduct the inspection.

The Inspector of Record contacts the Tree Farmer to arrange for the inspection.

Completion of Inspection and Recordkeeping

Upon finishing the inspection, the Inspector of Record sends the completed ATFS form to the PFA administrator for entry into the ATFS database.

Once the data has been entered, Program Administrator sends the information to the Inspection Coordinator via email for final approval of the information.

Payment of Inspector (See separate procedure)

Timeline

Mid-January – Required inspection forms received from AFF and in the possession of the PTFC Database Manager.

Within three weeks, the forms are entered in the PA database and then mailed to the appropriate Area Chairs or to the Inspection Coordinator if the Area Chair position is vacant.

September - Third quarter PA Tree Farm meeting in September will be the cutoff date for Area Chairs to have the inspections assigned. [This seems like a long time between the Area Chairs getting the forms and assigning the forest for the inspection. Should the wording be tweaked to indicate that the Chairs should contact the foresters as soon as possible, but no later than September? Also, there has been some discussion about not specifying quarterly Committee meetings. Can we just either the beginning or end of September as the deadline for assigning the inspecting forester? Do the Area Chairs send the information to Versant, to you, or the Committee Chair? The way the whole procedure is written, it doesn't seem like you are kept in the loop. Is that the way you want it to be?]

December - All required inspections must be completed and the current ATFS Forms submitted by the last quarterly Tree Farm meeting in December.

PFA administrator will enter the data into the ATFS data base as the required inspections come in.



E. REQUIRED SAMPLE INSPECTION LETTER

Date

«OrganizationName»

«FirstName» «LastName»

«Address»

«City», «State» «PostalCode»

Re: TREE FARM # «T_F_number»

Dear (Tree Farmer)

Your Tree Farm has been randomly selected for the Required Sample Inspection. This inspection is required by The American Tree Farm System to validate the Pennsylvania Certification Program.

Enclosed is the current ATFS inspection form and a Certified Inspector list for your county. Also included, is a copy of the latest 2015 Standards Addendum.

If your Inspector is not active or no longer available, you must select and contact a new inspector from the list provided. If you already have a consulting forester but he/she is not currently certified, you may request his/her guidance in the selection of your Certified Inspector.

Please coordinate with your Certified Inspector to include the 2015 Addendum in your management plan, complete the inspection, and sign the completed ATFS form. Your inspector will also sign the form and forward it to your Area Chair for additional review and data entry.

If you have questions, please contact (Area Chair) at (phone#)
We look forward to your successful inspection.

Regards,

Signature of Current Committee Chair
Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee

Signature of Current PFA President
Pennsylvania Forestry Association

Cc Area Chair if appropriate

F. REQUIRED SAMPLE INSPECTION THANK YOU LETTER (BY US MAIL)

Date

«OrganizationName»

«FirstName» «LastName»

«Address»

«City», «State» «PostalCode»

Re: TREE FARM # «T_F_number»

Dear [Tree Farmer],

On behalf of Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee, thank you for participating in the sample Inspection process. As you are aware, this process is necessary to maintain the Pennsylvania Certification Program.

We also want to congratulate you on successfully having your tree farm recertified! Your full benefits of being a Certified Tree Farm will now continue. Being a member of PA Tree Farm System will automatically maintain your membership in the Pennsylvania Forestry Association (www.paforestry.org) and its related benefits. This organization sponsors the PA Tree Farm Program. More information about our organizations can be found online at the American Tree Farm (www.treefarmssystem.org) and PA Tree Farm (www.patreefarm.org).

Benefits of belonging include:

- Internationally recognized forest certification: qualified to market your timber for the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI, Inc.) and PEFC chain of custody programs (<https://www.treefarmssystem.org/third-party-tree-farm-certification>).
- Consultation with a certified Tree Farm inspector on a periodic basis, at no cost
- Complimentary Pennsylvania Forestry Association membership
- Subscription to *Pennsylvania Forests* magazine and subscription to the Forest Leaves monthly newsletter
- Information and updates on forest related legislative issues
- Landowner representation at the state and national level
- Invitation to the Pennsylvania Tree Farmer of the Year Field Day
- Participation in the State, Regional and National Tree Farmer of the Year Contest
- Right to display Tree Farm sign and certificate

What it means to be a Certified Pennsylvania Tree Farm:

A Certified Tree Farm is a property that is managed to the highest standards of sustainability for multiple uses for wood, water, wildlife and recreation.

As a certified Tree Farm, you can continue to proudly display your Tree Farm sign. This sign shows the community your commitment to sustainably managing your woodlot. In exchange for the pride, pleasure and profit of being a certified Tree Farm, we ask that you to follow the standards of the program to remain certified.

Congratulations again on your commitment to management of your forest resources.

Regards,

Signature of Current Committee Chair
Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee

Signature of Current PFA President
Pennsylvania Forestry Association

cc: «Forestry Inspector_name»

VI. Required 5-Year Reinspection

Policy

Certification runs on a five year cycle. Therefore, Tree Farms who want to remain in the ATFS program must undergo a reinspection during the fifth year of the current certification.

Reinspections that are at or past the 5-year mark are classified as a 1st priority to keep the Tree Farm current and maintain certification.

All 5-Year Reinspections should be completed by end of the calendar year. If extenuating circumstances delay reinspection during the fifth year, every effort should be made to complete the reinspection during the next calendar year.

Procedure

Identification and Notification of Inspection

The Program Administrator identifies all Certified Tree Farms that are due (or past due) for the Required 5-Year Reinspection in the following calendar year. The Program Administrator verifies that the annual membership fees have been paid.

The Inspection Coordinator reviews the list, identifies any issues that need to be addressed, and returns the information to the Program Administrator.

The Program Administrator sends the Tree Farmer:

- The Required 5-Year Reinspection Letter (G),
- An current ATFS form for the Tree Farm which identifies the Inspector of Record for the Tree Farm,
- A copy of the 2021 Standards, and
- A list of current Inspectors for their county.¹

Administrator - Issues a list of all Tree Farms to be inspected to the Inspection Coordinator.

Arrangements for Inspection

The Tree Farmer contacts the Inspector of Record and works in cooperation with the Inspector to complete the inspection and forward the signed current ATFS form to the Inspector Coordinator or Area Chair (if appropriate).

- If the completed current ATFS form is not received by the Program Administrator by June 30, the Administrator alerts the Inspection Coordinator who determines the appropriate follow-up action..

Completion of Inspection and Recordkeeping

The inspector signs the completed current ATFS form and forwards it to the Program Administrator.

¹ If the Inspector of Record is not available, the Woodland Owner, the Area Chair, and/or the Inspection Coordinator work together to replace the inspector.

Program Administrator updates the ATFS data base including any new Inspectors of Record, archives the completed current ATFS forms and issues the *Congratulations on the Recertification of your Tree Farm letter (G)* to the landowner with an email copy to the inspector.

Timeline

Inspections should be completed and paperwork submitted by December 1

Program administrator periodically updates area chairs with a spreadsheet showing completed and due inspections for the year. The Area Chair follows up by June 30 to assist the Tree Farmer to insure on time inspection completion.

Payment of Inspector (see separate Certified Inspector Payment Policy & Procedure)

G. REQUIRED 5-YEAR REINSPECTION LETTER

Date

«OrganizationName»

«FirstName» «LastName»

«Address»

«City», «State» «PostalCode»

Re: TREE FARM # «T_F_number»

Dear [Tree Farmer]

As you may already be aware, re-inspection of your Tree Farm is required at least every 5 years to maintain certification. Our records indicate that your Tree Farm is approaching or has exceeded the 5 year anniversary of your last inspection. Completion of this inspection is targeted in the next 12 months to maintain your certification.

Enclosed is the current ATFS form inspection form and a list of Certified Inspectors for your County. Also included, is a copy of the latest 2015 Standards Addendum.

If your Inspector is not active, no longer available, or a change is needed, you must select and contact a new inspector from the list provided. If you already have a consulting forester but he or she is not currently certified, you may request his/her guidance in the selection of your Certified Inspector.

Please coordinate with your Certified Inspector to incorporate the 2015 Addendum into your management plan, then complete the inspection and sign the completed current ATFS form. Your inspector will also sign the form and forward it to your Area Chair for additional review and data entry.

If you have questions, please contact [Area Chair] at [phone#]

We look forward to your successful re-inspection.

Regards,

Signature of Current Committee Chair
Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee

Signature of Current PFA President
Pennsylvania Forestry Association

H. RECERTIFIED TREE FARMER CONGRATULATIONS LETTER (BY US MAIL)

Date

«OrganizationName»

«FirstName» «LastName»

«Address»

«City», «State» «PostalCode»

Re: TREE FARM # «T_F_number»

Dear [Tree Farmer]

On behalf of Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee, we want to congratulate you on successfully having your tree farm recertified! Your full benefits of being a Certified Tree Farm will now continue. Being a member of PA Tree Farm System will automatically maintain your membership in the Pennsylvania Forestry Association (www.paforestry.org) and its related benefits. This organization sponsors the PA Tree Farm Program. More information about our organizations can be found online at the American Tree Farm (www.treefarmssystem.org) and PA Tree Farm (www.patreefarm.org).

Benefits of belonging include:

- Internationally recognized forest certification: qualified to market your timber for the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI, Inc.) and PEFC chain of custody programs (<https://www.treefarmssystem.org/third-party-tree-farm-certification>).
- Consultation with a certified Tree Farm inspector on a periodic basis, at no cost
- Complimentary Pennsylvania Forestry Association membership
- Subscription to “Pennsylvania Forests” magazine and subscription to the Forest Leaves monthly newsletter
- Information and updates on forest related legislative issues
- Landowner representation at the state and national level
- Invitation to the Pennsylvania Tree Farmer of the Year Field Day
- Participation in the State, Regional and National Tree Farmer of the Year Contest
- Right to display Tree Farm sign and certificate

What it means to be a Certified Pennsylvania Tree Farm:

A Certified Tree Farm is a property that is managed to the highest standards of sustainability for multiple uses for wood, water, wildlife and recreation.

As a certified Tree Farm, you can continue to proudly display your Tree Farm sign. This sign shows the community your commitment to sustainably managing your woodlot. In exchange for the pride, pleasure and profit of being a certified Tree Farm, we ask that you to follow the standards of the program to remain certified.

Congratulations again on your commitment to management of your forest resources.

Regards,

Signature of Current Committee Chair
Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee

Signature of Current PFA President
Pennsylvania Forestry Association

VII. ATFS THIRD-PARTY ASSESSMENT

PENNSYLVANIA TREE FARM COMMITTEE

Policy

The PTF Committee undergoes periodic assessment by the ATFS to assure that it is compliance with the ATFS requirements.

Procedure for Preparation for Assessment

ATFS notifies PTFC of 3rd party assessment will be conducted during the following calendar year and sends the PTF Committee Chair guidelines for the assessment process.

By mid-January of the year in which the Assessment will be conducted, the ATFS schedules a preliminary planning meeting with the PTF Committee Chair, the Inspection Coordinator, the Inspector-Training Coordinator, the Program Administrator, and any other Committee members who will be part of or interested in the Assessment Process.

The PTF Committee Chair with assistance from Committee Members and the Program Administrator begins to compile the documentation required by the ATFS for the assessment. Relevant documents include, but are not limited to:

- Database system and relevant reports
- Policy and Procedure Manuals—Parts 1 and 2
- Committee Membership (?)
- Financial Statement/Report
- Promotion and Outreach materials
- Other?

Procedure for Review and Approval of Materials

The Committee Chair with assistance from the Program Administrator, PFA Treasurer, and appropriate Committee Members compiles the required materials and posts them to a Dropbox created by the ATFS office.

The ATFS office reviews the materials and notification of any deficiencies is sent to the PTF Committee Chair and Program Administrator for corrective action.

A. Procedure for On-site Inspection of Tree Farms

Prior to the preliminary planning meeting, the ATFS notifies the PFA Committee Chair of the Tree Farms that have been selected for inspection during the Assessment.

The Committee Chair, Inspection Coordinator, the Inspector-Training Coordinator, and the Program Administrator review the list of Tree Farms to identify any potential problems that would disqualify the Tree Farm from the Assessment inspection. Replacement Tree Farms are recommended to those that are disqualified.

ATFS and the PTF Committee agree upon a final list of Tree Farms to be inspected, and for each Tree Farm to be assessed, the PTF Committee forms an inspection team including:

- Tree Farmer or representative (on site)
- Inspecting Forester (on site if possible)
- Area Chair (on site optional)
- Administrator – With Area Chair organizes trip, hotels and guides
- Inspection Coordinator - Optional
- PTFC Chair or Vice-Chair (optional)

Program Administrator– Works with ATFS and the team to plan, communicate, and schedule each assessment.

ATFS – Returns assessment inspection results to the PTFC Chair for review and corrective action.

PTFC Chair – schedules corrective action, documents result and reports to PTFC

PTFC Chair – Files correction report with ATFS

A copy of the final Assessment Report is kept on file by the Program Administrator. The prior report is added to the PTF Committee archives.

VIII. Inspector of Record

Policy

All Tree Farm inspections conducted as part of the ATFS program are completed by an Inspector of Record who has successfully completed the Inspector Training Program and who's training is up to date and current to the latest Standard.

Woodland Owners/Tree Farmers select a certified Inspector with whom to work.

Procedure

When a woodland owner applies for initial certification, they are directed to the PFA website to see a list of certified Inspectors who work in the county where the Tree Farm is located.

The woodland owner is responsible for selecting an Inspector with whom to work.

The Inspector of Record is listed on the current ATFS form for the Tree Farm to be inspected.

The Inspector of Record on the current ATFS form is contacted for all subsequent reinspections.

An Inspector of Record is replaced under any of the following circumstances:

- For some reason, no Inspector of Record listed in the paperwork for the Tree Farm;
- The Inspector of Record is not available to conduct the inspection for personal reasons, or
- The Inspector of Record has been decertified

IX. Moving Tree Farm from Certification to Pioneer Status

Policy

The most current ATFS policy on Pioneer Status is available on:

https://www.treefarmssystem.org/stuff/contentmgr/files/2/0bb678f9133b49b644edf41bc8789de9/pdf/tree_farm_status_definitions_final.pdf

Although there is no time limit for a Tree Farm to remain on Pioneer Status, it is the policy of the ATFS and the PTF Committee to encourage landowners to address deficiencies and become recertified.

Procedure

A Tree Farm Inspector, Area Chair, or Inspection Coordinator may initiate moving a Tree Farm to Pioneer status based on:

1. a failed inspection that cannot be corrected in the short term and the Tree Farmer would like some time to correct shortcomings, OR
2. having an out of date inspection that is not current to the latest standards, i.e. not inspected within the current standards cycle.

The Program Administrator is notified of the Tree Farm's change in status via submission of the current Tree Farm Inspection Record Form. The reason for the drop in status must be included on the Form.

The Program Administrator issues a *Moved from Certified to Pioneer Letter (I)* and updates the ATFS data base to reflect the change to Pioneer status.

I. MOVE FROM CERTIFIED TO PIONEER LETTER

Date

«OrganizationName»

«FirstName» «LastName»

«Address»

«City», «State» «PostalCode»

Re: TREE FARM # «T_F_number»

Dear (Tree Farmer),

The Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee has recently been notified that your Tree Farm status has changed from Certified to Pioneer. You have five years to recertify your tree farm before being removed from the program.

We encourage you to take the steps necessary to recertify your Tree Farm and continue to receive the benefits of being a certified member of the PA Tree Farm Program and the American Tree Farm System. Please contact your Tree Farm Inspector to discuss what is needed to bring your woodland back to certified status.

If you are uncertain who your Tree Farm inspector is or if they are no longer active in the program, you can find an Inspector in your area by visiting the PA Tree Farm website (www.patreefarm.org/inspectors/) or by contacting the Tree Farm Program administrator at 800-835-8065.

We encourage you to complete the steps to recertify your Tree Farm. We are here to help you realize your goals for your forestland. Please contact us at your earliest convenience if you have any questions.

Regards,

Signature of Current Committee Chair
Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee

Signature of Current PFA President
Pennsylvania Forestry Association

X. DECERTIFICATION OF TREE FARMS

Tree farms may be decertified for failure to pay annual membership fee and/or failure to comply with ATFS standards.

PROCEDURE

A tree farm does not receive initial certification or is decertified for any of the following reasons:

- Sub-standard conditions: Not eligible for ATFS Program, lack of management plan, management not sustainable and the landowners disinterest in management to the AFF Standards.
- Landowner is no longer alive and heirs are not interested in continued certification.
- Property has been sold outside of the family. If the property is passed onto a relative that maintains the same management objectives outlined in the management plan, then the certification can be maintained.
- After multiple tries through multiple methods, the Inspector is unable to locate the owners.
- The landowner is no longer interested in participating in the program.
- Landowner fails to pay annual fee.

The reason(s) for decertification must be included in the notes section of the 004 form.

J. MOVE TO DECERTIFIED LETTER

Date

«OrganizationName»

«FirstName» «LastName»

«Address»

«City», «State» «PostalCode»

Re: TREE FARM # «T_F_number»

The Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee is writing to inform you that your Tree Farm # _____ has been decertified within the American Tree Farm System. We regret the loss of a fellow Tree Farmer from the program.

If circumstances change, we encourage you to take the steps necessary to recertify your farm and continue to receive the benefits of being a certified member of the PA Tree Farm Program and the American Tree Farm System. Please contact your Tree Farm Inspector to discuss what is needed to promote your woodlot to a certified status.

You can continue to keep in touch with forestry activities and news for managing your woodland by maintaining your membership in the Pennsylvania Forestry Association (<http://www.paforestry.org/>). You'll continue to be involved in Penn's Woods, keep yourself up to date with various communications, and experience the many membership benefits.

Should you have further questions, please feel free to contact us.

Regards,

Signature of Current Committee Chair
Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee

Signature of Current PFA President
Pennsylvania Forestry Association

XI. PA INSPECTOR TRAINING & CERTIFICATION

POLICY

All inspections conducted for purposes of ATFS certification/decertification must be done by a forester who has successfully completed the face-to-face Inspector Training Program and whose training status is up to date. All inspectors are listed in the ATFS database. Training status can be checked in the database.

ATFS updates the Tree Farm Standards approximately every five years. Once the new standards have been released, all face-to-face and on-line training materials are updated. Inspectors who want to maintain their certification must complete an update training on the new ATFS standard as directed by ATFS policy.

The most current information about the ATFS inspector certification policy can be found at: <https://www.treefarmssystem.org/trainings-resources-for-inspectors#InspectorPolicies>

The following procedures describe how the ATFS policies are carried out in Pennsylvania.

PROCEDURES

These procedures are conducted under the oversight of the PTF Committee Inspector-Training Coordinator.

The Inspector-Training Coordinator provides information about ATFS inspector training through several avenues including, but not limited to:

- Announcements in the e-news letter;
- Incorporation of ATFS training standards into the curriculum of forestry programs at Penn State University Park, Penn College, and Mount Alto.

Inspector Certification Requirements

- To find the most current inspector eligibility requirements, go to the ATFS https://www.treefarmssystem.org/stuff/contentmgr/files/2/ef7e67c6f86c2bb86bd8f112ba587092/misc/atfs_inspector_workshop_registration_form_updated_012018.pdf
- To receive initial certification, as a Tree Farm inspector, a forester must complete a 4-hour face to face classroom ATFS approved inspector training.
- To maintain their certification training status all trained inspectors must complete the refresher training every time an update to the Standard is released, approximately every 5 years.
- Inspectors who do not complete the required update training within the required time frame will be decertified and no longer qualified to conduct ATFS inspections.
 - Foresters who want to be re-certified must attend the full 4-hour face to face training program.

Face-to-Face Training Sessions

At the direction of the Inspector-Training Coordinator, the Program Administrator schedules one or more face-to-face training sessions within the state annually. This training is to certify “NEW” foresters into the program as well as to provide an opportunity for previously certified foresters who have let their training status lapse to regain certification.

The number of training sessions to be conducted during each calendar year is determined by the Inspector-Training Coordinator in cooperation with the PTF Committee Chair, and the Program Administrator.

The number of face-to-face training sessions held is based on demand from the forestry community, those wishing to get certified, as well as student demand from forestry colleges and universities within the state.

Face-to-face training sessions are often held in cooperation with Penn State University Park and Penn College forestry programs classes. This ensures newly trained forestry students have exposure to the Tree Farm program and Standards of Sustainability. Upon graduation with a 2- or 4-year forestry degree students are eligible for ATFS Certified Inspector status .

Training dates, times and locations are typically announced in late winter and trainings are held in late winter/early spring annually.

The face-to-face training sessions are conducted by the Inspector-Training Coordinator. At the discretion of the Inspector-Training Coordinator, additional facilitators may be trained to assist with face-to-face sessions.

Preparation of Face-to-face and On-line Training Materials

The Inspector-Training Coordinator stays up to date with current ~~facilitator~~ trainings and reviews the training materials provided by ATFS on the “Trainings and Resources” page of the Tree Farm System web site. <https://www.treefarmssystem.org/trainings-resources-for-inspectors#InspectorPolicies>

When a face-to-face training session is held, the Inspector-Training Coordinator supplies any necessary handouts.

Registration for Inspector Training

Individuals interested in attending an Inspector Training session can register by sending an email to or calling the PFA office.

There is no charge for attending the Inspector Training sessions

Record of Certification

Following training, the Inspector-Training Coordinator sends the Inspector Workshop Registration Forms for all eligible foresters who completed the face-to-face training to the Program Administrator to be entered into the ATFS database.

The Program Administrator updates the ATFS database and sends the *New and Recertified Inspector Congratulations letter (L)*.

L. NEW AND RECERTIFIED INSPECTOR CONGRATULATIONS LETTER (BY US MAIL)

Date

«OrganizationName»

«FirstName» «LastName»

«Address»

«City», «State» «PostalCode»

Dear [Tree Farm Inspector],

Congratulations on completing the Pennsylvania Tree Farm Inspector Certification class. The Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee values the essential role you play in helping fulfil our mission of spreading the word about the importance of good forest stewardship to private woodland owners.

To maintain your certification, you are required to take a one-hour online course every five years, as the Standards are updated, and complete at least one inspection (new or re-inspection) of a property every two years. Be sure to check the American Tree Farm System’s Inspector Corner website for current information and valuable updates: (www.treefarmssystem.org/trainings-resources-for-inspectors).

Regards,

Chair of the Tree Farm Committee

XII. Certified Inspector Payment

Policy

Based on the acreage of the Tree Farm inspected, certified Inspectors receive an incentive payment for completing inspections.

The amount to be paid is based on the type of inspection completed and the number of acres of the Tree Farm(s) inspected.

- New Tree Farm Inspection
- ATFS Required Inspection
- 5-Year Recertification Reinspection (paid only once every five years)

The amount is calculated according to the following schedule:

Stipend Payment Schedule		
Type of Inspection	Payment basis	Amount/Completed Inspection
New Tree Farm Inspection	Flat fee	No Stipend
ATFS Required Inspection	Flat fee	\$100*
5-Year Recertification	10-50 acres	\$100
	51-100 acres	\$150
	101-500 acres	\$200
	501+	\$250

Payment does not depend on the outcome of the inspection.

When a Tree Farmer has multiple Tree Farms:

- All Tree Farms are grouped and inspected on the same 5-year cycle of certification and inspection.
- The incentive payment is based on the total aggregate acreage of the Tree Farmer ownership. Only one payment is paid on the aggregate acreage during each 5-year cycle.

Procedure for Payment of the Inspector of Record

When all paperwork associated with a Tree Farm inspection has been approved by the Inspection Coordinator, it is forwarded to the Program Administrator.

The Program Administrator initiates payment of the stipend for the Inspector of Record by issuing an *Inspector Incentive Payment Query (M)* by email. The Query to the inspector outlines two options:

- Option 1. Have a check mailed to the noted address.
- Option 2. Make a donation to PFA-Tree Farm in the amount of the incentive.

The Inspector of Record responds by return email indicating which option has been selected.

Upon receipt of the Inspector's response, the Program Administrator takes one of the following actions:

- Option 1. Issues *Inspector Incentive Thank You for your Continued Support of The Pa Tree Farm Program (N)* and encloses a check.

- Option 2. Issues a *Thank You Inspector Contribution Letter for your Continued Support of The Pa Tree Farm Program (O)* with a donation receipt incorporated.

M. INSPECTOR INCENTIVE PAYMENT QUERY EMAIL

Dear [Inspector Name],

Thank you for inspecting Tree Farm # ----- . The Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee values the essential role you play in helping fulfil our mission of spreading the word about the importance of good forest stewardship to the many private woodland owners.

You are entitled to an incentive payment for your valuable efforts. You have two options for this payment.

1. Payment by check.
2. Donate your payment to PFA-Tree Farm

In either case we much appreciate and value your continued support for the PA Tree Farm Program.

Please indicate your preference by return email.

Regards,

[Inspection Coordinator Name, Inspection Coordinator
Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee

Cc **Chair of PTF Committee Chair**
 PFA Program Administrator
 PFA Treasurer

N. INSPECTOR INCENTIVE THANK YOU LETTER (US Mail)

Date

«OrganizationName»

«FirstName» «LastName»

«Address»

«City», «State» «PostalCode»

Dear [Tree Farm Inspector],

Thank you for inspecting Tree Farm #----- with -----acres.

The Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee values the essential role you play in helping fulfil our mission of spreading the word about the importance of good forest stewardship to the many private woodland owners.

Your incentive payment check for \$----- is enclosed. Your valuable efforts are at the heart of the PA Tree Farm Program and we appreciate all that you do.

Regards,

«Inspection Coordinator name», Inspection Coordinator
Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee

Cc PFA TREASURER
PFA Committee Chair
PFA Program Administrator

O. INSPECTOR CONTRIBUTION THANK YOU LETTER (US Mail)

Date

«OrganizationName»
«FirstName» «LastName»
«Address»
«City», «State» «PostalCode»

Dear [Tree Farm Inspector],

Thank you for inspecting Tree Farm #----- with -----acres.
The Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee values the essential role you play in helping fulfil our mission of spreading the word about the importance of good forest stewardship to the many private woodland owners.

Thank you for your contribution of \$----- to PFA/PA Tree Farm. Your support will help to strengthen the Tree Farm Program in Pennsylvania.

Again, your valuable efforts are at the heart of the PA Tree Farm Program and we appreciate all that you do.

Regards,

«Inspector Chair name», Inspector Chair
Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee

Signature of Current Committee Chair
Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee

Signature of Current PFA President
Pennsylvania Forestry Association

XIII. MOVING INSPECTOR FROM EXPIRED TO INACTIVE

1. ATFS may move an inspector from expired to inactive based on training and inspection records.
2. The Administrator reviews the data base and issues letter *Inspectors who have Dropped to Inactive since the Last Report (R)*.

P. INSPECTOR ALERT 6 MONTHS PRIOR TO EXPIRATION – LETTER SENT BY ATFS

Q. INSPECTOR ALERT 1 MONTHS PRIOR TO EXPIRATION – LETTER SENT BY ATFS

R. EXPIRED INSPECTOR TO INACTIVE STATUS LETTER

Date

«OrganizationName»

«FirstName» «LastName»

«Address»

«City», «State» «PostalCode»

Dear [Tree Farm Inspector],

The Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee has not has not heard from you since we notified you that Your Pennsylvania Tree Farm Inspector Certification has expired. Unfortunately, your certification will soon be inactivated.

We value the important role you play in the PA Tree Farm Program and encourage you to renew your certification.

To reactivate this certification, you must attend a four-hour face to face classroom training. Your certification is kept current by being active in the program and completing at least one property inspection every two years. In addition, an online update training must be completed every five years.

Information about the locations and times of the approved trainings can be found at this site: <https://www.treefarmssystem.org/trainings-resources-for-inspectors/> or contact the PA Tree Farm Program Inspector Training Coordinator (Contact information can be found on our web site: <http://patreefarm.org/>).

Please contact us immediately if you have any questions.

Regards,

Signature of Chair
Pennsylvania Tree Farm Committee

XIV. FORESTS OF RECOGNIZED IMPORTANCE (FORI) FOR PA

Policy

Forests of Recognized Importance (FORI) represent globally, regionally and nationally significant large landscape areas of exceptional ecological, social, cultural or biological values. These forests are evaluated at the landscape level, rather than the stand level and are recognized for a combination of unique values, rather than a single attribute.

To help Tree Farmers to comply with the current Tree Farm Standards the following guidance is offered.

Standard 5: Fish, Wildlife, Biodiversity and Forest Health

Performance Measure 5.4: Where present, forest management activities should maintain or enhance forests of recognized importance.

Indicator 5.4.1 Appropriate to the scale and intensity of the situation, forest management activities should incorporate measures to contribute to the conservation of identified forests of recognized importance.

The PA Tree Farm Committee has decided to use the High Priority Forest Areas of PA developed by PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry. These areas were selected based on several factors including: the amount of forest cover, inclusion of County Natural Heritage Areas, Important Bird Areas as well as area of habitat for rare, threatened or endangered species.

PROCEDURE

To determine if a Tree Farm is located in or next to a Forest of Recognized Importance (FORI):

1. Go to the website <http://www.apps.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/farmbill/prioritylandscapes.html>
2. On the right-hand side, turn on the button for "**ecological**"
3. Zoom into your property by going to the lower left corner and entering your county and address.
4. See if your property contains any **dark green** blocks, indicating "high" ecological values based on county natural heritage sites, large areas of forest, possible habitat for rare species, etc. Lighter shades of green indicate areas of low or medium ecological value.
5. Note: This program does not have the ability to create a printable copy of the map. To generate a copy of this report for your Tree Farm plan, use a window capture program to take a "snap shot" of the screen, then print or save it.
6. If you have dark green showing on your property, then a portion of your land is considered to be in a FORI. Now what? While it is hard to determine exactly why that area is dark green, you will not go wrong by keeping it in forest. Whether that is a young or old forest should not matter. The important part is to keep it as working woods...and isn't that the goal of any Tree Farmer?

XV. ENDANGERED SPECIES REVIEW PROCEDURE

1. Tree Farmer, Plan Developer, or Inspector – Sends a request to the Inspection Coordinator for a PNDI review. Tree Farm acreage and location must be specified by address or GPS coordinates along with an outline of the property boundary. The boundary should be drawn on a map to ensure accuracy.
2. Inspection Coordinator – Requests the review and provides the results to the Tree Farmer.
3. Tree Farmer – incorporates the results of the review into his/her plan indicating any appropriate management action. If a species of concern is detected in the PNDI review, it is the responsibility of the Tree Farmer or Plan Writer to contact the designated agency to determine the status of the “hit.”

XV. PENNSYLVANIA OUTSTANDING TREE FARMER OF THE YEAR

POLICY

It is the policy of the PFA/PTFC to recognize forest owners who have demonstrated exceptional commitment to fulfilling the Standards of the American Tree Farm Certification Program and reaching out to help others understand the meaning of sustainable forestry.

PROCEDURE

Eligibility Criteria

- Nominees must be a certified Tree Farmer.
- Individuals may be nominated again in 5 years after winning state Tree Farmer of the Year.
- Individuals who were nominated, but did not win the award, may be nominated the following year.

Selection Criteria. Candidates for Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year should excel in a number of the following areas:

Outreach

Host field days and other landowner outreach activities
Support of local woodland owner associations
Youth programs – school groups, scouts, etc.
Many other opportunities

Wood Products

Planting
Crop tree management
Timber stand improvement - thinning
Regeneration harvesting
Invasive plant and insect control

Recreation

Access roads
Hunting

Wildlife / Habitat Management

Wetland protection
Food plots
Edge cutting
Deer population management

Water Protection

Riparian buffers
Erosion control on roads and trails

Nomination and Selection Procedure

- Anyone may nominate a Certified Tree Farmer for this award by completing and submitting a Nomination Form available from <https://www.treefarmssystem.org/get-recognized>.
- Where are the forms sent? To the PFA office and brought to the next PTFC meeting
- What is the deadline for nomination? 1 month prior to symposium or thereabouts
- The PTFC making the final decision
- The award is presented at the PFA Symposium

At the discretion of the Committee Chair, a Recognition Committee may be formed to visit and judge nominations and ultimately select winners

- oversee the – holds yearly district/state Outstanding Tree Farmer, Inspector, and Field Leadership contests;
- coordinates judging and presentation logistics;
- handle regional and national contest submission (if applicable)

PENNSYLVANIA STATE TREE FARMER OF THE YEAR NOMINATION FORM

YEAR: _____

Note: Print or type all information. Preliminary judging will be based on this completed form.
Please fill it out concisely and legibly.

Name of Tree Farmer: _____ Tree Farm Number: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (_____) _____ E-mail Address: _____

Location of Tree Farm: _____

Occupation (if retired, prior occupation) _____

Total woodland acreage _____ Woodland acreage certified as a Tree Farm _____

How long has Tree Farmer owned the land? _____

How long has the land been under a written forest management plan? _____

How long has the property been a certified Tree Farm? _____

What are the primary objectives of Tree Farm (i.e. financial, recreation, wildlife habitat, timber, etc.)? _____

How much of the actual Tree Farm field work is done by the owner? _____

How is the rest accomplished? _____

What forest management work has been done in the last five years?

1. Harvesting (type of cut, volume & products) _____

2. Reforestation (natural, artificial and number of acres) _____

3. Other practices (protection and TSI) _____

Has the Tree Farmer been involved in any special activities (i.e. tours, news stories, radio or TV shows, magazine articles)? _____

Is the Tree Farm under the multiple use concept? _____ If so, what uses are allowed? _____

Not allowed? _____

Is the Tree Farm sign in good condition and correctly displayed? _____

In your own words, tell why you feel this is an Outstanding Tree Farmer (how he or she is different from the average Tree Farmer) _____

What, if anything, has this Tree Farmer done to promote Tree Farming? (Examples: used Tree Farm as a demonstration area, participated as a member in state forestry association, promoted Tree Farming to youth groups, influenced other landowners to plant or manage their forest) _____

Does the Tree Farmer belong to any forestry organization, i.e. Forest Farmer, state forestry association, or has he or she received any special awards for forestry efforts (other than Tree Farm awards)? _____

Is or has the Tree Farmer ever been a practicing forester? If yes, which of the above activities were employer-supported and which were truly voluntary and outside his/her duties:

OPTIONAL:

Name and affiliation of cooperating forester: _____

Address: _____

Phone : (____) _____ Email: _____

Nominating Forester's Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (____) _____ Email: _____

State Tree Farm Chair Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Submit the completed form to

XVI. PENNSYLVANIA TREE FARM INSPECTOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

POLICY

It is the policy of the PFA/PTFC to recognize the contributions of outstanding foresters whose efforts are vital to the success of the Tree Farm Certification Process. For this reason, an annual Tree Farm Inspector of the Year Award is presented to a nominee who meets the following eligibility and accomplishment criteria.

PROCEDURE

Eligibility Criteria

- May be nominated again 5 years following a prior win
- If did not win inspector of the year may be re-nominated following year

Selection Criteria

- Total Number of inspections in the year prior to nominations (This is the most important criteria at this time since we need to expand the number of inspections from +/- 15 per year to +/- 75 per year.
- Number of “new” Tree Farms inspected in prior year
- Involvement with outreach activities to woodland groups, students, foresters, etc.
- Career inspections and outreach may be considered

Nomination Procedure

- Anyone may nominate a Certified Tree Farm Inspector for this award by completing and submitting a Nomination Form available on the PFA website.
<https://www.treefarmssystem.org/get-recognized>

Selection Procedure

Award Announcement and Presentation Procedure

- The award is presented at the PFA Annual Symposium.

PENNSYLVANIA TREE FARM INSPECTOR OF THE YEAR NOMINATION FORM

YEAR: _____

Note: Print or type all information. Preliminary judging will be based on this completed form.
Please fill it out concisely and legibly. News clip and other documents may be attached to form.

Name of Inspecting Forester being nominated: _____

Employed by: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Nominated by: _____

Nomination approved by: _____

Area Chairman

Note: The information provided should be for work completed during the last calendar year.

1. Number of re-inspections completed: _____
2. Percent of inspections completed by September 1: _____
3. Number of new Tree Farms certified: _____
4. Demonstrated Tree Farm promotional activity and committee involvement (news releases, newspaper interviews, Tree Farm tours, appearances on TV or radio programs, civic speeches, etc): _____

5. Demonstrated service to the forestry community (membership in SAF, PA Forestry Association, SFI, etc.): _____

(Please use additional pages if needed)

Submit completed form to

XVII.REGIONAL and NATIONAL OUTSTANDING TREE FARMER OF THE YEAR

Policy

Recipients of the Pennsylvania Tree Farmer of the Year Award often demonstrate an exceptional commitment to the sustainability, not only of their own woodlots, but to Pennsylvania forests in general. It is the policy of the PFA/PTFC to recognize such individuals by nominating them for The American Tree Farm System Regional or National Outstanding Tree Farmers of the Year Awards. To this end, the PTFC follows the guidelines provided by the American Tree Farm System.

Procedure

Selection Criteria

Special consideration will be given to Tree Farmers who:

1. Continually carry out significant and outstanding forestry practices
2. Are involved in outreach and educational activities as ambassadors of sustainable forestry and the American Tree Farm Program.

American Tree Farm System Duty Description Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Active involvement in outreach and education activities;
2. Active member of their state Tree Farm Committee;
3. Be willing to serve on CFF operating Committee if invited;
4. Be actively involved in legislative issues affecting private forest landowners;
5. Be willing to open their forest lands for public educational field days;
6. Be willing to meet with the media, make appearances at forestry events, write articles for publications;
7. Attend National Leadership Conference;
8. Wear Tree Farm apparel when appropriate.

Expectations of Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year

In addition to all the duties and responsibilities of the regional award, recipient(s) of the national award will also have these primary duties:

1. Represent and promote the American Tree Farm System;
2. Serve on the CFF Operating Committee for a 3-year term;
3. Serve on the Editorial Board and at least one sub-committee of the CFF Operating Committee
4. Be a signatory of letter to Tree Farmers requesting donations for its programs.

October 21, 2009, updated Dec 2017 by
The American Tree Farm System

Nomination Procedure

Selection Procedure

Award Announcement and Presentation Procedure

XVIII. Committee Evaluation of Tree Farm Program

Policy

PFA's participation in the ATFS is predicated on the assumptions that:

1. Pennsylvania woodland owners desire third-party certification of their forest property;
2. The opportunity for certification motivates woodland owners to engage in sustainable forest management practices, and
3. Woodland owners value the benefits that come with participation in the ATFS certification program.

It is the policy of the PTF Committee to monitor levels of participation in the ATFS program in order to evaluate the accuracy of the preceding assumptions.

Figures to be monitored on an annual and projected five-year basis include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Number of certified Tree Farms in program at the beginning of the calendar year compared to the number of certified Tree Farms in the program at the end of the calendar year.
2. Number of certified Tree Farms that complete recertification at the end of the 5-year term of certification.
3. Number of Pioneer Tree Farms that are moved to certified status
4. Number of Pioneer Tree Farms that remain in the ATFS program.
5. Number of woodland owners that request information about the ATFS program and follow through by submitting a request for inspection
6. Number of Tree Farms completing certification for the first time.
7. Number of Pioneer Tree Farms that are decertified.

Addition data may be gathered to answer specific questions about the efficacy and efficiency of the certification process.

Procedure

By December 1 of each calendar year, the PTF Committee Database Manager provides the Committee Chair, the Inspection Coordinator, and the Inspector-Training Coordinator with a print out of statistics related to items 1-7 above.

The Committee Chair, Inspection Coordinator, and Inspector-Training Coordinator compare the current year's data with data from the previous year and with projections for the current year.

The Committee Chair, Inspection Coordinator, and Inspector-Training Coordinator prepare a report for the full PTF Committee to be presented at the final Committee meeting of the year. As a minimum, the report includes:

1. A summary comparison of actual certifications compared to benchmarks and projections established by the Committee;
2. Recommendations for any adjustments needed to address gaps between the benchmarks and current status of program, and
3. Recommended 5-year projections for inspections/reinspections.

If specific deficiencies in the system are identified, steps for corrective action are developed for implementation during the next calendar year.



THE PENNSYLVANIA TREE FARM PROGRAM

116 PINE STREET, 5TH FLOOR
HARRISBURG, PA 17101

www.patreefarm.org

1-800-835-8065 thePFA@paforestry.org



*Promoting the growth and utilization of renewable forest resources on private lands,
Protecting environmental benefits,
Increasing public understanding of the values of sustainable forestry practices.*