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# American Tree Farm System



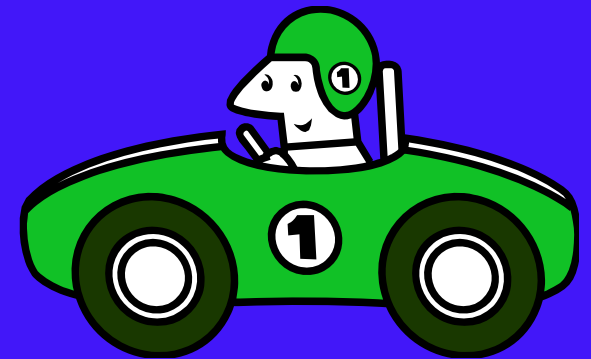
It's Not Your Daddy's Tree Farm

# Forestland as an Investment

- Multiple reasons for owning forestland
- In MS, economics (timber income, investment) is a major objective
- Forestland investing involves risks
  - Weather (wind, ice, drought, etc.)
  - Insects and Diseases
  - Fire
  - Markets

# Where Are We Headed?

- History of the Tree Farm System
- Organization of Tree Farm
- Changes in Tree Farm
- Why Become a Tree Farm
- Eligibility Requirements
- Standards of Sustainability
- How To Become a Tree Farmer
- Landowner Resources



# History

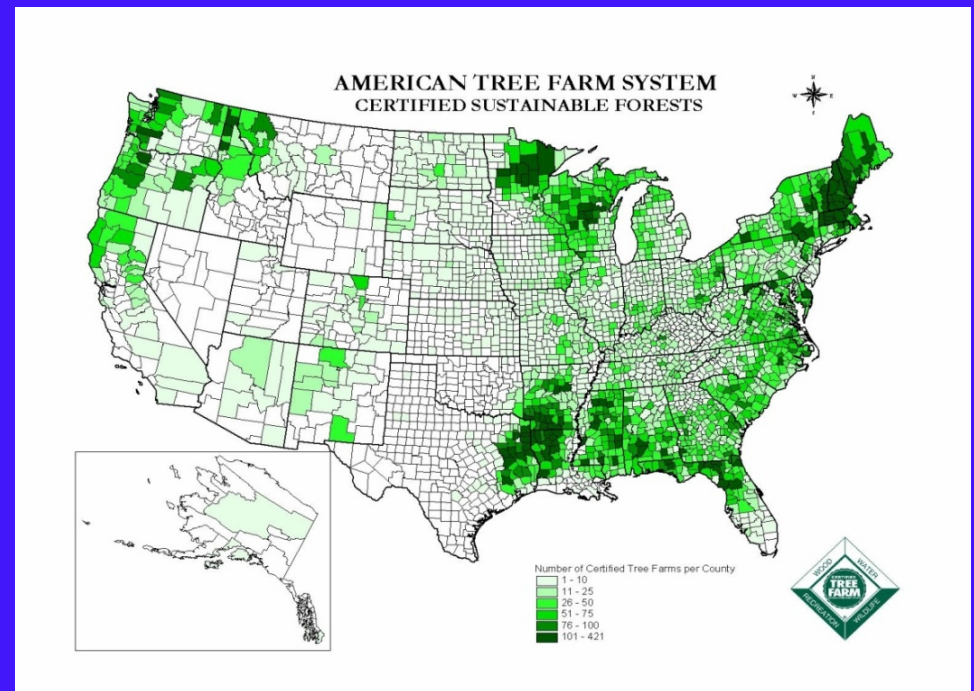
- 1<sup>st</sup> Tree Farm dedicated in Washington.
  - Owned by Weyerhaeuser Company.
  - For outreach and education purposes.
  - Emphasized responsible management.
- 1<sup>st</sup> State Tree Farm Program – Alabama.
  - Followed by Arkansas, California, Oregon, and Washington.
- Mississippi's first Tree Farm was in 1944.



Charles H. Clemmons,  
First Tree Farmer  
June 21, 1941

# Tree Farms Nationwide

- Over 90,000 Certified Tree Farms in the U.S.
  - 25+ million acres.
  - Half the Tree Farms are in the South.
- 3,898 Tree Farms in MS.
  - 1.6 million acres in MS.
  - All 16<sup>th</sup> section lands are now part of Tree Farm
- 68 Tree Farms in Neshoba Co.
  - 8,651 acres in Neshoba Co.
  - 96 Stewardship Forests (not TF)



# America's Family Forests

- 60% of all commercially valuable forest land is owned by Families.
- Supply 60% of all US roundwood products.



# ATFS Core Mission

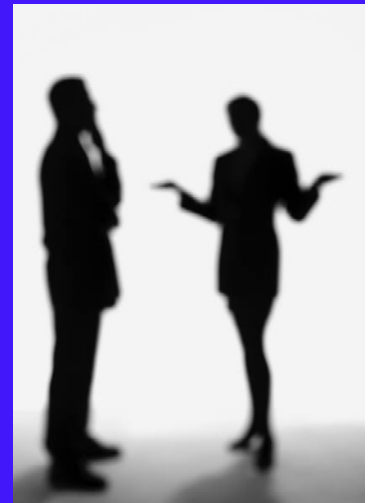
To Get More Good  
Forestry on More Acres  
and Keep it There!



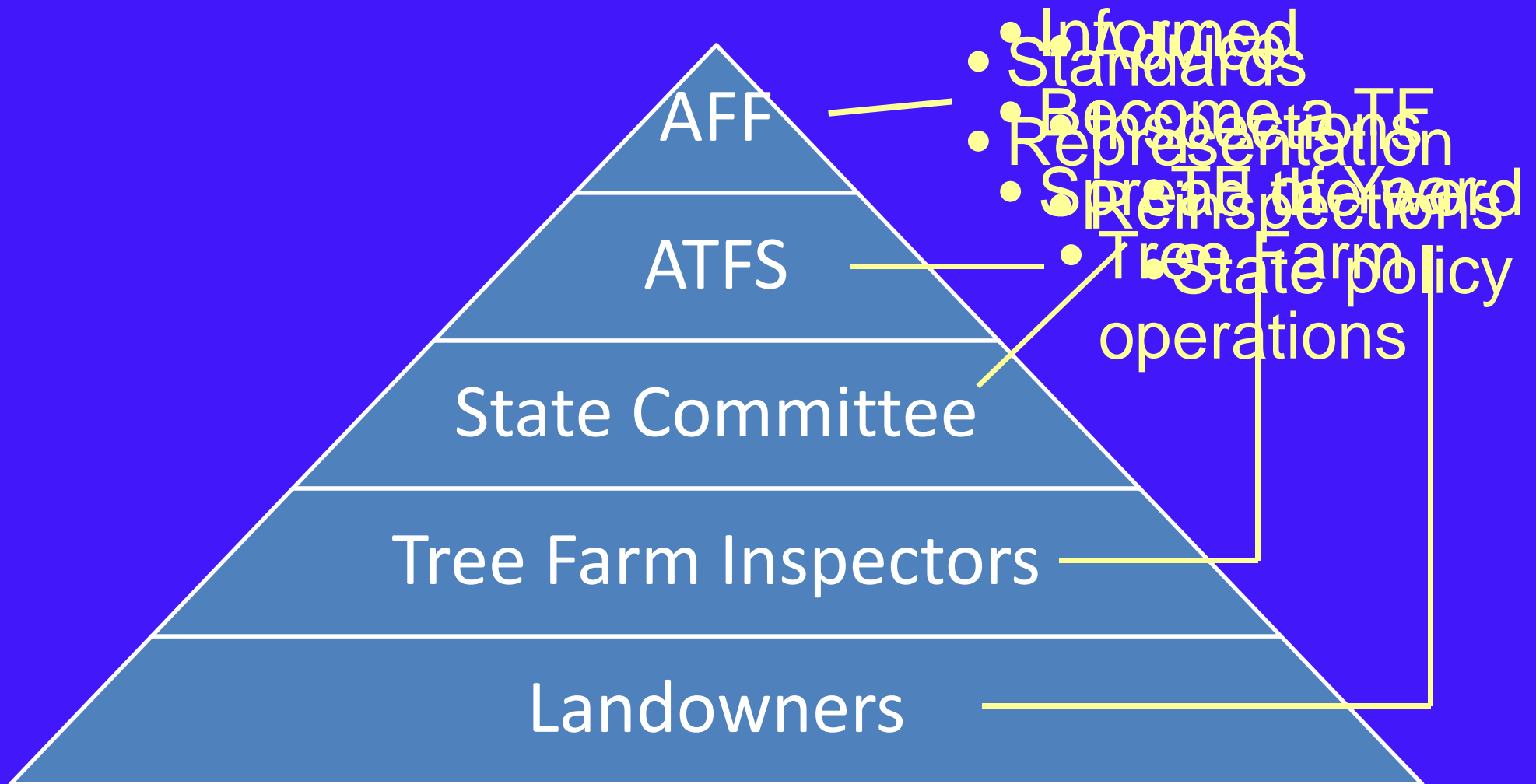


# A Common Misconception

- “I don’t have my land for timber production. I enjoy having my woods and want to keep this for my kids.”
- Tree Farm is about 1) your objectives, and 2) helping you meet these objectives.



# Tree Farm Organization



# Recent Changes in Tree Farm

- Mid 1990' s—development of “forest certification” as a way to demonstrate forest sustainability
  - Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)
  - Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI)
- No system focused on private landowners
- 2004—Tree Farm became a viable forest certification system
- 2005—Recognition by SFI
- 2008—Endorsed by PEFC
- 2010—New Standards



# These Changes are Important

- Corporate clients want “certified wood”
  - Home Depot, Lowes, Times Inc., Toyota, Bank of America, etc.)
- Tree Farm and SFI dominate the US South
- 2013—for the first time, Tree Farms received a price premium for timber
- Premiums will develop
- Will be important in the future



# Why Become a Tree Farmer?

- “Certified” sustainable forest – at NO COST to you!
- Receive advice from professional foresters.
- Practice sustainable forestry.
  - Receive a Tree Farm sign to post on your property.
- Representation at the state and national levels on legislative issues.

Grey and Paul Monroe  
Winston County



# Why Become a TF... (cont' d)

- Be recognized in your community as a leader in forest management.
  - Invited to attend the annual National Tree Farm Convention.
  - Receive complementary issue of *Tree Farmer Magazine*.
  - Receive the *Forests & Families* Newsletters.
- Eligible to participate in Farm Bill Conservation Programs.

Cecil Chambliss, Purvis, MS  
State Tree Farmer of the Year 1999



# Why Become a TF...(cont' d)

- Opportunity to benefit from ecosystem services (i.e., Carbon Credits).
- Forest product companies that participate in the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) recognize Tree Farms as a source of certified wood:
  - Mutual recognition with SFI,
  - Program for Endorsement of Certification Systems (PEFC) Endorsed.



# New Markets for Tree Farmers

**Green Building**



**Bioenergy**



**Water**



**Carbon**

**Biodiversity**



# Eligibility Requirements

- Tree Farm certification is primarily for private ownership.
- Own 10 – 20,000 contiguous acres of forest land (over 10,000 acres national office handles).



Mr. Joe Huggins, Owner  
Goose Valley Ranch, Oxford, MS



- Land managed according to the eight “Standards of Sustainability.”
- Must have written management plan.

# Management Plan Options



- MS Forestry Commission runs the Forest Stewardship program:
  - Tree Farm system requirements are compatible. This enables participation in Farm Bill and cost-share programs also.
- Registered consulting foresters: (<http://www.cfr.msstate.edu/borf/>).
  - best to use qualified Tree Farm Inspector

# Standards of Sustainability

- All “forest certification systems” have some sort of standards required
- Standards address items important in demonstrating “sustainability” of forests
  - Include both timber and non-timber benefits
  - All systems require a written management plan



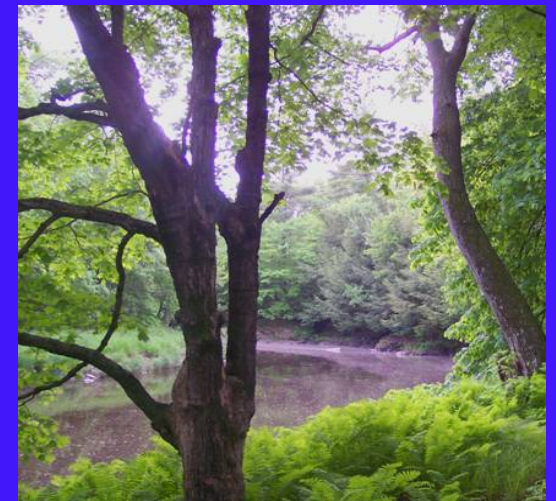
# Standards 1 and 2

- 1. Commitment to Practicing Sustainable Forestry.
  - Must have a written management plan
- 2. Compliance with Laws.
  - Must comply with relevant laws.



# Standards 3 and 4

- 3. Reforestation and Afforestation.
  - Must ensure adequate stocking levels of desired species.
- 4. Air, Water and Soil Protection.
  - Must follow Best Management Practices (BMPs).



# Standards 5 and 6

- 5. Fish, Wildlife and Biodiversity.
  - Must protect Threatened and Endangered species
  - Should prevent, eradicate or control invasive species.
- 6. Forest Aesthetics.
  - Should apply visual quality measures.



# Standards 7 and 8

- 7. Must Protect Special Sites.
  - Document in your management plan
- Forest Product Harvest and Other Activities.
  - Use qualified professionals and contractors.



# How to Become a Tree Farmer

- Contact MS Forestry Commission Service Forester (County Forester)

*OR*

- Call Dr. Tom Monaghan, MS Tree Farm Coordinator, at 662-325-1785

*OR*

- Call Glenn Hughes at 601-794-0671



Dr. and Mrs. Terry Ozier, Brandon, MS  
National Tree Farmers of the Year, 1990



# Initial Tree Farm Inspection

- Schedule a time to meet with the inspector at the property
- Have your written management plan available (Service Forester can prepare for free if you own 250 acres or less, other options for getting a plan)
- Discuss your goals and objectives, write on 004 Form
- Sign the 004 form and send to state TF
- Erect Tree Farm sign on property



# Third Party Assessment

- New for Mississippi in 2012 (every 5 years)
- Required by all forest certification systems
- 34 Tree Farms chosen and visited by 2 independent auditors over 3 days
- Main questions were:
  - Is your management plan complete and accurate?
  - Does your management plan reflect our goals?
  - On-the-ground visits to confirm practices

# 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)



# Summary

- ATFS has promoted sustainable forestry for 72 years
- YOU are the core of the Tree Farm System
- Landowners benefit from professional assistance, recognition, state and national advocacy
- No direct cost to become a Tree Farm
- Standards of Sustainability apply to Tree Farmers, both new and reinspections
- Increasing market recognition for TF



Thank You!!!

