



# NEW MEXICO TREE FARM NEWS

Published by the New Mexico Tree Farm Committee

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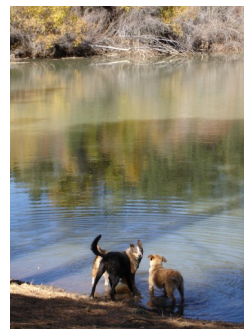
### In This Issue

**New Mexico Tree Farmers’ Piñon Crowned State and Soon-to-be National Champion.....1-2**  
**Dear New Mexico Tree Farmer,.....2-3**  
**Project Learning Tree Update for NM Tree Farm Bulletin, December 2012.....3-4**  
**New Mexico State University Renames Mora Forestry Research Center..... 4-5**  
**The Back Year Tree Farm.....5**  
**National Tree Farmer Convention.....6**  
**NRCS-Conservation Stewardship Program.....7**

### New Mexico Tree Farmers’ Piñon Crowned State and Soon-To-Be National Champion

- American Forests’ *National Register of Big Trees* Recognizes

graph the ranches’ State and former National Champion piñon pine (*Pinus edulis*). After a beautiful tour of the property, led by the friendly pack of Circle A’s canine tour guides, we made our way to the majestic piñon which perches on a large rocky outcropping at the edge of a large meadow.



The Circle A Ranch Canine Tour Guides Taking a Dip in the Pond.



New Mexico State Forestry Division’s Bernalillo District Forester Todd Haines with State Champion piñon pine (*Pinus edulis*).

State Champion piñon



The tree, which was first nominated for Big Tree status in 1982, still stands today and other than losing a large branch in a storm a few years back is in excellent health and continues to thrive. The tree was dethroned as National Champion in 2008 due to lack of measurement confirmation, but has been renominated and will once again regain its designation as National Champion in the spring of 2013. In the meantime, it continues to be the largest piñon on record in New Mexico and comfortably as New Mexico’s State Champion.

### Largest Trees in the Country -

On a beautiful fall morning in 2012, the New Mexico State Forestry Division’s Bernalillo District Forester, Todd Haines and Big Tree Program Coordinator, Kelly Washburn set off for a visit to Circle A Ranch, a Certified Tree Farm property just outside Cuba, New Mexico. Their goal was to conduct a Tree Farm inspection, but also to visit, measure, and photo-





View of the San Pedro Mountains through State Champion Piñon Pine



Woodpecker Acorn Cache at Circle A Ranch, Certified Tree Farm

Think you have a champion candidate? Anyone can nominate a big tree. Visit the American Forests website (<http://www.americanforests.org/our-programs/bigtree/>) to view the complete 2012 *National Register of Big Trees*. Beyond national champions, the State of New Mexico Big Tree Program also recognizes the biggest trees in New Mexico. To nominate a potential champion big tree in New Mexico, visit [www.nmforestry.com](http://www.nmforestry.com) and click on the "Big Tree" link to download a nomination form and to see the New Mexico list of State and National champion trees. You can also contact the State of New Mexico Big Tree Program Coordinator, Kelly Washburn at 505-476-3332 or by email at [kelly.washburn@nm.state.us](mailto:kelly.washburn@nm.state.us).

### A note about the 2013 National Audit

Thank you for your commitment as a New Mexico Tree Farmer. The American Tree Farm System (ATFS) is the largest and oldest sustainable woodland system in America. As a Tree Farmer, you are part of a strong and vibrant network sustaining America's forest heritage. ATFS provides you with the tools you need to help you reach your stewardship goals and the confidence that you are doing right by your land.

During the spring of 2013, the New Mexico Tree Farm Program will participate in a third-party certification assessment (the last one was in 2009). This assessment is important for the program in two critical ways. **First**, the assessment affirms the great work you do to manage your forests. In fact, the good forest management practiced by Tree Farmers has been consistently recognized through this assessment process. **Second**, the assessment also provides us with the opportunity to review how well our program operates to better understand how to serve landowners and help you manage your forest on the ground. The ATFS 2010-2015 Standards of Sustainability serve as the foundation for this stewardship and cover all aspects of good forest management to keep in mind when planning and conducting activities in your woods.

To perform the certification assessment of the New Mexico Tree Farm Program, we will visit about 15 Tree Farms for on-site visits. Attending these visits will be professional foresters from PricewaterhouseCoopers, the organization that provides ATFS with third-party recognition, your tree farm inspector/ local service forester, myself, and members of the NM Tree Farm Com-

Fall has arrived at Circle A Ranch



### About American Forests

Since 1940, American Forests' National Big Tree program has promoted the importance of planting and caring for trees and forests in helping to sustain healthy ecosystems. The program has campaigned to locate, protect and save the biggest specimens of every native and naturalized tree species in the United States. This year's *National Register of Big Trees* is made possible with the continued support of American Forests' long-time sponsor The Davey Tree Expert Company.





-mittee. **If your Tree Farm is chosen in the random sample for site visits, your Tree Farm Inspecting Forester will contact you in February or March of 2013.**

Until this time, we would greatly appreciate your help while we update our records. **Please let us know if there have been any changes to your Tree Farm or contact information, such as new acreage, sold acreage, change of home address, change of name, land transfers, etc.** You can contact me (New Mexico Tree Farm Committee Administrator) at the [email](#) or phone numbers listed below to update this important information. This is also a great time for you to update your forest management plan to reflect the 2010-2015 Standards of Sustainability. If you would like a copy of the ATFS Management Plan Addendum, a tool to use while updating your management plan, please call Sarah Crow at (202) 463-2738. We appreciate your cooperation in this effort to highlight the high level of sustainable management demonstrated by Tree Farmers in New Mexico.

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### **Project Learning Tree update for NM Tree Farm Bulletin, December 2012**

Below are some of the things New Mexico Project Learning Tree did this year to bring this outstanding environmental education curriculum to educators around the state.

- We awarded our NM PLT Outstanding Educator award to Carolyn Nesbitt.
  - \* Carolyn Nesbitt is the Fenton Ranch Director for Manzano Day School, where she teaches students about the natural environment. Ms. Nesbitt also served as an environmental education volunteer for the Peace Corps in Bolivia, earned a Master's degree in Environmental Education and

worked as an interpreter for Redwood National Park in California. One of the most useful resources in Peace Corps was the hands-on curriculum in the PLT guides. She adapted the lessons to fit into the culture. At Manzano Day School, she uses PLT to meet state education standards and uses the Build-A-Tree lesson with a tree costume. The students learn about the parts of a tree by putting it on in layers.

- We held a PLT GreenSchools! training for three schools in Albuquerque and one in Santa Fe. This training involved teachers and a select group of students all of them wanting to make their school environment more sustainable and "green." Check out the link to a video done by one of the schools: <http://youtu.be/RlcNdOo5ZzU>
- We held four educator workshops Taos, Albuquerque, Carlsbad, Washington Ranch, and Las Cruces totaling 70 educators.
- We had Steering Committee meetings in February, July, and November. Members of the Steering Committee include:
  - \* The three state coordinators – Dan, Barbara and Jean (see below)
  - \* Deb Thrall – Albert I. Pierce Foundation
  - \* Peg Crim – Lincoln National Forest Service
  - \* Terri Wildermuth – retired forester and State PLT Coordinator
  - \* Kevin Holladay – NM Game and Fish, Education Coordinator
  - \* Andrew Eagan – NM Mexico Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute
  - \* Mary Stuever and Rhonda Fitzgerald – NM State Forestry (they share a position)
- We will pursue getting a member from the NM Forest Products Industry and UNM. Thanks to all the committee members who help keep PLT alive in NM!
  - \* Barbara trained 7 new facilitators from





Carlsbad, Las Cruces, Santa Fe, Albuquerque, and Silver City.

- \* Barbara, Jean and Deb attended the national Project Learning Tree conference in Deadwood, SD in May. Maybe some year, New Mexico could host the national PLT conference again!
- \* We began charging \$20 to attend the workshop, with the start of the 2012-13 school year. We hope to use those funds to provide materials to educators.

We already have workshops scheduled for next year and hope to re-institute the week-long teacher summer camp.

We hope the next year will provide an opportunity for us to hold a PLT training at a tree farm in New Mexico. If anyone would like to volunteer their place please contact any of the three of us.

Your NM PLT State Coordinators:

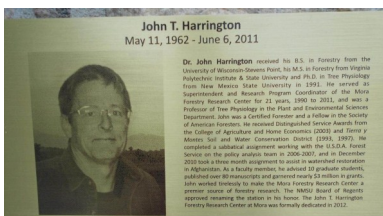
Dan Ware-NM State Forestry, [Daniel.ware@state.nm.us](mailto:Daniel.ware@state.nm.us)

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Jean Szymanski-Forest Service-Southwestern Region, [jszymanski@fs.fed.us](mailto:jszymanski@fs.fed.us)

## NMSU Renames Mora Forestry Research Center

On June 6, 2011 John Harrington, Superintendent of the Mora Forestry Research Center was involved in a tragic accident as he rode his bicycle home. All who knew him were shocked when they heard the news of his death. Colleagues at NMSU moved to honor his contributions to the university by renaming the agriculture science center in his honor. The NMSU Board of Regents approved renaming the facility in his honor in December of 2011.



The formal dedication on August 16, 2012 was presided by Dr. Richard Pratt, Head of Plant and Environmental Sciences, Dr. David Thompson, Agriculture Experiment Station Director and NMSU President Barbara Couture. The naming took place during the Centennial of New Mexico's statehood, the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the legislation establishing the Mora Forestry Research Center and the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Morrill Act, which created the land grant universities, including NMSU.



Among the more than 200 visitors were: 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Bart M. Lomont of the Indiana Air National Guard, an associate and friend of John's from his time working in Afghanistan on watershed restoration, William Lange, director of policy analysis for the US Forest Service, NMSU Provost Wendy Wilkins, and Associate Director of the AES, Steve Loring. Representatives of NM Division of Forestry, US Forest Service, Tree Farm Family, industry and family members of both John Harrington and his wife, Anne Wagner were also in attendance.

Senator David Salmon who represented this area was deeply concerned about the economic opportunities of citizens in forested areas, especially the Mora Valley. The legislation established NMSU's only forestry research facility which focused on Christmas tree production and other forestry-related activities. The first Superintendent and Research Director, Professor Emeritus James Fisher, was hired in 1975. Thus began a 37 year history of forestry research, reforestation programs, forest genetics and student training. During this brief time period, the station has grown over two million seedlings for State Forestry's forestation program. Over 30 graduate students (including John Harrington) have completed their thesis and dissertation research as part of the Mora program, and these programs have been funded by over





Over \$5 million in research grants.

## THE BACK YEAR TREE FARM (BYTF)

The Back Yard Tree Farm, BYTF for short, provides help for people interested in forest health but own less than 10 acres. According to Laura White, in an article for the East Mountain Telegraph in 2008, Donna Redman came up with the slogan for BYTF, it's "learning to care for your piece of the forest". The American Tree Farm System operates the program nationally but New Mexico has the distinction of having the only viable Backyard Tree Farm Program in the country. The activities and programs support the homeowner in keeping their piece of the forest healthy; thinning & pruning trees to reduce fire danger, planting trees & shrubs for wildlife food and cover, creating compost piles, using berms to slow storm water to name a few of the activities.

In 2012 two programs provided information to landowners to help keep their piece of the forest healthy; Jim Brooks of Soilutions gave a workshop on water harvesting-keeping the water that falls on your property, on your property. Later in the summer BYTF hosted Judith Phillips, landscape designer and author, spoke on what drought tolerant plants/trees/flowers to add to your property in times of low precipitation.

Each December the year closes with the annual gathering, a potluck and if we are lucky, George Duda's famous brisket. In 2012 George will give a tour of his property, there will be door prizes for all and a chance to provide input on the proposed programs for the following year.

For more information and to be added to the e-mail distribution list contact:

Mary Ellen McMurtrie:

[maryellenmcmurtrie@gmail.com](mailto:maryellenmcmurtrie@gmail.com) /505 281-0306

Catherine Scali:

[cscali1440@comcast.net](mailto:cscali1440@comcast.net) /505 286-7544 Co-chairs BYTF



Attendees at the Dedication

Dr. Fisher kept the responsibility of Research Director until Dr. John Harrington was hired in 1991 as Superintendent and Research Director. John had served in this position for over 20 years or more than one-half of the time the station has existed. His activities expanded the mission of the station to address climate change effects in forests, mineland reclamation, and outreach support for forest health activities in New Mexico.



Unveiling of the Dedication sign, John Harrington Research Center





## [National Tree Farmer Convention](#)

The annual National Tree Farmer Convention gives you the most up-to-date resources and opportunities to learn from other Tree Farmers, foresters, volunteers and industry professionals at one of the largest gatherings of woodland owners in America! From classroom-style concurrent sessions to on-the-ground learning opportunities at a local field day site, the National Tree Farmer Convention has something for everyone.

Keep checking this website for more information on the [2013 National Tree Farmer Convention!](#)



## 2013 National Tree Farmer Convention



*Photo credits: Meet Minneapolis*

### **The National Tree Farmer Convention is celebrating its 20th Anniversary this year - come join us!**

Journey to the "Land of 10,000 Lakes" to join hundreds of Tree Farmers, landowners, industry professionals and partners as we learn just what it takes to create *Healthy Forests for a Healthier Future*. Our event this year will provide you with a wealth of learning and networking opportunities and will feature a field day excursion to a local Certified Tree Farm. We will also be celebrating the extraordinary achievements of several of our Tree Farmers and Inspectors by recognizing the Regional & National Outstanding Tree Farmers of the Year as well as the Regional & National Outstanding Inspectors of the Year, generously sponsored by STIHL, Inc.

Mark your calendars - early-bird registration for this event will open on January 31, 2013!

**The 2013 National Tree Farmer Convention will be in [Minneapolis, Minnesota](#) on July 25-27, 2013.**

### **Hotel Information**

The 2013 National Tree Farmer Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota will be held at the [Depot Renaissance Minneapolis Hotel](#). Take advantage of our special rate and book your hotel room **by June 29, 2013**. The group rate for the 2013 Convention is \$129/night for a Standard King or Queen/Queen Room.

*To book your room online, [visit the ATFS online booking page](#); the group code "tretrea" has been pre-populated on the reservation form on the left-hand side of the screen.*

*To book your room by phone, **contact Renaissance Reservations at (612) 375-1700 or 866-211-4611** and let the reservationist know you are making a reservation at the Depot Renaissance Hotel in Minneapolis. In order to secure our group rate, specify that you would like a room on the **American Tree Farm System Block**.*





## **NRCS-Conservation Stewardship Program**

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) is a voluntary conservation program that provides incentives to agricultural producers to maintain, enhance, and manage existing conservation practices. CSP is administered through the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

CSP is available on Tribal and private agricultural lands and non-industrial private forest land. The program provides equitable access to all producers, regardless of operation size, crops produced or geographic location.

Producers can choose from a collection of enhancements to apply on their land. Enhancement refers to a type of conservation activity used to treat natural resources and improve conservation performance. For example, if you own non-industrial private forest land, you may consider implementing one of the following enhancements: grazing management to improve wildlife habitat; monitoring key grazing areas to improve grazing management; and/or creating forest openings to improve hardwood stands. To view a list of all enhancements eligible through CSP visit the national CSP webpage at, [www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/csp](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/csp).

“Rewarding producers for making a long-term commitment to apply sound conservation practices on their operation makes CSP a valuable tool for conservation and producers,” said NRCS New Mexico CSP Manager Kenneth Branch.

NRCS makes CSP available nationwide and producers can apply anytime throughout the year. CSP offers participants two possible types of payments: (1) Annual payment for installing and adopting additional activities, and improving, maintaining, and managing existing activities; and (2) Supplemental payment for the adoption of resource-

conserving crop rotations.

In 2012, NRCS New Mexico obligated \$4.3 million to CSP participants that benefitted over 1 million acres throughout the state. To learn more about the CSP program, visit the New Mexico NRCS site at [www.nm.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nm.nrcs.usda.gov) or contact your local NRCS Field Office about how they can help you consider using CSP for your private forest land.



An elk using a water trough with a wildlife escape ramp near Mora, NM. Photo taken by Mike Reardon

