

# FOREST STEWARDSHIP BRIEFINGS

Timber ♦ Wildlife ♦ Water Quality ♦ Soil Conservation ♦ Best Management Practices ♦ Recreation ♦ Aesthetics

## TREE FARM SYSTEM ENDORSED

*from a press release dated  
August 8, 2008*

*For more information:*

- [http://  
www.treefarmssystem.org/cms/  
pages/38\\_66.html](http://www.treefarmssystem.org/cms/pages/38_66.html)
- [http://  
www.pefc.org/  
internet/html/  
news/4\\_1154\\_65/5  
\\_1105\\_1894.htm](http://www.pefc.org/internet/html/news/4_1154_65/5_1105_1894.htm)

Family forest owners in the U.S., who own nearly two-thirds of the country's forestlands, recently cheered the international approval of the American Tree Farm System® (ATFS) by the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC). PEFC is an international, independent, non-profit, non-governmental organization, founded in 1999, which promotes sustainably managed forests through independent third party certification. ATFS is the oldest and largest forest conservation, certification, and advocacy program in the U.S.

Family forest landowners welcomed the endorsement by PEFC for certifying sustainably produced wood, a step that will open the door to new green markets for wood that is sustainably produced on their land. The Geneva-based PEFC made the announcement after a 14-month rigorous review designed to provide assurance to purchasers that certified wood and paper products are in fact produced from sustainably managed forests.

For some U.S. companies like NewPage Corporation whose North American operations include a mill in Rumford, Maine, this change could not come soon enough. "We sorely needed this endorsement in order to satisfy our customers who are demanding that our pulp and paper come from certified forest operations," said Tony Lyons, Director of Fiber Supply at the NewPage Rumford Mill.

He added that the market dynamics for sustainably produced wood have changed dramatically over just the last two years. "We can't meet the demand, and that's a shame when qualified forest owners are

standing ready. This fixes that problem."

"This is fantastic news for conservation-minded family forest owners who are struggling to survive in tough economic times," said Laurence Wiseman, President and Chief Executive Officer of the American Forest Foundation, the parent group of ATFS. "PEFC approval is the key to connecting more of the good operators to the rapidly growing marketplace of green manufacturers, distributors, retailers and consumers."

Forest landowners who voluntarily commit the extra time and expense to produce wood sustainably under the ATFS will now qualify for access to the international markets that they never had before. Traditional markets for U.S. wood have been shrinking as more foreign wood gains control into those markets, and Wiseman believes this endorsement step will help U.S. growers.

The United States is permanently losing 1.5 million acres per year of family forestland to development. Many people mistakenly assume that forestland they see is owned by either the government or large paper companies, when in fact 60 percent of all the wood harvested in the U.S. actually comes from family forestlands. For many of these small forest landowners, achieving some economic return on their property is essential if they are to avoid the pressures of development.

"By joining the largest forest certification system in the world, the American Tree Farm System is creating new markets for American growers," said Ben Gunneberg, Secretary General of PEFC International.

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## WHY MANAGE MY FOREST? PART II

prepared by Glenn & Evelyn Charlson for distribution by the Tree Farm System, May 2007

For more information:

- <http://www.treefarmssystem.org/index.cfm>
- <http://safnet.org/aboutforestry/index.cfm>
- <http://www.texasforestry.org/>

Some landowners and resource managers choose to “let nature take its course” on some forestland (see *Forest Stewardship Briefings*, July 2008). However, there is only one way to keep a forest as it is and that is management. Landowners can manage the forest so that the conditions they like can be maintained somewhere within the forest area.

While no set of management guidelines can cover all situations, professional and landowner judgment must combine scientific knowledge along with common sense within a plan for each individual’s specific piece of property. Lands which are actively managed usually follow a specific written plan (25-30 years in length) tailored by a forestry professional to meet that individual landowner’s goals while insuring their resources remain on course for future generations.

Forest management for timber production requires that growth be concentrated on those trees with the highest potential value. This is accomplished through periodic thinning, an exercise which requires knowledge of both timber markets and species growth characteristics. The timing of timber sales, both seasonally and within a business cycle, can significantly increase the value of a given timber sale. Effective regeneration of desired species can further enhance property value. The net result of effective management is optimized growth of high value trees and maximum timber

sale value. Under proper management, the quality of the timber improves, and the timber actually grows faster.

On the side promoting managing forests, while it may not be for a financial reason, one might consider the benefits for improved wildlife opportunities. Many wildlife species tend to favor habitat that is specific to a given forest composition type. Each species associated with a forested habitat or niche contributes to ecosystem functioning and, in turn, larger ecosystem processes. For example, studies have shown that insect-eating birds reduce overall levels of foliage loss from insect populations. As a result, bird population can affect larger ecosystem processes such as carbon storage or primary productivity.

In summary, a managed forest will improve the visual quality level and offer a source of pride to the landowner. Riparian area diversification provides a link between the aquatic environment and vegetation which is important for many species of fish, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and insects. Lastly, landowners will experience a higher level of recreational enjoyment; whether it is hunting, camping, hiking, fishing, ATV riding, wildlife watching, off-road bicycling, or berry picking. Proper forest recreation management can enhance the recreation experience, while at the same time, complementing a number of other landowner objectives.

## GOOSE ISLAND OAK

On the Texas gulf coast is one of the largest live oak trees in Texas. In the 1960s, it was recognized as the largest live oak in the United States.

Legend has it that the Goose Island Oak was once a place where the cannibalistic Karankawas held councils and pagan ceremonies in which they devoured their enemies and even members of their own

tribe. It is also referred to as a hanging tree and as a rendezvous of the fierce Comanche Indians.

In 2002, this former national champion live oak measured 340 inches in circumference, was 43 feet high and had a crown spread of 96 feet. Its age has never been accurately determined, but it is believed to be as much as 1,000 years old.

from the Texas Forest Service website—*Famous Trees of Texas*

For more information:

- <http://famoustreesoftexas.tamu.edu/TreeHistory.aspx?TreeName=Goose%20Island%20Oak>

## SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY PROGRAMS

The American Tree Farm System (ATFS) is a national program of the Center for Family Forestry that promotes the sustainable management of forests through education and outreach to private forest landowners. Founded in 1941, ATFS has 23 million acres of privately owned forestland and 90,473 certified forest properties that exhibit excellence in forest stewardship. ATFS private forest landowners (Tree Farmers) manage their forestlands for wood, water, wildlife, and recreation.

The American Forest Foundation (AFF) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) conservation and education organization that strives to ensure the sustainability of America's family forests for present and future generations. Their vision is to create a future where

North American forests are sustained by the public which understands and values the social, economic and environmental benefits they provide to our communities, our nation and our world.

Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC) is a framework for the assessment and endorsement of national forest certification systems that have been developed based on internationally recognized requirements for sustainable forest management. Since its launch in 1999, PEFC has become the largest forest certification umbrella organization covering national systems from all over the world, delivering hundreds of millions of tons of wood to the processing industry and then onto the market place.

*for more information:*

- <http://www.treefarmssystem.org/index.cfm>
- <http://www.affoundation.org/>
- <http://www.pefc.org/internet/html/>

## INVASIVE PLANT AND PEST COUNCIL

On June 2, 2008, the Texas Invasive Plant and Pest Council (TIPPC) became officially established in the State of Texas. TIPPC originated as a motion from the floor at the second statewide Invasive Plant Conference held at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, Austin, Texas in November 2007.

Invasive species spread easily in today's modern global commerce network and are difficult and costly to control. Invasive species impede industries, threaten agriculture and, in some cases, can endanger human health. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, invasive species impact nearly half of the species currently listed as Threatened or Endangered under the U.S. Federal Endangered Species Act. One study estimates that the total costs of invasive species in the United States amounts to more than \$135 billion each year.

Texas is under attack on every front by a host of plants and pests from exotic places with exotic names like Tamarisk, Giant Salvinia, Hydrilla, Emerald Ash Borer,

Channeled Applesnail, and many others. These invaders threaten the health of Texas' native ecosystems by decreasing biodiversity, threatening the survival of native plants and animals and interfering with ecosystem functions like fire, nutrient flow, and flooding.

Stakeholders from state and federal agencies, conservation organizations, academia, green industry and the public sector had long discussed the need for one unified body to address the threat of invasive species in Texas. The objectives of TIPPC are to promote understanding and awareness of invasive plant and pest impacts in Texas; provide a forum for the exchange of scientific, educational and technical information; and support research and restoration activities that reduce impacts of invasive plants and pests in Texas.

The organization has 96 charter members and will be governed by an interim board until a general election is organized. Membership in TIPPC is open to individuals, corporate and institutional entities.

*from a press release dated June 26, 2008*

*For more information:*

- [http://www.texasinvasives.org/TIPPC/Press\\_release.pdf](http://www.texasinvasives.org/TIPPC/Press_release.pdf)
- <http://www.texasinvasives.org>
- <http://www.naeppc.org>

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Editorial Board

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- Joe Pase, TFS, Lufkin, Texas

## TEXAS FOREST EXPO IS COMING

### Building Forests One Backyard at a Time

What: **TEXAS FOREST EXPO**

Where: **Lone Star Convention Center, Conroe, TX**

When: **Saturday and Sunday, September 27 and 28**

Come and discover the latest topics in land management, wildfire prevention and preparedness, generating alternate income from your land, landscape design, pest and invasive species management, timber and estate taxation, wildlife habitat management, tree maintenance and more!

Exhibitors and vendors will have interactive booths to answer your questions about your natural resource needs.

Texas Forest Service invites all the "Little Texans" to visit the children's exploration room with learning stations and activities to discover some of the wonders that the forest offers.

Go to <http://texasforests.tamu.edu/conferences/texasforestexpo/article.aspx?id=5070> for the class schedule and more information, or call (936) 273-2261.



P. O. Box 310  
Lufkin, TX 75902-0310

Phone: 936-639-8180

Email: [dwork@tfs.tamu.edu](mailto:dwork@tfs.tamu.edu)

TDD Line: 1-866-419-4872