

Maine Tree Farm NEWSLETTER

Mud Season 2017

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This Just In! Maine's 2017 Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year Selected as Finalist for Regional Award

Pam and Bryan Wells, the 2017 Maine Outstanding Tree Farmers and owners of the Wells Demonstration Forest in Milford and Greenfield, are one of two Northeast Regional Finalists for National Outstanding Tree Farmer. Based on the nomination form submitted by their Tree Farm Inspector Kirby Ellis, they were among 18 Tree Farmers nationwide that were nominated. This marks the second year in a row that the Maine OTFY is among the Elite Eight. To see stories for all the national nominees, click [here](#).

The next stage will be for a national assessment team to tour the Wells Demonstration Forest, later this year. It's not too early to save this date—Saturday, September 9, 2017—for the Annual Tree Farm/Maine Woodland Owners Field Day, which will be held at the Wells Demonstration Forest. Look for more details in future issues.



Third Party Assessment Update!

As mentioned in the last newsletter, 2017 is Maine's year for assessment, as part of the Northeast Regional Tree Farm 3rd party certification process. Two planning meetings have been held so far to get ready for on-the-ground visits in the spring. The process is going quite well. The independent assessors (from Price Waterhouse Cooper) and Kristina Duff, the national Tree Farm Certification Manager, have been very impressed with how the Maine Tree Farm Committee functions and conducts business. County Chairs and inspectors are now in the process of contacting the randomly selected Tree Farms to confirm participation and help coach them on compliance.

Maine has an excellent history of demonstrating quality management of our Tree Farms, and we expect this year will be no different. The biggest challenge during an assessment is ensuring all selected Tree Farms have their management plans updated to the current (2015-2020) Tree Farm standards for sustainability. Management plans that have not been updated since 2015 are likely out of compliance. The updates required are almost always very minor, and in many cases can be done by the Tree Farmers themselves. Have you updated your plan since 2015? Check the ATFS website for a 2015-2020 Management Plan Addendum template or ask your inspector or county chair for guidance.

If you have any questions about the 2017 assessment, or about how 3rd party certification works in general, please contact Kyle Burdick at chair@mainetreefarm.org.

Demand for Certified Fiber Coming to Maine?

-by Kyle Burdick, Maine Tree Farm Committee Chair

In 2015, the Maine Tree Farm Committee signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the American Tree Farm System, agreeing to maintain the Maine program as a 3rd-party certification program. This means that Maine's Tree Farms will continue to be a "Certified" source of forest products. What does that actually mean for Tree Farmers though? I recently asked two wood buyers about their demand for certified fiber. I spoke with Steve Follette, Wood Procurement Manager with Woodland Pulp LLC and St Croix Tissue, to represent pulp and tissue manufacturing, and Rich Smith, who fills the similar position with Pleasant River Lumber, to sample the solid lumber market.

First, Steve from Woodland Pulp:

Kyle: Is there a premium for certified fiber at Woodland Pulp LLC? Is there market preference for certified fiber?

Steve: *Currently the only premium is priority on pulpwood purchases from certified sources. Markets for fiber today are tight so any advantage that will get a person quota should be used.*

Kyle: Why does Woodland Pulp LLC care about certified fiber?

Steve: *Certified fiber from the American Tree Farm System (ATFS), SFI or FSC third party certified lands are required for some of Woodland's customers. The certified fiber allows us to access certain markets that we need to be able to sell the large volume of market pulp we produce. We have to maintain a system to verify the origin of all of our fiber supply. Each market we qualify for has a questionnaire that goes into detail on fiber sourcing. The State of Maine trip ticket and harvest notification requirement is a very good process for tracking Maine fiber back to the stump; it helps us provide confidence to our markets that we are doing the right thing to source the pulp mill.*

Kyle: Do you currently track Maine Tree Farm (ATFS) Certified Fiber?

Steve: *We track the origin of all sources of fiber. Fiber harvested from certified lands is tracked by certification type as well.*

Kyle: How should a Tree Farmer notify Woodland Pulp LLC that their fiber is certified?

Steve: *We keep a file on certified landowners. If the landowner has a direct contract with us it is part of the payment set up. If a landowner sells stumpage or markets pulpwood through a broker they should have the harvester pass the information on to their pulpwood buyer.*

Kyle: Are there any brands of paper or tissue products that I can buy that might be sourced from Woodland?

Steve: *Woodland Pulp is now sending pulp to our sister mill St Croix Tissue LLC. The two new tissue machines have been running since the first of August, 2016. The majority of the tissue produced will be used in a brand of tissue called Fiora.*

Simply put, there is a demand for certified pulp/tissue fiber, but that currently only translates into better market access, not price premiums.

(continued on pg 3)



Certified wood from a harvest at Pine Tree Camp Tree Farm in Rome, ME

Demand for Certified Fiber Coming to Maine?

(continued from pg 2) What about solid wood products like 2x4s? I also was able to discuss the same issue with a solid wood products representative. Rich Smith purchases logs for Pleasant River Lumber of Dover Foxcroft and Moose River Lumber in Jackman. This Q&A was significantly shorter, for obvious reasons.

Kyle : Is there a preference or a premium for certified sawlogs at Pleasant River now? Do you foresee one in the near future?

Rich: *There is no preference or premium in our market for certified lumber. There are times however, when we use accumulated certification credits to more easily dispose of byproduct on the pulp market. Other than that, there is no demand for certified lumber.*



Certified wood from a harvest at the Coleman Family Tree Farm in Baileyville, ME.

The conversation didn't need to go any further. I will note however, any lumber you find with an American flag stamp came from one of Pleasant River Lumber's mills in Dover Foxcroft or Jackman. Buying locally sourced building materials undoubtedly supports Maine Tree Farmers, as well as the state's wood-based economy. And, keep your eyes open for Fiora brand tissue, now available at the Princeton Food Mart, and (perhaps) other stores around Maine.

So there you have it. Paper customers have an interest in certified fiber, while lumber yards in our part of the country do not...at least not yet.

Tracking Tree Farm Wood - Does It Matter?

As Kyle Burdick noted in his article in this issue, concrete evidence of a market preference for certified wood of any kind is elusive, but more likely to happen with pulpwood than saw logs. Still, at certain times and places, the Certified Tree Farm wood source means something. And of course, it means a lot to you, as the Tree Farmer who has grown it, managed it, had it inspected and harvested according to the current Tree Farm Standards.

While there's not much that individual Tree Farmers can do to influence demand for Tree Farm certified wood, we can help make the supply more visible. Some markets are actively tracking Tree Farm and other certified sources, but most are not. So it's up to Tree Farmers to identify their wood. Whether you sell standing timber to a professional logger, cut your own and sell it roadside to a trucker-broker, or deliver it yourself to a mill or log yard, make sure to tell the person who pays you that it's from a Tree Farm! Even better, get your Tree Farm # into the paperwork, possibly on a trip ticket or timber sale agreement. If you are contracting directly with a facility, make sure that your Tree Farm status is noted in the contract, even if it doesn't noticeably affect the price.

In short, it's not too soon to raise awareness about the amount of wood coming from the +/- 1500 Tree Farms in Maine. One of these days, that might be the first question that a buyer asks—"Is it certified?"

Look for a future article about finding certified wood products in the consumer marketplace.



Kirby Ellis Receives Prestigious Austin Cary Award at Recent Forester's Gathering

Forestry consultant Kirby Ellis, former Maine Tree Farm Committee Chair and current Tree Farmer and Tree Farm Inspector, was presented with the Austin Cary Practicing Professional Award, at the most recent meeting of the New England Chapter of the Society of American Foresters (SAF).

The Austin Cary Award recognizes New England SAF members who have shown exceptional achievement as practicing forest managers. Austin Cary (1865–1936) graduated from Bowdoin College and introduced northern landowners to forest sampling, growth estimation, and simple silvicultural techniques. The Award has been presented annually since 1989.

The nomination letter reads, in part, “[Kirby’s] kindness, enthusiasm, and energy for the forestry profession and customers are remarkable. Kirby excels when it comes to the personal touch necessary to make a consulting forester unique and valuable.”

Kirby’s roots are in western Pennsylvania, where he worked on a dairy farm, then a greenhouse and a truck farm. In 1974, he came to Corinth, Maine to a teaching position, which continued until 2006 at Foxcroft Academy. During this time he also established Ellis’ Greenhouse and Nursery in Hudson, and worked part-time as a logger. With an increasing interest in forestry he became a Maine licensed forester in 1989, and then completed a MF degree at the University of Maine. Today he is a Stewardship Forester, a Maine Tree Farm Inspector, a NRCS forestry technical service provider, and a certified field verifier for Northeast Master Logger Program. In addition to his professional commitments, Kirby is an active community member in the town of Hudson, currently serving as a selectman. Pam Wells, who with her husband Bryan is the 2017 Maine Outstanding Tree Farmer, is a client of Kirby’s; she refers to him as a member of her “Team.” She also notes that Kirby’s forest management perspective covers a variety of options, including “wildlife diversity, future tree growth, and possible economic value. He is willing to ask the landowner important questions regarding the future of their forest, while staying within the bounds of recommended forest practices.” He is a wonderful teacher and mentor of forest practice skills.

As another endorsement noted, “Simply put (but well elaborated), he is an excellent practitioner of forestry and very deserving of this award.”

The Maine TREE Foundation and Project Learning Tree Announce 2017 Forests of Maine Teachers’ Tours

Join us on a 4-Day Tour of Maine’s Forests and Mills

July 11 – 14: The Birches Resort on Moosehead Lake

July 25 – 28: Camp Wapiti: Gateway to Baxter State Park and *the* County

Don’t let the name “Teachers’ Tours” keep you from signing up.

Certified Tree Farmers are educators by example, and are most welcome to join a tour.

The Maine TREE Foundation, which supports and sponsors the Maine Tree Farm Program, will provide comfortable accommodations and transportation, delicious food, and a wealth of information about Maine’s forests.

- See modern harvesting and manufacturing technology in the woods and in the mills. Enjoy on-site discussions with foresters, loggers and operators, the folks on the “cutting edge” of Maine’s 21st Century forest economy
- Each tour begins with a Project Learning Tree (PLT) workshop. PLT is a national, award-winning education curriculum that uses the forest as the platform to teach math, science, language arts, social studies and more. PLT doesn’t teach what to think, it teaches *how* to think!

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Reserve your space now! Registration Fee is only: \$105.00 per person if you register before April 28, 2017* \$115.00 per person if you register after April 28, 2017*

Space is limited, so call or e-mail soon to receive an information/registration brochure.

Contact the Maine Tree Foundation at [207-621-9872](tel:207-621-9872) or mtf@gwi.net For more about the Maine Tree Foundation visit www.mainetreefoundation.org

**Includes a \$10.00 non-refundable administrative fee.*



Upcoming Events and Call For Volunteers!

Loggers Expo - Bangor, ME - May 19 - 20 - The Maine Tree Farm Committee will have a booth at the [Northeastern Forest Products Equipment Expo](#) at the Cross Insurance Center. *We need help staffing the booth!* If you volunteer for two hours, you will receive a complimentary Maine Tree Farm t-shirt or coffee mug (your choice). Please contact Gretchen Heldmann TODAY to register! 207.613.6837 or coordinator@mainetreefarm.org

Spring Timber Frame Course - April 27 - 30, 8:00 am - 4:00 pm Location: Hidden Valley Nature Center
Students will work in small groups over the course of 4 days to learn the basics of timber frame construction, and ultimately to build and erect the frame of a small building. The class will be led by Bob Lear of Bob's Beams in Whitefield, ME along with assistance from several other experienced staff members. Visit <https://www.midcoastconservancy.org/events/timber-frame-course-427-3017/> for more information.

Reminder: Switching to an electronic version will help us save on printing and postage costs, and stretch our limited budget even further. You can access the online version and subscribe today at: www.mainetreefarm.org/newsletter.html

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