

Maine Tree Farm NEWSLETTER

Spring 2018

A publication of the Maine Tree Farm Committee

Issue No. 15



RUSSELL BLACK OF WILTON IS THE MAINE OUTSTANDING TREE FARMER OF THE YEAR!

Russell Black, owner of the Black Family Farm in Wilton, is the 2018 Maine Outstanding Tree Farmer. The award was presented by Governor Paul LePage on January 10, 2018, at the Maine Woodland Owner's annual meeting at the Augusta Civic Center.

SAVE THE DATE of SEPTEMBER 8, 2018, for the Annual Tree Farm Field Day and Maine Woodland Owners Forestry Fair!

The Black Family Forest, which encompasses over 400 acres in Wilton, displays exemplary forest management and land stewardship. Russell has been working on his farm since he was 10 years old and took responsibility of woodlot management in his early twenties. Much of the active management has been done by the Tree Farmers themselves, striking a balance of economics, ecology, and community involvement. Russell has hosted Maine Woodland Owner and Maine Maple Syrup Producer tours of his property. He has won several awards including the Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation District's "Outstanding Woodlot and Logger" award in 1997, Conservation Farm of Franklin County award in 1976, 2007, and 2015, and the "Cooperator of the Year" award from the Natural Resources Conservation Service in 1996 and 2007. He was also a runner up for Tree Farmer of the Year in 1976. Russell is also a state representative, where he serves on the Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee.



Don Newell, of **Thorndike** (Waldo County) and **Brian Carlton**, of **Jonesboro** (Washington County) won their respective County OTF awards for 2018. The competition was excellent this year—look for these Tree Farmers to become state winners in the future!

Russell Black has also been nominated to the regional and national OTFY competition. As of the publication date of this newsletter, Russell has been selected as a REGIONAL FINALIST! Over the next few months, ATFS inspecting judges will visit the regional finalists, learn about their land, hear their stories and ultimately select the four that will be this year's Regional Outstanding Tree Farmers. Then, it's on to the national award! Stay tuned!

Dear Maine Tree Farmer:

As a Maine Tree Farmer, you have a demonstrated commitment to your land. Tree Farm is the longest-running and best recognition program in Maine for family woodland owners practicing sustainable forestry. Tree Farm also offers third party certification through internationally recognized standards, along with forester visits, professional support, field days and events, and more – and this is done almost entirely by a dedicated volunteer group of forestry professionals.

The Tree Farm program remains “The Sign of Good Forestry;” however, it is no longer possible to sustain the program through volunteer efforts alone. For the past five years, the Maine Tree Farm Committee has contracted with a part-time, paid Program Coordinator. The Coordinator provides invaluable program support for outreach, third-party assessments, Field Day activities, and more. Maintaining the financial support for the Coordinator position is critical as we work to enhance our efforts in outreach, recognition, and fun!

We are writing to ask that you please consider a donation to the Maine Tree Farm program. ***Make no mistake, our Maine program is still 100% free.*** However, we’d like you to think about what Tree Farm means to you, and consider giving us your financial support. Be assured, we are looking at all possible sources of financial stability, including watching our expenses closely. The reality is that, to maintain and improve the program service we can provide you, we need annual contributions from a wide array of sources.

On behalf of Maine’s Tree Farmers and the Maine Tree Farm Committee, I thank you for being a Maine Tree Farmer, and for your consideration of additional support.

Sincerely,



Kyle Burdick
Maine Tree Farm Committee Chair



Yellow Warbler - Wells Forest



Please Donate Now

Yes! I will support the Maine Tree Farm Committee with a donation of:

\$10 \$50 (Suggested) \$75 \$100 Other: \$_____

Please check here if you would like to receive an invoice.

Please make checks payable to: **The Maine Tree Foundation**

Please mail checks to: Maine Tree Foundation, PO Box 5470, Augusta, ME 04332

Please indicate *Maine Tree Farm* on the check

Thank you so much for your support!

Or contact **Cathy Jo Herlihy** at:

(207) 621-9872 EMail: cj@mainetree.org

Please note: The Maine Tree Farm Program works very closely with the Maine TREE Foundation for administration support and fundraising. By making checks payable to the Maine Tree Foundation you will be able to take advantage of their non-profit 501c(3) status. **100% of your donation will go to the Maine Tree Farm Program.**

You may also have received a letter from the national office of the American Tree Farm System, also requesting your financial support. 50% of these donations make it to us, and 50% goes to supporting the American Tree Farm System on the national level. If you would like to strongly support your local program, please consider giving directly to us.



National Leadership Conference News

The 2018 American Tree Farm System Annual Leadership Conference was held from January 31st- February 2nd in sunny downtown Albuquerque New Mexico. Each year the National ATFS folks sponsor two individuals from Maine to attend. Patty Cormier, Maine Tree Farm Committee Secretary, and Pam Wells, 2017 Maine OTFY and Tree Farm Committee member attended. This was a first for both of them.



Patty Cormier

Patty found the meeting very inspiring. “After attending, I regret that I have never gone in the 20 years or so I’ve been involved with the Tree Farm program. It was uplifting to be with a group of 400 or so dedicated landowners, foresters and policy makers from around the country. “

Pam was also very impressed. “Thank you for allowing me to attend this conference. I learned a lot by talking with other state attendees and what I truly appreciate is that in Maine, we should never take for granted our trees, water, and wildlife. We are fortunate to have those resources available in our state.”

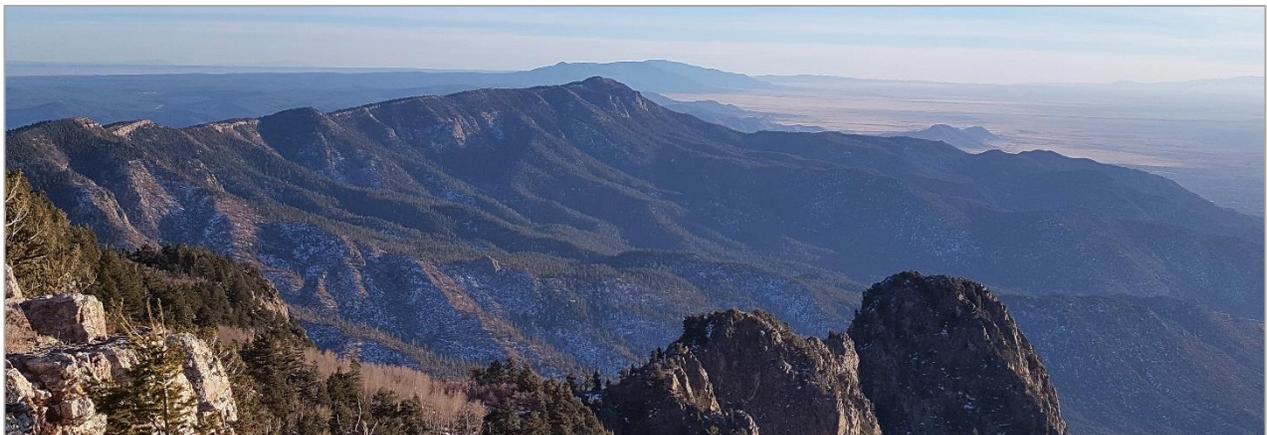


Pam Wells

The conference goals included these items:

- **How to reach out to new landowners**
- **Why growth matters to the Tree Farm system**
- **How to encourage young people to participate in the Tree Farm System**

Other important Presentations included “How to work, manage, and talk with millennials,” “Getting the message out in Virginia,” and “How bourbon can help the southern forest economy.” Pam and Patty brought back some ideas for the future here in Maine, such as nominating an outstanding Tree Farm Inspector for Maine, and encouraging college students to participate in the Tree Farm system.



Albuquerque New Mexico Mountains – Pam Wells

SPRING CLEANING (of the Tree Farm database!)

In a previous newsletter we described our recent 3rd party audit results. One of the conclusions was that the accuracy of our Tree Farmer database needs improvement. The database information, which is kept nationally and used locally, is vital to communicating with Tree Farmers and Inspectors. The “clean-up” is a team effort including Maine Tree Farm, National Tree Farm, and an independent contractor called *Edge Research*. In January, all Maine Tree Farmers should have received a post card asking them to participate in an online survey to verify their information. An alternative paper copy of the survey was sent in late March to folks who did not or could not go online to fill it out. In April, a second postcard will be sent out to people who have not completed either survey. We really appreciate your participation, which is vital to maintaining a healthy program. If you have any issues taking the survey, please contact info@forestfoundation.org or call Nephtali Chavez (202-765-3529). Thank to everyone who has already participated!

TREE FARM INSPECTIONS



One of the yearly requirements of our forest certification program is to conduct a small number of “required” Tree Farm inspections, randomly selected by the American Tree Farm System (ATFS). These are essentially the same as any other inspection—it’s really a woodland visit that provides opportunities for Tree Farmers to show how they are caring for their woods, get answers to questions, and receive advice and assistance as desired. From the standpoint of ATFS, these visits help demonstrate how Maine Tree Farms are meeting the ATFS Standards, and look for any opportunities for improvement. There is also some financial support from the national Tree Farm Program that depends on completing these inspections. This in turn helps keep the cost of maintaining a certification program at reasonable levels. In order to meet the deadlines for reporting to ATFS, these visits must be completed by September 30th each year.

Here is our 2018 timeline for getting this done:

February-March

The names of Tree Farms selected for the required inspections are sent to the Maine Tree Farm Committee (MTFC) by early February. By the end of March, the MTFC Chair sends a letter to the selected Tree Farmers and to their inspecting foresters with detailed information about that year’s visits.

April

In the event a selected Tree Farmer is not already working with a certified Tree Farm Inspector, the local County Chair will help the Tree Farmer find one. County Chairs will then complete the process of making assignments and providing materials to inspectors.

September 30th

Inspectors complete all inspections by September 30th and send in the “paperwork” to the MFTC. There are electronic options available now to help streamline the process. Completing all required inspections by the end of September allows the MFTC to make any corrections needed and report the results to ATFS in a timely manner. In turn, Maine’s status as a Certified Tree Farm program is validated.

If or when your Tree Farm is selected for a required inspection, thank you in advance for your valuable participation in the Maine Tree Farm Program!

Upcoming Events and Call For Volunteers!

Forest Heritage Days—August 11-12, Greenville

Maine Farm Days—August 22-23, Clinton

TREE FARM/MAINE WOODLAND OWNERS FORESTRY FIELD DAY - September 8, Wilton

Common Ground Country Fair - September 21-23, Unity

Fryeburg Fair - September 30 - October 7, Fryeburg

Agricultural Trades Show—January 14-17, 2019

We need volunteers to help staff our educational display booth at these events. We hope you will consider donating a few hours of your time to talk with potential Tree Farmers and the general public and share your experiences with the program. *As a Thank You, all volunteers will get a free Maine Tree Farm t-shirt or coffee mug!*

For more upcoming woodland events, check out the calendars at these locations:

[Maine Forest Service](#)

[Maine Woodland Owners](#)

[Hidden Valley Nature Center](#)



*The American Tree Farm System is a program
of the American Forest Foundation*

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