



FAMILIES & FORESTS

A NEWSLETTER FOR ARKANSAS TREE FARMERS JULY 2019

Am I Certified?

Written by: Tabitha Holloway
Arkansas Forestry Commission

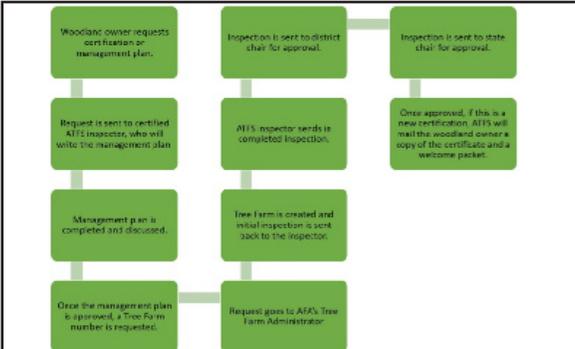


Figure 1 Time Line of New Tree Farm Certifications

Forest certification. By now, most of us have heard about forest certification, whether it be the American Tree Farm System (ATFS), Sustainable Forest Initiative (SFI), or Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification.

ATFS and SFI are endorsed by the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) and follow PEFC standards. The Standards recognize new conservation forestry practices and evolving consumer demand for sustainably harvested forest products. Once an ATFS certified inspector verifies that the Standards are

met, the Tree Farm is certified. As the nation's oldest family forest certification program, started in 1941, ATFS is administered mostly by state Tree Farm Committee programs. In Arkansas, the Arkansas Forestry Association (AFA) administers the Arkansas Tree Farm Program. AFA has been the only nonprofit organization representing forestry in Arkansas since 1947.

AFA sponsors and administers a variety of programs and activities that advance the cause of forestry in Arkansas, including several opportunities for members to learn about forest certification and the differences in the certification programs.

As members of AFA and active Tree Farmers, the four sides of the Tree Farm sign – Water, Wildlife, Recreation, and Wood, tell the story of sustainable forestry. The sign

THE TREE FARM PROGRAM... is administered by the Arkansas Forestry Association (AFA) and its Tree Farm Committee.

AFA's goal is to provide relevant, timely information about the Tree Farm program and forestry resources.

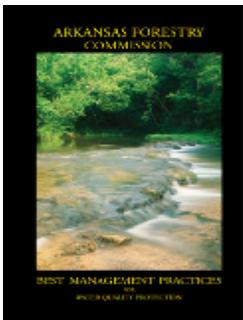
showcases a woodland owner's dedication to certification. In Arkansas, being certified takes on different meanings across the state. While mill access is a leading driver for certification in the south, recognition and education is the main focus for the north.

Many mills and timber buyers like to know if they are buying certified timber. Not all mills require wood products to be certified, but many of them are a part of a certified timber program, or have an interest in other certified timber programs. As an example, Domtar is an FSC certified mill but will accept timber

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Arkansas's Best Management Practices

Written by: Justin Mallett
Arkansas Forestry Commission



The recommendations in Arkansas's BMPs include harvesting tactics, site preparation, reforestation, designated waterbodies and fire.

Best management practices (BMPs) are different activities that a landowner can do to protect the water quality and to prevent erosion of soil in the forests. BMP guidelines are a requirement of the Clean Water Act that each state has to identify to control surface runoff and other forms of nonpoint pollution.

The first BMP guidelines were developed in the early 1970's. The current guidelines were updated in 2002 with a minor update this year.

One of the main objectives of BMPs is protecting the streams by establishing Streamside Management Zones (SMZs). Before an SMZ can be established, the manager or landowner must first determine what kind of stream is on the property. Classification of the stream and the slope of the ground around the stream determines what size the SMZ must be.

Another portion of the BMPs is creating, establishing, and maintaining active and inactive roads. There are many different ways that you can prevent erosion on roads. This includes adding things to it that divert and slow down water movement. The recommendations in Arkansas's BMPs include harvesting tactics, site preparation, reforestation, designated waterbodies and fire.

For the American Tree Farm System, BMPs are required to be followed for certification. The American Forest Foundation's Standard of Sustainability says, "To be certified, forest owners must apply BMPs (standard 4, Performance Measure 4.1)". A tree farm inspector must certify that BMP's are followed and adhered to when they inspect a tree farm for the recertification.

It is important for tree farmers to make a note of the actions taken and either write that into their management plan or insert an extra piece of paper with the actions written on it. Making a note always helps to refresh a memory since tree farm inspections only occur every 5 to 10 years.

BMP's are not required by law in Arkansas; however, they are required by many of the cost-share and grant programs that are available to forest landowners. Fortunately, in Arkansas, most forest landowners are following the voluntary guidelines.

In 2017 and 2018 the Arkansas Forestry Commission surveyed 237 sites covering 18,947 acres to assess the implementation

of the voluntary BMP guidelines. Based on that survey, they found that 93 percent of the sites already utilized them. The highest percentage implemented was by Public sites (99%) and the lowest by family forest landowners (86%).

For a more in-depth look at the Implementation Survey, you can find a link to it on the Arkansas Forestry Commission website homepage under the heading, "Resources" and click on the text "Results of 2017-2018 Best Management Practices Implementation Survey."

If actions on a site cause pollution to a waterbody or stream, the landowner could be responsible for fines and or remediation/repair of a stream.

If a landowner responsibly manages their property, they can not only protect our natural resources they can also get the most out of their forests by protecting roads, streams that so much of the wildlife depends on, and maintaining the soil that holds the nutrients that the forest depends on.

More information on Arkansas Voluntary BMP Guidelines can be found at: <https://www.aad.arkansas.gov/Websites/aad/files/Content/5944986/BMPs.pdf>, by contacting your local Arkansas Forestry Commission office or by contacting BMP Coordinator John Beasley at (870) 312-9999.

Am I Certified?, con't.

that is PEFC endorsed, which includes SFI and ATFS certification.

So, after all that, why is it important to understand your certification? Three words: Chain of custody. Simply put, chain of custody follows certified timber products from the time they are harvested to the time they are sold at retailers.

Which presents the next question. How do loggers or mill buyers know if the property is certified?

Many of the mill buyers have access that allows them to verify forest certifications, including ATFS certification. Many, but not all. What happens if you have a timber buyer interested that does not have access, or you are unsure if they have access? Simply provide the timber buyer with a certificate that proves certification of the Tree Farm. To provide the certificate, contact your Tree Farm inspector, one of the Tree Farm Committee members, or by contacting



Arkansas Tree Farm Program

1213 W. 4th St.
Little Rock AR 72201
501.374.2441
www.arkforests.org



As members of AFA and active Tree Farmers, the four sides of the Tree Farm sign – Water, Wildlife, Recreation, and Wood, tell the story of sustainable forestry.

Jennifer Johnson at the Arkansas Forestry Association at (501) 374-2441.

Whoever you use to request a certificate can print or email a copy of the certificate to you. This certificate should be requested at least a month before any harvest activities occur. This provides ample time for the information to be retrieved and updated if necessary.

The certificate provided will show the name of the Tree Farmer, the Tree Farm number,

and the certification date. In the bottom right corner, it will show the date the certificate was printed to prove certification is current. The latest inspection record can also be provided that shows the legal description and acreage, which can further clarify the certification of the Tree Farm.



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Mark your calendars for these upcoming educational opportunities:

August 1

SFE Webinar: Influences of Prescribed Fire on the Ecology of Wild Turkeys

southernfireexchange.org - 1 p.m.

August 21

Estate Planning Workshop for Forest Landowners

Dudeck Law Firm, Conway - 9 a.m.

September 12

Timber Tax Workshop

The Vines Center, Little Rock - 9 a.m.

September 20

Tree Growth & Development in a Changing Climate

urbanforestrytoday.org - 11 a.m.

October 8

AFA Annual Meeting Forest Management Workshop

Embassy Suites, Little Rock - 1 p.m.

The Importance of Landowner Ed.

With summer in full swing, and heatwaves reaching the century marks, educational opportunities are a great way to stay cool.

The Arkansas Forestry Association (AFA) strives to keep landowners updated on any opportunities related to natural resources, with upcoming events.

Ron Bell, an Arkansas tree farmer, has been to many of these educational opportunities and described them as invaluable to those in the profession.

"Unlike other agricultural commodity producers who have their local association and fellow producers to discuss issues with, forest landowners operate in a relatively isolated environment when it comes to exchanging information," Bell said. "That makes regional meetings and field days more important for landowners needing production or market information."

Bell encouraged others to get involved with the workshops and field days offered by AFA throughout the year. Even though an event may not address a particular question, or concern, he urged people to attend to discuss those topics with fellow state and federal forestry specialists.

Landowner education events not only keep you updated on the latest forestry information, but they also keep you connected to others.

For the latest updates on landowner education opportunities, you can visit arkforests.org or subscribe to AFA's weekly e-newsletter.



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