



***For Immediate Release***

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**Bill Chaney Named National Tree Farm Inspector of the Year**

Bill Chaney was named the 2019 National Outstanding Inspector of the Year at the National Tree Farm Leadership Conference on February 28 in Louisville, KY. Bill was previously honored as 2017 Arkansas Inspector of the Year and the 2019 Southern Regional Inspector of the Year. Bill is the first Arkansan selected to receive the national award.

Bill, a Forester II with the Arkansas Agriculture Department – Arkansas Forestry Commission (AFC) working in Sheridan, completed 208 inspections in 2017, and has a long history of Tree Farm volunteering and other activities in support of family forest landowners and stewardship of Arkansas's forests.

Bill has been involved in the Arkansas Tree Farm Program in several different aspects throughout his career in the AFC. Bill served as District Chair for many years and served as the Tree Farm Committee Chair in 2011-2012. Bill took a short break from the committee and inspections while he was working in the State Office as Stewardship Coordinator and later FMO. Even though he is not directly involved with the State Committee any longer, Bill constantly talks to members of the committee to stay current with the Arkansas Tree Farm Program.

Bill has worked with the Arkansas Forestry Commission for 28 years and is an active member of the Arkansas Forestry Association. He has served as a mentor to numerous foresters and landowners throughout his service. Bill has been a steward of the Tree Farm Program throughout the community. He has attended landowner education events to discuss the Tree Farm Program. Bill not only seeks to educate landowners on the program, but also foresters, to engage their participation in it as inspectors. He gives presentations to landowners within his district on a variety of subjects. Bill understands the importance of certification in Arkansas and educates his landowners on how Tree Farm can benefit them.

“Bill is the epitome of the ideal Tree Farm Inspector,” said Jennifer Lambert Johnson, Administrator of the Arkansas Tree Farm Program. “He works with landowners on identifying their goals, promotes sustainable forestry and the Tree Farm Program. His dedication has positively impacted not only thousands of acres of timberland in the state, but those who own and manage them as well.”

Inspectors are vitally important to the Arkansas Tree Farm System. Nearly 455,000 acres on 2,900 properties are certified in Arkansas as meeting the American Forest Foundation Standards of Sustainability for Forest Certification. All these properties have been inspected and certified by Tree Farm Inspectors.

The Arkansas Tree Farm Committee is sponsored by the Arkansas Forestry Association (AFA). Organized in 1947, AFA is the only private, nonprofit organization that represents the entire forestry community in Arkansas. AFA has over 1200 members in the areas of primary and secondary wood industry, supplier and service industries, wholesale, loggers and landowners. AFA promotes sound forest management through the Sustainable Forestry Initiative. For more information about the association or the Arkansas Tree Farm Program contact Jennifer Johnson at 501/374-2441 or visit [www.arkforests.org](http://www.arkforests.org).

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