



ARKANSAS TREE FARM PROGRAM

www.arkforests.org  
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# FAMILIES & FORESTS

A NEWSLETTER FOR ARKANSAS TREE FARMERS

OCTOBER 2019

## Two Tree Farmers Recognized for Outstanding Stewardship

The Arkansas Tree Farm Program recognized the G. William Smith Family and University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture – Livestock and Forestry Research Station as the Arkansas Tree Farmers of the Year at the Arkansas Forestry Association (AFA) Annual Meeting held October 10 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Little Rock.

The Smith family has been sustainably managing their forest since their grandmother, Ms. Rena Benson, homesteaded the approximately 360 acres of pine-hardwood timber in 1911. On April 1, 1944, the farm became recognized as a Tree Farm in Arkansas under the management of Ms. Benson's son, G. William Smith. This property was the fourth parcel of timberland instated by the American Tree Farm System in Arkansas and is the longest existing Tree Farm in the state. It is the third oldest in the nation. The Smith Family Tree Farm is located in Princeton, Arkansas.

The property has a comprehensive Forest Stewardship Plan written at the requests of the landowners, Billie Smith Hopson and Florence (Flossie) Smith Barker, daughters of William Smith. The plan covers multiple management prescriptions required by both the Tree Farm Program and the Forest Stewardship Program. The primary focus areas are timber management



and health, soil and water quality, management of the tract for wildlife habitat as well as threatened and endangered species. The family returns to the property each year to create memories and remember their family history.

Bill Chaney, County Forester with the Arkansas Department of Agriculture – Forestry Division, nominated the Smith family for this award. "Since working with Billie and Flossie I have realized and 'felt' the love and deep reverence they have for this property and their family - past, present & future," said Chaney. "They are an excellent example of what good stewards of the land represent. Their passion for their property – from past and to present, has and will continue to guarantee the future for their family for generations down the road. It is an honor, privilege, and pure joy working with this family."

A free tour of the property will be held

**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.**

on Friday, October 25. Those interested can find more information and register for the event at <https://arkforests.org/event/SmithTF>.



The University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture – Livestock and Forestry Research Station near Batesville was selected as the 2019 Outstanding Nonprofit Organization Tree Farm, and was nominated for the award by Kenneth Smothers, County Forester with the Arkansas Department of Agriculture – Forestry Division.

"We are so pleased to recognize the  
*continued on page 2*

## EQIP Application Deadline Approaching

From weather to pests, each American farmer faces a unique set of challenges. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural and forestry producers to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits such as improved water and air quality, conserved ground and surface water, reduced soil erosion and sedimentation, and enhanced or created wildlife habitat.

Although the official deadline has not been set, Josh Smith, a forester with USDA/ NRCS, stated, "Applications should be submitted by November 15, 2019. The deadline will be a minimum of 30 days after the official announcement has been made." The submitted applications will then be evaluated for consideration of funding in the fiscal year 2020. Applications received after that date will be accepted and evaluated for future rounds of funding

in subsequent batching periods that will be announced at a later date.

EQIP applications are continually accepted; however, NRCS establishes application "cut-off" or submission deadline dates for evaluation, ranking, and approval of eligible applications. EQIP is open to all eligible agricultural producers, and submitted applications may be considered or evaluated in multiple funding pool opportunities.

The best way to learn if EQIP is a good fit for you is by contacting your local NRCS office. If you choose to move forward, your local NRCS conservationist will guide you through applying for the program.

### Eligibility

Agricultural producers and owners of non-industrial private forestland and Tribes are eligible to apply for EQIP. Eligible land includes cropland, rangeland, pastureland,

non-industrial private forestland, and other farm or ranch lands.

### Applicants must:

- Control or own eligible land
- Comply with adjusted gross income limitation (AGI) provisions
- Comply with the highly erodible land and wetland conservation requirements
- Develop an NRCS EQIP plan of operations

### Participant Responsibilities

Applicants are responsible for completing and filing all application and eligibility paperwork as required. If funded, participants are required to sign a contract and agree to implement the planned conservation practices to NRCS standards and specifications as scheduled.

To learn how to get started with NRCS, visit [www.nrcs.usda.gov/getstarted](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/getstarted).

# Invasive Species: Why You Should Be Concerned

Written by Tabitha Holloway, Arkansas Department of Agriculture - Forestry Division

More than likely, you have heard the term invasive at some point, but what exactly does that mean? According to the U.S. Forest Service, an invasive species is defined as a species that is non-native to the ecosystem and whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health. A 2005 study estimated that the economic damages associated with invasive species in the U.S. reached approximately \$120 billion per year. Species that invade are not limited to just plants but are also animals, insects, diseases, etc. Some have been introduced accidentally, but most have spread from cultivation, such as the Bradford pear.

This leads to the next question: why are invasive species so successful? These non-native plants flourish for several

reasons. Many species produce large quantities of seed, likely increasing the percentage surviving to germinate. They thrive without the pressure of predators or diseases of their native range, and some have aggressive root systems or produce chemicals that affect the surrounding vegetation. Some species cross-pollinate and form hybrids, which alter habitats, reducing food and shelter, which native wildlife have trouble adjusting to. Eventually, this leads to a decline in indigenous populations. A recent study by researchers at Virginia Tech University confirmed that when invasive plants take over an area, they alter the ecosystem and deplete the native animals' natural food source.

Invasive species in Arkansas are largely unchecked and only partially monitored,

which is where the natural resource community needs help. If you have invasive species on your property, it is helpful to document and report your findings. A great app to use to help map and monitor invasive species in Arkansas is iNaturalist. More information about iNaturalist and to download the app can be found at <https://www.inaturalist.org/>. Once you have downloaded the app and created an account, see the project titled *Invasive Plants of the Natural State*. Once you join the project, any observations submitted that fall within the criteria of the project will be automatically added.

If you would like more information on controlling the invasive species on your property, speak with your consultant forester, ADA – Forestry Division personnel, or Cooperative Extension personnel.



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## Mark your calendars

**October 25**

*G. William Smith Family Tree Farm Tour*  
Princeton - 9 a.m.

**November 7**

*Forestry Research Center Tree Farm Tour*  
U of A Division of Agriculture - Livestock and Forestry Research Station, Batesville - 8:30 a.m.

**December 3 & 5**

*Learn to Burn: Prescribed Fire for Landowners*  
Camp Robinson Special Use Area, Conway - 10 a.m.

**December 9**

*Prescribed Burn Assoc. Formation Meeting*  
Camp Robinson Special Use Area, Conway - 6 p.m.

**December 10**

*Learn to Burn: Prescribed Fire for Landowners*  
River Valley Nature Center, Ft. Smith - 10 a.m.

**December 11**

*Learn to Burn: Prescribed Fire for Landowners*  
Arkansas Tech University, Russellville - 10 a.m.

## Tree Farmer Awards, con't.

UA Division of Agriculture for their achievements at the Research Station," said AFA Executive Vice President Max Braswell. "Every aspect of this certified Tree Farm—from its hardwood tracts to pine plantations—showcases the value of sustainability, and the mission of the Research Station exemplifies public outreach and landowner education."

The Research Station has 1,725 acres of timberland and is a unique property, not only in its forest management practices but also in the principles behind them. The forestry research program focuses on using prescribed burning, chemical application, and harvesting methods to improve timber stands, and evaluating the survivability of genetically improved loblolly and shortleaf pine seedlings for reforestation. They use their findings to help other foresters and scientists

develop applications and tools for improved silviculture. Much of this is on display in the Forestry Management Demonstration Area they constructed for the express purpose of community education.

Each year the Station is host to Field Days, FFA competitions, and many informational programs to help visitors learn more about forestry practices and wildlife so that they may help effect and affect positive changes to the surrounding ecosystems. Don Hubbell, Resident Director, leads the Station. Mike McGowan is the Station Forester. A free tour of the property is scheduled for Thursday, November 7. Those interested can find more information and register for the event at <https://arkforests.org/event/ExperimentStation>.