



# NEW MEXICO TREE FARM NEWS

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Please send suggestions or articles for future newsletters to:

Joe Stehling: joestehling@earthlink.net  
 HC70, Box 109  
 Ocate, NM 87734 OR,

Doug Boykin: doug.boykin@state.nm.us  
 1701 Enterprise Street  
 Socorro, NM 87801



### In This Issue

**Conserving Land is Key to Protecting the Planet and its Natural Resources**.....1-2  
**Identifying Hazards in the Home Ignition Zone: Danger to structures in the WUI**.....2-3  
**The Home Ignition Zone**.....3  
**Goggle Earth — A Neat Tool**.....3  
**Informational Links on NRCS Forestry-Related programs**.....4  
**2013 Tree Farm Inspections (Pie Charts)**.....4  
**Map of New Mexico Tree Farm**.....5  
**2014 National Tree Farmer Convention Information**.....6

## Conserving Land is Key to Protecting the Planet and its Natural Resources

What is conservation?

Webster's dictionary defines conservation as a way to save natural resources from loss or depletion by avoiding waste through controlled use and protection of animals, plants, and natural resources. A careful preservation and protection of something, especially planned management of natural resources to prevent exploitation, destruction, or neglect. (Merriam-Webster's, 2011)

When we think about conserving natural resources, various concerns come to mind such as air and water quality, plant and animal species, land, open space, wildlife habitat, cultural artifacts, and historical structures. (Internet. 2009). *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

Imagine how dull life would be if there were no more urban parks, bike paths, hiking trails, dog parks, greenbelts, clean lakes, rivers, or streams, or open space available for individuals to enjoy the outdoors. Conserving land benefits us by giving us a place to go where we can connect with nature, get some exercise, and enjoy the beauty of the natural world around us in a healthy way that benefits everyone.

Our air, water, and land mass are limited resources. Many of the concerns for natural resources stem from our own behavior. Beginning with land use, development pressure is spreading across the country and as cities grow, the demands on our land and its resources increase. As a result, open space and natural areas are being developed at an alarming rate. The tree canopy and vegetation on undeveloped land serve as critical filters for our air. Wetlands that border our rivers, lakes and streams filter pollution before it reaches our drinking water. While there was a time when vacant land was abundant and individuals could live just about anywhere they wanted to, choices have become much more limited due to increased development which contributes to extensive habitat loss. Saving and protecting land helps offset this danger.

In order to reduce the number of acres of open space being developed, smart planning is required. When previously designated open space is threatened by development pressures for the construction and expansion of structures, roads, and sidewalks, smart planning

options, such as condensing development into smaller more efficient spaces with city centers constructed within the development should be considered in order to maximize the benefits of our natural lands, preserve biodiversity, and protect wildlife habitat. While the conversion of open space for human based use may result in an economic gain for a community, it severely impacts nature's contribution.

Newly cultivated areas with increased human population influence air and water quality by bringing pollution to a previously untouched land mass. Undeveloped and unpaved land suddenly changes into a concrete jungle and subsequently a destination for the multitude of gas powered vehicles that will inundate the newly urbanized region. Increased emissions released into the air, in addition to added runoff from oil and gas leaks leaching into waterways and wetlands, create a tremendous threat to air and water quality affecting the health of humans, plants, and animal species alike resulting in a dramatic decrease in existing populations of mammals, birds, flora, fauna, insects, and fish. If we do not remove the pollutants that our society puts into the air and water, we will all continue to consume them ourselves. In many communities, it is not uncommon for air quality alerts to close schools and businesses. Already, nearly half of the river miles in America are too polluted to drink from and over fifty percent of our drinking water comes from rivers.

In addition to health benefits, conserving land increases property values near open space, and designated greenbelts, saves tax dollars by encouraging more efficient development, and reduces the need for expensive water filtration facilities. Study after study has demonstrated the tremendous economic benefits of land conservation. (*Land Trust Alliance*, 2014).

If we all do just one thing to protect the planet, we can conserve it for future generations.

**There are existing programs that offer tax credits to land owners who choose to place a conservation easement on their property.**

### New Mexico Land Conservation Tax Credits

Charitable donations of land or an interest in land (conservation easement) to public or private conservation agencies for conservation purposes are eligible for a state tax credit through the New Mexico Land Conservation Incentives Act. The maximum tax credit is 50% of the appraised value of the donation and a maximum of \$250,000 per individual donor.

Land conservation tax credits must be approved by the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department Secretary in consultation with the Natural Lands Protection Committee. Please refer to Rule 30.13.20 NMAC for details on eligibility and certification of the tax credit. A taxpayer has a maximum of 20 years to fully use the tax credit following the taxable year in which the donation was made,





or the tax credit may be transferred (sold) to another taxpayer through a tax credit broker in minimum increments of \$10,000.

**United States Forest Service Legacy Program**

The Forest Legacy Program (FLP), a Federal program in partnership with States, supports State efforts to protect environmentally sensitive forest lands. Designed to encourage the protection of privately owned forest lands, FLP is an entirely voluntary program and limited to private forest owners. To maximize the public benefits it achieves, the program focuses on the acquisition of partial interests in privately owned forest lands. FLP helps the States develop and carry out their forest conservation plans. It encourages and supports acquisition of conservation easements, legally binding agreements transferring a negotiated set of property rights from one party to another, without removing the property from private ownership. Most FLP conservation easements restrict development, require sustainable forestry practices, and protect other values.

Benefits to individuals include possible federal government funding up to 75% of the costs, and reduced taxes associated with limits placed on land use. (USFS Forest Legacy Program)

If you are interested in discussing either of these programs, please contact:

Rhonda C. Fitzgerald,  
Land Conservation Program Manager,  
New Mexico State Forestry Division  
(505) 476-3272  
[rhonda.fitzgerald@state.nm.us](mailto:rhonda.fitzgerald@state.nm.us)

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<http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/loa/aboutflp.shtml>

**IDENTIFYING HAZARDS IN THE HOME IGNITION ZONE: DANGER TO STRUCTURES IN THE WUI**

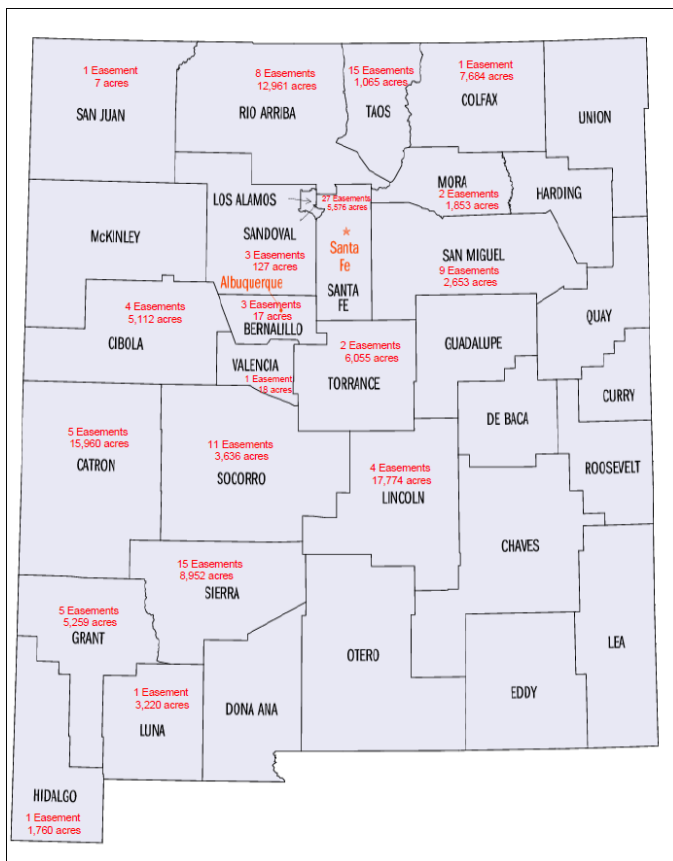
Living in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) we have the beauty and tranquility of the forest and the delight in viewing the various woodland animals. We love the trees and nature and hate to disrupt the natural cycle. However, decades of policies that prevented the natural cycle of fire has caused our homes to become fuel in the dense, overgrown forest. We normally do not think of our homes as fuel, but that is exactly what they are when a wildfire starts in adjacent forests. The Home Ignition Zone (HIZ) is an area that extends approximately 30 feet from any structure and even further if the structure is located on a slope. Within that area it is critical that certain tasks be done to keep the home, which is fuel as far as a wildfire is concerned, from igniting.

The most significant danger to a home is NOT directly from the adjacent wildfire unless the home is in the midst of the forest where the fire is burning and the structure has no defensible space. By far the majority of structures that burn from a wildfire are ignited by firebrands otherwise known as flying embers. Given the right wind conditions a fire-brand can travel over one mile. Floating on wind currents, it seems that the embers look for places to land where they can cause the worst damage. And where are those places that on ember likes to land? Glad you asked.

When preparing your home to withstand a wildfire, think like an ember floating through the air looking for ideal places to land.

Let's start at the roof. If your roof is metal or composition shingles you are in pretty good shape. Of course metal is inflammable and tests have shown that a composition shingle roof also is not flammable. Next look at your gutters, if you have them. Buildup of pine needles or leaves can ignite by that ember looking for a place to land. Although your roof may not ignite, your fascia may ignite and carry the flame into the structure.

Next look at siding and windows. A stucco or log home is relatively safe from direct ignition. Vinyl siding may melt when exposed to high heat allowing embers to lodge in the exposed wooden support structure and ignite. Single pane windows are susceptible to breaking from intense heat allowing embers to enter the structure. Double pane windows can withstand more intense heat. If the exterior pane is broken, the inner pane should be able to withstand the heat. Remember the flame front actually passes rather rapidly if you are not in the middle of overgrown forest and have no defensible space. If you have large picture windows, especially if they are single pane, eliminate plantings beneath the window or keep at a very low height.





Check your deck and any attached structures. Trex and other composite decking material is relatively inflammable. However, do you have a flammable broom or hemp Welcome mat by your wooden front door that an ember can land on and ignite? What about deck furniture? Whenever you leave your home for any extended periods of time, bring any flammable deck furniture inside. Be sure to check any nook and cranny for buildup of leaves, pine needles, or other flammable debris. That ember floating above would love to land in the pile of flammable debris. Do not store flammable items under your deck and screen the opening under decks and stairs with 1/8" mesh screening to prevent embers from entering and lodging in flammable material under the deck or stairs.

If there is a wooden fence attached to your house, that is a potential source of flames reaching the structure if the fence should be ignited by an ember landing on flammable debris under the fence. Consider replacing the wooden fence with a metal one.

Soffit and attic vents should be covered with a 1/8 inch mesh screen to prevent an ember from entering the roof structure or attic.

What about vegetation? Only plant succulent or other flame resistant plants around the foundation, especially under windows. Keep all vegetation around the foundation pruned low and well watered especially during fire season. If you have juniper bushes around your house that is the same as having a gasoline can in that location. Junipers burn quickly and very hot due to the resinous nature of the plant. Avoid wood chips in planting beds adjacent to the foundation. That pesky ember may not actually ignite the wood, but it may smolder enough to ignite the sole plate on the foundation wall. Keep debris cleaned out from under all plants; an ember can smolder for long periods unseen and could eventually flame up. Remove any tree branches that overhang the roof and that are within 10 feet from a chimney and remove closely spaced trees close to the house so the crown of the trees are a minimum of 30 feet apart. I will discuss this a bit later. However, if you have a small group of trees close to the house that provide shade and whose branches are not overhanging the roof, consider the trees a part of the structure and measure your Home Ignition Zone (defensible space) from that tree. Be sure the trees are limbed up 10 feet and that no firewood is stacked against the trees. As a side note, firewood stacked against trees provides not only ladder fuel for flames to move into the tree crown but also provides harbor for insects that can attack the tree.

Moving out from the structure thin trees to the 30 foot crown spacing and limb up to 10 feet. On a relatively flat lot, 30 feet is the defensible space for zone one. Tests have shown that at a distance of 30 feet a wooden structure will not ignite directly from the fire. Again, no firewood stacked against the trees. Keep grass mowed and well watered. A grass fire can move very rapidly once ignited. The prevailing winds during the fire season are most likely from the south southwest. That side of your property should be done first.

Finally move into defensible space zone two and remove dead and down material; thin trees so crowns are not touching. A rule of thumb is that you should be able to drive a pickup truck through the trees. Crown spacing of 10 feet would be good but becomes less important than within zone one. Prune trees up to 10 feet to prevent a ground fire from moving into the crowns of the trees. A ground fire is more easily controlled than a fire that has moved into the crowns of the trees.

Other considerations. Keep debris cleared away from your propane tank. It should be 30 feet from your structure if possible. Your driveway should be at least 12 feet wide for fire apparatus to be able to enter your property. Plan for a turnaround, preferable a circular one.

If firemen do not feel they can enter your property and exit safely, they will not enter. During a fire in the Taos Canyon several years ago that threatened Taos Pines, the local fire departments actually triaged the houses on Taos Pines to determine those that they might be able to fight and those they would not even try.

Again, think like a firebrand floating overhead just looking for a place to land and wrought havoc. There are no guarantees that if you do everything right, especially if your neighbor has not done his work as well, that your house will survive. But doing the items listed above gives it a much better chance of surviving a wildfire.

### Joe Stehling Hidden Lake Firewise Coordinator

**The Home Ignition Zone (HIZ)** primarily determines a home's ignition potential. This "zone" includes the home and immediate surroundings up to 200 feet. Although we can never ensure a home won't ignite, we can be tremendously effective in reducing the ignitability of homes by selecting ignition resistant building materials, by assessing the home and its surroundings and rectifying problem areas that may allow for ignition, and by creating [defensible space](#) (manipulating the surrounding landscape and vegetative fuels).

As the flammability of structural and vegetative fuels is reduced by treating HIZs, communities become more ignition resistant as they no longer support the requirements for combustion. When this occurs, their safety is enhanced, and fire fighting resources become more efficient.

Let Wildfire Solutions put 15 years of experience in the wildfire arena to work for you. We'll conduct an in-depth inspection, assess your HIZ, and show you what needs to be done to dramatically reduce your wildfire risk. We'll even come back and inspect it again...after the work has been done!



"Goggle Earth" is a neat tool that you can see your tree farm in 3-D. Here is a picture, taken from about 1,000 feet above the ground showing the topography of the Armijo property south of Quemado. Get on Google Earth and try it out, will give you a new perspective to your tree farm.







**Information on NRCS Forestry-Related Programs**

**EQIP:** The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers through contracts up to a maximum term of ten years in length. These contracts provide financial assistance to help plan and implement conservation practices that address natural resource concerns and for opportunities to improve soil, water, plant, animal, air and related resources on agricultural land and non-industrial private forestland. In addition, a purpose of EQIP is to help producers meet Federal, State, Tribal and local environmental regulations. <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/eqip/>

Applicants must be EQIP qualified. An example of a forestry project that received this funding last year is:



Nick Smokovich with a deck of logs from the Hay Vega Tree Farm Timber Sale in Catron County

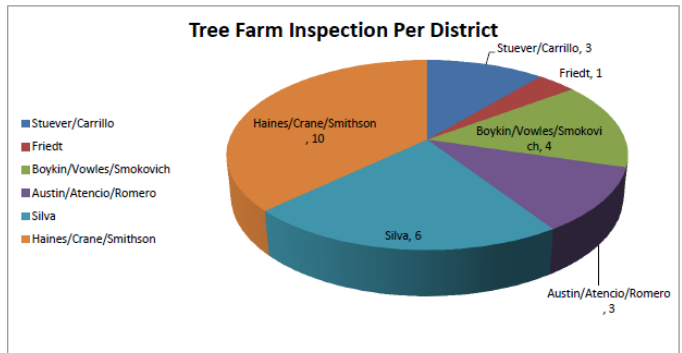
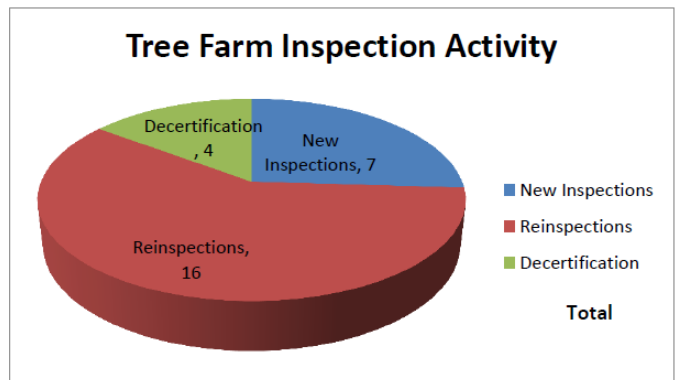
**Dogwood Alliance, Inc. (West Virginia) \$45,000,** Carbon Canopy Project of Dogwood Alliance: The purpose of this project is to implement a market-based approach to funding forestland conservation and stewardship practices through the creation and sale of high quality forest carbon offsets and Forest Stewardship Council certified timber management. This 2,000 acre pilot is an improved forest management project wherein the landowner commits to conserve and enhance existing forest carbon stocks on the property while planning to bring additional offsets to market as carbon stocks continue to accumulate through net growth supported by responsible forest management and ecological restoration efforts. This new, innovative model of forest conservation and management has the potential to provide a viable funding mechanism from revenue produced from forest-based carbon offsets under the California carbon cap and trade program that enables landowners to expand protection, restoration and conservation of their forests.

**Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP):** EWP was established by Congress to respond to emergencies created by natural disasters. EWP is designed to help people and conserve natural resources by relieving imminent hazards to life and property caused by floods, fires, drought, windstorms, and other natural occurrences. (Please note – even though it has emergency in its name, funding is not always quick). <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/ewp/>

**Full List of NRCS Financial Assistance Programs:** Just in case you want to know more or I missed anything: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/>

**NRCS Technical Assistance Programs:** <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/>

**2013 Tree Farm Inspections**



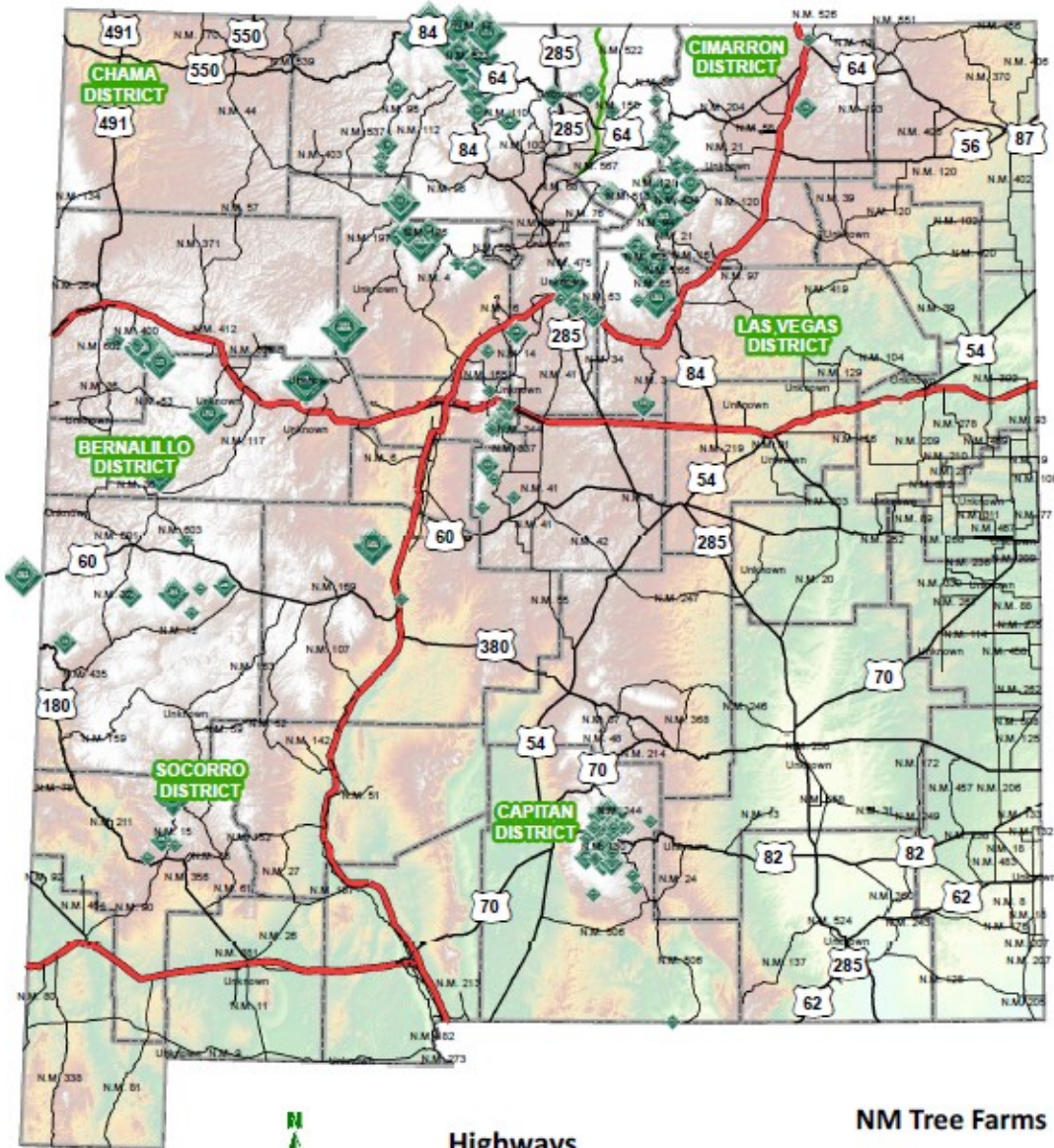
This picture shows the effects of a meadow restoration treatment at the Hay Vega Tree Farm in Catron County.

The area on the left has been treated, leaving only the mature, older trees in place, thus recreating the natural meadow/ponderosa pine Savannah. The area on the right is national forest system lands that show the pre-treatment density and invasion of mall diameter ponderosa pine. No treatment is scheduled to take place on the national forest lands due to administrative issues and shifting priorities. This site will provide a wonderful area to compare treatment vs. non-treatment in the future.





# New Mexico Tree Farms

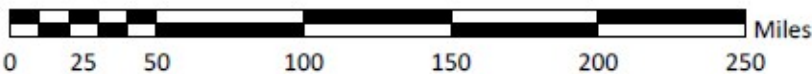


### Highways

- Interstate
- U.S.
- N.M.
- Unknown

### NM Tree Farms In Acres

- 0 - 100
- 101 - 500
- 501 - 1000
- 1001 - 10000
- 10001 - 100000







**The 2014 National Tree Farmer Convention will be in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania from July 17-19, 2014.**

You're invited! Join Tree Farmers, woodland owners, and forest enthusiasts at the 2014 National Tree Farmer Convention featuring: a line-up of educational sessions on topics ranging from forest and wildlife management to the generational transfer of your land; a field day at Burnham Woodlot - Pennsylvania's 2010 Outstanding Tree Farm of the Year; optional tours for you to discover some unique Pittsburgh experiences; and of course the chance to meet up with old friends and make new ones. **EARLY BIRD** through March 14, 2014 **\$330**  
**REGULAR** after March 14, 2014 **\$360**

Kenzie Rawcliffe at [mrawcliffe@forestfoundation.org](mailto:mrawcliffe@forestfoundation.org) or 202-765-3579. Check [www.treefarmssystem.org/convention](http://www.treefarmssystem.org/convention) for additional information and updates on the latest convention details.

Hotel Accommodations  
Westin Convention Center  
1000 Penn Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222  
**Reservations: 888-627-7053**

Room Rates:  
Standard King or Double - \$129.00 plus applicable taxes  
Additional Person (Triple/Quad) - \$20.00 per person  
**Hotel Reservation Deadline – June 13, 2014**  
Reserve early to ensure availability and this great group rate!

Pittsburgh International Airport (PIT) is located 14 miles from downtown. Airlines with scheduled service into PIT include: American, Air Tran, Delta, Frontier JetBlue, Southwest, and United. Visit [www.flypittsburgh.com](http://www.flypittsburgh.com) for more information on ground transportation. The Pittsburgh Amtrak and Greyhound Stations are located across the street from the Westin. Self parking at the Westin is \$20 per day.



**The Burnham Woodlot  
Proud Forest Stewardship in the Hills  
of Southwestern Pennsylvania**



John and Maureen Burnham welcome you to their home – the Burnham Woodlot. Nestled among the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains in southwest Pennsylvania, the Burnham Woodlot features 550 acres of woodlands and meadows laced with five miles of hiking trails and roadways which provide access to many areas of the farm for visitors to explore.

The Burnham Woodlot is committed to developing and maintaining high-quality trees, varied wildlife habitats, and recreational opportunities. Most importantly, however, the Burnhams are committed to supporting a smooth transition to the next generation of woodland stewards.

- 1) To register online, click "Log In" in the top right-hand corner of this page.
- 2) Enter your unique username and password in the fields
- 3) Then click on "Register for Events" from the right-hand menu on the next page.
- 4) Then, follow the links to the 2014 National Tree Farmer Convention.

Make Hotel Reservations online at [American Tree Farm System National Tree Farmer Convention](http://www.americantreefarm.com) (OR copy and paste the following link into a web browser) <https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/Tree2014>  
Find more [Travel and Hotel information here.](#)

**Cancellation Policy**

Refunds will be provided on cancelled registrations received in the national office on or before June 13, 2014. A \$20 processing fee will be applied to each cancelled registration. No refunds will be issued after June 13, 2014. All optional tours and events have minimum and maximum capacities; failure to meet the minimum number of registrants for any tour may result in its cancellation. Questions about registration and the Convention should be sent to Mac-

At the 2014 National Tree Farmer Convention Field Day, the Burnhams invite you to explore the diverse offering of demonstrations and learning stations throughout their property. There's plenty to do! Stop by the American Chestnut plantation and learn about John & Maureen's efforts to sustain the recovery of this iconic tree; take a walk through the wild-flower meadow and speak with a local beekeeper about creating a pollinator plot on your own Tree Farm; learn how the Burnhams are controlling invasive species on their property; or simply spend some time on the trails – you may even run into "Kite Boy" or one of the other special surprises around the property. And when you are ready for rest, pull up a seat and enjoy some local bluegrass sounds among the company of your fellow Tree Farmers.

The Burnham Woodlot, which has been in the family since 1956, is more than a forest with a management plan. It's a place for learning, a place for exploring, and a place for trying new things. But most importantly, it's a place that fosters a strong family bond for generations to come.

