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CUMBERLAND COUNTY FORESTRY NEWS

Summer 2005



NC Forest Service Offers Assistance for Southern Pine Beetle Management

The North Carolina Forest Service announced in May a new program designed to give assistance to landowners for southern pine beetle prevention management.

The program offers cost share assistance for pre-



Southern Pine Beetle Pitch Tubes

commercial thinning of forest stands that could potentially be impacted by southern pine beetles. The program offers qualifying private landowners 50% cost share up to \$5,000 per fiscal year on pre commercial thinning of pine stands that are 12 years or younger and have an initial stocking of 700 trees per acre or greater.

SPBPP funds cannot be used on the

same acres on which other cost share funds are being received for forestry practices during the same fiscal year. Funds cannot be used on CRP, CREP or other Federal cost share stands with an active contract.

For more information on this program contact Phil Wallace, SPB Forester in District 6 at 910-437-2620 or contact Colby Lambert at the Cumberland County Cooperative Extension Office at 910-321-6875.

Inside this issue:

<i>American Tree Farm System</i>	2
<i>Pine Straw Production in Longleaf Pine Stands</i>	2
<i>Identifying and Maintaining Forest Property Boundaries</i>	3
<i>NC Forestry Present-Use Property Tax Program</i>	3
<i>Managing Your Forest Portfolio Seminar</i>	4

I hope you find this newsletter helpful and informative. If you have ideas or suggestions for future issue, please call or stop by the office. I always welcome your feedback!

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Time To Order Tree Seedlings!

Now is time to think about ordering tree seedlings from the NC Forest Service. By ordering now, you can be assured that you will be able

to get the type and quantity of seedlings you need for planting this winter or next spring. Contact the NC Forest Service at 1-888-

NCTREES to order seedlings or you can order online at: <http://store.yahoo.com/nc-forestry/>. Orders will be taken beginning July 1, 2005.

American Tree Farm System Regains Landowner Interest

After an almost non-existent presence in the 1990's, the American Tree Farm System is beginning to renew landowner interest in the 21st century. The American Forest Foundation has published a new set of guidelines pertaining to Tree Farm certification and recertification, and Tree Farm Inspectors are being trained according to the new guidelines. ATFS has spread to all forested states in the United States. Supported by 46 state Tree Farm Committees, and 4,000 volunteer foresters from the public and private sectors, ATFS comprises 51,000 family forest owners who, together, manage more than 33 million acres under the widely recognized green and white Tree Farm sign.



If you are interested in becoming a Certified Tree Farmer or currently have a Tree Farm that is due re-inspection, please contact me at 910.321.6875. I am a qualified inspector and I will be happy to assist anyone interested in the program. For more information visit:

American Tree Farm System is a program by the American Forest Foundation

<http://www.treefarmssystem.org/index.cfm>

Pine Straw Production in Longleaf Pine Stands

Cumberland County has approximately 25,000 acres of longleaf pine stands. Managing these stands for pine straw production can be very profitable. As the landscaping industry continues to grow at a rapid rate, so will the demand for quality long leaf pine straw. Planning for pine straw production before planting is key for success.

Before planting, consider row aspect (direction of tree rows) and row spacing to accommodate raking and baling equipment. Using equipment is more efficient and cost effective than hand raking and baling. A row spacing of 8 to 10 feet will accommodate most modern balers designed specifically for pine straw baling.

This spacing will also allow a good stocking of trees for maximum straw production. Allowing room for equipment will also aid with chemical control of hardwood saplings and weeds. Chemical control of weeds may be warranted in stands close to neighbors or other homes where burning may be problematic. However, remember that chemical control should be done several weeks prior to harvest to alleviate the danger of herbicide damage to home landscapes. It is important that quality pine straw be free of cones, limbs, hardwood leaves, and trash.

“Planning for pine straw production before planting is key for success.”



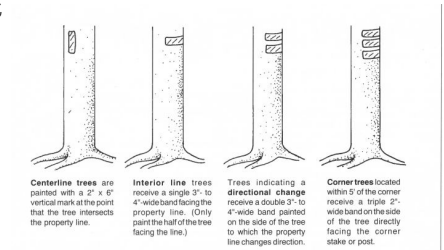
For more information on producing longleaf pine straw, please contact me at 910-321-6875 for more detailed information. I have publications available on producing longleaf pine straw as well as nutrition management for longleaf pine straw.

Identifying and Maintaining Forest Property Boundaries

As a Registered Forester, I know the importance of having property boundaries identified clearly on a forest property. Many surveyors offer the service of marking property lines while conducting a property survey. Consulting foresters also offer the service, if the property has all corner markers present. It is essential to maintain these boundaries for timber sales, avoiding timber trespass with adjoining landowners, and for hunting leases. Liability is also a major concern on forest land, and having clearly marked boundaries can minimize landowner liability in the case of recreation and trail use where no fees are exchanged.

If you don't have a recent survey of your property, you can check with neighbors or at the Register of Deeds office to see if adjoining land has been recently surveyed. After you have the boundaries marked for the first time, walk the boundaries so that you will become familiar with them. A good practice is to set metal fence posts at corners where rebar has been placed to better identify them, because small rebar stakes can become covered up after years of leaf accumulation on the forest floor.

As an active landowner, marking your own forest boundaries can be exciting and rewarding. It gives you a sense of accomplishment and also allows you to get out on your property and helps you to establish a true picture of just what your property holds. However, if you are not sure the steps to take, contact a consulting forester or a surveyor. I have some information available on the steps to marking property boundaries, so please feel free to contact me.



Different types of boundary line marks signify corners, line direction changes, and centerline trees.

NC Forestry Present-Use Property Tax Program

Since 1974, North Carolina forest landowners have enjoyed the forestry present-use property tax program. By actively managing timberland, landowners can qualify for a reduction in the property tax assessed on their timberland. This rate varies widely from county to county. Cumberland County is classified as an urban county, therefore the rates of property taxes between *market values* and *present-use values* of land vary greatly. This means that Cumberland County forest landowners can potentially save a large amount of money on property taxes.

In order to qualify, a landowner must have a "parent tract" of at least 20 acres of contiguous land in timber production. Smaller tracts in the same use in the same ownership will then qualify. The landowner must also have a sound, forest management plan, usually from the NC Forest Service, a forestry consultant, or done by the landowner themselves. However, if the use changes, the tax rate goes back to market value and a "rollback" provision is triggered. This means that all deferred taxes or difference between the market value and present-use value will also be charged to the landowner.

For more information on the present-use tax program, contact the tax assessor, a forestry consultant, or you can contact me at 910-321-6875.

"Cumberland County forest landowners can potentially save a large amount of money on property taxes."

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Managing Your Forest Portfolio Seminar in September

Have you ever wondered what might happen to your timberland investment once you're gone? Most of you will probably pass it on to your children or grandchildren. Estate planning can be a complicated and frustrating process. If you want to learn more about the estate planning process, taxes, and financial planning tools, please mark your calendars for **September 22, 2005**.

Cumberland County Cooperative Extension will be hosting a seminar entitled "**Managing Your Forest Portfolio**". The seminar will be held at the Extension Office Auditorium from **9:00 a.m. to Noon**. The program and guest speakers will be:

- **Federal and State Income and Property Taxes**—Rick Hamilton, DEL Forestry Extension
- **Estate Planning Basics**—Ted Feitshans, Extension Specialist, Ag and Resource Economics
- **Financial Planning Tools and Methods for Farm and Forest Landowners**—Greg Conner, Estate and Financial Planning and Consulting Forester, Woodsrun Inc.



Professional assistance is one of the most important forest management tools