



American Tree Farm System

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To All Tree Farm Leadership:

At 9:49 AM EST, Thursday, August 7, 2008, the threshold vote for PEFC endorsement was received at PEFC Council, Geneva, Switzerland. With this vote, the American Tree Farm System is now formally recognized and endorsed as an internationally credible sustainable forest management certification system.

This shining achievement belongs to each and every one of you who shouldered us through this nine year endeavor. You all have dedicated countless hours to the American Tree Farm System, many of you sacrificing your own personal time and expense because you believed in the American Tree Farm System and the values and principles it stands for.

This path has not been easy and it has involved much change, but the change has brought its hard-earned benefits. This recognition now opens the door to new markets abroad and on shore. All ready many nations are setting procurement policies that would have barred our forest owners' products from their markets. As future markets of other non-timber products emerge such as carbon and bio-fuels, international certification endorsement is materializing as a prerequisite for entrance.

Although I am personally proud of this achievement, I am most proud of having the honor to be associated with so many of you whose dedication and devotion to the health of our family forest lands has brought our Tree Farmers to this pinnacle.

I give my heartfelt thanks to you all and my congratulations on a job well done.

Sincerely,

Bob Simpson
Senior Vice President
Center for Family Forests