

# American Tree Farm Helps Forest Owners Do Right

Our forests are important to us for many reasons. Whether it be for hunting, scenic beauty, or timber, the woodland in Barry County is valued as a treasure and as a legacy for those who manage them. Barry County isn't alone in this feeling, nearly half of Michigan's landowners own their own private woodland. Trying to make the best decisions on how to manage these woods can be difficult, and the American Tree Farm System gives landowners the tools they need to make well-informed choices.

The American Tree Farm System is the largest and oldest forest conservation program in the country. Its roots are in cooperation between foresters and landowners, in response to the pressure of forest regulation that was common then. In this system, a Tree Farm is a forest that is being managed not just for wood production, but also for clean water, wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities. When a landowner decides to become a Tree Farmer, it shows they are committed to higher standards for their forest. They provide for the growing need for sustainable forest products and responsibly manage their land.

As the timber economy grows in Michigan, many mills are looking for certified, sustainable wood, and Tree Farm can make your There are also a host of benefits for becoming a Tree Farmer!

First and foremost are the tools that help them do right by their land. With all the challenges that woodland owners face, American Tree Farm provides information and on-the-ground assistance through its inspectors and partner groups. Just as important is the recognition for work well done. woods market-ready. You can also proudly display the Tree Farm sign to show off your land. Finally, the Organization understands that the woods can be a legacy you leave for others, so their support doesn't end after certification. Being a Tree Farmer allows you to be part of a support network that will help keep your woods thriving for generations.

If you are interested in becoming a Tree Farmer, all you need is 10 acres of forest, and a forest management plan that meets American Tree Farm Standards of Sustainability. If you don't have a plan, or just want to learn more about the program, the Barry Conservation District Forester Ben Savoie can help you! Ben is a Certified Tree Farm Inspector, and a CCF Forester through the Society of American Foresters. He can help you get involved with American Tree Farm and provide on-site assistance and professional referrals to meet your forest management needs. You can reach them at 269-908-4134, or by email at [ben.savoie@macd.org](mailto:ben.savoie@macd.org).



## This Year by the numbers:

Site Visits - 100  
Total Acreage - 4856  
QFP Acreage - 742 acres  
7 New Enrolled Parcels!  
Total Referrals - 117  
71 Private Sector  
46 Public Sector  
Outreach Events - 11  
Media Occurrences - 13  
MAEAP FWH Assessments - 8  
Estimated Economic Value:  
\$115,600

## Open referrals:

08-19-16  
Woodlot in the Saranac/Lowell Area, 23 Acres. New homebuyers looking to clear lot for house, manage forested land. Management objectives are for recreation, forest health, and game management. Contact District Forester Ben Savoie for landowner information.

