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# The Florida Forest Steward



A Quarterly Newsletter for Florida Landowners and Resource Professionals

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***“Special Sites”: what are they and how do Tree Farmers account for them in the certification process?***

## “Special Sites” for Tree Farm Certification

**By Jon Gould, Florida Tree Farmer**

The American Forest Foundation (AFF), in its *2010-2015 Standards of Sustainability for Forest Certification*, places a special emphasis on protecting special sites as one of the requirements of being certified as a Tree Farm under the American Tree Farm System (ATFS). Special sites are defined by the AFF as, “Those areas offering unique historical, archaeological, cultural, geological, biological, or ecological value. Special sites include:

- A. Historical, archaeological, cultural, and ceremonial sites or features of importance to the forest owner.
- B. Sites of importance to wildlife such as rookeries, refuges, fish spawning grounds, vernal ponds, and shelters of hibernating animals.
- C. Unique ecological communities like relic old-growth, springs, glades, savannas, fens, and bogs.
- D. Geological features such as terminal moraines, cliffs, and caves.”

First, the forest landowner must make a reasonable effort to locate and protect special sites on his/her Tree Farm as part of the management plan.



How do you locate special sites? Many landowners are hands-on managers and are the most knowledgeable people about their property and may be the best source for identifying special sites. Other landowners may not be so familiar with their property. The size of your property and how long you have owned it may also influence your ability to readily locate special sites.

It has been my experience that two of the best sources of information for special sites on your property are previous owners and neighbors. They are usually knowledgeable about the history of your land and have identified archaeological and cultural sites, especially if their families lived in the area for many years. Foresters and wildlife biologists or conservationists that have spent much time on your property can also point out special ecological, geological, and topographical features. Our forester identified rare pyramid magnolias on our land, which we were unaware we had. Other sources are old boundary survey, topographical, and geological maps and aerial photos; American Indian Tribal Councils; and the ATFS Woodland Owners' Resource ([www.treefarmssystem.org/woodlandresources](http://www.treefarmssystem.org/woodlandresources))

If you have never thought much about special sites on your property, here are some specific examples that may help you. Many special sites will fall into category A above and could include the following: old house or structure sites (may only be chimneys or foundations), early hand-constructed/excavated logging tram beds and canals, hand excavated wells, early roads, wagon trails, river/creek ferry crossing landings, remnants of fences with unusual features (We have a 24 in. DBH loblolly pine with strands of rusty barbed wire penetrating through the middle of it), Indian mounds or campgrounds (documented or determined by

plentiful artifacts, flint chips, pottery shards, etc.), abandoned turpentine operations, etc.). Old-growth natural longleaf pine stands that you want to preserve and the habitat for rare, threatened, or endangered species of plants, trees, or wildlife would also qualify as special sites. Other special sites I can think of in our part of the country could include springs and karst features like sinkholes and caves.

Let me clarify a possible concern about special sites. The intent of the AFF *Standards* is not to hinder or place an unnecessary burden on the landowner to identify and protect special sites that could be a hazard, create liability, or limit the landowner in managing his forestland to achieve his objectives. For example, you may not want to protect an open hand-excavated well because it may create a liability or be potentially dangerous to your small grandchildren. Also, you may not want to protect the remnants of an old house site because they are unsightly and take away from the aesthetics of your property, or they take up space that you would like to plant in pine trees. Therefore, it would be perfectly acceptable for you to fill in the well and demolish and remove the remains of the old house. However, some special sites could fall under federal or state regulations requiring protection, like Indian mounds or burial grounds, cemeteries, endangered species habitat, or environmentally sensitive areas.

You may have other special sites on your property, other than those listed above. Recognize the importance of identifying your special sites and be sure to include them in your management plan. Then protect and enjoy visiting them as often as you can. And be sure to share your special sites with your children and grandchildren, so they will also learn to appreciate, admire, and protect them.

Author's note: Thanks to Victoria Lockhart, Certification Manager of the American Forest Foundation, for her thorough review of this article.

## **What Can I Do About Invasive Exotic Species?**

**By Kate Pasch, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission**

By now most of us have heard about the vast array of invasive exotic plant and animal species that are threatening Florida's woodlands, farms, wetlands and other natural areas. These aggressive species negatively impact wildlife and desirable vegetation by displacing native species, resulting in large economic impacts in the form of eradication and prevention costs. It gets overwhelming to think about this problem, but there are some small, but important, steps you can take to help in the fight against invasive exotic species.

### **Tap Available Resources and Assistance**

Many species have been identified and are being controlled on public conservation lands, but there is a large knowledge gap regarding the presence of invasive species on private lands in Florida. Private property makes up the majority of Florida's land area, making it impossible to control invasive species in Florida without somehow managing infestations on private lands. To address this information need, the Florida Invasive Species Partnership (FISP) provides information and resources to landowners for controlling invasive species on their properties. Their website ([floridainvasives.org/](http://floridainvasives.org/)) has guides for identifying and controlling individual species, as well as information on financial and technical assistance available to landowners.

### **Partner with Neighbors**

In an effort to fight invasive species at the regional level, Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas (CISMAs) have been developed throughout the state. There are currently 16 CISMAs organized across Florida to coordinate efforts among public and private agencies and organizations. Private landowners are encouraged to get involved with their local CISMA and participate in meetings, workdays, and educational events. Find the CISMA closest to you at [floridainvasives.org/cismas.html](http://floridainvasives.org/cismas.html).

### **Report and Map Invasive Species**

While it may be impossible to eradicate many of the established invasive species, identifying current distributions and preventing their spread is crucial for mitigating future damage and preventing isolated infestations from expanding. Even if landowners are not in a position to manage species on their property, reporting invasive species occurrences on their land is important for documenting the spread of invasive plants and animals. EDDMaps (Early Detection & Distribution Mapping System; [www.eddmaps.org](http://www.eddmaps.org)) is an on-line database that provides an easy way for landowners and land managers to report invasive species occurrences.

EDDMaps is user-friendly and provides useful information on the locations of invasive species. There is a free, one-time on-line registration to use EDDMaps. The location can be reported through GPS coordinates or by entering a physical address. Pictures of the plant(s) in question can be uploaded as well.

Landowners who are interested in learning more about invasive species and getting involved in efforts to control them are encouraged to take advantage of the FISP

website, become involved with their local CISMA, and use EDDMaps to gather and disseminate information about invasive species sightings in their area. Invasive species threaten the enjoyment and use of the outdoors for all Floridians and many wildlife species. It is only through the combined efforts of public and private landowners and managers that we can effectively fight their spread.

### **Introducing Matthew Palumbo, Regional Biologist, National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF)**

Matthew Palumbo joined the NWTF flock in July as a Regional Biologist in Florida, and is a recent graduate of Mississippi State University where he earned his Master's degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Science.



He is currently stationed near Tallahassee, where he will be primarily working with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Florida Division of Forestry, and the Florida State Chapter of the NWTF to identify and develop cooperative opportunities for habitat enhancement projects which benefit wild turkeys and other wildlife on more than 5.5 million acres of public lands throughout the state. Matthew can be reached at: 4057 Remer Court, Tallahassee FL 32303. Office phone (850) 692-3290, Cell phone (850) 766-9396, Email [mpalumbo@nwtf.net](mailto:mpalumbo@nwtf.net).

### **Operation Oak 2010-11: NWTF Regional Program**

The NWTF's Operation Oak program is dedicated to restoring and creating wildlife habitat throughout the southeast. Last year alone, this program provided over 14,000 oak trees for planting on private lands throughout Florida. The NWTF and the FL State Chapter has once again shown its commitment to this program in Florida by having 14,000 trees available to private landowners, including white oak, swamp chestnut oak, live oak, and persimmon. All trees will be shipped to pre-determined, centralized locations within the panhandle and peninsular, FL for pick up in early February 2011. A minimum request of 100 trees will be required per species, and landowners interested in participating in this FREE program must be or become a member of the National Wild Turkey Federation. The NWTF will send a letter to all interested landowners along with an application for completion, and completed **applications must be received no later than Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>, 2010** to be considered for the program. If you are interested in participating in this program for 2010-11, please contact Mr. Brian M. Zielinski, NWTF Regional Biologist, @ 386-804-6691 or via email: [bzielinski@nwtf.net](mailto:bzielinski@nwtf.net) to receive the Operation Oak program materials. Thank You!

### **Get Email Updates on Events**

Email is the best way to stay current on upcoming programs, news and opportunities for landowners across the state. Don't miss out. If you don't receive email updates and want to, simply send your email address to Chris at [cdemers@ufl.edu](mailto:cdemers@ufl.edu). Updates are sent periodically and we do not share email addresses with anyone.

## From the Stump

By Chris Demers

**Sellers Beware.** Every now and then I hear horror stories from landowners about timber sales gone wrong. These days many landowners are having a difficult time just holding on to their property, let alone trying to get a decent return on their timber investment. We don't need any more reasons to get out of the timber business, or worse, sell the property because of a bad experience. Also, considering a landowner may only sell timber once or twice in a lifetime, one bad experience will likely cause their image of the industry, and everyone associated with it, to sour fast. For many, a rotten apple can spoil the whole bushel.

Despite a few swindlers, most foresters, loggers and dealers conduct themselves and their business in an ethical way. Here are a few tips for locating a reputable forester to help you with your management and timber sales.

Hire a good Forester. I capitalized Forester for a reason. Unlike other states, Florida does not require consulting foresters to be registered, licensed, or certified under a uniform set of standards. Thus, any entrepreneur, regardless of training or experience, can call him or herself a forester. Take the time to find a professional with the proper credentials, experience and associations. Here are some critical things to look for when shopping for a good Forester:

### **Proper educational background and**

**experience:** Consulting foresters should have at least one degree, preferably a B.S., in forest or natural resource management from an educational institution accredited by the Society of American Foresters (SAF). Foresters affiliated with the Association of Consulting Foresters (ACF) generally meet higher qualification standards than required by state forestry registration boards. Membership in ACF requires a 4-year B.S. degree in forestry and at least 5 years of practical experience. The average experience of ACF members is 25 years with 17 years in private practice, and continuing forestry education is required to maintain membership in ACF.

### **Involvement in professional societies and activities:**

In addition to ACF, membership in the Society of American Foresters, Florida Forestry Association, Forest Landowners Association, and/or other related organization can indicate a commitment to professional service and concern for landowner and conservation issues. You may have seen "CF" after a forester's name. These individuals are certified by the Society of American Foresters' Certified Forester ® program. They have passed a test, participate in continuing education programs and pay an annual fee for this designation. They meet basic educational and experiential requirements to carry the forester title. Also, many foresters practicing in Florida are registered or licensed in neighboring states.

**Good communication skills.** Talk to the consultant personally and ask to see a sample of their work. Good writing skills are as important as oral skills if his/her recommendations are to be understood.

**Honesty, integrity and ethical conduct.** Many landowners find consultants through referral from an existing or past client. Ask for references and check them. Industry foresters and landowner associations can also recommend consulting foresters with whom they have had favorable experience. ACF and SAF members subscribe to a standard Code of Ethics that governs their professional relationships with clients and the public.

Disclaimer - This is not guaranteed to find you the right person, but it's a start.

*Want to step up to the Stump?* We welcome your comments, questions, rant or all of the above. Send to [cdemers@ufl.edu](mailto:cdemers@ufl.edu) and write "stump" in the subject line. Letters should pertain to landowner or natural resources issues and be no more than 400 words in length. Letters may be edited for length and/or clarification. Please keep it civil – no personal attacks will be published



## Timber Price Update

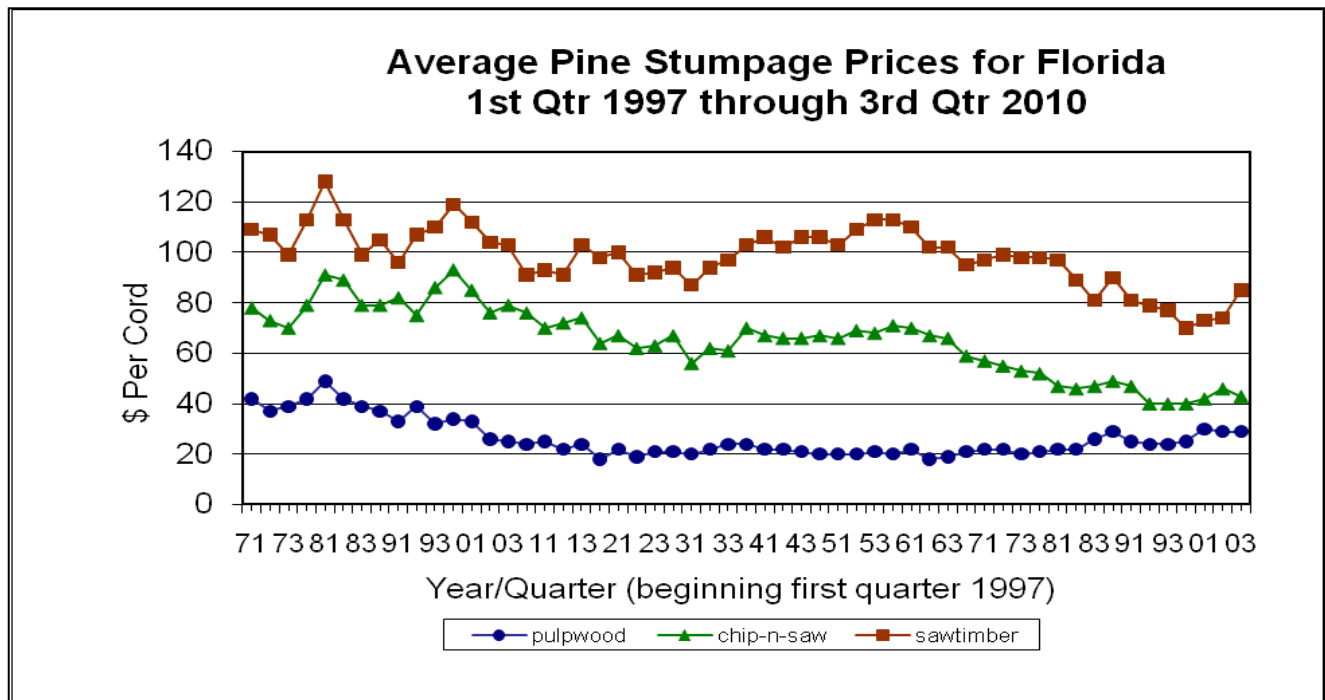
The timber pricing information below is useful for observing trends over time, but does not necessarily reflect current conditions at a particular location. Landowners considering a timber sale are advised to solicit the services of a consulting forester to obtain current local market conditions. Note that Southeast average price information for biomass fuel is now included.

Price ranges reported in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2010 Timber Mart-South (TMS) report were:

Florida Stumpage Prices	Biomass Fuel Prices*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Pine pulpwood</u>: \$21 - \$36/cord (\$8 - \$13/ton), ↓ from 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr</li> <li>• <u>Pine C-N-S</u>: \$34 - \$51/cord (\$13 - \$19/ton), ↓</li> <li>• <u>Pine sawtimber</u>: \$70 - \$98/cord (\$26 - \$37/ton), ↑</li> <li>• <u>Pine plylogs</u>: \$74 - \$97/cord (\$28 - \$36/ton), ↑</li> <li>• <u>Pine power poles</u>: \$133 - \$168/cord (\$50 - \$63/ton), ↑</li> <li>• <u>Hardwood pulpwood</u>: \$13 - \$26/cord (\$4 - \$9/ton), ↑ slightly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>In-woods whole tree pine</u>: \$14 - \$20/ton</li> <li>• <u>In-woods whole tree hardwood</u>: \$13 - \$20/ton</li> </ul> <p>*Southeast average low and high price ranges per ton, fuel quality chips from tops, limbs, limited bole material or otherwise pre-commercial material</p>

## Trend Report

Stumpage prices for most products, on average across the Southeast, remained above those in the same period of 2009 but prices declined overall compared to 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2010. Despite that regional trend and continuing weak underlying demand for building products, Florida's average stumpage prices for those products were all on the increase this quarter. As one reporter commented, this could be attributed to fewer quality sawtimber tracts on the market. Average biomass prices decreased as supply in most markets was more than sufficient to meet demand.



## Upcoming Forest Stewardship Program Events

**November  
9**

***Forest Stewardship Tour: Legacy Timber Tract, Levy County, 9 am - 1:00 pm ET.*** The Legacy Timber Tract is a mix of flatwoods, swamps and drains that typify much of the forest land in this region of Florida. High-quality timber, wildlife habitat and aesthetics are being met through the use of thinning, burning, rotational mowing and protecting the natural swamps and vegetation species that provide important habitat. Join us for a tour of Legacy Timber.

Details and registration on-line: <http://fsp-tour110910.eventbrite.com/>. Those without Internet access can reserve a space by calling the Levy County Extension Office at (352) 486-5131.

**November  
16**

***Forest Stewardship Tour: Evans Farm, Flagler / Volusia County, 9 am - 1:00 pm ET.*** Cost is \$10 per person. Lunch and materials included. Evans Farm is a diversified operation with products ranging from cattle, corn and timber to tilapia and sturgeon. Natural and enhanced wildlife habitat is enhanced through the use of prescribed fire and food plots. In order to protect some of the current uses of the property, the owners have sold a conservation easement to the St. Johns River Water Management District. Join us for a tour of Evans Farm.

Details and registration on-line: <http://fsp-tour111610.eventbrite.com/>. Those without Internet access can register by contacting the UF-IFAS Volusia County Extension Office at (386) 822-5778 or email David Griffis at [dgriffis@co.volusia.fl.us](mailto:dgriffis@co.volusia.fl.us).

**December  
14**

***Forest Stewardship Videoconference: Greenbelt Update – Conservation Use Assessments, 2-4 pm, ET, G001 McCarty Hall, UF Campus, Gainesville, broadcast to UF-IFAS Extension facilities across Florida.*** Florida Statutes now provide property tax exemption for real property dedicated in perpetuity for conservation, as well as a current use tax assessment of land used for conservation. Join us for an update on these provisions and how landowners can apply for them.

Contact your UF-IFAS County Extension Office to request the program, or contact Chris Demers at (352) 846-2375 or [cdemers@ufl.edu](mailto:cdemers@ufl.edu).

**January 12  
2011**

***Forest Stewardship Workshop: Invasive Exotic Plants and Their Control, 9 am - 3 pm ET, Trout Lake Nature Center, Eustis, FL.*** Lunch, materials, FDOACS pesticide applicator CEUs and SAF CFEs will be provided.

Details and registration on-line: <http://fsp-workshop011211.eventbrite.com/>. Those without Internet access can reserve a space by calling Maggie Jarrell at the Lake County Extension Office at (352) 343-4101 ext. 0.

Questions about these or other Forest Stewardship Program activities can be directed to Chris Demers at (352) 846-2375 or [cdemers@ufl.edu](mailto:cdemers@ufl.edu).

More Forest Stewardship Program information and events:

[http://www.sfrc.ufl.edu/forest\\_stewardship](http://www.sfrc.ufl.edu/forest_stewardship)

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### Upcoming Natural Resource and Small Farm Events

Date	Event, Location, Contacts
November 5	<i>Maximizing Profits by Extending Pine Rotations: Multiple Benefits of Longer Vs. Shorter Rotation Pine Management</i> , 9 am - 1 pm, UF-IFAS Suwannee County Extension Office, Live Oak, FL. Call (386) 754-1051 x 216 to register
November 12	<i>Advanced Topics in Hydroponics</i> , Live Oak, FL. For more information, contact Lydia Von Borstel at 386-362-1725 ext. 109 or <a href="mailto:lvonborstel@ufl.edu">lvonborstel@ufl.edu</a> .
November 13	<i>Flex Fuel Vehicle with Wood Workshop</i> , UF-IFAS Taylor County Extension Office, Perry, FL. Come learn about wood gas and how to outfit a truck to run on wood! \$15 fee required. RSVP at (850) 838-3508.
November 16	<i>Forest Economics Workshop</i> , 10 am - 3 pm, Mayo Community Center, 150 SW Community Circle, Mayo, FL 32066. Cost is \$10, contact Eric Black at (386) 294-2326, <a href="mailto:black@doacs.state.fl.us">black@doacs.state.fl.us</a> to register.
November 18	<i>Wildlife Management Workshop</i> , 8 am - 3:30 pm CT, Gum Creek Lodge, Baker, FL. Pre-register by November 16 - contact the UF-IFAS Okaloosa County Extension at (850) 689-5850.
November 18	<i>CFEOR Workshop: Groundcover Restoration in Forests of the Southeastern US</i> , Vernon, FL, 10 am to 3 pm, Sandhill Lake Mitigation Bank Tract, Chain Lake Road, Vernon, FL. Registration for non-members is \$30. See <a href="http://www.sfrc.ufl.edu/CFEOR/Upcoming%20events.html#groundcover">http://www.sfrc.ufl.edu/CFEOR/Upcoming%20events.html#groundcover</a> for details.
December 9-10	<i>Tractor Driving for Women</i> , Live Oak, FL. For more information, contact Lydia Von Borstel at (386) 362-1725 ext. 109 or <a href="mailto:lvonborstel@ufl.edu">lvonborstel@ufl.edu</a> .
January 19	<i>Land Management Workshop</i> , 9 am - 2 pm ET, Tenoroc Fish Management Area. Topics will include fisheries management, exotic vegetation control, prescribed fire, habitat management and assistance programs. Please contact Cheryl Whitney and RSVP by January 2, 2011 at (863)-534-7077.
January 20	<i>CFEOR Tour of Green Circle Bio-Energy Plant</i> , Cottdonale, FL. Details and registration: <a href="http://www.sfrc.ufl.edu/CFEOR/Upcoming%20Events.html#green">http://www.sfrc.ufl.edu/CFEOR/Upcoming%20Events.html#green</a>

For more Forest Stewardship Program information: [sfrc.ufl.edu/forest\\_stewardship](http://sfrc.ufl.edu/forest_stewardship)

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