



FORECON INC.
Forestry & Natural Resource Consultants
1890 East Main Street
Falconer, New York, 14733
716-664-5602

Dear Landowner or Manager:

Thank you for your interest in Forecon Inc. and Tree Farm Certification under the American Tree Farm System. The American Tree Farm System[®] (ATFS), a program of the American Forest Foundation, is committed to sustaining forests, watersheds, healthy habitats, and recreational opportunities through the stewardship practices of private and family forest owners. Forecon Inc. is supporting and promoting this voluntary program to its customers and this package provides the necessary information for you to understand it and its benefits. Included is information about forest certification, the ATFS standard, the outline for our management plan template, eligibility requirements, and the Tree Farm brochure.

The ATFS Certification Program is built to provide landowners with the benefits of third party certification in the most efficient and cost effective manner possible through a group certification system. By enrolling in the program you automatically become a member of an ATFS Regional Tree Farm Group (i.e. Northeast Region) and will be considered a source of certified sustainable wood products. As a Group Member you are expected to implement sustainable practices on your lands in accordance with the written management plan and in conjunction with your specific management objectives. You are expected to manage your resources in conformance with State published Best Management Practices (BMP's) and with all of the ATFS standards. ATFS will shoulder the financial and administrative burden of managing the certification process on behalf of the regional group. Every five years the group would be subject to a third party audit and verification of its member's conformance to the standard; and as a group member, if your property is selected for inclusion in the sample audit, you will be expected to open your property to inspection. It is through this verification process that the group's forests are granted certified status, and as a member you can take advantage of the benefits.

Conformance with the principles of this management system represents a strong commitment to the environmentally sound and sustainable management of the forest resource. There is no cost to enroll in the Tree Farm Program; conforming to the standards, however, can result in some added costs such as a slightly more involved management planning process and some additional monitoring of the forest. The benefit of this investment is the evaluation and confirmation of management activity, which assures you, shareholders, stakeholders, and/or constituents that your (their) resource is being sustainably managed, based on a widely accepted standard. Other benefits include: recognition that your forest is a source of certified wood products, having a healthier more productive forest, a proactive response to potential criticism of your management activities, public recognition of your stewardship ethic, the option to subscribe to the Tree Farmer Magazine, and the option to purchase and post an ATFS certified tree farm sign on your property. Furthermore, participation in a recognized certification system is a requirement to participate in a carbon sequestration project, allowing some landowners to verify and sell carbon credits in the carbon market; ATFS is a recognized Certification System for carbon credit trading.

Please also direct your attention to the compilation of press releases that are included in the information packet. These illustrate the growing demand for certified wood products and the domestic and foreign market place opportunities that are now available for private and family forest owners. Forecon Inc. is ideally positioned to help its customers participate in forest certification and take advantage of these opportunities. In addition to the other benefits, it is our further hope that this demand will allow our customers to receive premium prices and/or better market access through certification.

Participation requirements include a written management plan, a commitment to following the plan, and permitting access to your land for periodic inspection and audit purposes. For our clients that already have a written forest management plan, costs associated with amending it to conform to the standards for certification should be minimal depending on how recent the plan is. For new clients, Forecon Inc. foresters would develop the forest management plan from the ground up with conformance to this system. We have developed a management planning process consistent with this system. An outline of our template is included for your review and is intended to ensure that all required components for a plan are addressed. This outline is not, however, intended to result in a “cookie cutter” approach to plan development. Every forest owner has a unique resource and a unique set of objectives under which it is to be managed. Forecon Inc. recognizes this diversity from client to client and encourages ingenuity and creativity in the planning process as long as it is based on a balance between scientific principles, economics, and the ownership objectives.

So, how do you get started? First, review all of the information in this packet. Second, contact Forecon Inc. to schedule a no cost no obligation consultation with one of our Qualified Tree Farm Inspectors to discuss your ownership, your specific objectives, and review your management plan (if one is available). Through this initial consultation, we will conduct a needs assessment and outline the steps for you to become eligible for enrollment in the program and any fees associated with having Forecon Inc. complete these tasks. If at that time you decide to seek enrollment in the program you will be asked to sign a letter authorizing Forecon Inc. to proceed with completing the agreed upon services necessary to become eligible. We will help guide you through this process.

If you do not currently meet the standards and guidelines for enrollment but wish to participate you can enroll under the special designation of a Pioneer Tree Farmer. As a Pioneer Tree Farmer you can enjoy many of the benefits that a Certified Tree Farmers do, but have 5 years to develop your Tree Farm to meet the standards and guidelines to become certified. We would be glad to discuss this option with you as well, but please note that Pioneer status is not considered a certified source of wood products and is not recognized for carbon credit trading.

Participation in this management program should take place only after you fully understand the system and how it will affect you. Please take some time to read over all of the information in this folder. If after reviewing this information you have any comments, questions, or concerns please feel free to contact me; my contact information is listed below. For more information about Forecon Inc., our services, carbon credit sales opportunities, and the American Tree Farm System please visit our website at www.foreconinc.com. Thank you for considering Forecon Inc. and the ATFS program.