

Hi

On behalf of the Colorado State Tree Farm Committee and Colorado State Forest Service, I am pleased to invite your attendance to recognize **Bill & Patti Szilva** as the 2013 Colorado Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year. The attached flier indicates the location and agenda of this event to be held on Saturday, August 3<sup>rd</sup> from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The state Tree Farm Committee initiated this award in 1980 to annually recognize a forest landowner that is certified in the American Tree Farm System and has done an exceptional job of forest management on their properties, and an exceptional job of promoting sustainable forestry in their community. The recognition provides an opportunity to focus public attention on the Tree Farmer as a symbol of good forestry and encourage other landowners to manage their lands by showing what Tree Farmers can accomplish.

The Szilva's have an interesting story to tell in how they have transformed 40 acres of dense stagnated ponderosa pine/Gambel oak woodland to the attractive and productive forest it is today. In doing so, they are realizing their goals to foster healthy forest conditions that are resilient to insect, disease, and wildfire; enhance wildlife habitat, protect soil and watershed resources, and provide an economic return from the sale of value-added wood products. Upon purchasing the property in 1996, they pursued the development of a forest management plan in 2001 to guide their efforts, and became certified in the American Tree Farm System in 2005.

All forest management activities are done by the Szilva's with much forethought and with specific purpose. Thinning trees, pruning branches, brush mowing, chipping, pile burning of slash, grass seeding, weed control, and maintaining key elements of wildlife habitat are common practices. Seedling tree establishment, growing, and harvesting of mature trees is done on a sustainable basis. Trees having sufficient diameter and quality are destined for a portable chainsaw mill and recently constructed solar dry-kiln to produce boards, beams, and other products. Ultimately some may find their way to a line of high quality Spanish Colonial furniture or other product that Bill produces in his shop. Non-merchantable wood and milling scraps are converted to "Energy" through an outdoor wood boiler system and is used to heat the home. Concepts of energy efficiency, recycling, sustainability, and renewable resources will be evident throughout the field tour that Bill will provide. Please share with those who may have interest and we look forward to your participation and please RSVP by July 26th if planning to attend. Hope to see you there!

Thank You,  
Dan Wand  
Forester – Colorado State Forest Service  
Treasurer – Colorado State Tree Farm Committee