



The Benefits of Certifying Your North Carolina Timber

All over the world, consumers and companies are growing more concerned about where their products come from. Customers who buy products made with wood want to know that the products they buy aren't hurting the world's forests. Manufacturers, in turn, want to give their customers that assurance. Certification offers that guarantee, telling the world that your woods are sustainable and well-managed. It also makes your timber more desirable and valuable in the marketplace.



The American Tree Farm System® (ATFS) is a network of 82,000 family forest owners sustainably managing 24 million acres of forestland—the largest and oldest sustainable woodland system in the United States. A program of the American Forest Foundation, ATFS is one of four third-party forest certification systems that are active in North Carolina.

ATFS certification was created in 1941 especially for private forest landowners. You can participate if you own between 10 and 10,000 acres of land and manage your land to certain standards. Certification through ATFS is a way of assuring those who purchase your timber that your forest is managed to the highest standards of sustainability. (More information on other certification options active in North Carolina can be found in the “Learn More!” section at the end of this document.)

When your woodland is certified

by ATFS, you become part of an international network of forest owners recognized by the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC), the world's largest forest certification organization. If you want access to growing world markets for wood products, think about exploring certification.

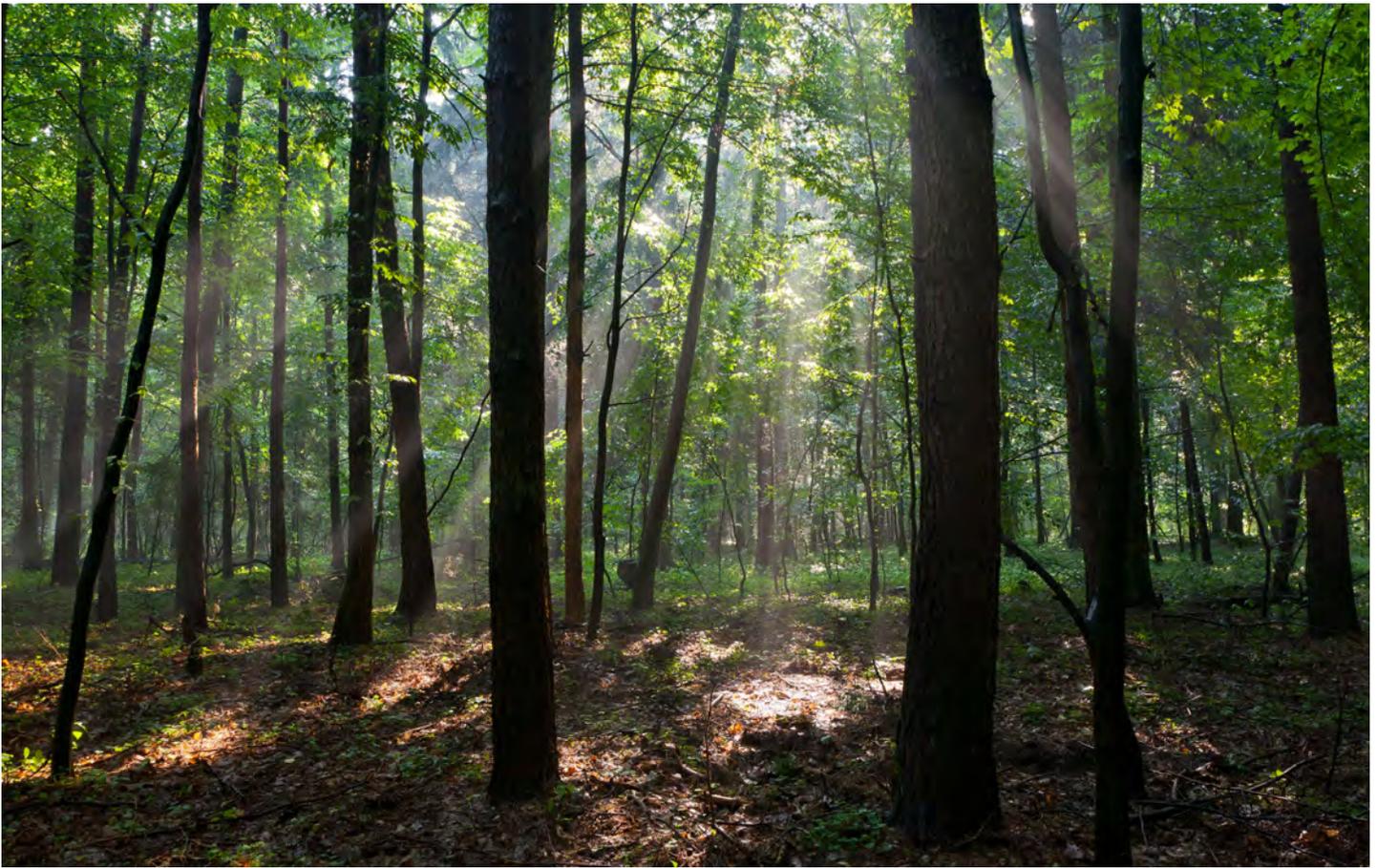
Steps to Certifying Your Woodland

To become certified through ATFS, you must have a management plan for your forest that addresses water, soils, wildlife (including threatened and endangered species), special sites (places of architectural, archaeological, or historic significance, for example), invasive species and integrated pest management as described in the Tree Farm System's Standards of Sustainability.

If you have a management plan in place and believe that you qualify for certification, your next step is to contact the North Carolina Tree Farm Program to request an inspection of your land by an ATFS-trained inspecting forester. The inspector will visit your land and verify that your management activities meet the ATFS Standards of Sustainability.

After reviewing your management plan and walking your property with you, the inspector will submit a report to the N.C. Tree Farm Program recommending that you be approved for certification. You then will be assigned a Tree Farm number and receive a Tree Farm sign to post on your land to show that you meet the highest standards of stewardship.





Learn More!

- **American Tree Farm System® (ATFS).** Learn more about the largest and oldest sustainable woodland system—and how you can become part of this network of 82,000 family forest owners who manage their land to the highest standards of forest stewardship: <http://www.treefarmssystem.org>
- **ATFS Standards of Sustainability.** Forest owners who are certified by ATFS must have a management plan that meets international standards for sustainable woodland management. Learn more about these standards here: <https://www.treefarmssystem.org/standards-for-tree-farm-certification>
- **North Carolina Tree Farm Program.** The N.C. Tree Farm Program can help you learn whether you meet the criteria for ATFS certification and can arrange for an inspecting forester to visit your



land and review your management practices. In addition, the state program offers field days, an e-newsletter and other educational resources to help you improve your sustainable woodland management prac-

tices. Get acquainted via their website here: <https://www.treefarmssystem.org/north-carolina>

- **North Carolina Forest Service.** The Forest Service website describes all four forest certification options available to North Carolina landowners. Find information here: http://ncforestservice.gov/Managing_your_forest/forest_certification.htm
- **North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.** The department's NC Green Verified Wood Products Program helps exporters of N.C. timber products meet forest certification-related demands from international consumers. While it is not a certification program, this state program provides resources for N.C. forest owners to navigate the demands of international timber markets. Find out more here: http://ncforestservice.gov/Managing_your_forest/forest_certification.htm

Information for this fact sheet was compiled from a variety of sources, including the American Forest Foundation, American Tree Farm System, North Carolina Forest Service, and North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.