

Foy's Community Forest and John Chase Tree Farms Recognized

By Mark Boardman

On Thursday October 29, 2013 the Montana Tree Farm Vice Chair and Certification Manager Angela Mallon and I met with representatives from Flathead County Parks and Recreation and other community leaders to recognize two new Tree Farms in Northwest Montana.

Foy's Community Forest, located west of Kalispell, is the recent recipient of a grant from the USDA Forest Service Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program. Foy's adds 220 acres of beautiful working forest with high recreational value to the Montana Tree Farm System. Angela said, "Foy's Community Forest is Montana's newest community forest and the first in our state to be certified by the American Tree Farm System." Jim Watson, a fellow Tree Farmer, has worked for 6 years to see these lands protected as an example of how to manage forests in a sustainable manner while providing recreational opportunities for the community. According to Watson, "It is an honor to be a member of the team that has worked so hard to secure this forest for public use and education."

The 160 acre John Chase property is adjacent to Foy's Community Forest and was the second Tree Farm recognized that day. Popular hiking trails extend from Foy's onto the Chase property, where users are welcome thanks to his generosity in granting access. Chase's outstanding stewardship and commitment to public access enhances the recreational value and open space characteristics of the adjacent community forest. Adding John's 160 acres to the Tree Farm system is a huge privilege. John is currently conducting a fuels reduction project with Quiram Logging out of Whitefish, MT. This commercial harvesting brings many values to the community through jobs, wood resources, reduction of fire hazard, increased recreational opportunities, enhanced wildlife habitat, and improved forest health.

Montana Tree Farm is part the American Tree Farm System® which is a network of 82,000 family forest owners sustainably managing 24 million acres of forestland. It is the largest and oldest sustainable woodland system in the United States, internationally recognized, meeting strict third-party certification standards. There are 457 Tree Farms presently recognized in Montana.