



# American Tree Farm System

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## Memorandum of Understanding Agreement Between The American Tree Farm System®

And

## International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers ( IAMAW) November 12, 2007

**WHEREAS**, The American Tree Farm System is a nationwide network of forest landowners and forestry professionals working together to promote the growing of renewable forest resources on private lands while protecting environmental benefits and increasing public understanding of all benefits of productive forestry.

**AND WHEREAS**, IAMAW through its Woodworkers Department represents wood and forestry workers in the US and Canada to promote decent work which includes expansion of the rights and privileges set forth in the ILO core labor standards in those places where the government has not ratified these conventions in order to insure safe and decent work and a stable labor force for the forest products industry.

**AND WHEREAS**, There are common goals among ATFS program participants, ATFS as an institution and IAMAW-Woodworker members, and the IAMAW and its global affiliation with the Building and Woodworkers International (BWI) as an institution to promote Sustainable Forest Management,

**AND WHEREAS**, these common goals include:

1. Ensuring that markets function in such a manner as to promote the planting and harvesting of forest land and commercial wood fiber. There must be economic demand for small holders to plant, manage, and harvest their wood fiber rather than convert their land use to other alternatives. Demand is shifting from pulp logs to saw logs, panel chips, and perhaps bio fuel. This is reducing the market for many small holders since few have the capacity to ship logs outside of their local hauling area. Decreased local markets mean fewer employment opportunities, fewer jobs, and poorer rural communities.
2. Driving value and money down through the production and distribution chain to the land owner and the forest and wood dependent worker. Most value is garnered in the top step or two of the production chain. Small holders, contractors, and other portions of the forest work force are often not in a position to demand better prices, wages, or working conditions. The market for wood in a majority of locales is controlled by just a few buyers, sometimes only one. These buyers have a natural interest in the lowest possible raw material costs – often with difficult consequences for small holders, small contractors and the forest work force. This portion of the industry is rapidly being turned into minimum-wage work where it used to be family-wage level work.
3. A viable infrastructure to harvest and deliver logs to functioning markets. Harvesting and hauling services have been fragmented. Their level of work and compensation is often controlled by the large wood-purchasing companies. Professionalization of harvesting and hauling services is needed to enhance productivity, ensure that markets can be served with reasonable transaction costs for small holders, and that the type of work performed is both safe and fairly compensated.

4. Access to certification schemes that recognize the unique contribution of small holders, contractors, and the forest workforce and meet the international standards required for SFM and the ILO core labor standards.

**THEREFORE**, The ATFS and the IAM-Woodworkers enter into this Memorandum of Understanding to cooperatively achieve the goals of enhancing forest health and productivity and all the benefits it brings, by outreaching to non-managing forest owners and forest contractors, educating them with timely forest sustainability information and working through mutually agreed upon methods, seeking to improve the overall health and sustainability of America's family-owned forestlands and sustain the economic viability of its contractors and forest-related markets.

**TO ACHIEVE THESE GOALS, BOTH PARTIES AGREE THAT BY WORKING TOGETHER:**

- ATFS and IMAAW-Woodworkers work to develop a representative database of contractors and haulers used by ATFS members.
- ATFS and IMAAW-Woodworkers develop best-practices models of contracts for ATFS members to incorporate into their forest practices activities.
- ATFS and IMAAW Woodworkers develop a program which educates and informs contractors and landowners on key SFM and certification criteria regarding safety, ILO labor standards, recommended contract design and land management planning.
- ATFS and IMAAW Woodworkers work cooperatively to develop a system that provides education and information (E&I) training services to contractors in database or refers them to other agreed upon equivalent programs..
- ATFS agrees to urge its members to give preference to those contractors who have successfully completed the above mentioned E&I training program or other equivalent program.
- ATFS and IMAAW Woodworkers work cooperatively to identify those operating areas which lack an adequate number of participants in the ATFS-IAMW E&I program or its equivalent and prioritize those areas for program delivery.
- ATFS and IAM Woodworkers work cooperatively to obtain preferred provider agreements for ATFS certified products with local, regional and national wood products companies.
- Contractors reported by IMAAW to be found in violation of US labor law and /or flagrant or frequent violations of ILO core labor standards will be removed and be ineligible for mention in ATFS "preferred contractor" databases.

This **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING** represents the intentions of the parties to cooperatively carry out the activities described herein in an effort to improve the overall health and sustainability of America's private non-industrial forestlands and sustain the economic viability of its contractors, workforce, and forest-related markets. This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended by written agreement of all parties and ratified by the signatories and shall remain in effect for three years from date of execution and renewed automatically for one year or until written notification by one party to the other to terminate or modify this agreement.

**American Forest Foundation**

**IAMAW- Woodworkers**

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By: Laurence Wiseman, Pres.

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By: R T Buffenbarger, Pres.