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Question1:

Question2:

Question3: Private Forests and the 2007 Farm Bill

Talking Points for USDA Comment Period ending Dec. 30, 2005

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- I am Tim More. My family owns 250 acres of forestland in Crawford County, Pennsylvania. We began purchasing forestland 1986. Some of our forestland has been in my family since about 1835, when my great-great-great grandfather owned it. I have been actively managing my forest land since 1986, and have had a written management plan since 1997. Our goal is to manage it in a sustainable manner, so that our forest can benefit future generations, as well as the current one.
- About two thirds of forests in the U.S. (or about 400 million acres) are family owned, and two thirds of those lands are in parcels under 1,000 acres owned by families like ours. But we're facing serious obstacles & we need help from the Admin. and Congress for the next Farm Bill.
- Besides being part of our family legacy, our forests provide so many benefits. We supply wood to the local sawmill, clean air and water, habitat for fish and wildlife, and recreation opportunities for our friends and neighbors. These benefits are a byproduct of the hard work and passion that we put into our land.
- All of these benefits depend on our ability to keep our forestlands and a decision to pass the land on to the next generation. Things like loss of markets and other financial and regulatory burdens make it hard to be able to afford to keep the land. Some of our neighbors have even sold their forests for development. Others are having trouble finding an heir willing to take on the challenge of owning forest land. Obstacles we deal with every day include: pests and pathogens, invasive species, and the risk of severe fire.
- Most of us take more pride and pleasure than profit from our lands. However, when we do harvest our land, we supply wood to mills in our area which is turned into wood products we all use. However, times are changing. Many companies have downsized or moved overseas. We now have to compete with international exports which often come from countries without environmental regulations. Supporting sustainably managed family owned forests like ours means keeping our forests as forests.
- In my experience on my land, I'm especially concerned that:
 - our forests are being threatened by invasive pests from other parts of the world ? insects, fungi, noxious plants, etc.
 - it is too difficult to pass forestland to the next generation. Estate tax laws place too large a burden on the next generation. Tax

laws need to be changed to encourage family forest owners to manage their forest sustainably, and to be able to keep it in the family from one generation to the next.

- We need Congress's help in providing us with more funding and technical assistance; provisions to give us the resources we need to resist selling our land. Currently, less than 1% of Farm Bill programs are directed to us as private forest landowners. The 2007 Farm Bill reauthorization provides a chance to improve this number.

- In the 2007 Farm Bill we need to see more priority given to forestry programs. We've been left out of past Farm Bills and we need support to be able to keep our land in the family and continue the good work that we've been doing on our land.

Question4:

Question5:

Question6: