

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 6/28/2018**

**Contact:** Adriane Barnes, (501) 516-6255, [adriane.barnes@arkansas.gov](mailto:adriane.barnes@arkansas.gov)

## **Michael and Tamera Rossi of Faulkner County Named Forest Stewards of the Year**

**LITTLE ROCK, AR** – Michael and Tamera Rossi of Conway have been named the 2017 Arkansas Forest Stewards of the Year by the Agriculture Department's Arkansas Forestry Commission (AFC). The Rossi family began actively managing their 195 acre tract of mixed forestland, pasture, and bottomland near Cadron Creek in 1998.

The Forest Stewardship Program recognizes and rewards landowners that are managing privately owned forestland with a multi-use concept, which could include enhancement of wildlife through habitat protection and improvements, protection against soil erosion, protection of water quality, restoration and management of wetlands, and others. Arkansas is home to over 1,200 certified forest stewardship landowners.

The Rossi family's primary management goals include healthy and valuable timber, soil and water conservation, and open space for recreational area. Since they enrolled in the Stewardship Program 11 years ago, forest management efforts have included several seasons of site preparation and seedling planting through the use of prescribed burns, forest thinning, and strategic harvest operations. The Rossi Tree Farm was also selected for the AFC District 7 Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year award.

"The Rossi family has always made good forest management a priority and because of that, they have enjoyed a valuable timber harvest and a healthy landscape," said County Forester Scottie Youngblood. "Even through several setbacks including a devastating ice storm, Mike and Tamera invested planning and time into their management decisions. It's a pleasure to have landowners who actively engage in a Forest Management Plan, and in implementing established goals."

Any private forest landowner with over ten acres is eligible to participate in the Arkansas Forest Stewards program. Find more information, including Stewardship Program Applications, [here](#).

The mission of the AFC is to protect Arkansas's forests, and those who enjoy them, from wildland fire and natural hazards while promoting rural and urban forest health, stewardship, development, and conservation for all generations of Arkansans. The AFC is a part of the Arkansas Agriculture Department.

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