



Cowlitz County  
**Mark Andrews**

*“Nowadays, to be socially and politically correct you have to temper your economic motives with the impact your tree farm has on the community.”*

“I have been involved with tree farm politics over the years. I was involved in the early days with the Harvest Excise Tax, which started about 1973. Mark Andrews talks about his influence on tree farming policy. He continues, “I was active when Brian Boyles was land commissioner; he had a blue ribbon committee that dealt with defaulted state timber sales back in 1982. I was involved with the Washington Farm Forestry Association (WFFA) and its legislative committee lobbying for different measures as they came down the pike.”

Mark operates in the business world to protect and progress the rights of tree farmers, but his interest began while working in the woods and on the farm where he grew up near Kelso. He left the farm to attend law school and returned to Kelso as a deputy prosecuting attorney in 1960.

In the beginning Mark conducted his business affairs at local pubs with Charlie Chambers and Dick Woods who both were involved as farm foresters in the WFFA. “They were very active in promoting forest projects and non-industrial forest management. They encouraged me to get involved with the WFFA. I became chairman in the local chapter for two years and, from that time have remained on the local board.

“We worked on some controversial projects over the years. In the early years we were involved with transmission line corridors. El Paso Natural Gas marched through the county at that time, acquiring right of ways. Later on the Olympic Pipeline people were doing the same thing. We became very deeply involved with our members’ rights and conducted effective negotiations with the appropriators who had power of eminent domain. They could condemn property. Our objective there was to control where they went, how much right of way they acquired and to help them determine reasonable compensation to be paid.

“In the last four years, we’ve become involved with Williams Communications’ installation of fiber optic lines throughout the state. We addressed the cattlemen’s open range issue with the objective to close open range in Cowlitz County, which we were successful in doing. That was an issue that had to be determined by the county commissioners. We felt that cattle and trees did not mix very well.

“Land-use regulations became a priority as rights began to dwindle after the growth management act. Environmental issues are coming down the pike constantly and we try to keep people informed so that their rights are protected.”

Mark realized the pros and cons of regulations and worked to create a balance between the two, noting, “Regulations have a result of improving our forest practices considerably, making us do a better job of protecting the environment and becoming more efficient in the manner of which we do things. In this way they have been a genuine benefit.”

Mark, with his wife Gina, began a systematic investment program, investing in cut-over timber and timberland. Their primary focus has been to rehabilitate formerly degraded timberland by returning it to a productive state by clearing, reforesting, monitoring and maintaining the land until it is again self-sustaining. In 1961 he created a forest management plan that's been frequently updated. The long-term plan has helped put their four children through college.

In 1973 they received tree farm certification on 320 acres. The Andrews are not only interested in financial security, but have a strong commitment towards conservation. Their tree farm is wildlife friendly with snags and stumps left for birds and residual orchards for deer, elk and bear. Community access is also allowed for fishing, a limited amount for hunting, and overnight campouts by a variety of groups. They also set aside 15 acres of bottomland for wildlife habitat, which currently has a trout-rearing pond established with the Columbia River Fly Fishers Club and the Washington State Game Department.

Today they manage 3,000 acres of timberland in Cowlitz, Wahkiakum, Lewis and Pacific Counties, which have been toured by groups ranging from elementary school students to state legislatures and conservationists.

Mark retired from his law practice in 1982 to focus on tree farming. He works 1,500 hours a year planting, slashing where necessary, and experimenting in poorly drained areas.

In 1987, Mark and Gina took part in a forest management exchange program with Japan. The following year they visited China on a "People to People" tour, where information was also exchanged. In 1992 the Andrews were named "Outstanding Tree Farmers of the Year" by Washington state.

"Tree farming is not for everyone. It's for people that have a heart-felt desire to be out among wildlife, timber and know the joy of the outdoors." – Mark Andrews

#### ANDREWS TREE FARM

Mark Andrews Jr, May 18, 1932 -2004

Gina Andrews, July 28, 1934

Board Member CCFFA

President CCFFA, 1964 - 65

Co-Conservationist of the Year, 1984

Forest Stewardship, Ambassador Volunteer Program, 1991

Washington State Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year, 1992



Mark Andrews Sr. 1967