Introduction

Roughly two-thirds of all landowners in the U.S. feel that maintaining their legacy, or passing their woodlands onto future generations, is an important reason for owning the land. For the most part, these folks have strong stewardship values, though their engagement with the land varies. Messages that focus on keeping the land intact for future generations are likely to resonate with these landowners.

Since legacy owners constitute such a large proportion of woodland owners, their attitudes towards active woodland management vary along the same wide spectrum as the whole population. Some legacy owners, for example, want to pass their woods on as a financial investment, whereas others may wish to pass on a piece of wilderness. In any case, legacy owners are passionate about doing activities that are in the woods’ long-term interest.

Barriers for legacy owners depend on their reasons for owning the land. Woodland Retreat legacy owners may not have much knowledge about management techniques, or they may genuinely believe that minimal human interference is the best way to keep woods healthy. For the Working the Land or Supplemental Income owners, the most likely barrier is their desire to handle woodland management themselves.

Basic Statistics

Number and Acreage
- Estimated number of ownerships in this group: 2,745,000.
- This group constitutes 68% of total family woodland owners in this geography with 10+ acres.
- Total acreage covered by these ownerships: 197,769,000 acres.
- This is 75% of the total acres held in wooded acreage of 10+ acres.

Land Tenure
- Average land tenure is 24.5 years.
- 17% have owned this land for less than 10 years.

Percent of landowners that say their woods are
- Part of their home: 64%
- Part of cabin or vacation home: 17%
- Part of their farm or ranch: 34%
Landowner Attitudes

SFFI Segmentation
Shows how the landowners in this group are distributed among the SFFI attitudinal segments.

- Uninvolved (11%)
- Supplemental Income (19%)
- Working the Land (32%)
- Woodland Retreat (37%)

89% of the landowners are classified as Prime Prospects. This means they have good stewardship attitudes but are not highly engaged in managing their land.

Reasons for Owning Woods
The percentage of landowners in this group who cited each of these reasons for owning land as important or very important to them.

- NTFPs*
- Timber
- Firewood
- Recreation
- Hunting
- Nature
- Water
- Privacy
- Family
- Investment
- Legacy
- Beauty
- Wildlife
- Water
- Nature
- Family
- Investment
- Legacy
- Beauty
- Wildlife
- Nature
- Family
- Investment
- Legacy
- Beauty
- Wildlife
- Nature
- Family
- Investment
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- Nature
- Family
- Investment
- Legacy
- Beauty
- Wildlife
- Nature
- Family
- Investment
- Legacy
- Beauty
- Wildlife
- Nature
- Family
- Investment

Landowner Concerns
The percentage of landowners in this group who said they are concerned or greatly concerned about each of these factors.

- Keeping land intact
- Property taxes
- Trespassing
- Vandalism
- Insects/diseases
- Invasive plants
- Storms
- Drought
- Nearby development
- Air pollution
- Off-road vehicles
- Climate change
- Animal damage

* Non-timber forest products
Activities on the Land

SFFI classifies 9% of the landowners in this group as highly engaged. This means that they have reported doing several activities to protect and improve their woods.

Past and Future Activities

The dark green bars show the proportion of woodland owners in this group that have done each of these activities in the past five years. The light green bars show the proportion who say they are likely or extremely likely to do that activity in the next five years.

Advice

19% of the landowners in this group have received advice or information about care, management or protection of their woodland in the past five years.

Sources of Advice

The proportion of landowners that said they have received advice from each of these sources in the past five years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State or local government employee</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal government employee</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private consultant</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another landowner</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family member or friend</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Preferred Modes

The proportion of landowners who said that they would prefer to receive advice or information in the following ways.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preferred Mode</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Talk to someone</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have someone visit my land</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written materials/publications</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference/Workshop</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t want any advice/information</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Future Plans

87% of these landowners want their wooded land to stay wooded.  
12% say they plan to sell or transfer their land in the next 5 years.  
17% say they would sell their land if offered the right price.

## Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average age</td>
<td>62.6 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-White</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have college education</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual income of $100,000 or higher</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual income of less than $49,000</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rely on woods for at least 5% of income</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male income of less than $49,000</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These landowner profiles have been developed by the Sustaining Family Forests Initiative (SFFI), a collaboration between the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Center for Nonprofit Strategies. SFFI aims to gain and disseminate comprehensive knowledge about family forest owners throughout the United States. For more information about SFFI, visit [sffi.yale.edu](http://sffi.yale.edu). The profiles use data from the National Woodland Owner Survey (NWOS) conducted by the US Forest Service. The data in this specific summary are based on a sample of 5,876 families and individuals that own 10 or more acres of woodland in the United States collected between 2011 and 2013. For more information about the NWOS, visit [www.fia.fs.fed.us/nwos](http://www.fia.fs.fed.us/nwos).