

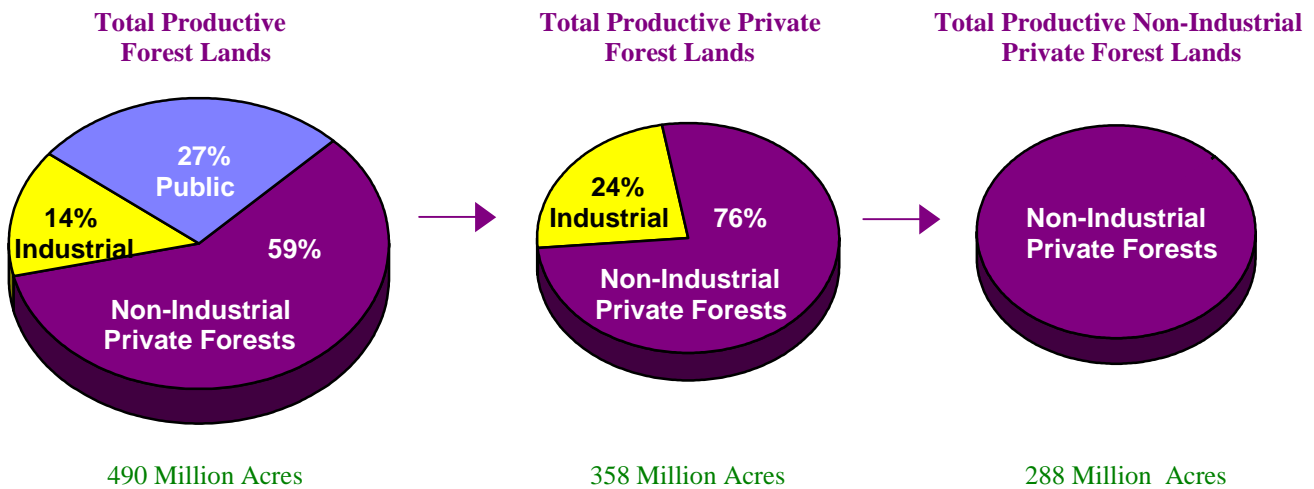


Eco-Link

Linking Social, Economic, and Ecological Issues

America's Private Forests

Volume 7, Number 3



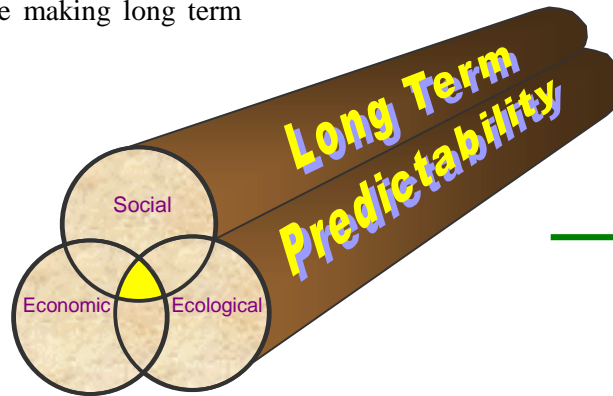
Approximately 73% of the productive* (i.e. wood producing) forestland in the United States is in private ownership. There has been a dramatic reduction in harvest on federal lands (which contain over 50% of the nation's softwood sawtimber inventory). Therefore wood to meet future demand must come from 10 million private forestland owners.

The greatest potential for increased wood production is on non-industrial private forestlands, which represent 59% of all the productive forestland in the United States. Over 50% of the nation's wood supply already originates on these lands. With properly implemented forest management plans, these lands could produce twice as much wood. They are also essential to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI)** and can provide fish and wildlife habitat, clean air and water, stable soils, biological diversity, aesthetics, and a buffer against urban sprawl. It is essential that we provide the incentives to keep private forests producing trees, while assuring owners the opportunity to realize their rewards of pride, profit and pleasure.

* Productive forestlands are not off limits as sources of wood fiber and can produce at least 20 cubic feet of incremental volume per acre per year. ** Sustainable Forestry Initiative and SFI are trademarks of the American Forest and Paper Association.

Sustainable Forestry

To make forestry sustainable, social, economic and ecological needs must be integrated across broad forest landscapes. Private owners also require predictability in the future. These owners must feel that their property and land ownership rights are secure, since they are making long term investments.



American Forest & Paper Association members and Tree Farmers are leading a sweeping forest conservation and management program known as the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI). The Sustainable Forestry Initiative requires AF&PA members to abide by its principles and guidelines, which include broadening and fostering the practice of sustainable forestry on all forestlands. The AF&PA has joined with many associations, conservation groups, universities, and government agencies to form state SFI Committees and accelerate a massive education program. At the heart of this training is the Logger Training & Education Program. Independent loggers play a critical role with respect to the environmental impacts of harvesting trees, and often serve as the primary sources of information for the non-industrial private landowner.

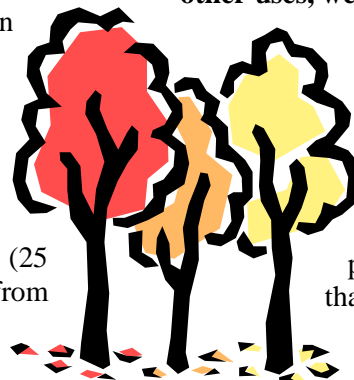


The American Tree Farm System (ATFS) unites a national community of private landowners (industrial & non-industrial). They pledge

to produce timber, to protect their forests from fire, insects and disease, to maintain water and soil quality, and to preserve wildlife habitat. Tree Farmers are also committed to public education initiatives.

Founded in 1941

Non-industrial private owners hold 288 million acres of forestland (25 million in ATFS), that needs to be passed on from generation to generation.



However, current estate tax laws may force many descendents to sell the Tree Farm or cut the trees prematurely, before their prime.

To Qualify for Tree Farm Certification

- Own 10 acres or more woodlands
- Implement a Forest Management Plan
- Protection from disease, insects, & fire
- Inspections by a qualified forester
- Follow state BMP's
- Commitment to public education

Farmers are the salt of the earth and Tree Farmers are no exception. We need to keep farmers on the land, generation after generation.

People who own things tend to take better care of them and Tree Farms are more sustainable if they are multi-generational. Tree Farmers should never be denied their property and ownership rights, including the right to sell. Most would prefer to produce trees as a crop, and pass the Tree Farm on to their children and grandchildren. These long-term commitments are urgent to prevent the loss of highly productive forest lands to other uses. This requires minimal regulation, incentives, and predictability in the future.

As our productive public lands are set aside for other uses, we need to manage private lands more intensively.

Tree Farms can be highly productive while remaining diverse, resilient, and healthy. Tree Farmers are interested in sustainable forestry for social, economic and ecological reasons. They are in it for pride, profit and pleasure. It's important to remember that the sale of timber pays the bills and the continuous production of timber as a crop remains the core objective.

Assistance Available

All non-industrial private forest landowners have a wealth of resources available for education and technical support. These include:

- Local Tree Farm Associations
- State Forestry or Natural Resource Agencies
- State Forestry Associations
- Cooperative Extension Service
- Consulting Foresters
- Landowner Associations
- Landowner Assistance programs (LOA's) from industrial landowners

To quote Stan Adams, the State Forester from North Carolina, "Our goal is to provide education, technical assistance, and incentives while using regulation as a last resort."

Happy the man, and happy he alone,
He, who can call today his own;
He who, secure within, can say,
Tomorrow do thy worst, for I have
lived today.

Horace

Programs Available

- **Forest Stewardship Program**
A federally funded program (Forest Service, USDA) administered by state foresters to encourage non-industrial private landowners to care for their woodlands by writing a forest management plan.
- **Stewardship Incentive Program**
This is the cost-sharing arm of the Forest Stewardship Program. There are nine SIP forestry practices. Landowners must have an approved stewardship plan and agree to 10 years of maintenance.
- **Forestry Incentive Program**
Non-industrial forest landowners may obtain cost-share assistance for carrying out approved practices aimed at increased wood production. Application made with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), USDA.
 1. Tree Planting
 2. Timber Stand Improvement
 3. Site Preparation
- **Conservation Reserve Program**
A voluntary land retirement program designed to reduce soil erosion. Lands converted to permanent vegetative cover (grass or trees) are rented to NRCS by landowner. Cover cannot be harvested or grazed during 10-15 year contract period.
- **Loans**
 - Farm Credit Service
 - Farm Credit Agency
- **Land Trusts**

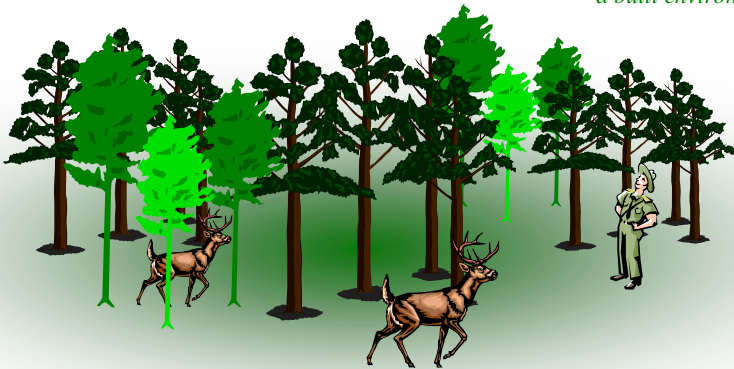


There is a big difference between incentives and regulations. Without profitable forest management, from any mix of forest products, the expanses of privately owned forestland in the United States will increasingly be converted to non-forest under the pressures of population growth and competing economic uses. For example:

Tree Farm

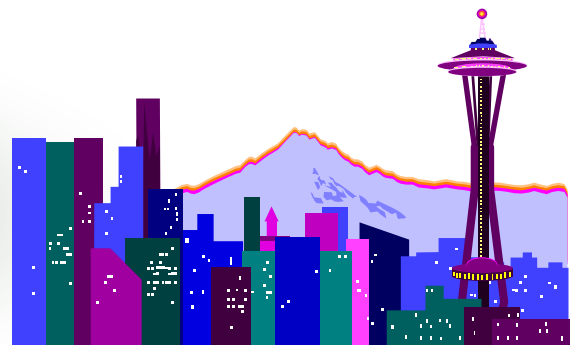
Clearcut or Selective Cut
Reforestation: Remains in Forest

The most intensive forest management may look environmentally benign compared to conversion of the natural environment to a built environment



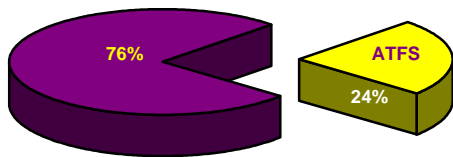
Major City

Clearcut
Deforestation: Converted to Non-Forest



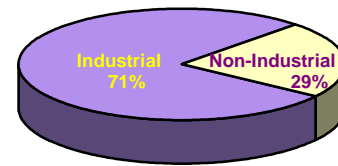
Today the world has 6 billion people all needing food, clothing, shelter, transportation, and quality of life. The global population is expected to reach 10-11 billion in less than 100 years. Renewable resources are essential to our sustainability and quality of life. Forests meet our needs for wood products, while providing many other values essential to quality of life.

All Wood Producing Private Forest



358 Million Acres

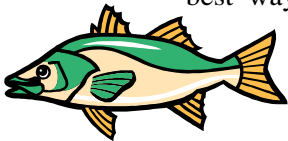
American Tree Farm System (ATFS)



86.5 Million Acres

Best Management Practices (BMP's)

Best Management Practices, designed to protect water quality and wetlands, are identified in federal and some state laws. Non-point source pollutants are a special concern, such as the sediment, which may be produced from harvesting, site preparation, or forest roads. A number of states require BMP's and others strongly recommend them in voluntary compliance with water quality goals and laws. BMP's identify the best way to comply while meeting social, economic, and environmental goals. The BMP's address many key issues including:



1. Riparian Zones (streams, lakes, wetlands)
2. Streamside Management Zones (buffer strips)
3. Harvesting, site prep. & reforestation practices
4. Erosion control on roads & skid trails
5. Water sedimentation & turbidity
6. Water temperature & chemical composition
7. Waste disposal

We have no wealth but the wealth of nature. She shows us only surfaces, but she is a million fathoms deep...

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Consulting Foresters

If you are a timberland owner, sooner or later you will need a forester. While larger companies have their own foresters, many landowners should consider retaining the services of a consulting forester. Consultants offer a variety of services including timber cruises and valuations, timber sale management, forest management plans, habitat plans, tree planting, site preparation, herbicide and fertilizer application, real estate appraisals, assistance with timberland tax and estate planning, and a multitude of other specialized services. Some consultants are registered foresters, registered land Surveyors and have a real estate license.



Of the 68,491 Tree Farms in the U.S., 98% are owned by Non-Industrial Private Forest Landowners.

Sources

- American Forest and Paper Association
(202) 463-2700 - www.afandpa.org
- American Forest Foundation
(202) 463-2462 - www.affoundation.org
- American Forests, (800) 368-5748 - www.amfor.org
- American Tree Farm System, (202) 463-2458
www.trefarmsystem.org
- Association of Consulting Foresters of America
(703) 548-0990 - acf@igc.apc.org
- Clark County, WA Farm Forestry Association, (360) 687-7377
- Cooperative Extension Service, (202) 401-4926
www.reeusda.gov
- Environmental Protection Agency, www.epa.gov
- Forest Landowners Association, Inc.,
(800) 325-2954 (17 Southern States)
- National Association of Conservation Districts
(800) 825-5547 - www.nacdnet.org
- National Association of State Foresters
(202) 624-5415 - nasf@sso.org
- National Woodland Owners Association
(703) 255-2700 - Argowk@aol.com
- Natural Resources Conservation Service USDA
www.nrcs.usda.gov
- Society of American Foresters, (301) 897-8720
www.safnet.org
- U.S. Forest Service USDA, (202) 205-1661 - www.fs.fed.us



CHAIRMAN, DR. ROBERT G. LEE
 PRESIDENT & CEO, ROBERT F. LEGG
 VICE PRESIDENT, DR. JOHN H. BALDWIN
 TECHNICAL MANAGER, ROBERT S. NORTON
 OFFICE MANAGER, RENEE K. CANNON

14780 SW Osprey Drive, Suite 355
 Beaverton, OR 97007
 Tel: (503) 579-6762 Fax: (503) 579-0300
 e-mail: forestinfo@easystreet.com
<http://www.forestinfo.org>



Printed on recycled paper