



Family Forest (10+ Acres)
Ownership Characteristics

2018

NORTHERN UNITED STATES

WHO IS THE PRIMARY DECISION- MAKER?

64 YEARS
(AVERAGE AGE)

49%
COLLEGE DEGREE

80% MALE

3% MINORITY



PAST 5 YEARS Forest Management Activities

CUT TREES FOR SALE

18%



CUT TREES FOR OWN USE

47%

INSECT/DISEASE MITIGATION

5%

INVASIVE PLANT MITIGATION

21%

IMPROVED WILDLIFE HABITAT

28%

REDUCED FIRE HAZARD

8%

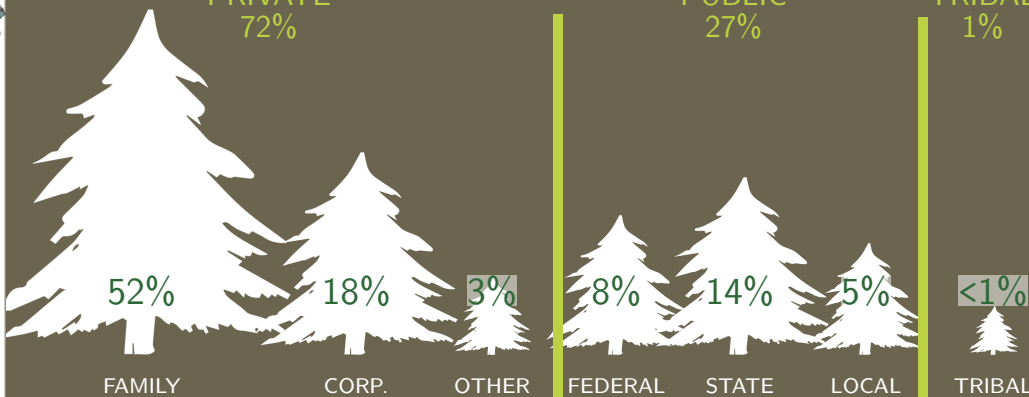


WHO OWNS NORTHERN UNITED STATES'S FORESTS?

PRIVATE
72%

PUBLIC
27%

TRIBAL
1%



PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

Management advice **18%**
Property tax program **18%**
Management plan **12%**
Cost-share programs **3%**
Conservation easements **3%**
Green certification **2%**

TOP 5 CONCERNS

Property taxes
Keeping land intact
Trespassing or poaching
Dumping or vandalism
Insects or diseases

BY THE NUMBERS Northern United States's Family Forest Ownerships

81,267,000 ACRES

1,608,000 OWNERSHIPS

3,175,000 OWNERS

MEAN SIZE

51 acres

Median = 26 acres



TOP 5 REASONS FOR OWNING

Beauty or scenery
Wildlife habitat
Nature protection
Privacy
Water protection



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Data in this report come primarily from the USDA Forest Service, National Woodland Owner Survey (NWOS). The NWOS is implemented by the Forest Inventory and Analysis program to answer questions related to who owns the forests, why they own it, what they have done with it in the past, and what they intend to do with it in the future. The family forest ownership results are based on a random sample of 3395 family forest ownerships from the Northern United States (CT, DE, IL, IN, IA, ME, MD, MA, MI, MN, MO, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, VT, WV, WI) who participated in the NWOS in 2017 and 2018. The sampling errors provided below are important for assessing the reliability of the estimates. Additional results from the NWOS are available in USFS General Technical Report NRS-199 and can be accessed via the [NWOS Dashboard](#) and additional documentation and resources can be found on the [NWOS website](#).

TABLE 1. Forest Ownership

OWNER GROUP	ACRES	SE
Family	90,280,000	425,000
Corporate	30,970,000	336,000
Other private	4,520,000	163,000
Federal	14,662,000	127,000
State	23,860,000	181,000
Local	9,330,000	177,000
Tribal	1,401,000	70,000

TABLE 2. Totals, family forest (10+ ac)

UNITS	TOTAL	SE
Acres	81,267,000	725,000
Ownerships	1,608,000	21,000
Owners	3,175,000	50,000

TABLE 3. Demographics, family forest (10+ ac)

DEMOGRAPHIC	ACRES	SE	OWNER-SHIPS	SE
	Percentage			
Age (65+)	53.1	<1	49.1	1.3
Education (College)	53	1.1	49.2	1.4
Gender (Male)	82.2	<1	80	<1
Minority	2.9	<1	2.9	<1

TABLE 4. Size of forest holdings, family forest (10+ ac)

SIZE OF HOLDINGS	ACRES	SE	OWNER-SHIPS	SE
(ACRES)	Percentage			
10-49	30.9	<1	0.9	1.6
50-99		<1	7.8	<1
100-499	36.4	<1	10.8	<1
500-999	4.7	<1	<1	<1
1,000+	4.3	<1	<1	<1

Mean size = 50.5 ac (SE = <1); Median size = 26 acres

TABLE 5. Reasons for owning, family forest (10+ ac)

OBJECTIVE	ACRES	SE	OWNER-SHIPS	SE
	Percentage			
Beauty or scenery	82.5	1	84.9	1.5
Wildlife habitat	81.3	<1	80.6	1.4
Nature protection	72.6	<1	74.3	1.5
Privacy	72.5	1	74.3	1.5
Water protection	66.1	<1	66.9	1.5
Family legacy	64.5	1	59	1.4
Recreation	59.1	1	55.2	1.4
Hunting	59.6	<1	51.1	1.3
Raise family	46.4	<1	48.9	1.3
Land investment	48.5	<1	44.7	1.2
Firewood	27.7	<1	28.2	1.1
Timber products	31.1	<1	19.8	<1
Nontimber products	11	<1	9.9	<1

TABLE 6. Concerns, family forest (10+ ac)

CONCERN	ACRES	SE	OWNER-SHIPS	SE
	Percentage			
Property taxes	80.2	<1	78.5	1.4
Keeping land intact	78.9	1	76.6	1.4
Trespassing	76.6	<1	75.7	1.4
Vandalism	71.1	1	70.7	1.4
Insects or diseases	67.8	<1	68.9	1.5
Government regulation	66	1	63	1.4
Water pollution	55.5	<1	58.5	1.4
Invasive plants	52.5	<1	53.1	1.3
Wildfire	49.4	<1	49.9	1.4
Air pollution	44.9	<1	48.9	1.3
Development	44	<1	47.1	1.3
Climate change	40.8	<1	42.1	1.3
Wind or ice storms	40.3	<1	39.6	1.2
Drought	34.7	<1	36.7	1.2
Off-road vehicles	34	<1	33.4	1.1
Animal damage	23.6	<1	21.7	<1

TABLE 7. Management activities, family forest (10+ ac)

ACTIVITY	ACRES	SE	OWNER-SHIPS	SE
	Percentage			
Controlled burn	4.5	<1	4	<1
Cut trees - own use	46.8	<1	46.8	1.1
Cut trees - sale	30.3	<1	18.4	<1
Insects management	5.6	<1	5.5	<1
Invasives	23.2	<1	21.2	<1
Livestock grazing	11.1	<1	9.6	<1
Nontimber products	28.9	<1	27.8	<1
Reduced fire hazard	7.9	<1	7.8	<1
Roads	16.1	<1	9.5	<1
Trails	34.4	<1	28.9	<1
Wildlife habitat	34.2	<1	27.5	<1
None	15.9	<1	21	<1

TABLE 8. Management programs, family forest (10+ ac)

PROGRAM	ACRES	SE	OWNER-SHIPS	SE
	Percentage			
Advice	28.9	<1	18.0	<1
Conservation easements	5.5	<1	3.2	<1
Cost-share programs	6.9	<1	3.3	<1
Green certification	4.9	<1	2.2	<1
Management plan	24.3	<1	12.5	<1
Property tax program	27.1	<1	17.8	<1