



Family Forest (10+ Acres)
Ownership Characteristics

2018

WESTERN UNITED STATES

WHO IS THE PRIMARY DECISION-MAKER?

65 YEARS
(AVERAGE AGE)

66%
COLLEGE DEGREE

70% MALE

8% MINORITY



WHO OWNS WESTERN UNITED STATES'S FORESTS?

PRIVATE
24%

PUBLIC
70%

TRIBAL
6%



PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

Management advice **23%**
Property tax program **12%**
Management plan **10%**
Cost-share programs **5%**
Conservation easements **2%**
Green certification **1%**

PAST 5 YEARS Forest Management Activities

CUT TREES FOR SALE

7%



CUT TREES FOR OWN USE

34%

INSECT/DISEASE MITIGATION

13%

INVASIVE PLANT MITIGATION

38%

IMPROVED WILDLIFE HABITAT

17%

REDUCED FIRE HAZARD

37%



TOP 5 CONCERNS

Wildfire
Trespassing or poaching
Keeping land intact
Property taxes
Dumping or vandalism

BY THE NUMBERS Western United States's Family Forest Ownerships

31,602,000 ACRES

425,000 OWNERSHIPS

879,000 OWNERS

MEAN SIZE

74 acres

Median = 25 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 2169 family forest ownerships from the Western United States (Coastal AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, KS, MT, NE, NV, NM, ND, OR, SD, UT, WA, WY) 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	33,989,000	380,000
Corporate	28,541,000	333,000
Other private	1,663,000	99,000
Federal	165,622,000	623,000
State	15,811,000	259,000
Local	1,711,000	99,000
Tribal	15,362,000	244,000

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

UNITS	TOTAL	SE
Acres	31,602,000	623,000
Ownerships	425,000	19,000
Owners	879,000	45,000

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

DEMOGRAPHIC	ACRES	SE	OWNER-SHIPS	SE
	Percentage			
Age (65+)	58.8	1.3	55.1	2.4
Education (College)	66.2	1.4	65.7	2.8
Gender (Male)	77.4	<1	69.9	1.9
Minority	8.4	<1	7.7	<1

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

SIZE OF HOLDINGS	ACRES	SE	OWNER-SHIPS	SE
(ACRES)	Percentage			
10-49	21.8	<1	75.9	2.8
50-99	10.9	<1	12.3	<1
100-499	24.3	<1	9.6	<1
500-999	10.6	<1	1.2	<1
1,000+	32.4	<1	1.1	<1

Mean size = 74.3 ac (SE = 2.1); Median size = 25 acres

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

OBJECTIVE	ACRES	SE	OWNER-SHIPS	SE
	Percentage			
Beauty or scenery	81	1.4	84.4	2.2
Wildlife habitat	77.1	1.4	77.4	2.7
Nature protection	70.4	1.3	73.5	2.6
Privacy	68.2	1.3	71.6	2.5
Water protection	69	1.4	66.3	2.5
Family legacy	67.1	1.3	54.8	2.4
Recreation	51.4	1.2	51.4	2.2
Land investment	52.1	1.3	49.2	2.5
Raise family	42.4	1.3	37.3	2.3
Hunting	44.2	1.1	29.5	1.8
Firewood	22.1	<1	20.1	1.6
Timber products	18.6	<1	9.8	<1
Nontimber products	5.3	<1	6.9	<1

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

CONCERN	ACRES	SE	OWNER-SHIPS	SE
	Percentage			
Wildfire	78.5	1.4	76.2	2.5
Trespassing	77.7	1.4	73.5	2.7
Keeping land intact	79.2	1.4	73.1	2.6
Property taxes	75.5	1.3	71.4	2.7
Vandalism	66.7	1.3	68.6	2.5
Insects or diseases	67.7	1.4	63.1	2.6
Drought	70	1.3	61.7	2.4
Government regulation	71.1	1.3	60.8	2.4
Invasive plants	60.8	1.3	54.3	2.3
Water pollution	49.1	1.3	53.7	2.3
Development	46.5	1.3	49.2	2.4
Climate change	39.2	1.2	48.8	2.5
Air pollution	37.1	1.2	46.5	2.5
Off-road vehicles	32.3	1.1	35.8	2.1
Wind or ice storms	30.7	1.1	33.9	2.3
Animal damage	20.7	<1	17.7	1.2

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

ACTIVITY	ACRES	SE	OWNER-SHIPS	SE
	Percentage			
Controlled burn	10.6	<1	9.7	<1
Cut trees - own use	39.5	1.1	34	1.9
Cut trees - sale	18.6	<1	7.3	<1
Insects management	11.2	<1	12.5	1.3
Invasives	41.2	<1	37.5	1.7
Livestock grazing	47.8	<1	23.5	1.2
Nontimber products	16.7	<1	19.3	1.6
Reduced fire hazard	41.7	1	36.8	2
Roads	31.4	<1	18.3	1.5
Trails	16.3	<1	10.9	1.2
Wildlife habitat	28	<1	16.5	1.2
None	10.7	<1	20.6	1.6

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

PROGRAM	ACRES	SE	OWNER-SHIPS	SE
	Percentage			
Advice	34.3	<1	23.2	1.3
Conservation easements	6.8	<1	2.4	<1
Cost-share programs	13.8	<1	4.6	<1
Green certification	5.0	<1	1.4	<1
Management plan	19.5	<1	9.6	<1
Property tax program	15.9	<1	11.6	1.0