Keep Penn's Woods Healthy

October 2024

Environmental Policy
Goddard Chair Group
at Penn State

PennState Extension

FOCCE
Forest Owner Carbon and Climate Education

THE JAMES C. FINLEY
CENTER FOR PRIVATE FORESTS

USDA

Northern Institute of Applied
Climate Science and USDA
Northern Forests Climate Hub

Introductions

- Name
- Location or region of the state
- What you do with your time
- Favorite tree

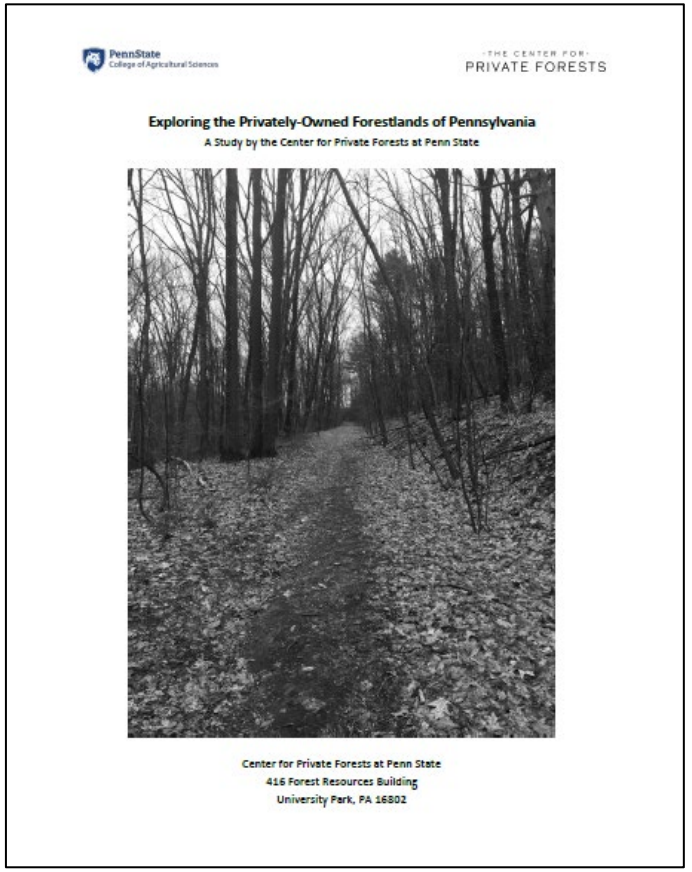
Agenda

- 9:00 Welcome & Introductions
- 9:20 Presentations – Changing Climate, Changing Forests
- 10:40 Technical Presentations – Managing our Changing Forests
- 11:40 Group Activity: What Are the Biggest Challenges in Managing Your Woods?
- 12:00 Lunch – Gardens Restaurant
- 1:00 Transition to Hartley Woods via bus
- 1:30 Activity: Assessing the Woods with the Healthy Forests Checklist
- 3:00 Board bus and return to Penn Stater
- 3:15 Wrap up and workshop evaluation

Who Are Pennsylvania's Woodland Owners?

2021 Forest Landowners Survey

- 6,600 surveys sent (100 landowners in each of 66 counties)
  - Identified by property tax maps and national land use cover data
  - Focused on private ownership categories
  - Parsed sample by property size


PennState College of Agricultural Sciences

THE CENTER FOR PRIVATE FORESTS

Exploring the Privately-Owned Forestlands of Pennsylvania

A Study by the Center for Private Forests at Penn State

Center for Private Forests at Penn State
416 Forest Resources Building
University Park, PA 16802

Landowner Characteristics

- Majority male – 74%
- Majority white – 88%
- Average age of 66
- Plurality are retired (46%); 38% work full time
- 65% of woodland owners have completed some level of education post-high school.
- Majority live on their forestland, but more likely with smaller properties.
- Majority (72%) have owned their land longer than 10 years.

Landowner Values and Actions

- Only 8% have management plans.
- Reasons for owning:
  - Solitude,
  - Hunting,
  - General enjoyment, and
  - To enjoy wildlife
- Activities:
  - Hunting and non-hunting recreation,
  - Enhance wildlife habitat, and
  - Non-herbicide vegetation management.
- 84% believe their woods is healthy

Forest Management

- 46% are willing or very willing to harvest.
- 62% have cut firewood off their properties.
- 32% have had a timber sale that produced income
- Reasons for harvesting include:
  - improve forest health
  - improve forest conditions, and
  - income.
- Harvesting landowners are generally happy with the outcomes of the harvest
- Fewer than 25% are engaging a forester to assist with their harvests.

Forest Resilience in the Face of Change

- Forests should be protected to mitigate climate change (3.66/5)
- Forestland is important for carbon storage (3.56/5)
- Healthy forests are important to me (4.43/5)
- Some forest management by humans is necessary (3.93/5)
- You don’t have to worry about the forest because it will take care of itself (2.36/5)