



Indiana Forestry & Woodland Owners Association

1007 North 725 West
West Lafayette, IN 47906-9431

Phone: 765-583-3501
Fax: 765-583-3512
E-mail: jackson@purdue.edu

**SHARING ...Forestry and
Nature Knowledge**
**PROTECTING ...Your Forest
Investment**
**GROWING ...Indiana's
Woodland Resource**

www.ifwoa.org

A Guide to Managing Your Woodlands

Owning Woodlands: Possibilities and Responsibilities



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A Resource List



Indiana contains nearly 4 million acres of forest land, some of the most productive in the world. It is important that woodland owners practice good stewardship to enhance this great resource.

This brochure is intended to provide woodland owners with a list of resources to assist in managing woodlands with their goals in mind. The Indiana Forestry and Woodland Owners Association (IFWOA) wants to help every woodland owner be a good steward. For more detailed information and live links to websites, go to: <http://resources.ifwoa.org>.

Managing Your Woodlands begins with creating and using a management plan. Your management plan will identify your goals for the property and list the management activities necessary to meet those goals and keep the woods healthy and productive. It is highly recommended that you seek the input of a professional forester to help you determine your goals and write your plan. Working with a forester will set you on the right path for the future.

State/District Foresters are available for consultation and free advice on woodland management, and they will help you determine and achieve your goals. Find your district forester at www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/4750.htm.

Professional Foresters have the knowledge and experience to help you manage your woodlands in the manner you wish. They are available for consultation, or will do the work for you for a fee. Go to www.FindIndianaForester.org to find a forester in your area.

Timber Harvesting is a good management practice that may include improvement cuts or selective harvesting to remove mature and poor quality trees. Plus, the carrying costs of woodland ownership can be offset with timber sale income. But woodlands quality and value can be hurt by poorly-managed timber harvests. Do your homework! Contact a professional forester to determine if a timber sale makes sense, and to get the correct trees marked for harvest. A forester can also help you get top dollar for your sale. See the links to find a forester. Go to www.callB4Ucut.com to get further information before considering a harvest. To find a licensed timber buyer, go to www.INForestryX.com.



Tree Planting, from fields to forest, is an option when fields that were in row crops are no longer viable for that activity. Converting fields to trees is the easiest way to get the trees you want. A professional forester can help you choose the right species, spacing, and method of planting. For a series of publications on tree planting and care see www.ag.purdue.edu/fnr/Pages/extpubs.aspx#Forestseries.

Recreation in the woods is great! However, damage to the ecosystem and future timber sale values can occur quickly. ATV and heavy equipment can create ruts and soil erosion and damage the trunks of your high-value

trees. Choose your trails carefully based on your management plan, maintain them regularly, and keep visitors on marked trails.

Classified Forest & Wildlands Program is an Indiana Division of Forestry program that provides assistance to help manage and maintain your woodland while reducing property taxes. Learn more at www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/4595.htm.

Wildlife Management can be an integral and rewarding part of owning woodlands. See www.agriculture.purdue.edu/fnr/wildlife/ or www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild for information on wildlife management. For information on birding, see www.indianaudubon.org.

Hunting can help minimize the harmful effects that wildlife can have on woodlands when their populations are out of balance with the ecosystem. Hunting helps keep numbers in balance, but you should clearly communicate your wishes to hunters so they treat your property with respect. IFWOA has sample hunting permits for you to use. If your friends or family are not interested in hunting, consider a hunting lease to help control populations while earning income.

Invasive Species negatively impact woodlands by taking over and forcing out existing trees and plants while preventing native plants from growing. If there are invasive plants on your property, they should be identified and controlled. Professional foresters can help identify plants and recommend treatments. Learn more about invasives at www.invasive.org, www.in.gov/dnr/3123.htm, www.mipn.org, and www.sicwma.org.

Native Plants and Trees should be considered when adding vegetation to your woodlands. Check out Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society at www.inpaws.org for recommendations.

Maintaining Healthy Trees is a good first step in keeping diseases out of your woodlands. Thinning promotes tree health by allowing sunlight into the trees you want to maintain. Contact your forester to get professional help to keep your woodlands healthy.

Water Quality can be enhanced by healthy woodlands which are great filtering systems for our water supply. Learn what can be done to protect the land, especially during and after timber harvests. Best Management Practices information is available at www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/2871.htm.

Tree, Shrub, and Plant Identification is possible with the many publications available to help you identify the living things in your woods. It is a lot of fun to walk in the woods, know the plants you are seeing, and appreciate their contribution to the ecosystem. See www.agriculture.purdue.edu/fnr/wildlife/enthusiasts/plantid.html.



Liabilities of Woodland Ownership can be reduced through liability insurance on your land. Talk to your insurance agent to make sure you have appropriate coverage. Indiana has a law protecting landowners from liability. Check out the specifics on the law at www.ifwoa.org.

Controlling Trespassing on Private Land helps to reduce damage from trespassers by limiting access to your property. Make sure to post "no trespassing" signs where appropriate, and keep your boundary lines clearly marked.

Harvesting and Sawing Your Own Timber can be a good option for those woodland owners with proper equipment. A great source of information is www.ForestryForum.com.

Secondary Income Potential from woodlands can include the harvesting of products like firewood, fruits, nuts, mushrooms, grapevines, ginseng, and many others. These products can provide extra income from your woods. See www.sfp.forprod.vt.edu/special_fp.htm for more information.

Tax Consequences of Owning Woodlands can be complicated due to the various tax laws, and timber has special rules. Find out how to minimize the tax burden on your woodlands by consulting your tax advisor, or see www.timbertax.org and www.timbertaxadvice.com.

Government Programs and Loans are designed to provide you with low cost loans or cost share for woodland management and wildlife habitat creation. Contact a forester or go to www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs or www.fsa.usda.gov.

Conservation of Woodlands is important to the future. Pressure from developers, infrastructure, and invasive species decrease the amount of forestland in Indiana. If you are interested in having your land protected in perpetuity, there are a number of options available, including donations or conservation easements. Contact Indiana Land Protection Alliance at <http://tinyurl.com/9f47oyp> for land trusts in your area.

Publications to Help Woodland Owners are available at no cost. There are many publications dedicated to help the landowner manage their land to achieve their goals, whether for profit or pleasure. See www.inwoodlands.org or www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/3605.htm or www.sawmillmag.com for examples.

Join an Organization to Assist Landowners. Working together with others is a great way to connect with like-minded woodland owners. Guidance and networking are available from Indiana Forestry and Woodland Owners Association (www.ifwoa.org), American Tree Farm System (www.treefarmssystem.org), Walnut Council (www.walnutcouncil.org), and National Woodland Owners Association (www.nationalwoodlands.org).

There is a tremendous amount of valuable information about owning and managing woodlands.

Visit <http://resources.ifwoa.org> for more details and more links to the topics above.

To learn about Indiana Forestry & Woodland Owners Association, or to become a member, visit www.ifwoa.org or call 765-583-3501.

Enjoy your Woodlands!