

## THE VALUE OF FORESTS

Private forests are important to Pennsylvania. More than 12 million of our state's 17 million acres of forested land are owned by more than 500,000 landowners – individuals, families and clubs.

The decisions these owners make regarding their land are important. They hold in trust many things that we all value and that improve the quality of our lives – clean air and water, wildlife habitats, aesthetic countrysides, recreation opportunities and myriad forest products, including valuable hardwoods. PA is the country's leading hardwood producer. In addition, forests control flooding and moderate temperatures.

When you see the heavy canopy of trees along the ridges throughout the commonwealth, it can be hard to imagine that the woodlands need sound stewardship practices to survive. Yet, they do.

Ninety percent of logging done on private property in Pennsylvania is being done without proper knowledge of sustainable forestry. The biggest and healthiest trees are removed, leaving thin, misshapen, genetically inferior specimens that will grow into and reproduce poor quality trees. The result is a diminished value for property owners and their heirs, and a poor quality of trees in the future.

## VALUABLE FOREST RESOURCES

Penn State University School of Forest Resources  
7 Ferguson Building, University Park, PA 16802  
800-235-WISE, [www.sfr.cas.psu.edu](http://www.sfr.cas.psu.edu)

Penn State Co-operative Extension offices are in each county and can provide woodlot owners with educational materials and programs.

PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), Bureau of Forestry has Service Foresters in every county to assist landowners. In Bedford and Fulton Counties, the Service Forester is:

Dave Scamardella  
440 Buchanan Trail, McConnellsburg, PA 17233  
(717) 485-3148 [dscamardel@state.pa.us](mailto:dscamardel@state.pa.us)

For assistance outside Bedford and Fulton Counties, contact DCNR at (717) 787-2703, [www.dcnr.state.pa.us](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us)

The Bureau of Forestry maintains a list of consulting foresters working in your county. Ask for a copy.

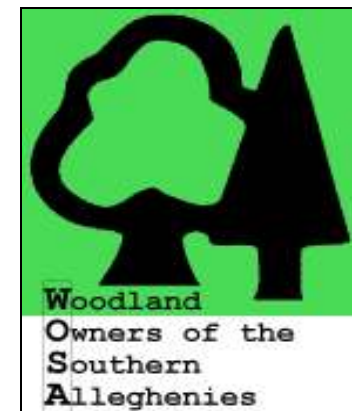
Woodland owners associations are in counties throughout Pennsylvania. They are a resource for persons seeking information on stewardship practices concerning wildlife and watershed protection, habitats, aesthetics, recreation and economic return. Your local Co-op Extension office can provide the name and phone number of the association in your area. In Bedford and Fulton counties, the local woodland owners association is:

Woodland Owners of the Southern Alleghenies  
311 Oakview Road, Bedford, PA 15522  
(814) 623-7399 or (814) 652-9150  
[www.orgsites.com/pa/wosa](http://www.orgsites.com/pa/wosa)

# STOP!

BEFORE  
YOU  
LOG  
YOUR  
WOODLOT

READ THIS  
AND  
GET HELP



## BEFORE YOU LOG

There is much to know about the forest and its proper care. It is critical that you understand this before contracting to harvest your timber.

To ensure you receive the best return for the wood you have cut, and to protect the future of your woodlot, it's a good idea to engage the services of a professional forester. He or she is familiar with regulations, current market prices and sound forestry practices that will protect your woodland. Knowing your goals, he or she will work to ensure they're met.

A professional forester will:

- **Provide references, show credentials and have a contract with you for their services**
- **Provide an inventory of your forest resource with volume and value estimates**
- **Mark the trees to remove**
- **Provide a list of species and their sizes (in board feet) for trees marked**
- **Contact buyers and handle the bidding process**
- **Prepare a contract between you and the buyer**
- **Oversee the operation to enforce the harvesting contract**
- **Ensure that the logger meets every condition outlined in your contract including compensation for damaged trees and re-seeding of logging roads and loading areas to prevent erosion**

## DEVELOP A PLAN

A **Forest Stewardship Plan (FSP)** is a guide that helps you ensure the sustainability while increasing value of your woodlot as you undertake harvesting and other management options.

It will help your forest become a more valuable and enjoyable investment for you and your heirs.

A well-developed FSP focuses on your goals for the property, whether they're recreational, wildlife habitat, timber harvesting, aesthetics, erosion control, a combination of the above, or any other aims you have. Your FSP can include as little or as much involvement on your part as you wish.

FSPs originated in 1991 as part of the Forest Stewardship Program with the support of the US Forest Service. Their purpose has been to help private landowners protect and sustain the value of their wooded property. The benefits to property owners are many.

In Pennsylvania, Service Foresters in the Bureau of Forestry, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) work one on one with land owners, at no charge, giving them technical advice to achieve their goals. Penn State's School of Forest Resources works with the Bureau of Forestry to provide the educational component of the Forest Stewardship Program through workshops and educational materials for landowners in the program.

Your local Service Forester can help you outline a Forest Stewardship Plan based on your goals. With your input, a consulting forester can write your plan.

*Please see the back of the brochure for a listing of resources.*

## IMPORTANT TERMS TO KNOW

**Service Forester** – A forester with PA's Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). Service Foresters can provide land owners, at no cost, a vast amount of information and guidance regarding their woodlots.

**Consulting Forester** – A professional forester privately employed. Consulting Foresters can write Forest Stewardship Plans for landowners, assist with timber harvests and also provide a vast amount of information and guidance regarding their woodlots.

**Service and Consulting Foresters** have professional training in forestry from an accredited university. Many have graduate degrees. Ask to see their credentials.

**Select Cut or Diameter Cut** – The cutting of all trees over a certain diameter or trees that have the highest value. This type of cut removes the largest trees and leaves small, thin, genetically inferior specimens. **Avoid doing this. It degrades the value of your investment.**

**Note:** *Due to the history of PA forests, some species trees of the same height are approximately the same age, regardless of the diameter. The smaller diameter trees might be past their prime growing age. By cutting only large trees, we greatly decrease the future productivity of the forest.*

**Timber Stand Improvement (TSI) or Thinning** – Timber harvests in which the best trees are left standing and are given room to expand their crowns and grow.

**Habitat Trees** – Dead or hollow trees that provide habitats for wildlife. Unless a dead tree is a safety hazard, it's a good idea to let remain in your woodlot.