Who Owns What Forest and Why?

How much of our forests are privately owned? What are the forests used for? What are the ownership demographics? The National Woodland Owner Survey answers these questions, and more. Together with the Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) and the Timber Products Output studies, these Forest Service programs provide a comprehensive view of the nation’s forests in terms of biophysical as well as economic and social dimensions. The latest National Woodland Owner Survey analysis was published this year, revealing the majority of forest land in the U.S. (about 60%) is privately owned. It also offers a
deep-dive into family forest ownerships with over 10 acres of forest land. The most common reasons for owning family forests are “To enjoy beauty or scenery,” “To protect or improve wildlife habitat,” “To protect nature or biological diversity,” and “For privacy.”

**FOREST & RANGELAND MANAGEMENT**

Novel Approaches to Quantify the Benefits of Public Lands

Forest Service scientists and partners have implemented novel approaches to evaluate ecosystem services in a pilot project in the Ashley National Forest in Utah. This research provides a method to facilitate discussion and valuation of ecosystem services provided by national forest lands with collaborators, including cooperating agencies and the public.

Timber and Tracks: Practices for Limiting Soil Disturbance During Harvest Operations

Limiting the degree and extent of soil disturbance during harvest operations is important for maintaining ecosystem services and goods. A new Forest Service report, “Soil Sustainability and Harvest Operation: A Review,” covers how soil properties both influence and are affected by disturbance from timber harvesting and how forest managers can understand and limit impacts.

**CLIMATE SPOTLIGHT**

Lining Up Adaptation Options to Sustain Our Multitasking Urban Forests

As climate change impacts increase, efforts to “green” cities and adapt urban forests to changing conditions take on greater importance. A new Forest Service report “Climate Adaptation Actions for Urban Forests and Human Health” synthesizes adaptation actions to address climate change in urban forest management and promote human health and well-being through nature-based solutions.

**FOREST PRODUCTS**


The Forest Service Wood Handbook was first issued in 1935, produced by Forest Products Lab scientists as a compendium on wood and wood products. It covers a wide range of topics ranging from wood structure to wood processing and construction. A new edition of the Wood Handbook was published this year with updates on the status of endangered or vulnerable tree species, cross-
Nontimber Forest Products: A Review

Nontimber Forest Products (NTFPs), including wild plants and fungi, are among the many benefits forests offer. A recent Forest Service review explores research on the producers, production, marketing, and sales of NTFPs in the U.S. It also identifies information gaps where research is needed to help balance forest management and the multiple and potentially conflicting objectives among a diverse community of stakeholders.

Nontimber Forest Product Factsheets for Native Trees

Trees provide food, medicine, and other things that people need. Forest Service scientists recently developed a series of factsheets for eight tree species that provide NTFPs, including the pawpaw, Eastern black walnut, and sassafras. The trees included provide valuable fruit and nuts, sweetener, seasoning, Christmas decorations, and medicine. This growing series of factsheets covers management and threats to each of these species.

CONSERVING WILDLIFE

Research That's For the Birds

Forest Service research to quantify the far-reaching ways that birds affect ecosystem services and function has recently been integrated with i-Tree, a Forest Service tree and forest assessment tool. Forest Service scientists and partners are using this tool to support land managers and strengthen international cooperation across the Caribbean, Latin America, and North America, including Mexico and Canada.

When It Comes to Bat Habitat, One Size Does Not Fit All

Bat populations throughout the southern U.S. have been in decline for decades. Forest Service bat research is shedding light on why and what we can do to increase their numbers, including the impact of prescribed burns. Scientists found that retaining some unburned forest areas in a mosaic of high- and low-severity burn sites creates the most favorable conditions for the greatest number of bat species in the southern and eastern U.S.
Engineered Logjams for Fish Population Restoration

**Engineered logjams** are built to create pools that provide suitable habitat for young salmon and steelhead before migrating to the ocean in the Pacific Northwest. A recent Forest Service study evaluated how far-reaching impacts of these restoration projects are on fish populations in Washington’s Entiat River. Scientists found rearing capacity was enhanced across broad sections of the river.

Rat Trap Success in Hawai’i Forest Fragments

**Rats** are among the most widespread and damaging non-native predators in Hawai’i. In a recent study, Forest Service scientists and partners explored the use of multi-year snap traps around forest fragments. Results indicate that on Hawai’i and similar islands lacking native rodents, the risk of killing non-target species in snap traps may be lower than the application of rodenticides, which have the potential to contaminate food webs.

DID YOU KNOW?

**Forests provide the most stable and highest quality water supplies among all land uses.**

Approximately 55 million people in the South derive some portion of their drinking water from **State and private forest lands**. This represents 49% of the total population in the region.

Learn More!

The Forest Service’s **Urban Forest Connections** webinar series brings together experts to discuss the latest science, practice, and policy on urban forestry and the environment. The next webinar, “Tree planting, inventory and analysis tools for human and environmental health”, will be held on September 8, 2021 from 1:00-2:15 PM ET.

The Forest Service co-hosts a monthly **biochar webinar series** that covers information about biochar applications and environmental benefits. The next webinar, “Biochar and Carbon Trade” is scheduled for Thursday, September 2nd, 2021 from 11 AM to 12 PM ET.

**NEW!** The Forest Service’s Southern Research Station has launched **Unlocking the Bioeconomy for Nontimber Forest Products**, a new monthly webinar series it is co-hosted with the International Union for Forestry Research Organizations (IUFRO) Task Force, The Forest History Society, and Renmin University of China.

The Forest Service’s Rocky Mountain Research Station hosts a **Science You Can Use** webinar series with one-hour webinars held twice a month. They feature the latest research from the station’s scientists and cover a wide range of topics, including wildland fire, forest restoration, rangeland management, and wildlife conservation.
The Forest Service's Northern Research Station hosts a Rooted in Research webinar series scheduled for 12:30 PM ET on the first Wednesday of each month. This series features the latest research from the station with a direct land management application.

The Forest Service's Southern Research Station hosts the Science in Practice webinar series, which summarizes recent research with a focus on practical takeaways for land managers and practitioners.

The Forest Service's SCIENCEx webinar series brings together scientists and land management experts from across the agency’s research stations and beyond to explore the latest science and best practices for addressing large natural resource challenges across the country. SCIENCE x Climate is scheduled for October 25-29, 2021 from 2-3 PM ET and will feature the latest resources and management guidance for climate change-related natural resource management challenges. More details will soon be posted on the SCIENCEx webpage.

Message from the Forest Service R&D Deputy Chief

How We Value Our Forests

During the long, warm days of summer, many of us get outdoors and enjoy time in nature with friends and family. Whether hiking, camping, fishing, or enjoying a picnic, we find quiet moments to take in the fresh air and appreciate the wealth of benefits - physical, spiritual, and aesthetic - our forests and grasslands afford.

Our deeply seeded appreciation for nature is born out in the research, as shown in responses for owning forests collected via the National Woodland Owner Survey. Family ownerships most commonly cited “To enjoy beauty or scenery,” “To protect or improve wildlife habitat,” and “To protect nature or biological diversity” as the main reasons for maintaining their forests.

As some of the research showcased in this month’s newsletter demonstrates, research undertaken by Forest Service scientists and partners explores nature’s wide variety of benefits. We work to better quantify, understand, and communicate how forests and grasslands sustain basic needs like water, fresh air, and building material, as well as provide critical economic functions to support livelihoods. This research is fundamental for guiding forest managers and land owners in making balanced, science-based decisions to help sustain the forests and grasslands we value so dearly.

Deputy Chief Alexander L. Friend

AUGUST INFOGRAPHIC
PARTNERSHIPS

The Society of American Foresters (SAF) publishes *The E-Forester*, a free weekly e-newsletter, with information about top forestry and natural resources-related news. Topic areas covered include wildfire, state lands, federal lands, research, innovation, forest products, international forestry, educational opportunities, and more. [Click here to subscribe.](#)

Join us at the virtual 2021 SAF National Convention to ignite, grow, and launch your passion for forestry and natural resources as we
explore the critical role forests play in ecosystems. Register today!

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