



Family Forest (10+ Acres)  
Ownership Characteristics

2018

# NORTHEASTERN UNITED STATES

## WHO IS THE PRIMARY DECISION- MAKER?

**64** YEARS  
(AVERAGE AGE)

**54%**  
COLLEGE DEGREE

**79%** MALE

**3%** MINORITY

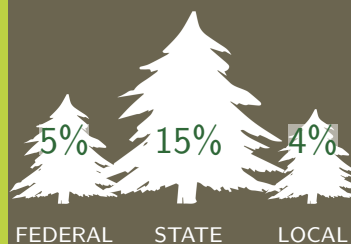
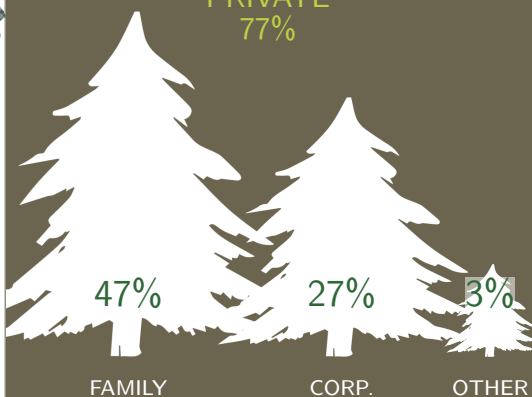


## WHO OWNS NORTHEASTERN UNITED STATES'S FORESTS?

PRIVATE  
77%

PUBLIC  
23%

TRIBAL  
0%



## PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

Property tax program **27%**  
Management advice **17%**  
Management plan **15%**  
Conservation easements **5%**  
Green certification **3%**  
Cost-share programs **2%**

## TOP 5 CONCERNS

Property taxes  
Keeping land intact  
Trespassing or poaching  
Dumping or vandalism  
Insects or diseases

## BY THE NUMBERS Northeastern United States's Family Forest Ownerships

**34,462,000** ACRES

**674,000** OWNERSHIPS

**1,270,000** OWNERS

MEAN SIZE

**51 acres**

Median = 24 acres



## TOP 5 REASONS FOR OWNING

Beauty or scenery  
Wildlife habitat  
Privacy  
Nature protection  
Water protection



## PAST 5 YEARS Forest Management Activities

CUT TREES FOR SALE

**17%**



CUT TREES FOR OWN USE

**46%**

INSECT/DISEASE MITIGATION

**5%**

INVASIVE PLANT MITIGATION

**17%**

IMPROVED WILDLIFE HABITAT

**28%**

REDUCED FIRE HAZARD

**8%**



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## Ownership Characteristics

### NORTHEASTERN UNITED STATES

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 1583 family forest owners from the Northeastern United States (CT, DE, ME, MD, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT, WV) 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	39,498,000	316,000
Corporate	22,321,000	280,000
Other private	2,817,000	130,000
Federal	3,950,000	85,000
State	12,196,000	124,000
Local	2,970,000	126,000
Tribal	291,000	41,000

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

UNITS	TOTAL	SE
Acres	34,462,000	485,000
Ownerships	674,000	15,000
Owners	1,270,000	30,000

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

DEMOGRAPHIC	ACRES	SE	OWNER-SHIPS	SE
	Percentage			
Age (65+)	53.7	1.4	48.7	2
Education (College)	58.5	1.7	53.6	2.2
Gender (Male)	80	<1	78.7	1.4
Minority	3.4	<1	2.9	<1

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

SIZE OF HOLDINGS	ACRES	SE	OWNER-SHIPS	SE
(ACRES)	Percentage			
10-49	29.8	1.1	71.6	2.4
50-99	22.6	<1	17.4	<1
100-499	35.6	1.3	10.5	<1
500-999	5.7	<1	<1	<1
1,000+	6.4	<1	<1	<1

Mean size = 51.1 ac (SE = 1.2); Median size = 24 acres

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

OBJECTIVE	ACRES	SE	OWNER-SHIPS	SE
	Percentage			
Beauty or scenery	83.4	1.6	87.4	2.2
Wildlife habitat	79.9	1.5	81.1	2.2
Privacy	73.5	1.5	77	2.3
Nature protection	73.7	1.6	75.9	2.3
Water protection	67.9	1.6	70.8	2.4
Family legacy	63.6	1.5	60.1	2.1
Recreation	59.3	1.5	57.2	2.2
Raise family	45.7	1.4	50.6	2
Hunting	51.5	1.5	45.5	2
Land investment	49.1	1.5	43.5	2
Firewood	31.1	1.1	31.4	1.7
Timber products	36.7	1.2	21.8	1.4
Nontimber products	13.6	<1	12.3	1.1

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

CONCERN	ACRES	SE	OWNER-SHIPS	SE
	Percentage			
Property taxes	81.9	1.4	80.7	2.2
Keeping land intact	78	1.5	78.9	2.3
Trespassing	74.1	1.5	75.5	2.4
Vandalism	73.5	1.6	74.2	2.3
Insects or diseases	69.4	1.6	73	2.4
Government regulation	66.8	1.6	64	2.3
Water pollution	55.7	1.5	61.1	2.3
Wildfire	50.4	1.5	54.1	2.4
Development	46.8	1.4	52.8	2.2
Invasive plants	49.6	1.4	52.1	2.1
Air pollution	47.8	1.4	50.9	2.1
Climate change	45.3	1.3	47.4	2.1
Wind or ice storms	42.2	1.3	43.4	2
Drought	34	1.3	39.5	2
Off-road vehicles	39.1	1.3	38.3	1.9
Animal damage	23.9	1	22.3	1.5

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

ACTIVITY	ACRES	SE	OWNER-SHIPS	SE
	Percentage			
Controlled burn	2	<1	3	<1
Cut trees - own use	47.8	1.1	46.1	1.7
Cut trees - sale	31.8	1.1	17.3	1.2
Insects management	5.5	<1	5.3	<1
Invasives	19	<1	17.2	1.2
Livestock grazing	8.5	<1	7.9	<1
Nontimber products	28.4	1	27.9	1.6
Reduced fire hazard	6.8	<1	8.1	<1
Roads	20.7	<1	10	<1
Trails	32.7	1	27.4	1.4
Wildlife habitat	32	1.1	27.8	1.6
None	18.6	<1	25	1.5

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

PROGRAM	ACRES	SE	OWNER-SHIPS	SE
	Percentage			
Advice	30.4	<1	17.3	1.1
Conservation easements	8.0	<1	4.6	<1
Cost-share programs	4.1	<1	1.5	<1
Green certification	6.5	<1	3.0	<1
Management plan	27.4	<1	14.5	<1
Property tax program	38.4	1.0	27.5	1.5