

# GETTING STARTED: Planning for Forest Resources



## Woodland Owner's Workshop

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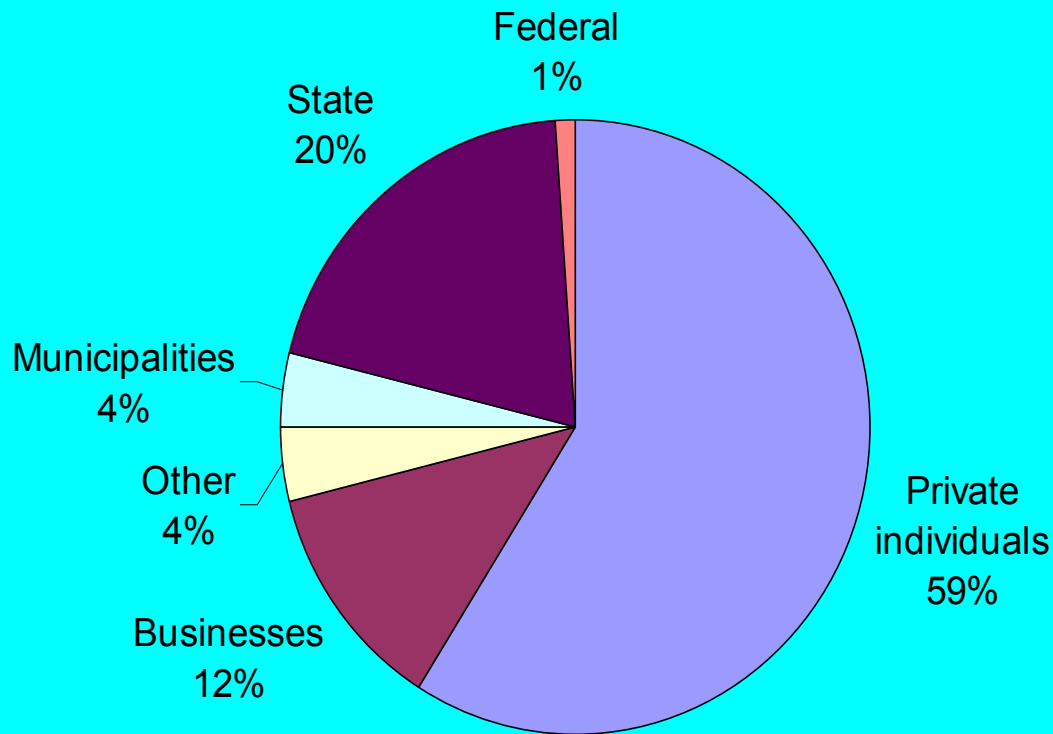
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# Today's Topics:

- Management Plans
- Forest Certification:
  - Farm, Forest, Open Space Program
  - Tree Farm/Green Certification
- Cost-share, or Self-Pay Options
- Carbon Credit Markets

# Who Owns RI's Forest?



# Financial Reality of Owning Land

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- **Property Taxes**
- **Maintenance Costs**
- **Liability Concerns**



# **Economic Incentives of Good Planning for Forest Management**

- **Establishing a Sustainable Cash Flow**
- **Controlling Property Tax (RI's Farm, Forest, Open Space Program)**
- **Improving quantity and quality of timber for future harvests**

# Planning Objectives

- Traditional
- Stewardship

# Traditional Forest Management Objectives

- **Timber Stand Improvement**
- **Timber Harvesting**
- **Habitat Improvement (Game species)**





# Stewardship Objectives

- **Water Quality Protection**
- **Alternative Forest Products**
- **Forest Health (Pests & Pathogens)**
- **Non-game wildlife habitat**
- **Species of concern, unique habitats**
- **Recreational activities**
- **Bio-diversity**
- **Cultural/archaeological resources**





# Forest Stewardship Planning Encourages:

- **Water Quality Protection**
- **Healthier, more Productive Forests**
- **Diversity of Habitats**
- **ID and Control of Invasive Plants**
- **Improved Recreational Opportunities**



# Traditional & Stewardship Planning Encourages:

- **Involved Families**
- **Raised Awareness of Younger Generation**
- **Opportunities to Develop Estate Plans for Transfer of Assets**
- **Long-term Protection of the Land**



# The Planning Process:

- Identify Your Objectives – Traditional, Stewardship
- Landscape Scale Review
- Your Woodlot – A Piece of the Landscape Puzzle
- Stand Scale – Compartmentalize the Planning Process into manageable units

# Landscape Scale Issues

- Habitats, Development, Local Issues
- Watershed-scale – What's your Watershed Address???
  - e.g. Wood River watershed



# Woodlot and Stand Scale

- Your Woodlot – how does it fit into the landscape
- Site Conditions – how do they affect the health of your forest
  - Soils (RI Soil Survey)
  - Stocking level (under/fully/overstocked conditions)
  - Growth rates
  - Species suitability

# Developing the Plan

- Identify property in the field – boundaries!
- Conduct Inventory – Timber, Habitats, & Other Resources
- Identify Resource Problems
- Identify Management Units (Stands)
- Develop Recommendations to Meet the Stated Objectives and Desired Future Conditions

# Management Strategies

- Management Recommendations to meet Planning Objectives
  - Address specific problems
  - Improve overall conditions with thinnings
  - Consider gradual conversion to more appropriate species for the site conditions
  - Improve bio-diversity



# FOREST CERTIFICATION

- FFOS
- Tree Farm

# Rhode Island's Farm, Forest and Open Space Act (Chapter 44-27)

- Established in 1980 in response to loss of significant quantities of farm, forest and open space lands
- Goals
  - To encourage the preservation of farm, forest, and open space land in order to maintain a readily available source of food and farm products;
  - To conserve the state's natural resources; to prevent the forced conversion of farm, forest, and open space lands to more intensive uses; and
  - To provide for the welfare and happiness of the state's residents

# Recommended Current Use Values 2005 - present

Land Class	Use Value/Acre
<b>Forest</b>	<b>\$115.00</b>
Farm	
<i>Vegetable/Orchard</i>	\$675.00
<i>Ornamental</i>	\$1,955.00
<i>Dairy/Livestock</i>	\$300.00
<i>Forest/Wetland</i>	\$115.00
Open Space	10-20-30% FMV

# Forest Classification Requirements

- 10 or more forested acres
- Written Forest Management Plan prepared by a qualified forester
- Submit to RIDEM – Div. of Forest Environment
- DEM Forester re-inspects & recertifies every 5 years
- Updated Plan every 10 years
- Landowner must certify to Tax Assessor that land is still open on an annual basis



# Land Use Change Tax

- When the land owner voluntarily withdraws from the program or when the land is used for for a use other than as farm, forest or open space it shall be subject to additional taxes
  - 10% of FMV during the first 6 years
  - 9 % during the 7th year, etc. to
  - 1% during the 15<sup>th</sup> year
- No land use change tax shall be imposed following the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> year.

# Tree Farm Certification

- American Forest Foundation has obtained international (PEFC) certification for all Tree Farmers
- Can be utilized for premiums on green chain of forest product sales
- Can be utilized to qualify for sale of carbon credits

# Tree Farm Certification

- Same guidelines as RI's FFOS Forest Certif.
- New standards effective 2010 to comply with PEFC certification requires that all Tree Farmer plans be reviewed for compliance in next couple of years
- RI subject to Assessment in 2012



# Types of Foresters

- **Public Service Forester**



- **Private Forestry Consultant**

- **Industrial Forester (Buys Timber)**

# Public Service Forester

- **Employees of the State Forestry agency**
- **Provide basic information on your forests and its potential**
- **Specific information on programs for landowners**
  - **current use tax policy, etc...**
- **Generally no fee**
- **Limited time availability**
- **Good place to start**

# Private Consulting Forester

- **Private, professional forester**
- **Work independently or in small firms**
- **Paid directly by landowner**
  
- **Consultant List - DFE**



# Services Provided by Private Foresters

- **Stewardship Planning**
- **Selling Timber**
- **Forest Land Taxation assistance**
- **Forest Inventory and Appraisal**
- **Timber Stand Improvement (TSI)**
- **Other Services**
  - **Mapping, Boundaries, wildlife enhancement, forest health**

# How to get your Plan

- Cost-share assistance available for CAP Forest Management Plans (NRCS EQIP funds) = Stewardship Plan
- NRCS requires use of certified Technical Service Providers (TSP)
- Self-Pay – Simpler process, quicker turn-around, not so bureaucratic

# Carbon Credits

- Adsorption of Carbon Dioxide thru Photosynthesis
- Locks CO-2 into wood, wood products
- Management = Additionality
- Plan now for future potential to cash in
  - Chicago Climate Exchange (CCX)
  - CarbonTree, LLC (Aggregator) 100 ac+
  - All Eligible Land must be enrolled, 15 year rolling commitment
  - Tree Farm Certification and Mgmt Plans important



## For More Information

Rhode Island Forest Conservators  
Organization [www.rifco.org](http://www.rifco.org)  
(401) 568-3421

RIDEM – Div. of Forest Environment  
(401) 568-2013 or 539-2356

Rhode Island Tree Farm Program  
(401) 568-3421 [www.ritreefarm.org](http://www.ritreefarm.org)