

## Forestry management benefits landowners

26 March 2020



The most rewarding part of my job in Monroe County, Ohio, is meeting with landowners who want to better manage their forests.

According to the United States Forest Service, around 56% of the forested land in the U.S. is privately owned. With so much property being privately owned, I view my job in educating landowners on best management of their parcels as very important.

### **Don't leave it alone**

I believe there is a common misconception that owning a forested area and leaving it alone is good for it. That might be the case very rarely, but often the parcels that we manage as private landowners are so fragmented that they end up facing an onslaught of issues.

These issues include invasion of invasive species and pests. There is also often a legacy of poor timber management or land-use practices that can change physical and chemical properties of soil and water.

Even the typical tree species make-up of a property can be much different from what it was 100 or so years ago based on the management and land-use history of the property. Though this may sound a bit depressing, the point is that work and time often do need to be put into a forested property to ensure the function and health of that forest.

### **Landowner's goals**

Function and health of a forest are important from an ethical standpoint, but they are also important in reaching a landowner's goals for their property. The initial question I ask when

visiting a property is what the landowner goals for the forest are. Generally, the responses run a spectrum between making money off of the timber and enjoying the property for recreational activities.

The recreation activities mentioned have included ATV riding, hunting, wildlife viewing and having a place to get away from urban life. It is incredibly difficult to reach any of those goals without a healthy forest stand.

When poor logging practices occur, the landowner can be left with timber species of very little value which are now the major seed producers in the stand, no valuable tree species seedlings in the understory, soil erosion problems, and water quality issues.

### **Recreation**

Proper management has positive impacts to recreation uses as well. A well-managed forest and well-maintained trail system can be helpful when using ATVs to prevent trail erosion problems. Creating well-placed canopy openings can be beneficial in encouraging diverse under-story vegetation growth that provide better wildlife food and cover for hunting or viewing.

Some of the common forest management practices that get recommended include grapevine cutting, invasive species control, crop tree release and tree thinning.

What options are available to landowners who want recommendations on the forestry management practices that will meet their goals for their property?

#### **Forestry management plan**

One way to get recommendations on forestry management practices is to have a forestry management plan (FMP) written for the property.

If interested in having an FMP written or in having management recommendations made, be sure to contact the local soil and water conservation district. The staff will be able to direct landowners with questions to the proper contact.

One concern that is often shared with me by landowners is of not being able to do the work needed on a property. This can be due to physical limitations, not living on the property or not being knowledgeable about the techniques.

It is important to get in contact with a local soil and water conservation district.

Source: <https://www.farmanddairy.com/columns/forestry-management-benefits-landowners/605634.html>