

## Introduction

Woodland Retreat landowners place high importance on lifestyle and amenity reasons for owning woods, but not on the financial aspects such as timber and investment. They derive great pleasure and joy from their land and they have a strong emotional bond with it. They value their woodland because it is beautiful and wild. During focus group discussions, Woodland Retreat owners often talk about the environmental benefits of woodlands, and the spiritual and emotional satisfaction they derive from being in the woods.

Nationally, they are the largest group of landowners and most of them live on their land—they love living in the woods, and anything that increases that pleasure would be attractive to them. On the other hand, anything that disrupts their enjoyment of the land, such as extensive timber harvesting, would not appeal to them.

Many see their land as a sanctuary for animals and birds, and themselves as defenders of this sanctuary. They are therefore best targeted with messages about making woods healthier and more attractive to wildlife. Messages or programs that have a conservation focus, especially those that highlight biodiversity, may also be well received.

## Basic Statistics

### Number and Acreage

- Estimated number of ownerships in this group: **454,000**.
- This group constitutes **43%** of total family woodland owners in this geography with 10+ acres.
- Total acreage covered by these ownerships: **14,986,000 acres**.
- This is **31%** of the total acres held in wooded acreage of 10+ acres.

### Land Tenure

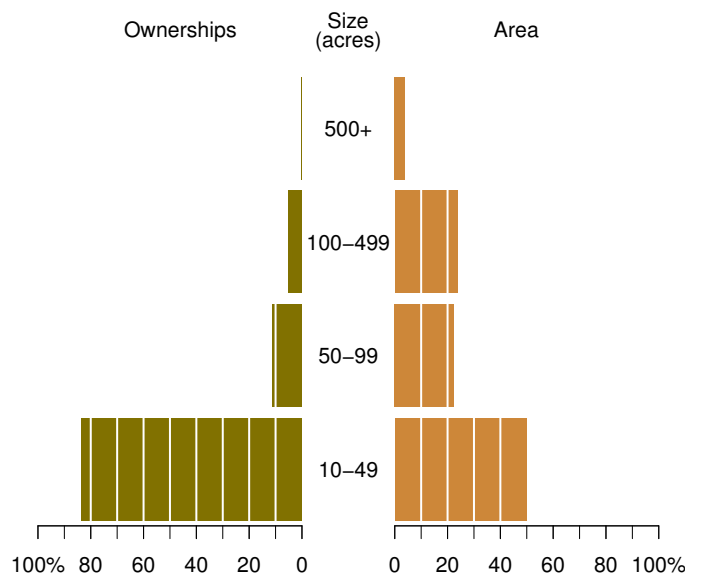
- Average land tenure is **22.8 years**.
- **14%** have owned this land for less than 10 years.

### Percent of landowners that say their woods are

- Part of their home: **68%**
- Part of cabin or vacation home: **17%**
- Part of their farm or ranch: **24%**

### Size of Holdings

The bars on the left show the proportion of woodland owners in this group who own land parcels of specified sizes. The bars on the right show how the wooded acreage held by this group of landowners is distributed among the specified parcel sizes.

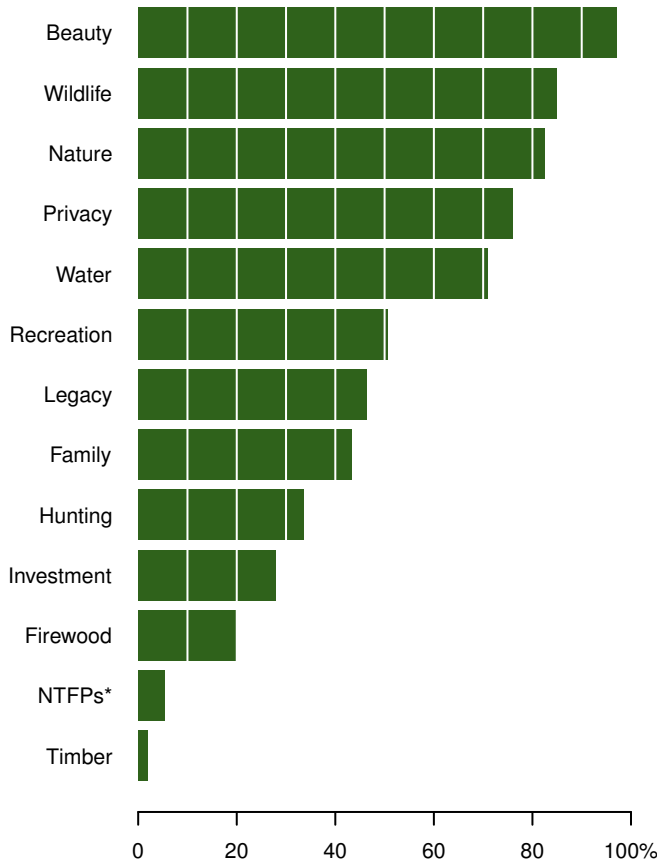


## Landowner Attitudes

97% of the landowners are classified as Prime Prospects. This means they have good stewardship attitudes but are not highly engaged in managing their land.

### Reasons for Owning Woods

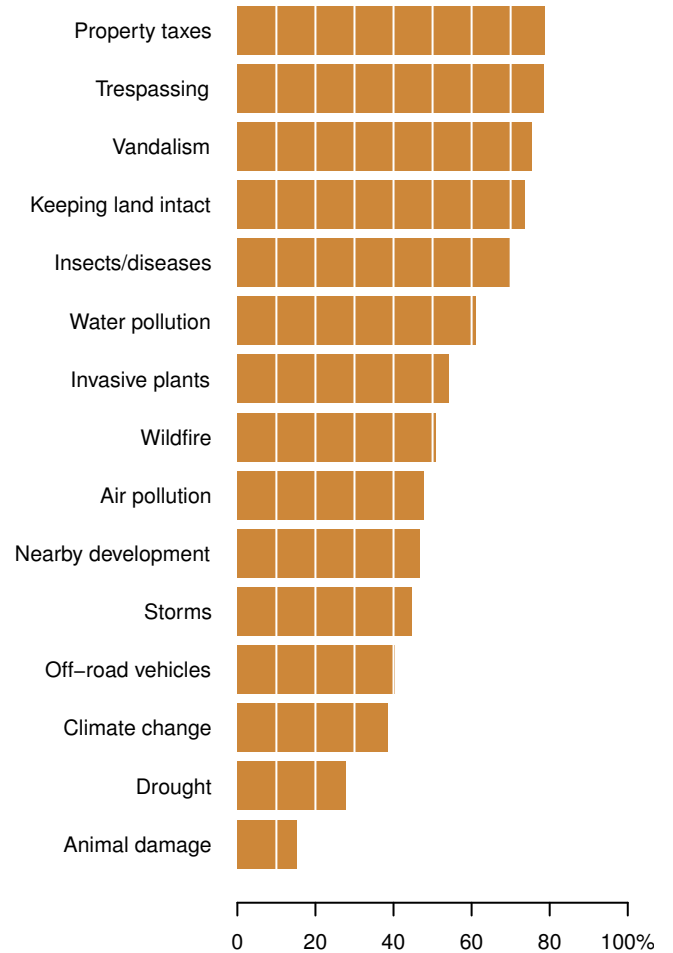
The percentage of landowners in this group who cited each of these reasons for owning land as important or very important to them.



\* Non-timber forest products

### Landowner Concerns

The percentage of landowners in this group who said they are concerned or greatly concerned about each of these factors.

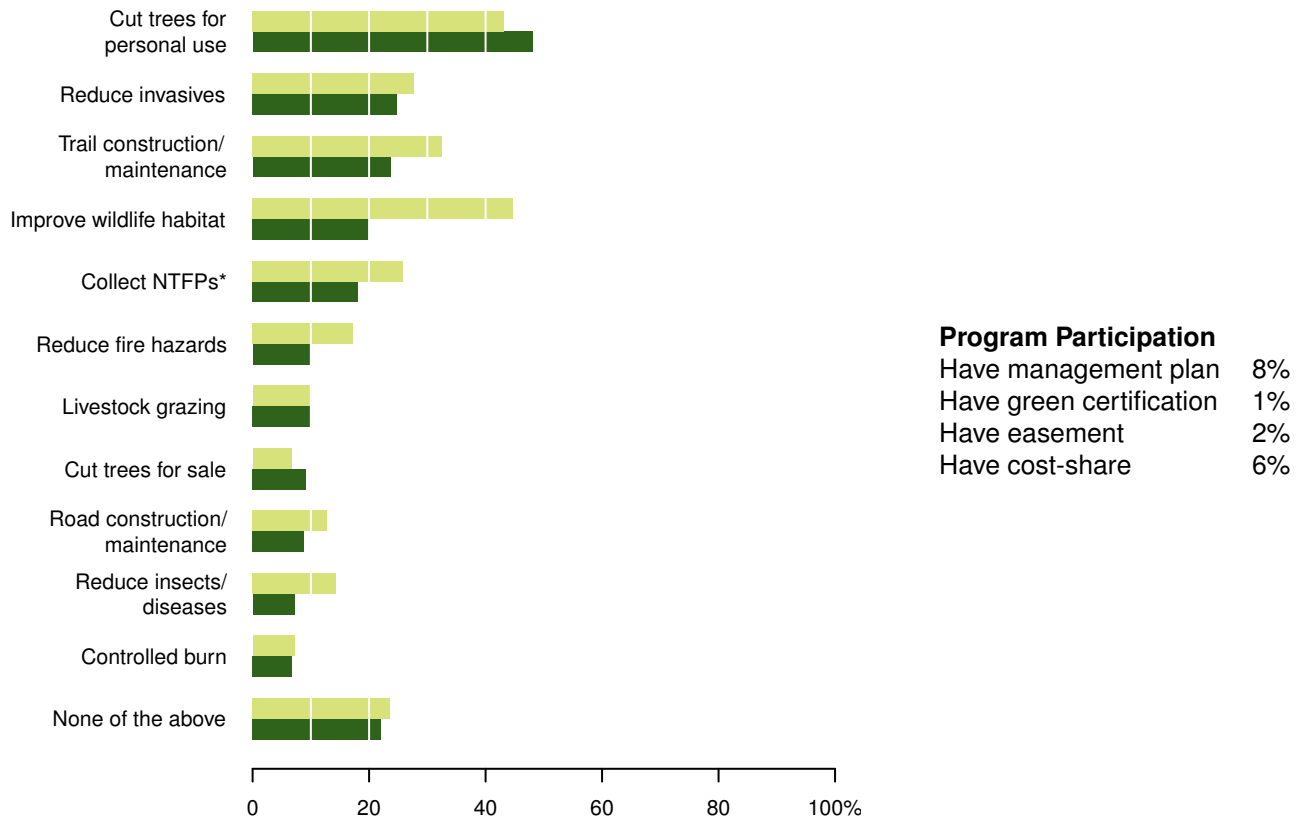


## Activities on the Land

SFFI classifies **3%** of the landowners in this group as highly engaged. This means that they have reported doing several activities to protect and improve their woods.

### Past and Future Activities

The dark green bars show the proportion of woodland owners in this group that have done each of these activities in the past five years. The light green bars show the proportion who say they are likely or extremely likely to do that activity in the next five years.



**Program Participation**

Have management plan	8%
Have green certification	1%
Have easement	2%
Have cost-share	6%

\* Non-timber forest products

## Advice

**13%** of the landowners in this group have received advice or information about care, management or protection of their woodland in the past five years.

### Sources of Advice

The proportion of landowners that said they have received advice from each of these sources in the past five years.

State or local government employee	9%
Federal government employee	3%
Private consultant	3%
Another landowner	1%
Family member or friend	1%
Other	1%

### Preferred Modes

The proportion of landowners who said that they would prefer to receive advice or information in the following ways.

Talk to someone	28%
Have someone visit my land	29%
Written materials/ publications	60%
Internet	32%
Conference/Workshop	13%
Don't want any advice/information	19%

## Future Plans

**96%** of these landowners want their wooded land to stay wooded.

**12%** say they plan to sell or transfer their land in the next 5 years.

**19%** say they would sell their land if offered the right price.

## Demographics

Average age: **60.4 years**

**53%** have a college education or higher

**28%** have an annual income of \$100,000 or higher

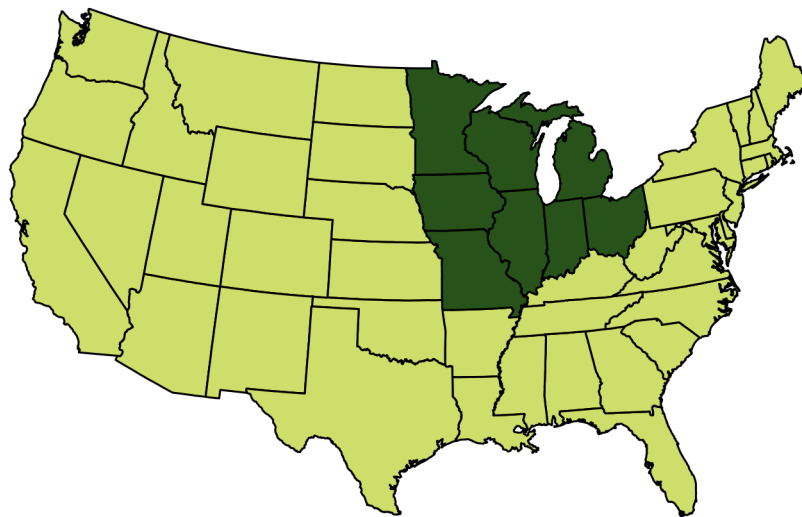
**29%** have an annual income of less than \$49,000

**4%** rely on their woods for at least 5% of their income

White: **97%** Non-White: **3%**

Male: **79%** Female: **21%**

## States Included in this Region



These landowner profiles have been developed by the Sustaining Family Forests Initiative (SFFI), a collaboration between the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Center for Nonprofit Strategies. SFFI aims to gain and disseminate comprehensive knowledge about family forest owners throughout the United States. For more information about SFFI, visit [sffi.yale.edu](http://sffi.yale.edu). The profiles use data from the National Woodland Owner Survey (NWOS) conducted by the US Forest Service. The data in this specific summary are based on a sample of 593 families and individuals that own 10 or more acres of woodland in the North Central collected between 2011 and 2013. For more information about the NWOS, visit [www.fia.fs.fed.us/nwos](http://www.fia.fs.fed.us/nwos).