Characteristics of Limited-Resource and Traditionally Underserved Landowners in the Coastal Plain

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Reaching Limited-Resource & Traditionally Underserved Forest Landowners
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Objectives

• Who and where are the “limited resource and traditionally underserved” landowners in eastern North Carolina?
• How can we find and reach out to these landowners?
  – Survey
  – Recruit to educational and outreach programs
  – Deliver information
Motivations

• In our survey of landowners,
  – more than ¼ said that greatest difficulty is “I don’t know what to do with my woods”
  – more than ¼ get information from loggers and timber buyers, while fewer than 10% think this is best source

• In our sample of landowners,
  – agency lists of known limited resource and traditionally underserved landowners were short and overlapping

• In our survey of consultants,
  – 50% said that lack of education about forest management is greatest barrier to working with these landowners (80% listed as one of top three barriers)

Characteristics

• **Small acreages** → difficulties contracting forest management services and selling forest products at reasonable prices, because of the large fixed costs associated with forestry services and timber harvests. Small is < 25 – 40 acres, depending on market and resource.

• **Limited financial and human resources** → hurdles to productive use of forest land; for example, landowners with low incomes and low levels of education (low literacy) are less able to participate in cost-share programs.

• **Traditionally underserved socio-demographic categories** are less likely to be in the social networks that receive information and participate in government outreach meetings and technical assistance programs. These include minority (African American and Native American), heir property owners who have recently inherited land, and elderly women with land that was previously managed primarily by their late husbands.
Finding landowners

Survey sampling frames or mailing lists for meetings

- ✔ Small acreages
- ☐ Limited financial & human resources
- ☑ Traditionally underserved

- Public sources
  - NC Division of Forest Resources
  - NC Cooperative Extension (Small Farm)
  - NRCS
  - FSA
  - NC NASS
  - County property tax records

North Carolina

Traditionally Underserved

% Minority Population
- 1.54% - 20.00%
- 20.01% - 40.00%
- 40.01% - 67.30%
- Study Counties
Limited Resource Counties

- Limited Resource
- Study Counties

\* Definition of Limited Resource:
- Median income less than State median income ($33,940) AND
- \% people under poverty level is more than State median (12.9\%) AND
- \% people over 25 with no high school degree is more than State median (29%)
Warren County

Education - Income
Poverty - Race

Limited resource and traditionally underserved

Survey sample

- Match to property tax records through GIS or by township
- Landowners who
  - Own 5 – 100 acres
  - Own at least 5 of woodland
- Random sample, stratified at 30 acres
Survey instrument

• Focus groups, pre-tests, expert review
• Appropriate language (woodlands, lots of trees on your land)
• Expect complicated land tenure
• Query all uses of woodlands, gathering full information on non-timber benefits
• Future plans and wills

Survey methods

Personal Interview (89)
  – Local interviewers
  – Higher response rate from agency/project list

Mail (304)
  – Includes absentee landowners.
  – Large font size critical

Phone (64)
  – Random sample of non-respondents

Survey of Woodland Owners

Davie, Halifax, Northampton, Robeson, Sampson, and Warren Counties, NC
and Brunswick County, VA

A survey by:

North Carolina A&T State University
Greensboro, NC 27411-1107

North Carolina State University
Raleigh, NC 27695-8555

For more information, leave a message for project staff or call toll-free number:
1-866-733-1595
Survey results

• 64% own less than 100 acres of land
• 35% highschool education or less
• 33% minority
• 38% women
• 60% older than 60 years
• 40% live more than 5 miles from woods
• 60% inherited woodland

Survey results

• Information sources
  – 40% family, friends, neighbors
  – 35% publications
  – 30% county forester
  – 30% timber buyer or logger
  – 25% extension
  – 15% media
  – 10% events
  – 10% internet
WHO: Owners of small acreages of forest land
WHEN: March 8, 2004, 4:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
(Dinner will be served)
WHERE: Harrells Community Building (Map on Reverse)
WHAT: Learn how to put your woodlands to work. Get your questions answered by forestry experts. Take home informational materials and contacts.

For additional information, please call the Sustainable Woodlands program toll-free number (1-866-753-1595) or see our webpage: www.ncsu.edu/woodlands
Outreach

Family Forest Heritage Days

- **Duplin** (landowner sponsored)
  - 20 participants, most traditionally underserved
  - 50% heard through personal contacts
  - Flyers/posters also important
- **Warren** (CES sponsored)
  - 40 participants, most traditional participants
  - 70% heard through agency
  - Newspaper also important

Family Forest Heritage Day:

**How to Enjoy and Profit from Your Forest's Treasures**

Two FREE events:

1. **Morning event**
   - When: April 11, 9:00 – 1:30 (lunch provided)
   - Where: Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Scotland NC
   - Register by calling Cooperative Extension at 910-884-2711

2. **Evening event**
   - When: April 11, 3:00 – 6:30 (dinner provided)
   - Where: Cooperative Extension Center, Marston NC
   - Register by calling Cooperative Extension at 910-287-3640

Presentations by agencies, private foresters, and landowners. All forest and woodland owners are invited.

This information brought to you by the Land Use Planning Project.
Outreach

- Brunswick, VA (agency sponsored)
  - 25 participants, variety of backgrounds
  - 60% heard through agency, 60% through flyer
  - Many also received postcard
- Northampton (CES/landowner sponsored)
  - 45 participants, variety of backgrounds
  - 45% heard through CES
  - Letter or postcard also mentioned by many

Outreach lessons

Publicity
- Direct mailings to landowners
- Flyers & newsletters
- Radio and newspaper
- Personal contacts
- Agency contacts and motivation key

Planning
- Non-traditional venues and locations
- Schedule around work hours
- Free food is key!
Outreach funding


Bradley Murphy Forestry and Natural Resources Extension Trust
3128 Woodhaven Drive
Birmingham, AL 35243