

Forestry Assistance for Missouri Landowners

Missouri citizens own 85% of the state's 15.2 million forested acres (Figure 1). Proper care and management of the private forest resource are important to the health of Missouri's economy and environment.

When it comes to managing your property, you have plenty of options. Improvements to your land, even simple ones, can have a sizable impact on its health and productivity and the surrounding wildlife.

Responsible forest management is the key to a healthy forest.

You may ask yourself, "How can I manage my forest for both wood and wildlife?" or "Where can I go for help?" Throughout Missouri, the following agencies and organizations can help you find publications, technical advice, educational programs and financial assistance to help you manage your woodlands. Table 1 summarizes the available assistance.

State organizations

[Missouri Department of Conservation](#)

mdc.mo.gov

Missouri Department of Conservation staff are available to help landowners make sound decisions regarding the stewardship of their property's natural resources. These professionals include foresters, wildlife and fisheries biologists, and soil scientists, all of whom are available to help free of charge. From the drop-down menu in the upper right-hand corner of the MDC website, select the county in which your property is located to find a comprehensive list of all the natural resource professionals available to you.

[Missouri Department of Natural Resources](#)

dnr.mo.gov

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) protects, preserves and enhances Missouri's natural, cultural and energy resources. Two programs woodland owners find useful are the Land Survey Program and the Soil and Water Conservation Program. The Land



Figure 1. Across Missouri, private citizens own 85% of the state's 15.4 million acres of forestland.

Survey Program provides information for the accurate and economical location of property boundaries in Missouri. The Soil and Water Conservation Program is administered through your county-based Soil and Water Conservation District. These are local people solving local problems. The mission of the Soil and Water Conservation Program is to administer the policies and general programs developed by the Soil and Water Districts Commission for saving the state's soil and water resources. Contact your district to get involved with soil and water conservation activities in your area.

[University of Missouri Extension](#)

extension.missouri.edu/programs/forest-ecology-and-management

The Missouri Woodland Steward program is designed to help you better understand basic woodland ecology and forest management principles so that you will feel more competent in tending your woodland garden. It helps newcomers and more "seasoned" landowners alike connect with other woodland owners

Revised by

Hank Stelzer, Forestry State Specialist, School of Natural Resources

Brian Schweiss, Sustainable Forestry Specialist, School of Natural Resources

to help build a community of like-minded people. It also provides the opportunity to connect with both public and private professional foresters responsible for assisting landowners where your property is located. The program covers a wide variety of topics, such as tree identification, selecting and planting forest tree seedlings, rehabilitating neglected woodlands, chainsaw safety, selling your timber, and keeping your forest in the family.

Women Owning Woodlands (WOW) works to build a welcoming community for women to gain access to information and resources. Members share experiences, receive support and learn together.

[University of Missouri Center for Agroforestry](#)

centerforagroforestry.org

The Center for Agroforestry helps landowners intentionally integrate trees and shrubs with crops or livestock. The integrated practices of agroforestry — forest farming, alley cropping, silvopasture, riparian forest buffers, windbreaks and urban food forests — help protect the environment and improve biodiversity while sustaining land resources for future generations. Agroforestry practices help landowners create multifunctional working landscapes to provide a wide range of benefits, including diversification of products, markets and farm income; protection and improvement in soil, water and air quality; enriched habitat diversity; and improved human health and well-being.

Federal agencies

[Natural Resources Conservation Service](#)

www.mo.nrcs.usda.gov

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides technical assistance and guidance to landowners for reducing erosion, improving water quality, preventing floods, enhancing fish and wildlife habitat, promoting good land use, and conserving soil, water and other natural resources.

NRCS offers voluntary Farm Bill programs to eligible forest landowners to provide financial and technical assistance to help manage their natural resources in a sustainable manner. Through these programs, the agency approves contracts to provide financial assistance to help plan and implement conservation practices that address natural resource concerns or opportunities to help save energy and improve soil, water, plant, air, animal and related resources on agricultural lands and nonindustrial private forestland. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation

Stewardship Program (CSP) are two NRCS programs that provide statewide assistance to forest landowners.

[Farm Service Agency](#)

fsa.usda.gov

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) administers the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). The CRP offers cost-share incentives that provide landowners the opportunity to carry out conservation and environmental practices that result in long-term public benefits. Trees as well as wildlife-cover practices are eligible for cost-share assistance. The CRP also provides 10-to-15-year annual rental payments to producers who participate in the program. The NRCS assists the FSA by providing technical land eligibility determinations, conservation planning and practice implementation.

Private organizations

[Missouri Consulting Foresters](#)

missouriforesters.com

The Missouri Consulting Foresters Association (MCFA) is an organization of technically trained professional foresters that provide competent forest management advice or assistance to landowners. Each member is a private consultant and offers services on a fee or contract basis.

MCFA members are required to be a graduate of a Society of American Foresters accredited college or university with a minimum of a Bachelor of Science degree in Forestry; to have at least three years' professional field experience; or to have an equivalent combination of education and experience in practical forest administration and management. No MCFA member may have an economic interest in a timber purchasing or procurement entity so as to prevent a potential conflict of interest.

[Forest and Woodland Association of Missouri](#)

forestandwoodland.org

The Forest and Woodland Association of Missouri (FWAM) was founded in 2011 as a public advocacy voice for privately owned woodlands to promote healthy, productive and sustainable forests. Members come from all walks of life: woodland owners, city and rural dwellers, loggers, conservationists and educators. In addition to the annual woodland owners' conference, FWAM partners with other agencies and organizations described here in hosting webinars, workshops and field days throughout the year.

FWAM also administers the Missouri Tree Farm System, part of a national program for woodland

Table 1. Forestry assistance for landowners.

Agency/Organization	General information	Technical assistance			Contract services	Financial assistance
		Planning	Cultural	Marketing		
State organizations						
Missouri Department of Conservation	✓	✓	✓			✓
Missouri Department of Natural Resources	✓					✓
MU Extension	✓	✓	✓	✓		
MU Center for Agroforestry	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Federal agencies						
USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service	✓	✓	✓			✓
USDA Farm Service Agency	✓					✓
Private organizations						
Missouri Consulting Foresters Association	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Forest and Woodland Association of Missouri	✓					
Walnut Council	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Missouri Forest Products Association	✓			✓		

owners who are committed to sustainably managing their forested property for wood, water, wildlife and recreation. Membership is open to private woodland owners who have 10 or more acres and are willing to develop and carry out a long-range management plan to meet their objectives.

Currently, Missouri Tree Farms are green certified by the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC), an international nonprofit, nongovernmental organization that promotes sustainable forest management through independent third-party certification. The US-based Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) recognizes PEFC certification, and companies are beginning to pay a premium for wood being harvested from certified properties such as Tree Farms.

Walnut Council

walnutcouncil.org

Founded in 1970, the Walnut Council is an international association representing nearly 700 woodland owners, foresters, forest scientists and wood-producing industry representatives in 45 states and three foreign countries. The council assists in the technical

transfer of forest research to field applications, helps build and maintain better markets for wood products and nut crops, and promotes the sustainable management of eastern black walnut and other high-quality fine hardwoods. Missouri has an active state chapter that hosts semiannual field days and workshops.

Missouri Forest Products Association

moforest.org

Missouri Forest Products Association (MFPA) encourages the wise use and conservation of the state's natural resources. MFPA members share the responsibility with landowners, foresters and other industry professionals to ensure Missouri's renewable forests can be sustained for the 21st century and beyond. MFPA, in conjunction with MDC, offers Professional Timber Harvester (PTH) training to loggers and forest landowners. It is based on a training program that is widely acknowledged as the premier timber-harvesting training program in the country, offering hands-on training emphasizing safety and sustainable timber harvesting. Missouri's PTH training is affiliated with Safety and Woods Worker (SAWW) training.