

Forestry Assistance for Landowners

Missouri citizens own about 85 percent of the state's 15 million forested acres. Proper care and management of the private forest resource are important to the health of Missouri's economy and environment (Figure 1).

Once you as a forestland owner become aware of this valuable resource, you might have questions like "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. The following descriptions will give you an idea of some of the assistance available.

State organizations

University of Missouri

Forestry Extension
573-882-4444

extension.missouri.edu/forestry

MU Forestry Extension is a one-stop shop for Missouri landowners interested in improving their woodland property. Urban residents will also find helpful tips and useful links for taking care of their front-yard landscape trees or backyard woodlots. We can help you find the appropriate agency or individual for your land management decisions.

Center for Agroforestry
573-884-2874

centerforagroforestry.org

Agroforestry practices include riparian forest buffers, windbreaks, alley cropping, silvopasture and forest farming. These practices can help landowners diversify products, markets and farm income; improve soil and water quality; and reduce erosion, nonpoint source pollution and damage due to flooding. The primary goal of the Center for Agroforestry is to educate and inform landowners and natural resource professionals about new research in agroforestry and to demonstrate how this research can be applied successfully to their operations. The integrated



Figure 1. Eliminating unwanted and weak trees from an unmanaged woodland (top) produces a healthy forest of high-value crop trees (bottom).

practices of agroforestry enhance land and aquatic habitats for fish and wildlife and improve biodiversity while sustaining land resources for future generations.

Missouri Department of Conservation

573-751-4115
mdc.mo.gov

The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) has offered a wealth of services to the public for more than 60 years. Its mission is to protect and care for the forest, fish and wildlife resources on both state and privately owned land.

Revised by
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MDC Forestry Division

Resource foresters offer two levels of assistance based upon the landowner's need and interest in long-term forest management: advisory service and management service.

Advisory service is available to all landowners, including urban residents. This service includes group training sessions, publications, office consultation, insect and disease identification and analysis, referrals to consultants, on-site visits under certain conditions, and help with evaluating and choosing land management options.

Landowners are encouraged to accompany the forester during an on-site visit to the property. The landowner must provide the legal description of the land or the street address with the request for assistance.

Management service is available to landowners interested in the long-term management of their forest. Those who receive management services agree to develop and carry out a management program for the immediate and long-term stewardship of their property.

Management service includes assistance in developing and carrying out a management plan for the property. Activities may include tree planting, timber stand improvement, pest identification and management, wildlife habitat improvement, and outdoor recreational development.

To receive these management services, the landowner must (1) show proof of ownership by a copy of the property deed or current tax receipt, (2) complete a forest management questionnaire provided by the department, and (3) develop and agree to follow a long-term forest management plan for the property.

Call the main office number above or check a telephone directory under Missouri state offices for the Department of Conservation office near you. You can also find your local forester online at <http://mdc.mo.gov>.

MDC Private Land Division

Private land conservationists are trained to help you evaluate and develop habitat on your property. Knowledgeable in a wide range of management areas, they offer assistance in pond management, stream improvement techniques, native plant restoration and agricultural practices. Private land conservationists can also guide you toward state and federal cost-share programs to help you finance your management practices. If lack of time or equipment is a concern, they keep a list of private conservation contractors who can help you implement your suggested practices.

To find the private land conservationist nearest you, call the main office number above or find the Missouri Department of Conservation in a telephone directory under Missouri state offices. You can also find your local private land conservationist online at <http://mdc.mo.gov>.

Missouri Department of Natural Resources

800-361-4827

dnr.mo.gov

The mission of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is to protect, preserve and enhance Missouri's natural, cultural and energy resources. Two programs managed by DNR are of particular interest to forestland owners: the Land Survey Program and the Soil and Water Conservation Program. The mission of the Land Survey Program is to develop and provide information required for the accurate and economical location of property boundaries in Missouri. 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 Missouri soil and water, through the soil and water conservation districts, in their work with landowners. Contact information for your county soil and water conservation district (SWCD) can be found online at <http://maswcd.net>, or by calling 573-751-1172.

Federal agencies

Natural Resources Conservation Service

573-876-0900

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. Farmers, ranchers and forest landowners can also receive financial assistance from NRCS to make improvements to their land.

NRCS offers voluntary Farm Bill programs to eligible landowners and agricultural producers to provide financial and technical assistance to help manage 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 are available statewide to provide assistance to forest landowners.

The agency also offers easement programs to landowners who want to maintain or enhance their land in a way beneficial to agriculture, the environment or both. The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agricultural lands and wetlands and their related benefits. Under the Agricultural Land Easements (ALE) component, NRCS helps Indian tribes, state and local governments, and nongovernmental organizations protect working

agricultural lands and limit nonagricultural uses of the land. Under the Wetlands Reserve Easements (WRE) component, NRCS helps to restore, protect and enhance enrolled wetlands.

Landowners interested in learning more about assistance available from NRCS or participating in available programs may inquire at any of the 100 field offices across the state of Missouri.

Farm Service Agency

573-876-0925

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. In addition to 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 Association

missouriforesters.com

Private consulting foresters provide a variety of forest management services on a fee basis.

Consulting foresters can provide the following services:

- Value appraisals and inventories for assistance in buying or selling of timber or timber lands; assessing loss due to fire, theft, chemical spray or condemnation; and tax valuation.
- Development of resource management plans with emphasis on increased timber production, recreational development, wildlife management and watershed protection.
- Assistance with cultural practices, including site preparation, tree planting, thinning and pruning to increase crop tree value; and timber stand improvement by removing unwanted trees.
- Marketing assistance for selling forest products, such as marking trees for sale, soliciting bids where practical, preparing timber sale contracts and monitoring timber sales.

Often consultants can provide these services at a more intensive level than public foresters can, while providing quicker response to clients' requests and spending more time with clients. You can get a directory of consulting foresters in Missouri from MU Forestry Extension or the Missouri Consulting Foresters Association.

Walnut Council

walnutcouncil.org

Founded in 1970, the Walnut Council is an international association representing nearly 1,000 woodland owners, foresters, forest scientists and wood-producing industry representatives in 45 states and seven foreign countries. The Walnut 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 sustainable forest management, conservation, reforestation and use of eastern black walnut (*Juglans nigra*) and other high-quality fine hardwoods. The Missouri chapter of the Walnut Council is one of 12 state chapters. It conducts spring and fall workshops around the state and provides a valuable information packet to new members.

Missouri State Tree Farm Program

573-418-6221

treefarmssystem.org/missouri

Nationally, the American Tree Farm System is sponsored by the nation's forest industries through the American Forest Foundation and endorsed by various public and private organizations. In Missouri, the Tree Farm Program is sponsored by the Forest and Woodlands Association of Missouri and supported by the Missouri Department of Conservation. However, tree farmers themselves set the direction and policy of the program through the Missouri State Tree Farm Committee. 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.

Forest and Woodland Association of Missouri

573-418-6221

forestandwoodland.org

The Forest and Woodland Association of Missouri is a group of volunteers that promotes healthy, productive and sustainable forests and trees across the state through education and advocacy. Members include residents from all walks of life — woodland owners and nonowners, city and rural dwellers, tree farmers, loggers, conservationists, educators — anyone who cares about the health of Missouri's forests and woodlands, and wants to assure those lands receive the care and support they need.

Missouri Forest Products Association

573-634-3252

moforest.org

The Missouri Forest Products Association (MFPA) assists landowners in conducting the Professional Timber Harvester program throughout the year in various locations around the state. Missouri's professional loggers are a vital part of the forest products industry. Decisions

Table 1. Forestry assistance for landowners.

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

they make today will have an impact for many decades to come. Professional loggers share the responsibility with landowners and foresters to help ensure that Missouri’s renewable forests can be sustained for this century and beyond. Forestland owners can support this program by allowing only trained loggers to bid on their timber. Contact the MFPA office or go online for the current list of trained professional loggers.

Technical assistance from member organizations like Missouri Tree Farm and Walnut Council usually comes from informal contacts that you the landowner initiate with a member.

Technical assistance from public agencies like the Missouri Department of Conservation and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is free, but there is usually a waiting period for these service providers. If time is of the essence, then retain the services of a consulting forester. Although they do charge a fee, they work for you and will provide assistance in a timely manner.

Financial assistance refers to incentive and cost-share payments. The terms and conditions, as well as the application process, are determined by the state or federal agency administering the program. Regardless of the program, landowners must have a written management plan to participate. Usually the demand for assistance far exceeds the amount of funds available, so the best way to get the latest information on these opportunities is to stay in touch with your local forester.

Summary of available assistance

Table 1 summarizes the various types of forestry assistance that each of the above agencies or organizations provides for landowners. General information may be obtained by phone or e-mail, on the web, and through printed materials, seminars and workshops.

Technical assistance may include management plan development, tree planting, herbicides, pest management, crop tree management, timber stand improvement, wildlife habitat management, and timber marketing and harvesting.

ALSO FROM MU EXTENSION PUBLICATIONS

G5054 *Forestry Terms for the Woodland Owner*

extension.missouri.edu | 800-292-0969