

NWOS First Cover Letter



**United States
Department of Agriculture**

**Forest
Service**

Dear Landowner:

We invite you to participate in the National Woodland Owner Survey conducted by the U.S. Forest Service. Your participation will help policy makers, land managers, and public and private service providers better understand and address the needs and concerns of America's private landowners.

Whether you own one acre of trees, thousands of acres, or something in between, we are interested in hearing from you. You were identified as a landowner from public ownership records. We are contacting only a few owners in each state. Because of the limited number of owners contacted, your answers are especially important. This survey is conducted once every 5 years to understand new topics and changes over time. If you responded during the last cycle, we ask that you respond again.

This is an official U.S. Forest Service survey, but your participation is voluntary. Your answers will be confidential and will be combined with others. The results will only be used to determine patterns and trends. Completing the questionnaire takes, on average, 25 minutes.

If you do not currently own land, please return the questionnaire using the postage-paid return envelope and write on the cover "No Land Owned."

If you would like to receive a copy of the results from this survey, write your name and address on the back of the return envelope.

We greatly appreciate your valuable assistance. If you have any questions, please call us toll-free at 1-855-233-3372, visit our website at www.fia.fs.usda.gov/nwos/, or write us at USDA Forest Service, National Woodland Owner Survey, 160 Holdsworth Way, Amherst MA 01003.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brett J. Butler".

Brett J. Butler, Survey Director

NWOS: Islands Longform Survey

OMB # 0596-0078

Expiration date: to be updated

Paperwork Reduction Act Notice

A Federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, nor shall a person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with an information collection subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 unless the information collection has a currently valid OMB Control Number. The approved OMB Control Number for this information collection is 0596-0078. Without this approval, we could not conduct this survey. Public reporting for this information collection is estimated to be approximately 25 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the information collection. All responses to this information collection are voluntary. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this information collection, including suggestions for reducing this burden to the U.S.D.A. Forest Service email address SM.FS.InfoCollect@usda.gov and include the OMB Control Number in the subject line.

Instructions

- ✓ Please provide answers for all of the wooded land that you own in the [ISLAND]. If you are part of more than one group that owns wooded land, please respond for the group that is listed on the outside of the envelope.
- ✓ The owner who makes most of the decisions about your wooded land in [ISLAND] should answer this survey.
- ✓ If this survey is received by a company or other organization, please have a person knowledgeable about the organization's wooded land in [ISLAND] answer this survey.

General Questions About Your Land

If you own any wooded land in the [Island], please complete this survey.

1. How much total acres of land do you currently own in the U.S. Virgin Islands?
_____Acres of land in [Island]
2. There are many types of lands in the [Islands]. About what percentage of your land is described by each of following categories?

Forest or wooded land – areas with trees that are not mowed, including unmanaged farmland where trees have established naturally or by planting and what is locally referred to as bush.

_____Acres of wooded land in [Islands]

If you own any wooded land in [ISLANDS], please complete this survey.

If you do not own any wooded land in the [Islands], please return this survey in the postage paid envelope provided and write on the cover “No wooded land”.

General Questions about Your Ownership

3. Which category below best describes your ownership?

Select only one.

- Individual
- Joint, with husband or wife
- Joint, such as with other family members or friends
- Family partnership or family LLC or LLP
- Family trust or estate
- Corporation or business (for-profit)
- Corporation or business (non-profit)
- Other (please specify): _____

4. How many people are a part of this ownership, including you?

_____Owners

5. Do you currently own more than one separate, unconnected property with wooded land in the [ISLANDS]?

- Yes
- No

6. Is your home (primary residence) on or within a mile of any of your wooded land in the [ISLANDS]?

- Yes
- No
- Not Applicable

7. Do you own a vacation home or secondary residence on or within a mile of any of your wooded land in the [ISLANDS]?

- Yes
- No
- Not Applicable

8. Which, if any, water body do you have on your wooded land in [Islands]?

Select yes or no for each item

Yes No

- £ £ Pond/lake
- £ £ River/stream/creek
- £ £ Wetland/bog
- £ £ Gut
- £ £ Other (please specify):

The History of Your Wooded Land

9. Have you **ever** sold or given away any of your wooded land in the [ISLANDS]?

- Yes
- No

10. a. How did you get your wooded land in the [ISLANDS]?

Select yes or no for each item

Yes No

- £ £ Purchased
- £ £ Inherited
- £ £ Received as gift
- £ £ Other (please specify):

b. From whom did you get your wooded land?

Select yes or no for each item

Yes No

- £ £ My parent(s) and/or my spouse's parent(s)
- £ £ My husband or wife
- £ £ Another family member
- £ £ Other individual(s)
- £ £ A business
- £ £ A government agency
- £ £ Other (please specify):

c. In what year did you first take ownership of your wooded land in [ISLANDS]?

_____Year

The Future of Your Wooded Land

11. How likely is it that you will sell or give away any of your wooded land in [ISLANDS] in the next 5 years?

- Extremely likely
- Likely
- Undecided
- Unlikely
- Extremely unlikely

12. If you were to sell or give away your wooded land, who would likely receive it?

Select yes, no/don't know for each item

- Yes No/Don't know
- £ £ My children
- £ £ Another family member(s)
- £ £ Other individual(s)
- £ £ A business
- £ £ A government agency
- £ £ Other (please specify):

13. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about the future of your wooded land.

Check one box for each item

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I want my wooded land to stay wooded					
I would sell my land if I was offered a reasonable price					

14. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about your knowledge and feelings about your wooded land.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I know my wooded land very well					
I want to know more about my wooded land					
I have a strong emotional attachment to my wooded land					
I believe my wooded land provides benefits to my community					

Natural Disturbances

15. To what extent, if any, has your **wooded land** (excluding structures and roads) been damaged by the following natural disturbances in the past 5 years?

	Extremely damaged	Moderately damaged	Somewhat damaged	Slightly damaged	Not at all damaged	Not applicable
Hurricanes and/or tropical storms						
Drought						
Wildfire						
Pests and/or plant diseases						
Invasive plants and/or animals						
Floods						
Other (please specify):						

16. Please indicate which of the following activities, if any, you've done in the past 5 years

for the primary purpose of reducing risk of damage from natural disturbance to the wooded portion of your land in the [ISLANDS]?

Select yes or no for each item

Yes	No	
£	£	Brush/debris removal
£	£	Invasive plant(s) removal
£	£	Invasive animal(s) removal
£	£	Erosion control practices
£	£	Flood control practices
£	£	Tree trimming or pruning
£	£	Other (please specify):

Concerns

17. Please indicate your level of concern about each of the following topics for your wooded land in [ISLANDS].

	Great concern	Concern	Moderate concern	Of little concern	No concern	Not applicable
Air pollution						
Climate change						
Damage from animals						
Damage from hurricanes or tropical storms						
Development of nearby lands						
Drought or lack of water						
Damage or noise from off-road vehicles						
Government regulation						
High property taxes						
Invasive plants						
Keeping land intact for future generations						
Misuse of wooded land, such as vandalism or dumping						
Neighbors' property use or decisions						
Trespassing or poaching						
Unwanted insects or diseases						
Water pollution						
Wildfire						
Weak timber markets						
Other (please specify):						

Recreation on Your Wooded Land

18. a. Who, with your permission, has hunted, hiked, or otherwise recreated on your wooded land in the [ISLANDS] in the **past 5 years**?

Select yes or no for each item

Yes	No	
£	£	Me and/or my husband or wife
£	£	My children
£	£	Other family members

- £ £ Friends
- £ £ Neighbors
- £ £ The general public for free
- £ £ The general public for a fee
- £ £ The general public as part of an access program
- £ £ Other (please specify):

b. How did you/they recreate, if at all?

Select yes or no for each item

- | Yes | No | |
|-----|----|----------------------------------|
| £ | £ | Hunting |
| £ | £ | Fishing |
| £ | £ | Hiking/walking |
| £ | £ | Nature viewing |
| £ | £ | Birding |
| £ | £ | Bicycling |
| £ | £ | Camping |
| £ | £ | Horseback riding |
| £ | £ | Cultural or spiritual activities |
| £ | £ | Off-road vehicles |
| £ | £ | Other (please specify): |

19. What activity, if any, is posted to restrict access and/or use by the general public on any of your wooded land in [STATE]?

- | Yes | No | |
|-----|----|-------------------------|
| £ | £ | Trespassing |
| £ | £ | Hunting |
| £ | £ | Motorized vehicles |
| £ | £ | Other (please specify): |

20. Is any of your wooded land in the [ISLANDS] fenced to restrict access and/or use by the general public?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

Sources of Information and Assistance

21. a. Have you talked with anyone or received information/advice about the care, management, or protection of your wooded land in the [ISLANDS] in the past 5 years?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please answer b, c, and d.

If no, skip to question 21.

b. What was it about?

Select yes or no for each item

Yes	No	
£	£	Unwanted insects or plant diseases
£	£	Wildlife or wildlife habitat
£	£	Timber production
£	£	Land conservation
£	£	Fire safety or fire risk reduction
£	£	Damage from storms
£	£	Invasive plants and/or animals
£	£	Drought mitigation
£	£	Erosion control
£	£	How to transfer land to the next generation
£	£	Other (please specify):

c. How did it happen?

Select yes or no for each item

Yes	No	
£	£	Talked to someone
£	£	Someone visited my land
£	£	Received a brochure or other written material
£	£	Web/web search
£	£	Social media
£	£	Email
£	£	Conference or workshop – in person
£	£	Conference or workshop – virtual
£	£	Other (please specify):

d. Who was involved?

Select yes or no for each item

Yes	No	
£	£	Federal/State/Local government employee
£	£	Extension forester or other university employee
£	£	Private consultant
£	£	Non-profit/NGO
£	£	Another landowner
£	£	Family member or friend
£	£	Other (please specify):

22. Which of the following information/advice topics about your wooded land would be helpful to you?

Select yes or no for each item

Yes	No	
£	£	Unwanted insects or plant diseases

£	£	Wildlife or wildlife habitat
£	£	Timber production
£	£	Carbon programs

- £ £ Green certification programs
- £ £ Tax programs
- £ £ Land conservation
- £ £ Wildfire risk reduction
- £ £ Invasive plants and/or animals
- £ £ Drought mitigation
- £ £ Damage from storms
- £ £ Erosion control
- £ £ How to transfer land to the next generation
- £ £ Other (please specify):

23. How would you **prefer** to get information or advice related to your wooded land?

Select yes or no for each item

Yes No

- £ £ Talk to a neighbor
- £ £ Talk to an expert
- £ £ Have someone visit my land
- £ £ Written materials, such as brochures or other publications
- £ £ Web/web search
- £ £ Social media
- £ £ Email
- £ £ Conference or workshop – in person
- £ £ Conference or workshop – virtual
- £ £ Other (please specify):
- £ £ I don't want/need information or advice

Uses of Your Wooded Land

24. A management or stewardship plan may be written in order to help the landowner meet their goals for their wooded land.

a. How familiar are you with these types of plans?

- Extremely familiar
- Moderately familiar
- Somewhat familiar
- Slightly familiar
- Not at all familiar

b. Do you have written management or stewardship plan for any of your wooded land in the [ISLANDS]?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

If yes, please answer c, d, and e.

If no or don't know, skip to question 24.

- c. Who it was the primary writer?
- I was
 - Private consultant forester
 - Federal/State/local government forester
 - Other (please specify):
- d. How was it funded?
- I paid for it
 - A program paid for it
 - Other (please specify):
- e. Have you taken actions to implement it?
- Yes
 - No

25. Who makes the management decisions, such as whether or not to cut or harvest trees, for your wooded land in the [ISLANDS]?

Select yes or no for each item

Yes	No	
£	£	Me
£	£	My husband or wife
£	£	My children
£	£	My parents
£	£	Another family member
£	£	My business partner
£	£	My land manager or forester
£	£	Other (please specify):

26. a. Have you ever leased your wooded land in the [ISLANDS]?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please answer b

If no, skip to question 26

b. What leasing activities did they use it for?

Select yes or no for each item

Yes	No	
£	£	Logging
£	£	Hunting
£	£	Recreation (other than hunting)
£	£	To graze/pasture livestock
£	£	Vacation rentals
£	£	Solar/wind

£ £ Other (please specify):

27. Some state and local governments have programs that defer, reduce, or eliminate property taxes for wooded land, such as the Forest Stewardship Program.

a. How familiar are you with these programs?

- Extremely familiar
- Moderately familiar
- Somewhat familiar
- Slightly familiar
- Not at all familiar

b. Is any of your wooded land in the [ISLANDS] currently enrolled in one of these programs or something similar?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

28. Cost-share programs provide landowners with money to help them establish or otherwise manage their wooded land. Examples include the Conservation Reserve Program, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, and the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program.

a. How familiar are you with cost-share programs?

- Extremely familiar
- Moderately familiar
- Somewhat familiar
- Slightly familiar
- Not at all familiar

b. In the past 5 years, have you used a cost-share program to help you establish or manage your wooded land in [ISLANDS]?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

29. Which of the following activities have occurred on your wooded land in [ISLANDS] in the past 5 years?

Select yes or no for each item

Yes No

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| £ | £ | Cut and/or removed trees for sale |
| £ | £ | Cut and/or removed trees for own use |
| £ | £ | Planted trees for food production |
| £ | £ | Planted trees for wood production |
| £ | £ | Livestock grazing |
| £ | £ | Used for tourism (including horseback riding, hiking, tours, etc.) |
| £ | £ | Collected edible forest products, such as [examples] |

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| £ | £ | Collected medicinal forest products, such as [examples] |
| £ | £ | Collected forest production for decoration, such as [examples] |
| £ | £ | Collected nontimber forest products for landscaping, such as [examples] |
| £ | £ | Cut tree and/or shrub branches for livestock feed (fodder) |
| £ | £ | Other (please specify): |
| £ | £ | None of the above |

30. Which of the following management practices have occurred on your wooded land in the [ISLANDS] in the past 5 years?

Select yes or no for each item

- | Yes | No | |
|-----|----|--|
| £ | £ | Reduced fire hazard |
| £ | £ | Controlled burn/prescribed fire |
| £ | £ | Road construction or maintenance |
| £ | £ | Trail construction or maintenance |
| £ | £ | Eliminated or reduced invasive plants and/or animals |
| £ | £ | Eliminated or reduced unwanted insects or diseases |
| £ | £ | Drought mitigation measures |
| £ | £ | Water conservation measures |
| £ | £ | Other (please specify): |
| £ | £ | None of the above |

31. Which of the following activities will likely occur on your wooded land in [ISLANDS] in the next 5 years?

Select yes or no for each item

- | Yes | No | |
|-----|----|---|
| £ | £ | Cut and/or removed trees for sale |
| £ | £ | Cut and/or removed trees for own use |
| £ | £ | Plant trees for food production |
| £ | £ | Plant trees for wood production |
| £ | £ | Livestock grazing |
| £ | £ | Lease for commercial use |
| £ | £ | Use for tourism (including horseback riding, hiking, tours, etc.) |
| £ | £ | Collect edible forest products, such as [examples] |
| £ | £ | Collect medicinal forest products, such as [examples] |
| £ | £ | Collect forest production for decoration, such as [examples] |
| £ | £ | Collect nontimber forest products for landscaping, such as [examples] |
| £ | £ | Cut tree and/or shrub branches for livestock feed (fodder) |
| £ | £ | Other (please specify): |
| £ | £ | None of the above |

32. Which of the following management practices will likely occur on your wooded land in [ISLANDS] in the next 5 years?

Select yes or no for each item

- | | | |
|-----|----|--|
| Yes | No | |
| £ | £ | Reduced fire hazard |
| £ | £ | Controlled burn/prescribed fire |
| £ | £ | Road construction or maintenance |
| £ | £ | Trail construction or maintenance |
| £ | £ | Eliminated or reduced invasive plants and/or animals |
| £ | £ | Eliminated or reduced unwanted insects or diseases |
| £ | £ | Drought mitigation measures |
| £ | £ | Water conservation measures |
| £ | £ | Other (please specify): |

Your Reasons for Owning Wooded Land

33. How important are the following as reasons for why you currently own your wooded land in [ISLANDS]?

	Very important	Important	Moderately important	Of little importance	Not important	Not applicable
To enjoy beauty or scenery						
To protect nature or biological diversity						
To protect water resources						
To protect or improve wildlife habitat						
For land investment						
For privacy						
To raise my family						
To pass land on to my children or other heirs						
For firewood or fuelwood						
For timber products, such as logs or sawn boards						
For nontimber forest products, such as medicinal plants or herbs or artisanal wood						
For hunting						
To graze and/or shade animals						
For recreation, other than hunting						
For cultural or spiritual reasons						
Other (please specify):						

General Questions About You

This section asks questions about you to help us understand private forest owners more broadly. As with the rest of the survey, your responses are anonymous and will not be used to identify you. If you are responding on behalf of a company or other organization, please skip this section.

34. What is your age?

_____ Years

35. What is your gender?

Male

Female

36. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?

Less than 12th grade

High school/GED

Some college

Associate degree

Bachelor's degree

Advanced degree

37. Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin?

Yes

No

38. What is your race?

Select one or more.

American Indian or Alaska Native

Asian

Black or African American

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

White

38. What is your household's annual income?

Less than \$25,000

\$25,000 - \$49,999

\$50,000 - \$99,999

\$100,000 - \$199,999

\$200,000 or more

39. On average, what percentage of your household's annual income comes from the wooded land that you own?

_____ Percent

