

Public First Cover Letter



**United States
Department of Agriculture**

**Forest
Service**

Dear Public Land Manager:

We invite you to participate in the National Public Forest Land 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 your agency manages land with one acre of trees, thousands of acres, or something in between, we are interested in hearing from you. You were identified as a public land manager from public ownership records. We are contacting only a few public land managers in each state. Because of the limited number of managers 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, 15 minutes.

If your agency does not currently manage land, respond to this email saying "No Land." If you would like to receive a copy of the results from this survey, please respond to this email with your name and address.

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 Public Forest Land Survey, 160 Holdsworth Way, Amherst MA 01003.

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

Brett J. Butler, Survey Director

Public Forest Owner 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 forested land that is under your agency's jurisdiction, i.e., "owned" by your agency, in <STATE>.
- ✓ Please include land that is under your agency's jurisdiction, but managed by others.
- ✓ Please do NOT include land that your agency manages, but the land is under the jurisdiction of another agency.
- ✓ The person who is most knowledgeable about the agency's forested land in <STATE> should answer this questionnaire.

General Questions about Your Agency's Forested Land

1. How many total acres of land are currently under your agency's jurisdiction in <STATE>?
 _____ acres

2. Forested land covers XX% of <STATE>.

Forested land includes:

- ✓ Woods, woodlots, timberland, and forests
- ✓ Land at least 1 acre in size, 120 feet wide, and has at least 10% forest cover
- ✓ Land at least 1 acre in size, where trees were removed and trees will grow again

Forested land does *not* include:

- ✓ Christmas tree farms, orchards, or nurseries
- ✓ Land that is mowed for lawn or recreational fields

How many acres of *forested land* are currently under your agency's jurisdiction in <STATE>?
 _____ acres

3. Approximately what percentage of your agency's forested land is reserved? Reserved includes land permanently reserved from wood products utilization through statute or administrative designation.

_____ percentage

4. How important are the following reasons for why your agency currently has forested land in <STATE>?

| | Very Important | Important | Moderately Important | Of little importance | Not Important | Not Applicable |
|---|----------------|-----------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------|----------------|
| To protect beauty or scenery | | | | | | |
| To protect nature or biological diversity | | | | | | |
| To protect water resources | | | | | | |
| To protect or improve wildlife habitat | | | | | | |
| For firewood | | | | | | |
| For timber products, such as logs or pulpwood | | | | | | |
| For nontimber forest products, such as <REGIONAL NTFPs> | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| For hunting | | | | | | |
| For recreation, other than hunting | | | | | | |
| For gas or oil extraction | | | | | | |
| For other mineral extraction, such sand, or gravel | | | | | | |
| For carbon capture/sequestration | | | | | | |
| For the public to enjoy | | | | | | |
| Carbon capture | | | | | | |
| Mineral extraction | | | | | | |
| Other | | | | | | |
| (Please specify): | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

5. Which of the following have occurred on your agency's forested land in <STATE> 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 internal/agency purposes
- £ £ Collected nontimber forest products, such as <REGIONAL NTFPs>
- £ £ Plant trees
- £ £ Reduced fire hazard
- £ £ Controlled burn/prescribed fire
- £ £ Eliminated or reduced invasive plants
- £ £ Eliminated or reduced unwanted forest insects or disease
- £ £ Road construction or maintenance
- £ £ Trail construction or maintenance
- £ £ Improved wildlife habitat
- £ £ Livestock grazing
- £ £ Gas/oil extraction
- £ £ Renewable energy generation (i.e., from solar, wind)

6. Which of the following will likely occur on your agency's forested land in <STATE> **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 internal/agency use
- £ £ Collect nontimber forest products, such as <REGIONAL NTFPs>

- £ £ Plant trees
- £ £ Reduce fire hazard
- £ £ Controlled burn/prescribed fire
- £ £ Eliminate or reduce invasive plants
- £ £ Eliminate or reduce unwanted forest insects or disease
- £ £ Road construction or maintenance
- £ £ Trail construction or maintenance
- £ £ Improve wildlife habitat
- £ £ Livestock grazing
- £ £ Gas/oil extraction
- £ £ Renewable energy generation (i.e., from solar, wind)
- £ £ Renewable energy generation (i.e., from solar, wind)
- £ £ Other (please specify): _____

7. a. Who, with your agency's permission, has hunted, hiked, or otherwise recreated on your agency's forested land in <STATE> in the past 5 years?

Select yes or no for each item

- | Yes | No | |
|-----|----|---|
| £ | £ | The general public for free |
| £ | £ | The general public for a fee |
| £ | £ | The general public as part of an access program |
| £ | £ | Other (please specify): _____ |
| £ | £ | Nobody -> If nobody, skip to question 7 |

b. How did they recreate?

Select yes or no for each item

- | Yes | No | |
|-----|----|--|
| £ | £ | Hunting |
| £ | £ | Fishing |
| £ | £ | Hiking/walking |
| £ | £ | Nature viewing |
| £ | £ | Birding |
| £ | £ | Bicycling |
| £ | £ | Camping |
| £ | £ | Horseback riding |
| £ | £ | Skiing or snowshoeing |
| £ | £ | Off-road vehicles, such as ATVs or snowmobiles |
| £ | £ | Other (please specify): _____ |

8. Approximately what percentage of your agency's forested land in <STATE> is posted to restrict trespassing?

- 0% (not restricted on any of your agency's forested land)
- 1-24%
- 25-49%
- 50-74%
- 75-99%
- 100% (restricted on all of your agency's forested land)

9. Approximately what percentage of your agency's forested land in <STATE> is posted to restrict hunting?

- 0% (not restricted on any of your agency's forested land)
- 1-24%
- 25-49%
- 50-74%
- 75-99%
- 100% (restricted on all of your agency's forested land)

10. Approximately what percentage of your agency's forested land in <STATE> is posted to restrict motorized vehicles?

- 0% (not restricted on any of your agency's forested land)
- 1-24%
- 25-49%
- 50-74%
- 75-99%
- 100% (restricted on all of your agency's forested land)

11. A management or stewardship plan may be written in order to help an agency meet its goals for its forested land. What percentage, if any, of your agency's land is covered by a written management plan?

- 0% (none)
- 1-24%
- 25-49%
- 50-74%
- 75-99%
- 100% (all)
- Not applicable – no lands are eligible for management

12. Development rights for land can be sold or voluntarily given away. This is usually in the form of a conservation easement. What percentage, if any, of your agency's land is covered by a conservation easement?

- 0% (none)
- 1-24%
- 25-49%
- 50-74%
- 75-99%
- 100% (all)
- Not applicable – no lands are eligible for conservation easement

13. In efforts to reduce the impacts of climate change, public programs and private markets have been created that pay owners of wooded land for capturing or sequestering carbon. What percentage, if any, of your agency's land is enrolled in a carbon program?

- 0% (none)
- 1-24%
- 25-49%
- 50-74%
- 75-99%
- 100% (all)
- Not applicable – no lands are eligible for a carbon program

14. To encourage good woodland management, groups have created green certification programs to recognize landowners who comply with the group's standards. Examples include Tree Farm, Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), and Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI).

a. How familiar are you with green certification?

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

b. What percentage, if any, of your agency's forested land in <STATE> is currently green certified?

- 0% (none)
- 1-24%
- 25-49%
- 50-74%
- 75-99%
- 100% (all)

10. Please indicate your level of concern about each of the following topics for your agency's forested land in <STATE>.

| | Great concern | Concern | Moderate concern | Of little concern | No concern | Not Applicable |
|---|---------------|---------|------------------|-------------------|------------|----------------|
| Air pollution | | | | | | |
| Climate change | | | | | | |
| Damage from animals | | | | | | |
| Development of nearby lands | | | | | | |
| Drought or lack of water | | | | | | |
| Damage or noise from off-road vehicles | | | | | | |
| Invasive plants | | | | | | |
| Keeping land intact for future generations | | | | | | |
| Misuse of forested land, such as vandalism or dumping | | | | | | |
| Trespassing or poaching | | | | | | |
| Unwanted forest insects or diseases | | | | | | |
| Water pollution | | | | | | |
| Wildfire | | | | | | |
| Wind or ice storms | | | | | | |
| Weak timber markets | | | | | | |
| Lack of staff | | | | | | |
| Other | | | | | | |
| (please specify): | | | | | | |