

Do you have a forgotten forest?

TIME FOR FORESTRY



PAST DUE

Forests in Delaware cover 352,000 acres or one-fourth of the state. More than 78 percent are owned privately by individuals or families.



Facts about Delaware's forests

Delaware has 352,000 acres of forestland covering about one-fourth of the state. But did you know that more than 78 percent of forests in the First State are owned privately, mostly by individuals and families? These “non-industrial private forest” (NIPF) lands constitute sustainable and renewable resources that provide many natural benefits: clean water, wildlife habitat, better air quality, places for recreation, and valuable wood products. With proper management, these precious forest resources can continue to provide benefits far into the future, but **Delaware's forests need your help.**

Can't my forest take care of itself?

Letting nature take its course might be simple, but when it comes to your forest, “doing nothing” might not be the best strategy. Understory overgrowth, deer browse damage, poor species composition, invasive species – all of these can rob your forest of its potential to deliver on its many natural benefits, including possible economic returns.

Challenge: Keeping forests healthy

Most forest landowners want to sustain or increase the economic value of their forest while also protecting environmental assets such as wildlife and clean water.

Solution: Active forest management

The **Forest Stewardship Program** brings professional natural resource expertise to private owners to develop plans for the sustainable management of their forests. This increases the likelihood that these private forests will remain productive and healthy, and that their social, economic, and environmental benefits will be realized. Landowners decide on the objectives that are important to them, and then a plan is developed to meet these goals.

“A healthy forest is a managed forest”

On the web: de.gov/foreststewardship



Unlock the hidden potential of your forestland

How does a forest plan work?

The Delaware Forest Service (DFS) will provide for a trained forester to visit your land and discuss your management objectives. Many landowners have several objectives, such as enhancing wildlife or riparian habitat or producing timber. After your objectives are discussed and understood, the Delaware Forest Service forester will prepare your Forest Stewardship Plan. As the landowner, you must understand and approve the plan that is prepared by the Forest Service.

What happens after I get a plan?

Forest Stewardship Plans provide guidance that you can carry out by yourself, or with the assistance of professional foresters. As the landowner, you are simply asked to make a good faith commitment to implement the strategies in your plan.

Your participation in the program is strictly voluntary. Several cost-share programs are available to help you implement your plan. A service forester can discuss these options with you.

Am I eligible to participate?

Most owners of nonindustrial private forests are eligible. These private forests include rural lands with existing tree cover or land suited for growing trees, preferably forests that are 10 acres in size or more.

Is there any cost to get a plan?

There is **no cost** to a landowner for the preparation of a Forest Stewardship Plan.

Request a free plan for your forestland!

Landowners who implement a new plan will receive a "Stewardship Forest" sign.



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Landowner Assistance Programs



Many forest landowners do not plan to harvest timber but can still benefit from forest management planning and technical guidance.

Forest Management Assistance

In addition to helping prepare forest stewardship plans, the Delaware Forest Service can assist with timber stand improvements, sample timber sale contracts, reforestation and afforestation, or forest inventories. The DFS can also refer consultant foresters for appraisals.

Tree Seedlings

The DFS offers a variety of low-cost seedlings each spring. Landowners can order seedlings in fall and early winter for delivery between mid-March and mid-April.

Financial Assistance

There are limited federal and state cost-shares available to support tree planting, timber stand improvement, wildlife habitat enhancement, and invasive species control. The DFS can help landowners to apply for funds.

Wood Utilization

The DFS promotes wood marketing, the utilization of traditional forest products, and the development of alternative markets. There are lists of primary (sawmills, loggers) and secondary wood processors (furniture-makers, etc.) available to interested parties.

Forestry Education

The DFS manages state forests covering over 20,000 acres: Blackbird State Forest near Smyrna, Taber State Forest near Harrington, and Redden State Forest near Georgetown. These lands are managed for multiple objectives: timber, wildlife habitat enhancement, recreation, and demonstration forest management.

Commercial Forest Plantation Act

There is a 30-year property tax exemption available for forestlands managed for timber production that follow a DFS-approved plan.

Information

The DFS offers publications to help citizens learn about forestry and our programs. This can be useful for those who are new to forest management or forestry terms.

Stewardship Program: 302-856-2893

Toll Free Number: 1-800-282-8685

Erosion & Sedimentation Law

Delaware's Forestry Practices Erosion and Sedimentation (E&S) Law requires all operators and landowners to submit a permit before beginning forest management activities, including timber harvests. We offer educational programs (via the Maryland-Delaware Master Logging Program) to loggers and landowners. The Delaware Forest Service performs on-site inspections to ensure compliance with Best Management Practices (BMPs) and the E&S law.

Delaware Seed Tree Law

All harvested sites of 10 acres or more containing at least 25% pine and/or yellow-poplar must be reforested unless the property will be developed or cleared for agriculture.

Wildland Fire

The DFS tries to minimize wildland fire through various prevention and suppression activities. Staff and equipment are able to help volunteer fire companies control wildfires. For a fee, there is also prescribed fire assistance available (for forest management purposes).

Tax Assistance

The DFS can ease the burden of tax season with information for landowners to complete the process.



Delaware Forest Service

NEW CASTLE COUNTY

Blackbird State Forest
502 Blackbird Forest Road
Smyrna, DE 19977
(302) 653-6505

KENT COUNTY (Headquarters)

2320 S. DuPont Highway
Dover, DE 19901
(800) 282-8685 (DE only)
(302) 698-4500

SUSSEX COUNTY

Redden State Forest
18074 Redden Forest Drive
Georgetown, DE 19947
(302) 856-2893

