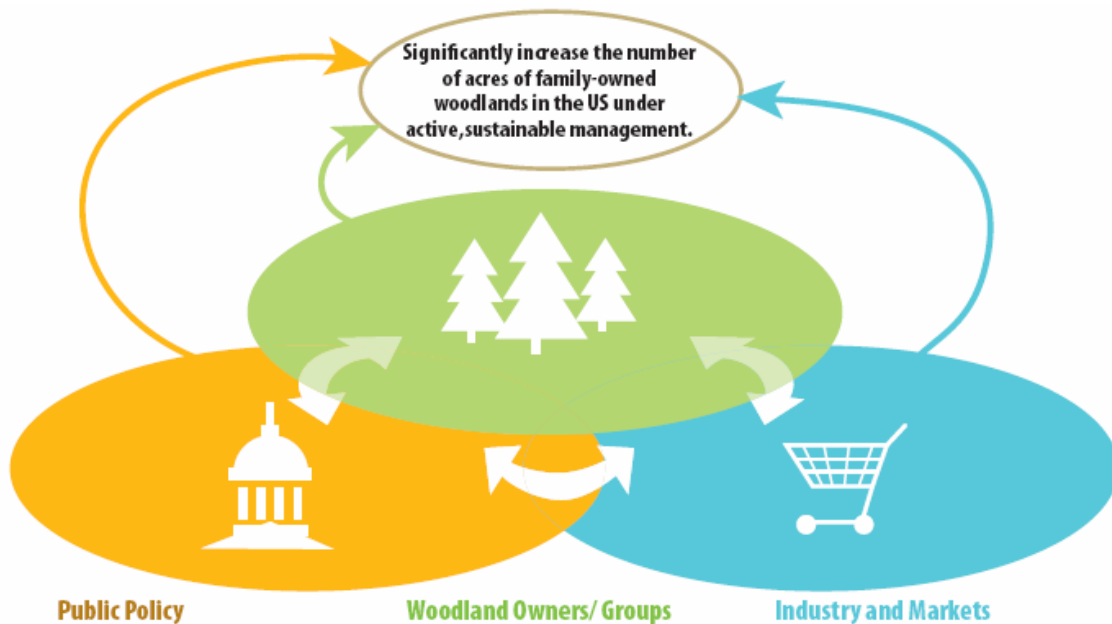


# The Future of Family-Owned Woodlands in the United States



*Final Report from a Conference Held at the Johnson Foundation's  
Wingspread Retreat Center, November 11-13, 2005*

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## Executive Summary



The Wingspread Conference on “The Future of Family Woodlands in the United States” identified policies and practices to increase the number of acres of family-owned woodlands under active, sustainable management. Conference participants also began the process of developing strategies and timetables to implement these priority policies and practices.



Representatives of 35 diverse organizations from across the country – ranging from grassroots woodland owner groups to foundations, the forest industry and state and federal forestry programs – met at the historic Wingspread Conference Center in southeastern Wisconsin on November 11-13 and identified eight priority activities for improving family forest management practices.



Sustainable management of family woodlands is becoming an increasingly important issue in the United States. More than 10 million families and individuals own over 350 million acres of forestland.

*Lack of effective woodland management results in low economic productivity in rural areas and environmental problems for all of us.*



Half of the wood harvested in this country comes from family-owned forests. Yet, less than 20% of these woodlands have sustainable management plans. This lack of effective woodland management results in low economic productivity in rural areas and environmental problems for all of us.



Parcelization of large woodland tracts, spread of invasive species, growing demand for certified wood products, concerns about fire control, emergence of new markets such as carbon sequestration, and a drive to strengthen rural economies are all forces drawing attention to ways to support private woodland owners in better management of their woodlands.



In the three-day conference, the 40 participants developed strategic recommendations for action in three broad, overlapping categories that together will help speed the pace of better management of privately owned woodlands. In summary, the priority strategies and actions are:



### Public Policy

1. **2007 Farm Bill:** In the federal 2007 Farm Bill, strengthen support for financial incentives that effectively advance sustainable forestry practices among private woodland owners.
2. **State & Local Programs:** Make better use of property tax and other incentive programs to cost-effectively increase family forestland under sustainable management.



### Community-Based Outreach through Woodland Owner Groups

3. **Communicate Effective Messages:** Build on existing and new research, develop and implement a marketing strategy that significantly increases the number of family forest owners who are carrying out good stewardship practices on their land.





4. **Peer-to-Peer Outreach:** Expand the use of peer-to-peer outreach through local woodland owner organizations and mentoring programs to improve family forest management.
5. **Next Generation Owners:** Develop and implement educational programs to encourage children and grandchildren to maintain family woodlands, including identifying the use of estate planning and wills to maintain family forests across generations.

**Industry & Markets**

6. **Sustainable Forestry Certification:** Broaden the use of sustainable forestry certification programs in marketing family forest products.
7. **Low-Grade Wood Markets:** Increase marketing opportunities for low-grade materials from private woodlands.
8. **Ecosystem Services:** Design and implement ecosystem services pilot projects that link improvements in the environment with improved family forest management.

In graphic summary form, the interactions of the strategies and actions look like this:



The eight priority activities represent pragmatic actions on which measurable progress can be achieved in 2006. Sub-groups of participants have indicated interest in working on each of these priority activities. Action plans are now being detailed, and funding support is being sought to carry them forward during the year

Participants said that the wide diversity of backgrounds, experience and geographic location represented was of particular value during the retreat and in work that can go forward. They learned of effective practices from each other that they are applying in their efforts at home, and they are moving toward developing a shared voice on the common purpose of advancing sustainable forestry among private woodland owners.

Participants at the meeting represented the following organizations:

**Woodland Owners:** Appalachian Sustainable Development; Eastern Ozarks Forestry Council; Kickapoo Woods Cooperative; Massachusetts Woodlands Cooperative; National Woodland Owners Association; Northwest Natural Resources Group; Southern Forests Network; Wisconsin Family Forests; Wisconsin Woodland Owners; Women in Land Ownership.

**Education:** University of Minnesota Extension Service; University of Wisconsin Stevens Point; Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies.

**Private Sector:** Carley Wood Associates; Fleishman-Hillard, Inc; Rapid Improvement Associates; Starpoint Consulting; Stora Enso North America; Weyerhaeuser.

**Associations & NGOs:** American Forests; Community Forestry Resource Center; Cooperative Development Services; Dovetail Partners; EcoTrust; Forest Stewards Guild; Mississippi Association of Cooperatives; Northwest Cooperative Development Center; Pacific Forest Trust; Pinchot Institute for Conservation; Trust to Conserve the Northeast Forests.

**Foundations:** Blandin Foundation; Cooperative Development Foundation.

**Government:** Alabama State Forestry Commission; US Forest Service; Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

A complete list of participants and affiliated organizations is presented in Appendix 1.

Additional details on the conference and on follow-up activities are currently on the web at: [www.rapid-improvement.com/wingspread](http://www.rapid-improvement.com/wingspread). (Funding support permitting, a new website at [www.familywoodlands.org](http://www.familywoodlands.org) will be established to carry the communication of this work forward.)

\* \* \*

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## **Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank all of the participants in the Family Woodlands conference for their constructive, creative and cooperative work in identifying priority policies and practices to improve family forest management in the United States.

Special thanks to Don Arnosti, Community Forestry Resource Center, for his help in planning and seeking funding for the conference.

Special thanks also to the Johnson Foundation staff, in particular Steve Branca, who provided highly professional help in preparing for and carrying out this very successful event.

We would also like to thank the following organizations for providing financial support for the conference:

- Blandin Foundation
- Ford Foundation
- Home Depot Foundation
- The Johnson Foundation.
- Ralph K. Morris Foundation
- Stora Enso North America
- USDA Forest Service
- University of Wisconsin Stevens Point Forestry Outreach Programs
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Forestry Division.

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## I. Conference Agenda and Process

Beginning with the early planning stages in January 2005, the goal of the Family Woodlands conference was to develop achievable outcomes related to the improvement of family forest management.

Accordingly, the conference organizers identified several key elements that would facilitate these outcomes:

- An attractive, retreat-style venue;
- A diverse group of people interested in, and knowledgeable about, private forests;
- To incorporate the results and activities of similar initiatives, such as the Ford Foundation's Community-Based Forestry Demonstration Program, the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, the Pinchot Institute for Conservation and others;
- Financial support for organizing the conference and providing scholarships;
- A participatory and results-oriented agenda; and
- A plan for post-conference activities to implement and support the priority actions identified at the conference

In the spring of 2005, the Johnson Foundation approved an application to hold an event limited to 40 participants at the Wingspread Conference Center in southeastern Wisconsin. The Foundation reserved the weekend of November 11-13 for the conference. The Center, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and other Taliesin architects, proved to be an ideal location for the Family Woodlands conference.

The event organizers then went through the process of identifying potential participants representing different roles related to family forestry and from different regions of the country. They then invited them to the conference with a caveat that scholarships would be contingent on raising adequate funds from donors.

At the same time, the organizers successfully gained financial support. Sufficient funds were raised to provide full and partial scholarships to all participants who requested them.

Three weeks prior to the conference, organizers set up a website for participants at [www.rapid-improvement.com/wingspread](http://www.rapid-improvement.com/wingspread). A key initial feature of the site was a set of required readings and PowerPoint presentations about family forest issues to help people prepare for the event. A list of these materials is in Appendix 2.

Also prior to the conference, participants were e-mailed a two-stage survey. In the first stage, they were asked to identify up to five **barriers** that inhibit private woodland owners from pursuing sustainable forestry practices on their land, and up to five current and emerging **opportunities** that are drawing more private woodland owners into sustainably management of their woodlands.

In stage two, participants were e-mailed a list of the top seven barriers and the top seven opportunities that they had selected in stage one and asked to rate the importance of each one. The results are in the table on the next page.

Thus, by the time participants arrived at Wingspread on November 11, most had already become actively engaged in reading and reflecting on key conference issues.

On Friday evening, November 11, participants had the opportunity to talk and dine with one another informally. After dinner, conferees gave brief descriptions of themselves and identified the most important issues that they wanted to see addressed over the next two days

Saturday began with an overview of survey responses and family forest owner demographics. For most of the day, participants worked in four small groups.

Each group addressed the following question:

*“From what we know today, what range of specific policy and practice changes can we take to increase the number of privately-held acres in the United States that are being sustainably managed?”*

The groups answered this question from four different vantage points:

- Public policy
- Woodland Owners/Organizations
- Forest industry
- Marketplace

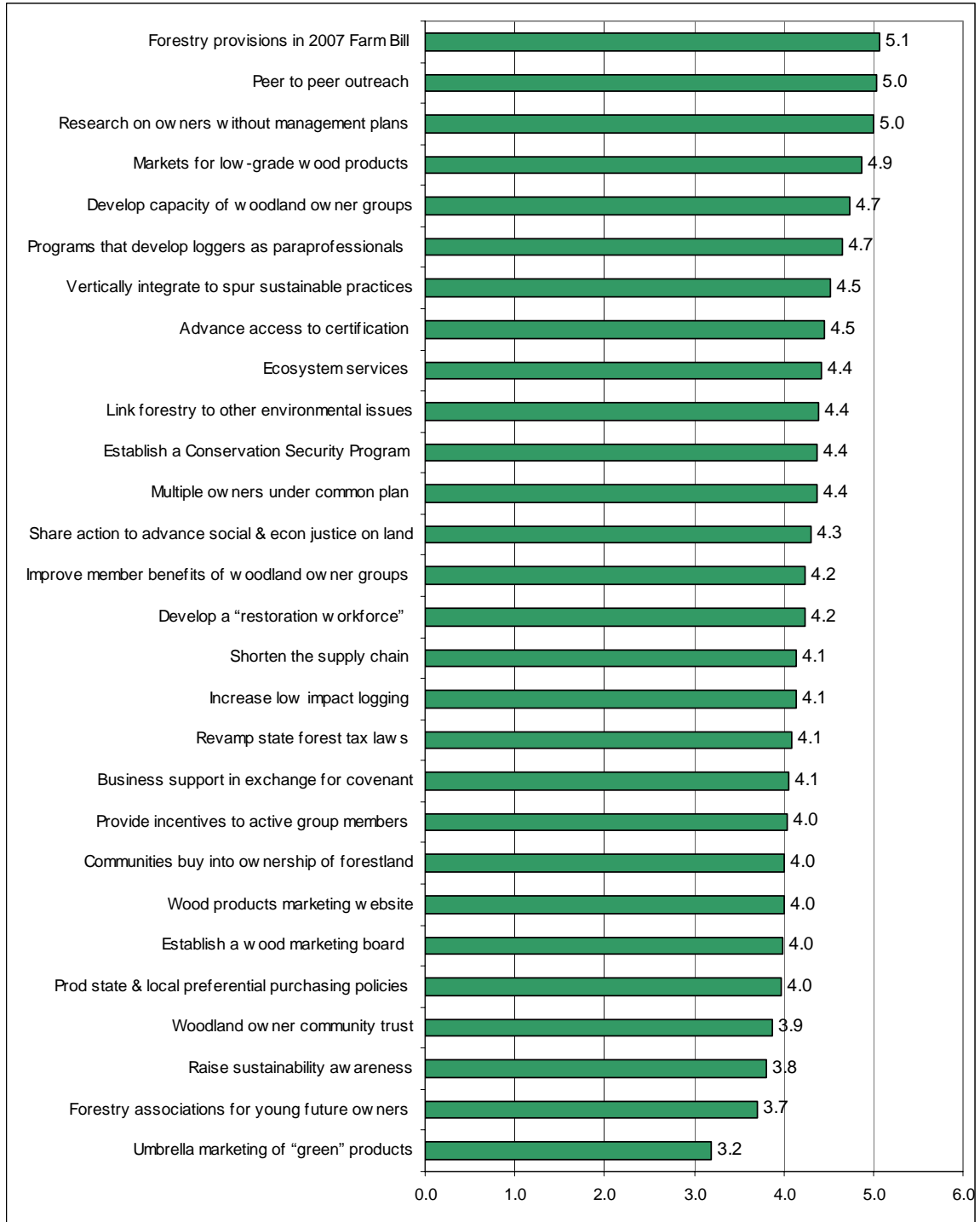
The groups compared notes at the end of the afternoon.

Overnight, the conference organizers summarized the policies and practices identified on Saturday and prepared a survey. Participants filled out the survey over breakfast on Sunday morning. The results were tallied and presented at a general session after breakfast. They are summarized in the following table:

<b>Our Collective Take on the Barriers &amp; Opportunities as of November 2005</b>			
<i>Barriers – What are the main factors that inhibit private woodland owners from pursuing sustainable forestry practices on their land?</i>		<i>Opportunities -- What are the current and emerging opportunities that are drawing in more private woodland owners into sustainably managing their woodlands?</i>	
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Ave. Rating:</b> 1=not so big; 6 = really big	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Ave. Rating:</b> 1=not so big; 6 = really big
There are a number of economic barriers to sustainable forestry.	4.84	Landowner groups are supporting and educating individual landowners.	4.83
Sustainable forestry is not well understood.	4.36	State and federal incentives support good practices.	4.44
Demographic of forest owners works against sustainable management.	4.08	There are new markets coming on line that better recognize well managed woodlands.	4.20
Logging seems inconsistent with many owners' goals.	3.96	There are new techniques for working in the woodlands.	3.88
There is a lack of accessible information about management options.	3.96	Consumers and markets value sustainably sourced wood products.	3.80
There is a low availability of trusted sustainable forestry professionals, both in planning and contracting.	3.80	Landowners appreciate sustainably managed lands.	3.72
Fears and misunderstandings keep owners from pursuing management of their forests.	3.72	The cost of land and taxes are going up.	3.40

### Priority Strategies for Improving Family Forest Management

Thirty-one conference participants rated the ideas that emerged from discussions on a 1-6 scale. A rating of 1 indicates that a strategy is not a priority and/or significant progress on it is unlikely in 2006. A rating of 6 indicates that a strategy is a high priority and that significant progress can be made on it in 2006. The responses were averaged and then ranked in order of priority. The summary chart is presented below. Detailed survey responses are presented in Appendix 2.



Participants then formed three work groups – public policy, woodland owners/organizations, and forest industry/marketplace – to identify the top priority activities that have good potential for significant progress in 2006 and to develop an initial plan of action on each priority activity. Each group then reported back to the full group at a final general session. The eight top priority activities are the subject of the next chapter of this report.

At the end of the conference at midday on Sunday, most participants filled out a conference evaluation. They gave the conference a very positive overall evaluation – including an average score of over 4.5 on a 5 point scale for achieving conference objectives.

As of mid-January, post-conference activities have included:

- ✓ The preparation of notes from each of the three Sunday morning work groups;
- ✓ An early December conference call involving about half of the conference participants;
- ✓ Development of a pilot project proposal by the Community Forestry Resource Center with Stora Enso for low grade wood marketing;
- ✓ The preparation of a summary highlights on the conference which have been e-mailed to participants and interested parties;
- ✓ Preparation of a set of comments to USDA on the 2007 Farm Bill;
- ✓ The preparation of this report.

In January and February, participants interested in working on each of the priority activities will meet via conference call to develop a preliminary timetable for activities to be carried out in 2006.

Also in January and February, conference organizers will contact potential funders to solicit their support for carrying out priority activities for improving family forest management identified at the conference.

## II. Priorities for Improving Family Forest Management

All of the priority actions presented in this section of the report are in keeping with the core theme of the Family Woodlands conference, namely “*increasing the number of acres of family-owned woodlands under active, sustainable management.*”

Participants identified eight “action areas” grouped under public policy, industry and markets, and community-based outreach through woodland owner organizations. These activities were selected by conference participants because of their importance in improving family forest management and because there are measurable steps that can be taken in 2006 to implement each activity.

### A. Public Policy

Federal and state policies related to private woodlands have an enormous impact on family forest management. Land use regulations, property taxation and forest stewardship incentive programs all affect forest management.

Conference participants focused on improving the use of state and federal programs related to forest management incentives, technical assistance and education as effective means to increase forest acres under management.

#### **Action Area 1:** 2007 Farm Bill

**Outcome:** *Increase the incentives for family forest conservation and sustainable management in the 2007 Farm Bill.*

**Context:** The 2002 Farm Bill, officially entitled the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, is set to expire in 2007. The deadline for public comments was December 30, 2005.

The 2002 Farm Bill contains very few provisions for conservation incentives, technical assistance or research related to family forests, despite the large and growing percentage of rural land that these forests comprise.

Participants in the Wingspread conference identified the strengthening of family forest provisions in the 2007 Farm Bill as a key mechanism for increasing the number of acres of family forests under sustainable management in the United States.

A number of participants suggested making modifications to existing Farm Bill provisions, such as the Forest Land Enhancement Program, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, the Conservation Security Program and the Conservation Reserve Program as means to generate a large, measurable impact on sustainable forest management by farmers and other private woodland owners.

Others shared research findings indicating the need to approach forest landowners in new and innovative ways due to massive demographic shifts in forest land ownership.

**Next Steps:**

- a. *Submit comments on the 2007 Farm Bill to USDA by December 30, 2005. (This task has already been completed. See [www.rapid-improvement.com/wingspread](http://www.rapid-improvement.com/wingspread) to view the comments to USDA.)*
- b. *Coordinate a sub-group of conference participants interested in working on getting family forest provisions into the 2007 Farm Bill.*

*This sub-group will meet via conference call in January 2006 to develop a plan of action for the year. Participants in the Wingspread conference have already indicated that they want to pursue a strategy that involves working with a broad coalition of forestry, agricultural, conservation and other organizations.*

**Role of Family Woodlands Project:**

- ✓ Staff the work group, including coordination of calls and meetings and preparation of policy recommendations;
- ✓ Communicate activities to Wingspread participants and others.

\* \* \*

**Action Area 2: State & Local Programs**

**Outcome:** *Improve the use of state and local property tax and other incentives for sustainable family forest management.*

**Context:** Many states have some form of a property tax incentive program to encourage sustainable forest management and/or the retention of woodlands by private landowners. Some of these programs, such as the Managed Forest Law in Wisconsin, appear to be more effective than others at achieving these objectives.

Many conference participants thought that improved property tax incentives could be a very effective means for increasing sustainable management on family forest land. At the same time, they recommended that proposed changes in state property tax and other programs be based on sound research results identifying cost-effective approaches.

Nadeau, Howard and Edberg conducted a study for the Blandin Foundation in 2005 that analyzed various family forestry incentive programs and made recommendations to be implemented in Minnesota. (See the citation in the Readings section in Appendix 2 and view the report at [www.rapid-improvement.com/wingspread](http://www.rapid-improvement.com/wingspread)) The results of this research could be adapted for other states.

**Next Steps:**

- a. *Contact Paul Ellefson at the University of Minnesota and other researchers in January 2006 to gather information on forestry tax incentive programs in different states and, if not already available, prepare a reference library of these materials.*
- b. *Establish a working group in January or February of 2006 among conference participants to identify tax incentive programs that appear to be effective in increasing family forest acreage under sustainable management and communicate this information to all conference participants and others.*

**Role of Family Woodlands Project:**

- ✓ Compile research information on state tax incentive programs;
- ✓ Organize and staff a state tax incentive work group;
- ✓ Disseminate recommendations developed by the work group.

\* \* \*

**B. Community-Based Outreach through Woodland Owner Groups**

A second major way to improve family forest management is by strengthening the outreach capabilities of woodland owner groups -- including local associations, cooperatives and chapters of statewide associations -- that are emerging across the country. They are providing a “neighborhood” approach to better forest management. Conference participants addressed the question: “*How can we help keep woodland owners on their lands, benefiting from sustainable, working forests?*” They identified three action areas where progress can be made in 2006.

**Action Area 3: Effective Messages**

**Outcome:** *Build on existing and new research to develop and implement a communications strategy that significantly increases the number of family forest owners who are carrying out good stewardship practices on their land.*

**Context:** Research work by Mary Tyrrell and associates at the Yale School of Forestry and by Catherine Mater for the Pinchot Institute for Conservation has begun to identify key target audiences among family forest owners and messages related to environmental stewardship that resonate with them. These audiences include landowners who give low priority to timber harvesting, women and the next generation of owners.

Only about 20% of non-industrial forestland is being managed based on a professionally prepared plan. Part of the reason for this low percentage is that past and current efforts to encourage private woodland management generally don't use sophisticated marketing and communication strategies that recognize the array of different reasons that people own forestland.

New research and outreach programs are moving beyond this “one size fits all” approach. The Sustaining Family Forests Initiative being coordinated by Mary Tyrrell is developing a detailed database of information about woodland owners. Catherine Mater's research includes new information on women owners and on issues related to inter-generational transfer of forestland. Women in Land Ownership is an example of successful outreach project that communicates with landowners through local community networks.

**Next Steps**

- a. *Form a work group of Wingspread participants and others interested in improving communication about sustainable management to family forest owners in February 2006.*
- b. *Conduct a review of current research on different subgroups of family forest owners and effective messages for each group..*

- c. *Select aspects that can be piloted in 2006.*

**Role of Family Woodlands Project**

- ✓ Coordinate awareness of current research.
- ✓ Help set up test market sites among landowner groups.
- ✓ Communicate results.

\* \* \*

**Action Area 4: Peer-to-Peer Outreach**

**Outcome:** *Expand the use of peer-to-peer outreach through local woodland owner organizations and mentoring programs to improve family forest management.*

**Context:** Many woodland owners' preferred source of information is a local, trusted source. This often means a neighbor or other peer. These "over the fence" conversations and networks are very effective ways to engage landowners who are not currently managing their woods. Local woodland organizations and woodland owner training programs sponsored by state forestry extension services have the potential to create and support a cadre of peer leaders to engage and inform their neighbors. These programs can both enhance social marketing capacity and help to ensure that the information being disseminated is accurate.

**Next Steps:**

- a. *Form a peer-to-peer outreach work group in February 2006.*
- b. *Develop several pilot projects in 2006 designed to increase local peer-to-peer outreach activities. One pilot would be the Multi-Owner Forest Stewardship Project in Wisconsin. Peer-to-peer outreach is a key part of Wisconsin Family Forests' strategy for the project.*
- c. *Identify ways to build on existing peer-to-peer programs being carried out by state forestry extension services, and to extend the best of these to other regions.*

**Role of Family Woodlands Project:**

- ✓ Staff the work group.
- ✓ Investigate existing master volunteer and other peer-to-peer programs in Oregon, Wisconsin, and Minnesota and other states. Identify ways that these programs can be adapted to support peer-to-peer programs sponsored by local landowner organizations, cooperatives, and other groups.

\* \* \*

**Action Area 5: Next Generation Owners**

**Outcome.** *Develop and implement educational programs to encourage children and grandchildren to maintain family woodlands, including identifying the use of estate planning and wills to maintain family forests across generations.*

**Context.** Research shows that potential heirs often lack the commitment to maintain and manage family forestland. Landowner associations, schools, and organizations that focus on women and other demographic groups can be effective avenues to communicate with these next generation owners.

A related problem is that many current landowners don't have a clear plan for the transfer of their estate to heirs. This can seriously inhibit the heirs' ability to retain the land, often necessitating partial sell-offs of the property. Careful estate planning can significantly reduce the negative tax consequences of a property transfer – not to mention potential stress and in-fighting among the heirs. Estate planning can also include making sure that potential heirs are interested and knowledgeable about forest stewardship.

**Next Steps**

- a) *Organize a work group in February 2006.*
- b) *The work group will develop a strategic plan for 2006 taking into account the following issues identified at the conference.*
  - i. *Landowner associations can offer multi-generational events designed to engage whole families in land stewardship. School-based programs like Project Learning Tree and school forest, as well as community-based programs like 4-H and scouts can also play a role.*
  - ii. *Organizations and activities that focus on women or other demographic groups may help potential heirs to feel more a part of the process.*
  - iii. *There is anecdotal evidence of possible "generation skipping," where grandchildren may step in and become active in the stewardship of the property. Target message to females, grandchildren, PLT, 4H, Scouting, etc.*
  - iv. *Although estate planning conversations can be personal and difficult, there are several possible ways to address this issue, including targeted personal and agency contacts, development of land ownership maps by small units (watershed), identification of tracts likely to pass into heirship, engagement of public assistance attorneys, and development of links with local coops, USDA offices, etc.*

**Role of Family Woodlands Project:**

- ✓ Staff the work group
- ✓ Assist in carrying out the work group's strategic plan.

\* \* \*

## **C. Industry & Markets**

A third major means to improve woodland management is through changes in the marketplace. Conference participants addressed the question: *“What are the opportunities for increasing sustainable management on family forest lands through the use of markets and certification?”* Three specific action areas emerged as priorities for 2006.

### **Action Area 6:** Sustainable Forestry Certification

**Outcome:** *Broaden the use of sustainable forestry certification programs in marketing family forest products.*

**Context:** There are a number of certification systems currently in use in the marketplace today that provide third party verification that forestland is being managed sustainably. Manufacturers of wood and paper products use these “green” certification programs in the marketing of their products. Unfortunately, these programs have had only a minor impact in the U.S. marketplace to date.

Increasing the visibility of certification programs all along the marketing chain -- from the woodland owner to the consumer -- would play a major role in increasing sustainable forest management.

Time, Inc. provides an excellent example of corporate leadership on green certification. The company, which is the largest user of coated papers in the world, has made a commitment to have 80% of the paper used in its publications come from sustainably managed forests by 2007. Time’s commitment to certification has already had a strong ripple effect on the companies that supply its paper and on significantly increasing certified forestland in Maine, Minnesota, Wisconsin and elsewhere.

Other wood and paper manufacturers and users, including architects and builders, in the United States should be encouraged to make similar commitments to sustainable certification. Promotion of green certification should be done on a national scale as well as at the regional and local levels.

#### **Next Steps:**

- a. *In February 2006, form a work group involving Wingspread participants and others to develop a strategy for broadening the use of family forest certification in 2006.*
- b. *Gather contact information for key individuals interested in green certification, including architects, builders, timber framers, and key industry representatives in secondary markets in the first quarter of 2006.*
- c. *Hold a one-day workshop for architects and builders on using sustainable wood products at the Forest Products Lab in Madison, WI in the second half of 2006.*
- d. *Hold a one-day dialog on the potential for umbrella marketing of green label products, possibly to be held at Yale in the fall of 2006.*
- e. *Distribute information that helps customers compare and contrast the different forest certification systems by the end of 2006.*

**Role of Family Woodlands Project:**

- ✓ Coordinate action among the participants.
- ✓ Assist in setting up one-day learning events, as needed.
- ✓ Communicate best examples to other interested parties.

\* \* \*

**Action Area 7: Low-Grade Wood Markets**

**Outcome:** *Increase marketing opportunities for low-grade materials from private woodlands.*

**Context:** There is a broad-based need for landowners to find markets for the low grade/low quality material that comes from their forests, especially in the early years of sustainable management.

In particular, there is a need for projects that demonstrate that harvesting can be done with a high degree of environmental responsibility and landowner satisfaction. This approach is needed to reassure landowners who have seen or experienced the outcome of poor harvest practices on their own or on a neighbor's land.

Market opportunities for low grade materials vary by timberstand, regions and market demand. Some markets may exist already, such as pallets and local biomass markets. Some may require substantial new development, for example, new approaches to bioprocessing.

Responsible members of industry share the value in participating in demonstration projects that make efficient use of low grade materials, and in working with landowners, loggers, and others in the supply chain to ensure that responsible harvests occur routinely.

In discussing this issue at the conference, several participants thought that the best way to proceed was to conduct a pilot project involving low-grade wood. They suggested the following approach for a collaborative project:

- Demonstration of a responsible improvement harvest at a specific site;
- Ongoing communication/teaching using the demonstration site so that others benefit from the project in the future; and
- Marketing low grade material from the site in a way that offsets some or all of the costs of the improvement harvest.

In addition to expanding outlets for low-grade wood products, there also appear to be opportunities for adding value to wood by shortening the supply chain between family forest owners and wood users -- for example the use of large logs by local timber framers and log home builders.

**Next Steps:**

- a. *In December 2005 and January 2006, the Community Forest Resource Center and Stora Enso are working to adapt a harvest demonstration project for which CFRC has initiated funding to a joint pilot project by CFRC and Stora Enso.*

- b. *Establish a work group in February 2006 to develop a pilot project for adding value to wood products through shortening the supply chain between woodland owners and wood users.*

**Role of Family Woodlands Project:**

- ✓ Coordinate the above steps and share results broadly.
- ✓ Facilitate development of messages for architects and builders about local woods and under-utilized species and other forest management and sustainability concerns from the landowner or land manager perspective.
- ✓ Promote the messages of under-utilized and local species derived from sustainably forestry practices by private woodland owners as well as more local value-add supply chain opportunities.

\* \* \*

**Action Area 8: Ecosystem Services**

**Outcome:** *Design and implement an ecosystem services pilot project that links improvement in the environment with improved family forest management.*

**Context:** Ecosystem services refers to a broad array of activities that result in environmental improvements along with potential income streams that can help encourage and pay for good forest management. For example, tree planting can be used to sequester carbon, reduce soil erosion, or reduce the flow of nutrients into watersheds. Governmental agencies and corporations are sometimes willing to pay landowners to carry out practices that provide water quality, air quality and other benefits.

Conference participants selected as a priority project the identification of, and support for, at least one pilot project in ecosystem service payments to forest landowners. They would like to have the pilot project involve collaboration among government agencies, landowner organizations, industry, private consultants and others working on family forestland management.

**Next Steps**

- a. *In February 2006, convene a work group from the conference interested in developing a strategic plan for this activity, in particular identifying a pilot project that could be pursued by the work group.*

**Role of Family Woodlands Project**

- ✓ Facilitate work group.
- ✓ Research similar projects involving ecosystem services and family forests and communicate research results to the work group.

### **III. Conclusion**

Participants in the Wingspread Conference on “The Future of Family-Owned Woodlands in the United States” identified eight strategies to increase the amount of family forestland in the United States under sustainable management. These strategies and the steps proposed to implement them have been described in this report.

One of the unique aspects of the Family Woodlands conference is its emphasis on identifying and achieving measurable outcomes. This can be efficiently and effectively achieved by linking the network of similar organizations and efforts across the country while providing targeted action in the specific, high leverage action areas. Sharing of lessons learned across the network will speed adoption of effective practices.

Many of the participants have made a commitment to work together in 2006 to carry out the priority activities identified at the conference.

If adequate funding is available, these activities will be coordinated in 2006 by the Family Woodlands Project. The project is a one-year initiative staffed by Cooperative Development Services and Rapid Improvement Associates with the sole mission of assisting conference participants and others to implement the eight priority activities identified at the conference.

## Appendices

### 1. Participants

Contact	Title	Company	City	State
Gus Townes	Executive to the State Forester	Alabama Forestry Commission	Montgomery	AL
Laura Schweitzer	Director of Forest Policy	American Forests	Washington	DC
Anthony Flaccavento	Executive Director	Appalachian Sustainable Development	Abingdon	VA
Bernadine Joselyn	Director of Public Policy & Engagement	Blandin Foundation	Grand Rapids	MN
Liz Skree	Wingspread Fellow	Carleton College	Northfield	MN
Greg Ericson	Estimator/Purchaser	Carley Wood Associates, Inc.	Madison	WI
Don Arnosti	Director	Community Forestry Resource Center	Minneapolis	MN
Elizabeth Bailey	Executive Director	Cooperative Development Foundation	Washington	DC
Kevin Edberg	Executive Director	Cooperative Development Services	St. Paul	MN
EG Nadeau	Director of Research	Cooperative Development Services	Madison	WI
Katie Fernholz	Forestry Program Manager	Dovetail Partners	White Bear Lake	MN
Peter Becker	Research Coordinator	Eastern Ozarks Forestry Council	Bunker	MO
Kent Goodyear	Director Market Connections-Forestry	EcoTrust	Portland	OR
Donald Ferguson	Senior Vice President	Fleishman-Hillard, Inc.	San Francisco	CA
Fred Clark	Board Member	Forest Stewards Guild	Baraboo	WI
Paul Bader	General Manager	Kickapoo Woods Cooperative	La Farge	WI
Susan Campbell	Associate Director	Massachusetts Woodlands Cooperative, LLC	South Deerfield	MA
Melbah Smith	Executive Director	Mississippi Association of Cooperatives	Jackson	MS
Keith A. Argow	President	National Woodlands Owners Association	Vienna	VA
Eric Bowman	Project Manager	Northwest Cooperative Development Center	Olympia	WA
Ian Hanna	Director	Northwest Natural Resource Group	Port Townsend	WA
Andrea Tuttle	Board Member	Pacific Forest Trust	Arcata	CA
Catherine Mater	Senior Fellow	Pinchot Institute for Conservation	Corvallis	OR
Warren C. Gaskill	Senior Partner	Rapid Improvement Associates, LLC	Black Earth	WI
Alyx Perry	Director	Southern Forests Network	Ashville	NC
Colin Donohue	Conservation-Based Development Director	Starpoint Consulting	Glouster	OH
Fred Souba Jr.	Vice President	Stora Enso	Wisconsin Rapids	WI
John Gunn	Director of Forest Stewardship and Research	The Trust to Conserve Northeast Forestlands	Hebron	ME
Eli Sagor	Natural Resources Program Leader and	University of Minnesota Extension Service	St Paul	MN
John DuPlissis	Forestry Outreach Specialist	University of Wisconsin Stevens Point	Stevens Point	WI
Ted Beauvais	Assistant Director for Landowner and	USDA Forest Service	Springfield	VA
Karl Dalla Rosa	National Program Manager, Forest	USDA Forest Service	Washington	DC
Margaret Fisher	Market Development Manager	Weyerhaeuser	West Bend	WI
Paul DeLong	Wisconsin State Forester	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources	Madison	WI
Gerry Mich	Executive Director	Wisconsin Family Forests	Appleton	WI
Marvin Meier	Past President	Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association	Wausau	WI
Carolyn Pickett	General Manager	Women In Land Ownership, LLC	Selma	AL
Mary Tyrrell	Executive Director, Global Institute of	Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies	New Haven	CT

## 2. Selected Readings

All readings available at: [www.rapid-improvement.com/wingspread](http://www.rapid-improvement.com/wingspread)

### Pre-Conference Readings:

- Catherine Mater: Decisions drivers to fragment forests. Family Forests -- What will the next generation decide?
- Eli Sagor: Reaching Woodland Owners Online
- E.G. Nadeau, Elisabeth Howard, Kevin Edberg: Taking Care of Family Forests & Appendix A
- Mary Tyrrell: Family Forest Owner Study Objectives & Sustaining Family Forests Initiative.
- Susan M. Campbell: Profiles from Working Woodlands: Exploring Forest-based Enterprises in Western Massachusetts.

### Additional Readings of Interest:

- Aspen Institute: Growth Rings: Communities and Trees. Lessons from the Ford Foundation Community-Based Forestry Demonstration Program, 2000-2005.
- Hal Salwasser: "The Value of Our Forests"
- Journal of Forestry: American Family Forest Owners
- American Forest Foundation: Issues Confronting Family Forest Owners in the 21st Century
- Bryan Foster, et al: Comparing FSC Certified and Uncertified Northern Hardwoods
- Mary Tyrrell: Family Forests Literature Review 2003
- Global Markets Forum Summary Report

### 3. Survey: Strategies with Greatest Potential

*Thirty-one conference participants rated the ideas that emerged from discussions on a 1-6 scale – 1 indicated the participant thought the strategy or action simply wouldn't be smart to pursue because its impact on the goal of increasing family forestland under sustainable management would not be very high and there probably weren't the resources to make much headway on it in 2006; 6 meant the participant believed it should be a really high priority to go after because it would have high impact and we could make good headway on it in the coming year. The responses were averaged and then priority ranked. The summary chart is on Page 3, and fuller details on them are on the following pages.*

Strategy (and its priority rating)	Rough notes from our discussion
<b><u>Action/Strategy: Establish a Sustainable Forestry focused Working Group to guide the 2007 Farm Bill (5.1)</u></b>	Doing good work now: bring together orgs, non-profits, etc.  Potential resources: volunteer coalition, foundations...
<b><u>Action/Strategy: Peer to peer outreach -- Institute landowner mentoring (over the fence engagement) to help engage broader rural community. (5.0)</u></b>	Doing good work now: Alabama Treasure Forests, co-ops, etc., Woodland Advisory Program.  Potential resources: Extension
<b><u>Action/Strategy: Deploy research on who are non-participating landowners and what issues might trigger their interest. (5.0)</u></b>	Doing good work now: Yale, Mater, National Woodlands Ass., Blandin ...  Potential resources: USDA, foundations ...
<b><u>Action/Strategy: Stress the role of local landowner orgs by developing their capacity to provide services to woodland owners. (4.9)</u></b>	Doing good work now: Vermont Family Forests, Wisconsin Family Forests...Federation of Southern Cooperatives  Potential resources: tie public incentives to participation in them; use as vehicle for multi-owner planting, harvesting, etc.
<b><u>Action/Strategy: Promote programs that develop and elevate the role of loggers as sustainably-oriented professionals (4.7)</u></b>	Doing good work now: Master Logger programs in Maine, WI  Potential resources: certification fees, govt. funding for training.
<b><u>Action/Strategy: Develop and maintain markets for low-grade wood products, e.g. small diameter wood, biomass, etc. (4.7)</u></b>	Doing good work now: local, regional biomass markets, cogen facilities, US Forest Lab  Potential resources: industry interested in developing markets, extension agencies, energy producers., grants.
<b><u>Action/Strategy: Market-based incentive program for landowners and loggers utilizing community-based, vertically integrated enterprises to spur sustainable practices (4.5)</u></b>	Doing good work now: Appalachian sustainable development, Vermont Family Forests, Mass Woodlands Co-op  Potential resources: Consumers, Industrial development organizations.

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<p><b><u>Action/Strategy: Advance access to certification for private woodland owners, e.g. group certification. (4.5)</u></b></p>	<p>Doing good work now: Community Forestry Resource Center, WI DNR, NNRG, Stora Enso Potential resources: certification orgs....</p>
<p><b><u>Action/Strategy: Ecosystem services -- conduct research to quantify revenue streams that can be developed to support landowners &amp; orgs, such as water quality credits, carbon sequestration, etc. (4.4)</u></b></p>	<p>Doing good work now: CDS, California carbon credit, Forest Trends ... Kyoto Accords a start Potential resources: CIG grants from USDA NRCS....mil tax levy, taxes on resource use....</p>
<p><b><u>Action/Strategy: Expand public education effort linking sustainable forestry to other environmental issues and their constituencies. (4.4)</u></b></p>	<p>Doing good work now: Potential resources: in the marketplace with cause related marketing program. Seed fund from a foundation....</p>
<p><b><u>Action/Strategy: Establish a Conservation Security Program similar to agricultural. – contract with conservation districts or state forestry department to do outcomes on individual lands. (4.4)</u></b></p>	<p>Doing good work now: Conservation security program for ag. Potential resources: Broad multi-sector coalition</p>
<p><b><u>Action/Strategy: Promote landscape level management planning (multiple owners under common plan) (4.4)</u></b></p>	<p>Doing good work now: Wisconsin DNR, USFS Forest Stewardship Potential resources: Industry, associations, USFS Forest Stewardship</p>
<p><b><u>Action/Strategy: Develop technical competence in minority communities that would advance social and economic justice (4.3)</u></b></p>	<p>Doing good work now: National Network of Forest Practitioners, USFS Potential resources: International Paper, USDA/USFS, foundations...</p>
<p><b><u>Action/Strategy: Improve member benefits of woodland owner groups – insurance info, access to master loggers, certification, marketing, etc. (4.2)</u></b></p>	<p>Doing good work now: American Woodland Owners Council Potential resources:</p>
<p><b><u>Action/Strategy: Develop a “restoration workforce” capable of meeting needs of landowners interested in managing their land. (4.2)</u></b></p>	<p>Doing good work now: Watershed Center in Hayfork, CA ... Master Logger programs. Potential resources: Transfer from govt. support, foundation cost share, flexible govt. grants.</p>

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<p><b>Action/Strategy: <u>Shorten the supply chain for small forestland owners to the lumber procurement industry (4.1)</u></b></p>	<p>Doing good work now: co-op landowner groups. Northwest Sustainable Timber Growers</p> <p>Potential resources: Local entrepreneurs, govt. that specify local grown wood, NGOs.</p>
<p><b>Action/Strategy: <u>Facilitate implementation of low impact logging in equipment and training (4.1)</u></b></p>	<p>Doing good work now: Master logger programs.</p> <p>Potential resources: industry financing support, grants for training</p>
<p><b>Action/Strategy: <u>Revamp state forest tax laws to provide additional financial incentives (4.1)</u></b></p>	<p>Doing good work now: WI MFL, MN SFIA ...</p> <p>Potential resources: NASF, State woodland owner orgs, Forest industry, USFS...</p>
<p><b>Action/Strategy: <u>Provide forest based business support to strengthen local economy in exchange for covenant – Protect both health of forest and the businesses that do sustainable work (4.0)</u></b></p>	<p>Doing good work now: Massachusetts forest viability program pilot ...</p> <p>Potential resources: State....</p>
<p><b>Action/Strategy: <u>Assure government incentives are given to active members of landowner orgs, trusts, forest guild, co-ops, etc. (4.0)</u></b></p>	<p>Doing good work now: Wisconsin MFL .... American Farmland Trusts – costs of community services studies...</p> <p>Potential resources: govt.</p>
<p><b>Action/Strategy: <u>Advance models where communities can buy into ownership of forestland, to help stem forest conversion. (4.0)</u></b></p>	<p>Doing good work now: land trusts in Oregon</p> <p>Potential resources: Develop state policy, tax or financing mechanism to promote this option.</p>
<p><b>Action/Strategy: <u>Establish a wood marketing board on benefit value of sustainably managed woodlands – messages can be directed toward consumers and landowners (4.0)</u></b></p>	<p>Doing good work now: Dairy, pork marketing boards, etc.</p> <p>Potential resources: A “harvest tax” to support ongoing messaging</p>
<p><b>Action/Strategy: <u>Develop wood products marketing website (4.0)</u></b></p>	<p>Doing good work now: Sustainable Woods Network</p> <p>Potential resources: trade organizations.</p>
<p><b>Action/Strategy: <u>Support public preferential purchasing policies for local value added products and business (3.9)</u></b></p>	<p>Doing good work now:</p> <p>Potential resources: Govt.</p>
<p><b>Action/Strategy: <u>Establish common values and woodland owner community trust (3.9)</u></b></p>	<p>Doing good work now: MA Woods Co-op, WI Family Forests, Appalachian Sustainable Development., Women in Landownership</p> <p>Potential resources: national funder e.g. Ford</p>
<p><b>Action/Strategy: <u>Advance a market-based strategy to raise sustainability awareness (3.8)</u></b></p>	<p>Doing good work now: ??</p> <p>Potential resources: cost of natural services based through to consumer, govt. base</p>

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	support to fund.
<b><u>Action/Strategy: Support an association or club for teenagers whose parents own woodlands. Excites them and prepares them to take on the land. (3.7)</u></b>	Doing good work now: 4H Potential resources: woodland associations.
<b><u>Action/Strategy: Have a simple base standard or umbrella for "green" products in the marketplace, easily visible in the marketplace (3.2)</u></b>	Doing good work now: The Forests Dialogue, certification orgs. ...Minnesota wood, Maine Wood..? Potential resources: Retailers, federal grant...