

FAMILY FORESTS, TREE FARM & FSC

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DOVETAIL PARTNERS, INC.



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Summary

For decades, service providers have strived to deliver technical assistance and education programs to the diverse and large number of stakeholders included in the forestland ownership category - family forests. Recent developments in certification have exemplified the difficulties of these efforts, and as forest certification has grown, the challenges encountered in trying to apply certification to small-scale properties have been a constant reminder that forest management programs cannot be effectively applied in a one-size-fits-all fashion.

In the United States today, there are two programs most commonly utilized in the certification of family forestlands. The American Tree Farm System (ATFS) was created in 1941 and has been modified in recent years to address the current trends and expectations of market-driven certification systems. The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) was formed in 1993 and made special accommodations to address small property certification early in its development, but has only recently developed a specific program focused on the needs of family forests. Although the ATFS and the FSC are the two programs more commonly used to certify family forests in North America, several other approaches, including Green Tag, Master Logger Certification, and even limited auditing as outlined in the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and FSC procurement policies, are available to family forest owners interested in participating in the certified product marketplace.

This report explores the challenges and opportunities of family forest certification and the relative strengths and weaknesses of the American Tree Farm System (ATFS) and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) programs as they relate to family forestlands. This paper also touches on the other approaches that are available for these landowners. The goal of this paper is to assist family forest owners, and organizations working in their interest, in selecting and promoting the certification approach that best fits their needs and objectives.



Mission:

"To promote the growing of renewable forest resources on private lands while protecting environmental benefits and increasing public understanding of all benefits of productive forestry"

www.treefarmssystem.org



Mission:

"To promote environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests."

www.fscus.org

¹ Many professionals are now using the phrase "family forests" as a more market friendly term for those forests in the US Forest Service's classification: Non-Industrial Private Forestlands.

Introduction

Forest certification as a modern, marketplace initiative began little more than ten years ago, and arose largely in response to the perceived environmental threat of logging, especially in tropical forests. Since its beginnings, certification has struggled to balance benefits with costs. Forest certification was envisioned to be a market-driven program, with the goal of harnessing and growing a marketplace capacity to provide incentives and rewards to producers who follow the forest certification standard. To its most idealistic proponents, forest certification is a system that levels the playing field between large corporate producers and smaller community-based organizations and allows consumers to “vote with their dollars”. However, standard setting organizations and certifying bodies have yet to fully address the disproportionately high cost of certification incurred by small property owners, and consumers in North America remain largely oblivious to



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Non-industrial private ownerships represented 58% of U.S. timberland and accounted for 63% of the volume of growing stock removals in 2001. Timber harvest on non-industrial private forestlands increased by about 46% between 1986 and 2001.

Forest Resources of the United States, 2002, USDA, Forest Service, www.ncrs.fs.fed.us

the existence of certified wood as an environmental choice. Certification, regardless of the specific program, continues to be an investment that is limited primarily to the budgets of larger organizations or is accessed only with significant subsidies. The impacts of the economic barriers of certification have been particularly evident in the low level of participation from family forest owners in the United States.

There are approximately 290 million acres of timberland in the United States in the ownership category “non-industrial private forests” (NIPFs). Today this group is often referred to as “family forests,” although it includes individuals, partnerships, estates, trusts, clubs, and other organizations among its membership. It is estimated that there are approximately 10 million family forest owners in the United States, with 90% having properties smaller than 100 acres².

The American Tree Farm System (ATFS) has been in existence since 1941, and its membership includes approximately 51,000 family forest owners in 46 states covering 33 million acres. Since developing a group certification program and revised standards in 2002, the ATFS has issued four group certificates that cover approximately 1.25 million acres³.

Since the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) was first established, this program has offered group certification as a way to pool resources and share costs involved in the certification process. In the U.S. today the FSC recognizes roughly 40 group certificate holders totaling approximately 500,000 acres⁴.

² <http://sfp.cas.psu.edu/nipf.htm>

³ http://www.certificationwatch.org/article.php3?id_article=2167

⁴ FSC data, September 2004.

While growth in the certification of family forestlands has been slow, the expansion of forest certification in general has not been stifled by the absence of family forest participation. In North America, the certification of forestland is growing at a rapid rate with more than 18% of the forest area in the United States and Canada certified⁵. With industrial and public lands increasingly participating in forest certification, the continuing challenge is to share the responsibilities of sustainable forestry with family forest owners.

American Tree Farm System (ATFS)

The American Tree Farm System (ATFS) is a program of the American Forest Foundation (AFF). Membership in the ATFS is open to any individual or organization owning between 10 and 10,000 acres and having a written management plan that follows the AFF's standards. There is no cost or obligation to become an ATFS member. The ATFS is "committed to sustaining forests, watershed and healthy habitats through the power of private stewardship"⁶.

Public and private foresters have played a significant role in the widespread implementation of the program through providing volunteer services including free inspections. The ATFS also operates through state committees, often with administrative support from state forestry associations. The maintenance of a volunteer network in the face of shrinking budgets and the precedence of free inspections are two challenges facing the new ATFS programs.

The AFF approved revised standards in December 2002. These standards are to be applied to all newly enrolled properties and to existing Tree Farms' 5-year re-inspections *beginning July 1, 2004*. The AFF has sole ownership and control of any alterations to its Standards of Sustainability for Forest Certification. To facilitate adoption of the revisions, the AFF directed national staff to revise the inspection process, provide refresher training for inspecting foresters, and inform Tree Farmers about the new standards. The ATFS offers Lead Auditor training courses and On-Line Inspector Refresher Training, and the National Interpretations Committee has issued a report on interpretations of the standards with direction on how they are to be used by the certified ATFS Inspectors. For associations or individuals interested in more information about the ATFS Group Certification process, the *Manual for Group Organizations* is available.

Key Elements of Tree Farm

- National Operating Committee led by Tree Farmers
- 46 State Committees
- 4,000 Volunteer Inspecting Foresters
- 51,000 Family Forest Owners
- 33 Million Acres of Managed Forests
- Independently-reviewed Certification Standards

Criteria for Tree Farm certification:

- Ten acres or more in size;
- Maximum of 10,000 contiguous acres;
- Under an implemented, written management plan that accounts for water quality, wildlife habitat, and soil conservation, as well as the production of forest products, all according to our standards and guidelines; and
- Protected from fire, insects, disease, and destructive grazing.

http://64.177.25.182/cms/pages/11_3.html

⁵ UNECE/FAO Forest Products Annual Market Analysis, 2002-2004

⁶ http://65.109.144.60/cms/pages/69_1.html

The American Forest Foundation's Standards of Sustainability for Forest Certification include 9 Standards, 14 Performance Measures and 22 Indicators.

The 9 AFF Standards are:

1. Ensuring Sustainable Forests
2. Compliance With Laws
3. Commitment to Practicing Sustainable Forestry
4. Reforestation
5. Air, Water and Soil Protection
6. Fish, Wildlife and Biodiversity
7. Forest Aesthetics
8. Protect Special Sites
9. Wood Fiber Harvest and Other Operations

The complete Standards, including Performance Measures & Indicators are available at http://65.109.144.60/cms/test/26_34.html

An example of a complete AFF Standard with its Performance Measures & Indicators:

Standard 3: Commitment to Practicing Sustainable Forestry

Forest owners demonstrate their commitment to sustainability by developing and implementing a long-term forest management plan.

Performance Measure 3.1

Forest owners must have a written forest management plan consistent with the scale of forestry operations of the property.

Indicator 3.1.1

Management plans include: title page; type of ownership (e.g., fee simple, limited partnership, etc.); owners goals appropriate to the management objectives; tract map noting stands and conditions, important features including special sites, and management recommendations that address wood and fiber production, wildlife habitat, owner-designated fish, wildlife and plant species if desired, environmental quality, and, if present and desired by the landowner, recreational opportunities.

Indicator 3.1.2

Management plan is active, adaptive, and embodies the owners' current objectives, remains appropriate for the land certified, and reflects the current state of knowledge about forestry and natural resource management.

Performance Measure 3.2

Forest owners assure management activities are conducted in accordance with the management plan.

Indicator 3.2.1

On-site visit, interviews, and records confirm management activities are being conducted in accordance with the plan.

In addition to adopting new standards in 2002, the ATFS also piloted its group certification program. In April 2003, the ATFS announced their first certification of a non-industrial forest management firm under its program. Currently, the ATFS website⁷ lists four ATFS Certified Group Organizations: Meadwestvaco's CFM program in South Carolina, F&W Forestry Services Inc., Small Woodland Owners Association of Maine (SWOAM), and American Forest Management LLC. The SWOAM certification assessment involved 37 landowners representing 18,000 acres, the American Forest Management certification involved approximately 73 landowners with a total of about 215,000 acres⁸, and the F&W Forestry Services certificate includes about 100 landowners owning 600,000 acres.

American Tree Farm System®
Group Certifies F&W Forestry
Services: 600,000 Acres Certified
April 24, 2003

Washington, D.C. — The American Tree Farm System® (ATFS), announced today that 600,000 acres of forestlands owned by clients of F&W Forestry Services, Inc., in nine Southern states have been group certified as being managed in an environmentally-responsible and sustainable manner.

http://www.treefarmssystem.org/cms/pages/38_11.html

In a show of ingenuity, the ATFS offers a “pioneer Tree Farmer⁹” category for landowners who do not yet meet the standards and guidelines. Members in this category have five years to come into compliance. Many certification programs have been criticized for a “pass/fail” approach, and offering a trial period may be a safe and successful way to engage skeptical landowners.

There are several significant strengths and weaknesses to the American Tree Farm System as a forest certification system for family forests.

Table 1: American Tree Farm System Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths	Weaknesses
Highly applicable to the United States	Not an internationally recognized standard
Highly applicable to Family Forests	No chain-of-custody procurement program
Recognized by the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) Program	No separation between training of auditors and the standard setting organization
Large existing membership	No market recognized label for products
Nationwide program	No public reporting process

The most significant strengths of the ATFS are its long history, established reputation among participants, and standards and guidelines specific to small, family forests in the United States. The ATFS, and its logo, are arguably the most widely recognized forestry program in North America. It would be a significant accomplishment in the effort to improve forest management and engage family forest owners to translate this long history and established membership into a credible, market-based certification system.

⁷ <http://www.treefarmssystem.org/cms/pages/40.html>

⁸ http://65.109.144.60/cms/pages/38_32.html

⁹ <http://65.109.144.60/cms/pages/29.html>

The most significant weaknesses challenging the ATFS are that it is currently not recognized outside of the United States, and the program has historically relied on free, volunteer services. The ATFS is a member of the Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC, formerly Pan-European Forest Certification), which is a “global umbrella organization for the assessment of and mutual recognition of national forest certification schemes developed in a multi-stakeholder process.¹⁰” The ATFS Director was named to the PEFC’s Board of Directors in 2003, and the ATFS could pursue PEFC endorsement in the future.

American Tree Farm System® Awards First Group
Certification of Forestry Association
January 20, 2004

Washington, D.C. — The American Tree Farm System (ATFS), a program of the American Forest Foundation (AFF), announced that the Small Woodland Owners Association of Maine (SWOAM) has been certified under a new group certification program developed by ATFS. The initial group of 37 private forestland owners and their 18,000 acres were audited to AFF’s Standards of Sustainability by independent third-party auditor The Plum Line and recommended for group certification. This marks the first time in the United States that a forestry association has been granted group certification and that its group members’ forests are certified as well managed. At a ceremony in Augusta, attended by Maine’s Governor, John Baldacci, ATFS Director, Bob Simpson, presented SWOAM with their group certificate.

http://www.treefarmssystem.org/cms/pages/38_1.html

The ATFS faces the challenge of transforming itself from a free, volunteer based program to a fee-based service with paid auditors. To date, the results from ATFS’ group certification assessment show that the direct costs are at least several thousand dollars, and the early pilot projects have used various sources of funding as subsidies. For example, for the SWOAM audit, support came from L.L. Bean and International Paper, among others, and made it possible for the landowners’ fee to be in the range of \$50 to \$150 annually.³

An additional challenge is the credibility of the new AFF standards. Although the revisions in 2002 represent a significant

enhancement in the depth, breadth and rigor of the Tree Farm System, there are several aspects of the standards and the associated auditing procedures that differ sharply from other forest certification systems that have gained market acceptance. For example, the standards are not regionally tailored, many are arguably vague or discretionary and open to broad interpretation, audits occur on a five-year cycle rather than annually, and there is no requirement for public disclosure. The credibility of the standards and the new group certification program will be tested as they are more widely applied over the next few years. The credibility will be enhanced if the ATFS is able to complete its efforts to develop real time verification of Tree Farm membership status and enforce its de-certification process.

¹⁰ http://www.pefc.org/internet/html/about_pefc.htm

Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) was formed in 1993, and the U.S.-based office was established in 1995. The Forest Stewardship Council is an international membership organization. There are approximately 500 members, with 80 of those in the United States¹¹. There are approximately 3,277 companies in 66 countries that are FSC-certified to produce and market FSC products. Over 500 of these are in the United States. There are 658 FSC-certified forest management certificates, encompassing 113 million acres around the globe. About 12 million acres of forest are FSC-Certified in the United States¹².

From the beginning, the FSC has intended to make its certification program accessible to “all sizes, scales and types of forests around the world”¹³. Through its group certification program, the FSC has succeeded in certifying a wide variety of organizations and ownerships including members of forestry cooperatives, landowner associations, and clients of consulting foresters.

FSC Brings New Prosperity to Legendary Community

In the Brazilian municipality of Xapuri, Acre, community forest management to Forest Stewardship Council standards shines as a model for communities that seek to preserve their traditional forest-dependent livelihoods.

The Chico Mendes Association obtained FSC certification in March 2002, and was the first community forest operation in Brazil to do so.

Nine families in Acre currently participate in the FSC-certified community project, and are responsible for the management of 900 hectares of tropical forest. The FSC-certified wood is sold to the FSC-certified Etel furniture factory in the heart of the forest, a facility that provides revenue and jobs to the community.

http://www.fsc.org/fsc/about/case_studies/success_stories/2

In 1995, the SmartWood Program pioneered a Resource Manager Certification model that was subsequently approved by the FSC and has been widely applied. In this model, a consulting forester or similar responsible party holds the FSC certificate and is able to enroll clients or other interested landowners as members of their certified group. The responsible party in the FSC’s group certification structure holds the certificate and is the “group manager”. The group manager undergoes a field and office audit to verify compliance with the FSC-standard. The landowners are “group members” and are also audited with the requirement that group member properties must be visited at least once during the five-year certification contract. The FSC also offers a group chain-of-custody certification program for small businesses interested in producing and marketing FSC labeled products.

Despite the FSC’s efforts and commitments, the size and number of enrolled family and community forests in the FSC system has been slow to grow both internationally and

¹¹ eco-structure, Sept/Oct 2004, Interview with Michael Washburn, FSC-US

¹² <http://www.fscus.org>

¹³ <http://www.fsc.org/slimf/index.htm>

domestically. The FSC standard is often referred to as the highest forest certification standard available. With its requirements to address indigenous peoples' rights, monitoring and assessment, and high conservation value forests, the FSC principles attempt to both balance a diverse range of stakeholder interests and provide a rigorous measure of what constitutes a well-managed forest. However, these high standards and the associated auditing protocols have given the FSC a reputation as an expensive system that is difficult to meet successfully. Small property owners and managers have found it especially challenging to interpret the standards in relationship to the scope of their operations.

In response, the FSC initiated the "Small and Low Intensity Managed Forests" (SLIMFs) project in 2001. Recently renamed as FSC's "Family Forest Program", the committee for this project worked to identify the barriers facing family forest certification efforts and subsequently articulated solutions. The FSC Board of Directors reviewed the committee's recommendations in November 2003 and established a working definition for "small or low intensity managed forests" and approved streamlined assessment and auditing protocols for qualifying ownerships. Certification applicants in the United States and Canada that manage less than 2,500 acres are eligible for modified FSC assessment protocols that pilot projects have shown can reduce the expense of the FSC certification process by 20 to 50%. Lands and companies assessed using the FSC's Family Forest Program criteria are currently still required to meet the full FSC standard, but the second phase of the project involves exploring the FSC standard in detail and developing guidance regarding how standards should be interpreted in reference to small, low-intensity properties and perhaps identifying specific standards or portions of standards that are not applicable to family forests.

FSC launches new certification procedures for small and low intensity managed forests
January 23rd, 2004

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) has launched its new requirements for small and low intensity managed forests seeking FSC forest certification. These requirements enable eligible forests to be evaluated for FSC certification under a modified set of procedures including sampling levels that better reflect the size and management activities of the operation, greater emphasis on local rather than national stakeholder consultation, and a reduction in the number of required peer reviews.

http://www.fsc.org/fsc/whats_new/news/press_releases/3

FSC Definitions of Small, Low-intensity Forests

Small forest: FSC-US and FSC-Canada have defined a "small forest" as an area less than 1000 hectares (ha). *(FSC's international baseline is 100 ha.)*

Low intensity forest: The rate of harvesting is less than 20% of the mean annual increment (MAI) within the total production forest area of the forest management unit (FMU), **AND** the annual harvest from the total production forest area is no more than 5000 cubic metres (m³). *(All natural forests being managed exclusively for non-timber forest products (with the exception of NTFP plantations) are considered 'low intensity'.)*

Group of SLIMFs: All group members are either 'small forests' **or** 'low intensity forests', as defined above. There is no limit on the number of members in a group of SLIMFs.

The FSC has 10 Principles and 57 Criteria coupled with regional indicators and accompanying verifiers. The FSC has developed 9 regional standards for the United States.

The FSC Principles:

1. Compliance with Laws and FSC Principles
2. Tenure and Use Rights and Responsibilities
3. Indigenous People's Rights
4. Community Relations and Worker's Rights
5. Benefits from the Forest
6. Environmental Impact
7. Management Plan
8. Monitoring and Assessment
9. Maintenance of High Conservation Value Forests
10. Plantations

*The FSC's complete "Regional Forest Stewardship Standard for the Lake States – Central Hardwoods Region (USA)" is available at:
<http://www.fscus.org/documents/index.php>*

An example of an FSC Principle with one of its Criteria:

PRINCIPLE #7: MANAGEMENT PLAN

A management plan -- appropriate to the scale and intensity of the operations -- shall be written, implemented, and kept up to date. The long-term objectives of management, and the means of achieving them, shall be clearly stated.

7.1. The management plan and supporting documents shall provide:

- a) Management objectives.
- b) Description of the forest resources to be managed, environmental limitations, land use and ownership status, socio-economic conditions, and a profile of adjacent lands.
- c) Description of silvicultural and/or other management system, based on the ecology of the forest in question and information gathered through resource inventories.
- d) Rationale for rate of annual harvest and species selection.
- e) Provisions for monitoring of forest growth and dynamics.
- f) Environmental safeguards based on environmental assessments.
- g) Plans for the identification and protection of rare, threatened and endangered species.
- h) Maps describing the forest resource base including protected areas, planned management activities and land ownership.
- i) Description and justification of harvesting techniques and equipment to be used.

Table 2: Forest Stewardship Council Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths	Weaknesses
Internationally recognized standard	Standards not tailored to Family Forests
Chain-of-custody procurement program	Internal accreditation program
Market recognized label for products	Low awareness among landowners
Public reporting process	
Regionally specific standards	

The most significant challenge facing the application of FSC certification to family forests in the United States is to maintain the rigor and credibility of the FSC system as the FSC further develops and applies their Family Forest Program. As the FSC explores group certification at larger scales and debates the applicability of its standards for small ownerships, it will need to balance the benefits of greater accessibility and participation with the potential reduction in credibility that could occur if there is a perception that the standards are being weakened.

Other Certification Approaches

Besides the ATFS and FSC programs, there are several other approaches to family forestland certification.

The Green Tag program offers a set of standards and an assessment process that is available in all fifty states and lists more than 68,000 acres certified as of July 2004. More information about Green Tag Forestry is available at: <http://www.greentag.org/>

Many states have established Master Logger Programs that certify the operators’ harvesting practices. More information about the Maine program is available at: <http://www.masterloggercertification.com/>

In addition, both SFI and FSC offer procurement policies that allow wood from family forests and other lands to be included in SFI or FSC labeled products if certain basic criteria are met. The details of these polices are available from the respective programs.

So what are the choices?

The choice of a certification program is tied to the motivations of ownership and the benefits landowners hope to achieve by undertaking the certification process. There are many motivations and potential benefits of certification that appear common to all ownerships; these include market access, an opportunity to make a public statement on the quality of forest management being practiced, and the opportunity to increase the value of the resource. However, in reviewing their selection priorities, the interests of small landowners can vary significantly from their public and/or industrial counterparts.

“The Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI), Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), and Canadian Standards Association (CSA) certify that wood products industries are managing their lands in a manner that will not jeopardize the availability of forest resources for future generations. The International Standardization Organization (ISO 1401), certifies production practices, ensuring that mills are operated in a safe and efficient manner. The Certified Logging Professional (CLP) program certifies the technical and safety skills of individual loggers working in wood harvest operations in Maine.”

–Master Logger Certification Program in the State of Maine
<http://www.masterloggercertification.com/April%20revision.p>

One key benefit of the certification process that is often unrecognized initially is the opportunity to obtain an independent review and objective feedback on current forestry practices. For professional land managers this feedback offers the opportunity to discuss management decisions and the latest practices with peers, but for family forest owners this feedback opportunity can be much more significant. The information resulting from new eyes with new ideas looking at a property can result in a reawakening to various management opportunities, and landowners are often reinvigorated by the possibilities. A landowner participating in the ATFS group certification pilot in Maine said it best when he said, “The interesting thing to me was the opportunity to have two inspectors walk on to my land with me and answer more questions in a different way than the forester that I work with...it was a wonderful opportunity to get another perspective on my land.”¹⁴ In addition, this independent review provides a level of assurance to the landowners that their forest management practices are responsible and that their land managers are trustworthy.



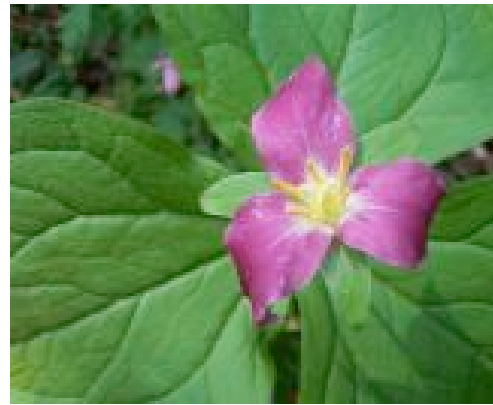
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Perhaps the greatest distinctions between ATFS and FSC come down to the differences in their relative accessibility and the rigor of their respective standards.

Perhaps the greatest distinctions between ATFS and FSC come down to the differences in their relative accessibility and the rigor of their respective standards. Historically, the ATFS has been the most accessible forestry program in existence. It is free to join and a large network of public and private sector volunteers has provided management assistance and inspection services. On the other hand, until very recently, there have been few requirements for ATFS membership, minimal accountability or enforcement, and the standards were limited in scope and intensity. The recent efforts of the ATFS to institute a group certification program, new forestry standards, and additional education requirements for auditors are a reflection of their interest in becoming a more rigorous program. Alternately, FSC is currently the most rigorous forest certification system available. The FSC has an internationally recognized standard, chain-of-custody tracking, and a labeling program. The FSC’s initiation of the SLIMFs project and adoption of the “family forests program” are a direct attempt to address the issue of access. Clearly, if ATFS can unite their diverse membership under a rigorous third party certified program, they will have one of the most recognizable and effective systems in the U.S. Additionally, if the FSC can maintain the integrity of its standards in the eyes of its supporters and the marketplace as it enrolls lands of more diverse ownership and scale, it will demonstrate that the bar for well-managed forests does not need to be lowered to accommodate family forests.

¹⁴ “Group Certification: The Small Woodland Owners Association of Maine, Forest Certification Watch, Sept. 2004

The subtle and not-so-subtle differences between the certification programs available to family forests, industrial forests, and others are an indication of the variability that exists and is a healthy component of the on-going debate on what constitutes responsible, sustainable forestry. Family forest owners deserve to be part of this debate and should be called upon to contribute through their independent selection of the certification system they feel best fits their needs and goals. From the perspective of an organization or agency that is working in the interest of family forest owners, *the critical role is to provide quality information and equal access to the various certification programs to ensure that the individual landowners are able to successfully complete a robust selection process. When choice is limited, or even perceived to be forced, it is unlikely that family forest owners will embrace certification wholeheartedly or make the long-term management decisions and commitments necessary to meet and maintain associated standards.*



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When choice is limited, or even perceived to be forced, it is unlikely that family forest owners will embrace certification wholeheartedly or make the long-term management decisions and commitments necessary to meet and maintain associated standards.

Conclusion: What is the bigger picture?

The Non-Industrial Private Forest ownership category represents 58% of total timberland in the US; therefore, it is critical that this group is included in any programs that impact long-term forest management. Forest certification is one such program.

Certification of family forests is a way to help deliver the wood supplies that the marketplace is increasingly demanding, to recognize and reward the practice of responsible forestry on more acres, and through their choice, to give family forest owners an opportunity to make a public statement about their values.

Kathryn Fernholz has worked on family forest management issues and the challenge of increasing landowner access to certification for the past five years. Prior to Dovetail Partners, Kathryn developed and managed a group certification project for family forest owners in the Upper Midwest. Kathryn has also helped landowners in other regions of the United States and Canada increase their understanding of certification, improve their compliance with the standards, and realize the various benefits of participation. Kathryn has a B.S. degree in Forest Resources from the University of Minnesota and also studied at the College of Saint Benedict in St. Joseph, MN and Sheldon Jackson College in Sitka, Alaska.

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