

# American Tree Farm System & Family Forestry

Fred Euphrat, PhD RPF

---

Consultant in Sonoma & Mendocino Counties

Santa Rosa Jr. College Adjunct

707.591.5966

[fred@euphrat.org](mailto:fred@euphrat.org)



# Who helps us?

---

- American Tree Farm System & Foundation
- Forest Landowners of California
- Certification via Smartwood & Others
- Carbon Sequestration Networks
- Plant and Wildlife Protection Associations
- Watershed Organizations
- California Licensed Foresters' Association
- Licensed Timber Operators' Association
- UCANR

# American Tree Farm System

Vast Resource

Family Oriented

‘Tree Farm’ label

Simple Certification

The land has been in her family for three generations. Sitting in the middle of Pennsylvania, it is a zig zagged shaped tract at the headwaters of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Stately white oaks, red oaks, hickories and more are mixed in with a few small patches of open grass fields and wild flowers.

Her first encounter with the struggles of land ownership came when she was just a teenager. Her grandfather, who purchased the property in 1943, had never formally set up succession planning for the land. So when he passed, Susan's father, Lewis Shoemaker, had to fight other family members to keep it from being broken up and sold.

"When my grandfather died, my father basically lost his whole family, because he never spoke to any of them again," she recalls. "I was just 16 years old – which was old enough to understand the toll land can take on a family."

#### The Benedict Family Uses the Sale of Timber to Pay for Taxes and Management of the Land

While Lewis had no formal forestry background, he, like other landowners, had a determination to keep the land in trees and keep it healthy and productive. For Susan, this meant weekends spent at Bear Town, helping her father and brothers do much of the hard labor themselves – clearing out the 8 miles of roads, cutting firewood and other chores. It was fulfilling work, but much of it was done without guidance or professional advice. And that meant mistakes were made and lessons learned.

"In the 1970's, there were a lot more landowners who didn't know about sustainable forestry. So when we had a harvest, we did something called a 'diameter limited cut' – meaning they would come in and take the trees larger than 17 inches that would make good, straight poles and such. We didn't realize it, but it's what modern-day forestry



would consider high grading. It's not a sustainable practice. We were fortunate though. Our property has incredible soil, and we had very good regeneration. But a lot of properties in our area that did the same thing were not as lucky."

#### Susan Seeks the Help of Professionals to Help Her Care for Her Land

It wasn't until many years later, in the 1990's that they began formally working with a forester. He helped Lewis, Susan and her brothers write a forest management plan and guided them on the best practices for harvesting such as taking the smaller, lower quality trees first, to allow more room for the quality trees to grow and

seed regeneration. In no time at all they began to see the difference in overall health of their stands, and in the wildlife that increased.

#### Taking Over the Family Legacy and the Management Bills

Before her father passed in 2006, he sat Susan down to give her instructions on carrying on his legacy.

"He said to me sternly 'Don't piss away this land. It's important to me. It's important to our family. And it's important to something bigger than us both.' I really took that to heart."

Several months later, she set up a meeting with their forester. She wanted to get a feel for how he and her father had managed the land, and build out a plan for the future.



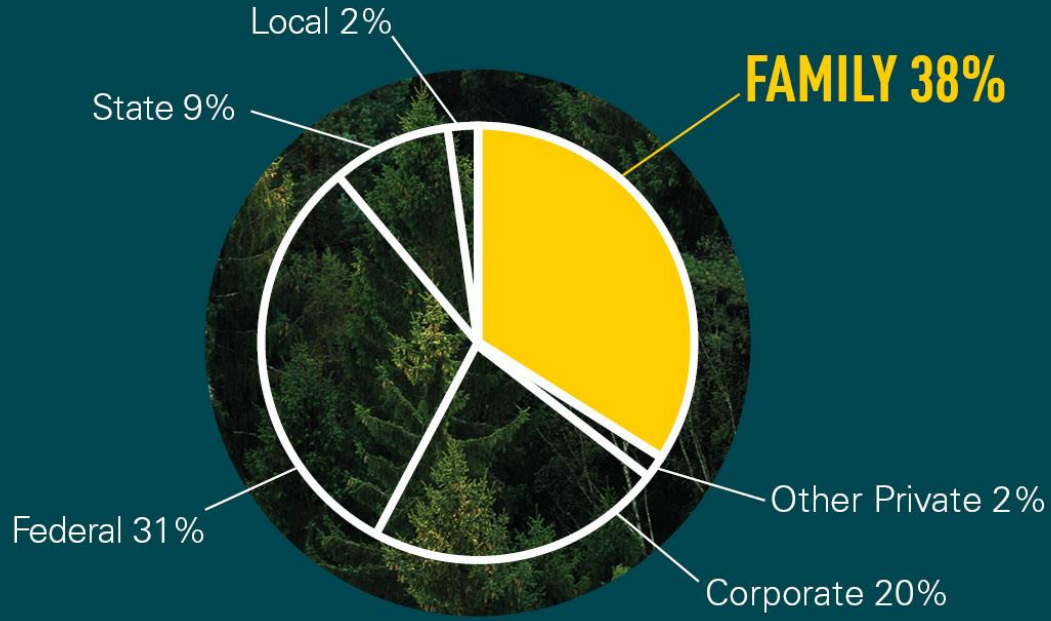


# The AFTS is part of the American Forest Foundation

---

## Vision Statement:

The American Forest Foundation seeks a future where **family-owned forests** and the interconnected social, economic, and ecological benefits received from them **are recognized and supported** by landowners, policymakers, conservationists, philanthropists, and business leaders.



## FAMILY FOREST OWNERS OWN THE LARGEST PORTION OF U.S. FORESTS



THERE ARE 21 MILLION FAMILY FOREST OWNERS IN THE U.S., OR **1 IN 4** RURAL AMERICANS.



COLLECTIVELY, THERE ARE **290 MILLION ACRES** OF FAMILY-OWNED FORESTS IN THE U.S.

This is more than the area of California and Texas combined.

# FAMILY FOREST OWNERS **FACE CHALLENGES** IN CARING FOR THEIR FORESTLAND



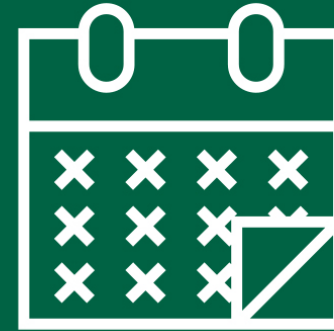
## **LACK OF AWARENESS:**

The majority of landowners are not aware of the programs and resources available to help them care for their land.



## **LACK OF EXPERTISE:**

Only 20% of landowners have received formal advice from a forester.



## **TIME-CONSUMING PROCESS:**

It can take anywhere from 2-6 months to get a forest management plan written by a professional.



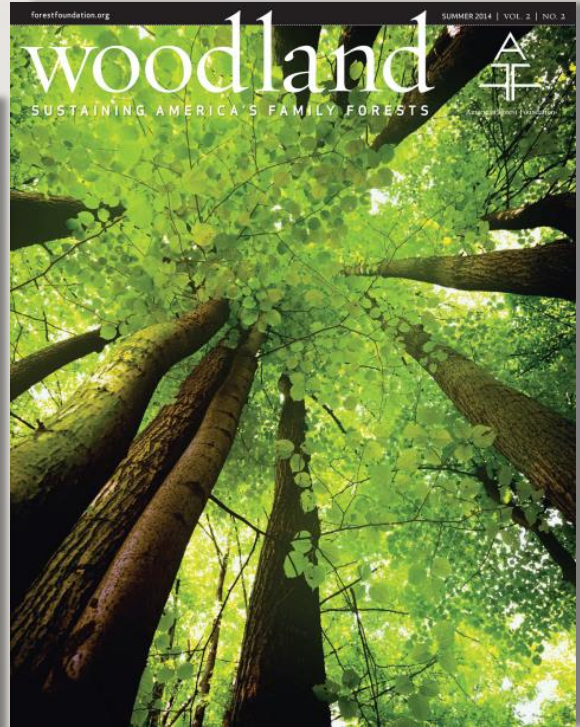
## **HIGH COSTS:**

For example, in the West, it costs \$2,500 an acre to remove debris and trees that fuel wildfires.



# Resources !

---





# FAMILY FOREST OWNERS CARE ABOUT THEIR LAND AND WANT TO DO THE RIGHT THING

Top reasons forest owners own land:



**WILDLIFE**



**BEAUTY**



**LEGACY**

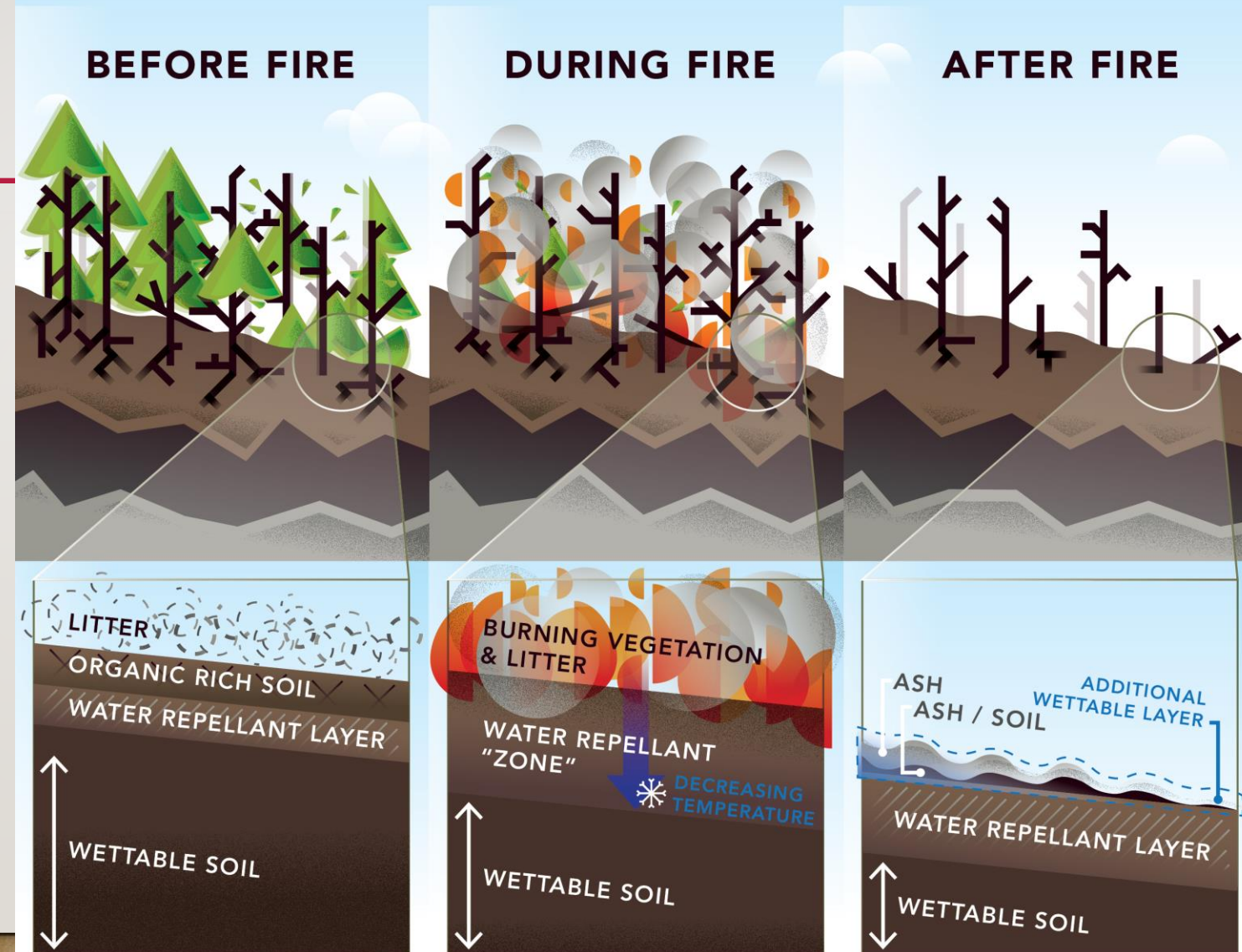


**PRIVACY**



## Forest information

- Fire, for instance →
- Woodlots & Farms
- Watershed protection
- Best management practices
- Forest contracts
- Personal stories



LITTER (needles, leaves, dead grass, bark, etc) | WETTABLE SOIL (receives, filters and stores moisture)

WATER REPELLANT LAYER (decomposition of waxy material that comes from plant residues - these materials can coat soil, preventing water from filtering through)



# Forest Policy and Advocacy





# ATFS-Certified Forests

## LEED Rating System - Internationally Recognized



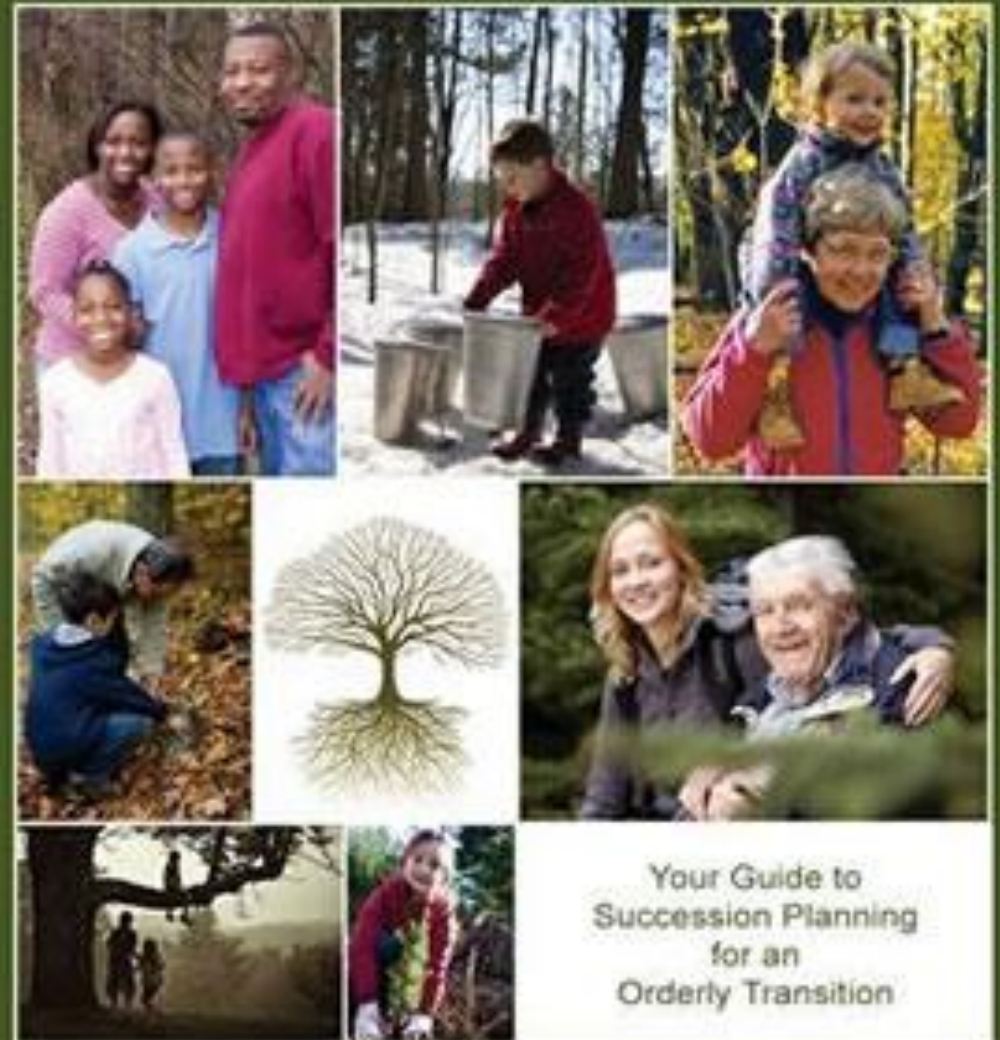


# ATFS focuses on Family Future

- Ties to the Land at OSU →
- Successional Planning
- Estate Tax Planning
- Conservation Easements

## Ties to the Land

Your Family Forest Heritage





# Why Join Forest Networks?

---

- Great field trips
- Monetizing tips
- Finding Foresters & Loggers
- Insurers and Safety
- Community
- Free Forester visit
- Fire coordination
- Forest improvement
- Certification Standards
- Great Signs





BY VISIONS  
OF THE FUTURE  
OF THE WORLD

NO  
HUNTING