



Pennsylvania

Department of Conservation  
and Natural Resources

# CARING FOR YOUR WOODLAND PROPERTY

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in Middlesex Township (and beyond!)

**Jessica Pierce**

Service Forester

Clear Creek Forest District

Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and  
Natural Resources

# Pennsylvania State Forest Districts



# Bureau of Forestry Mission



**“Conserve, steward, and enhance Pennsylvania’s trees, forests, and native wild plants and connect with all the people and communities we serve.”**





Middlesex Township Woodlands

Forest Health Challenges

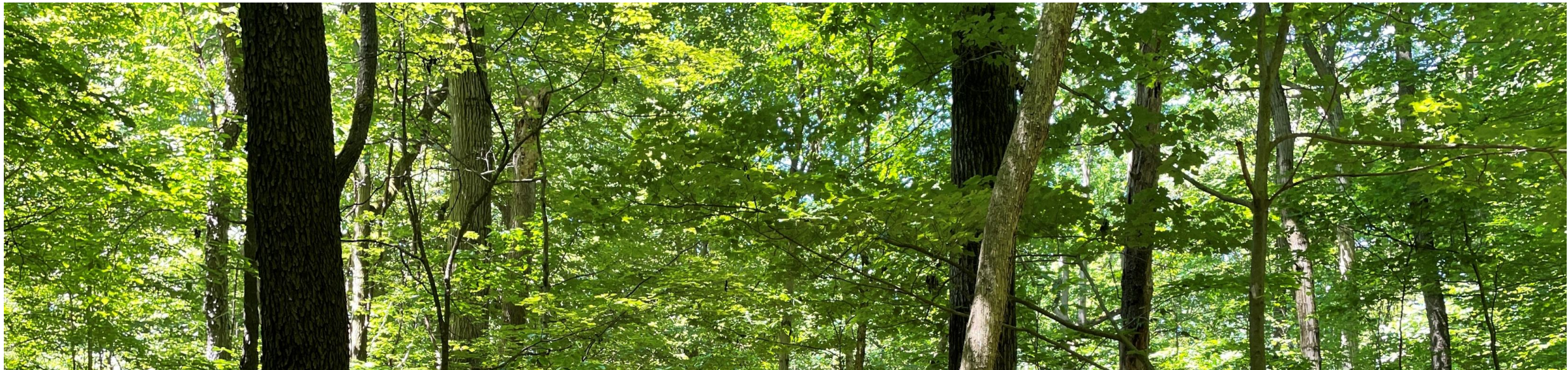
Professional Resources

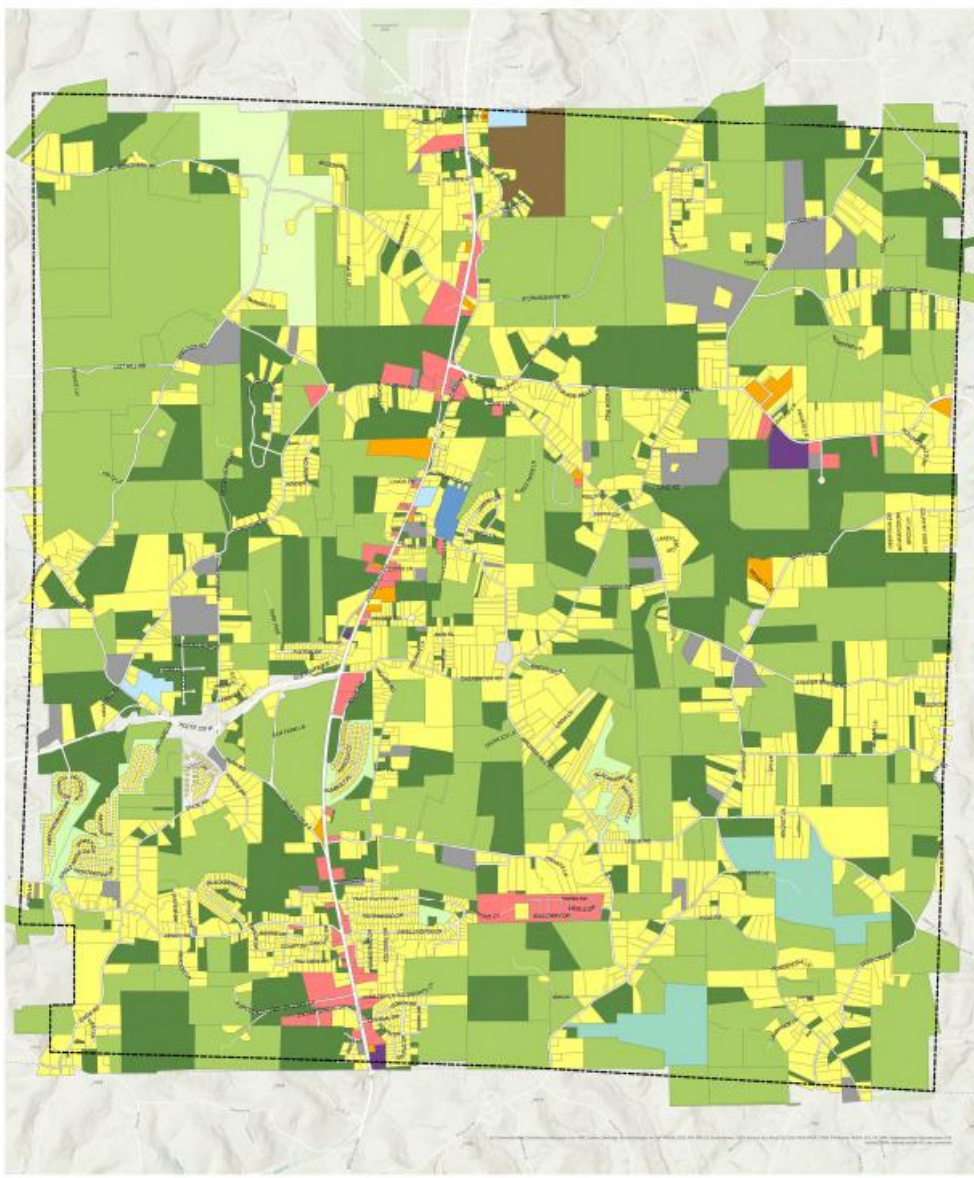
Managing Forests with Intention

Forest Management Projects



# Middlesex Township Woodlands





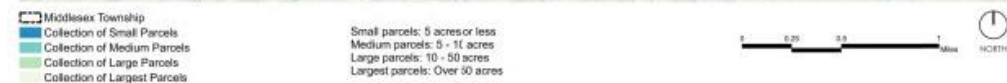
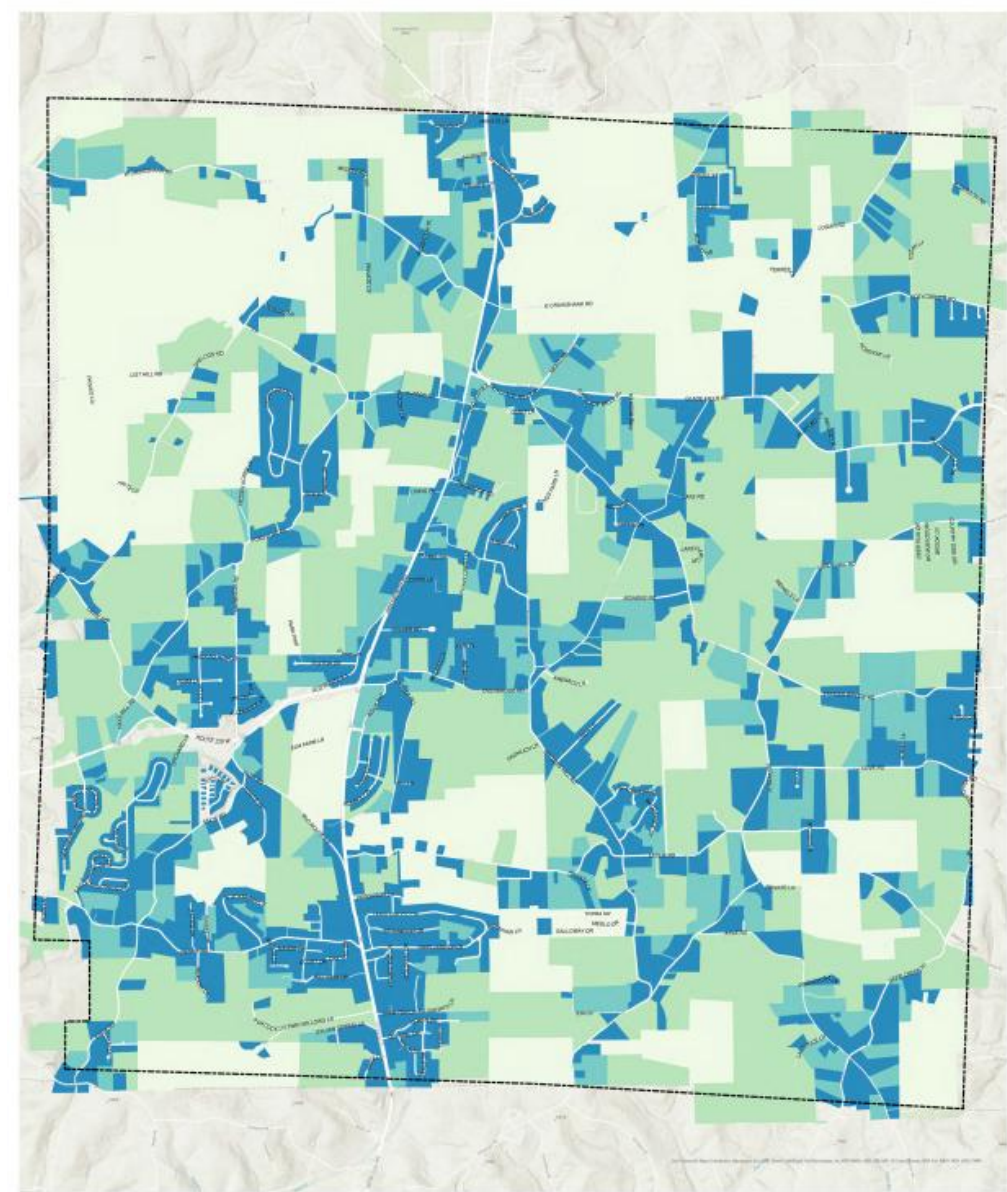
## FOREST FACTS

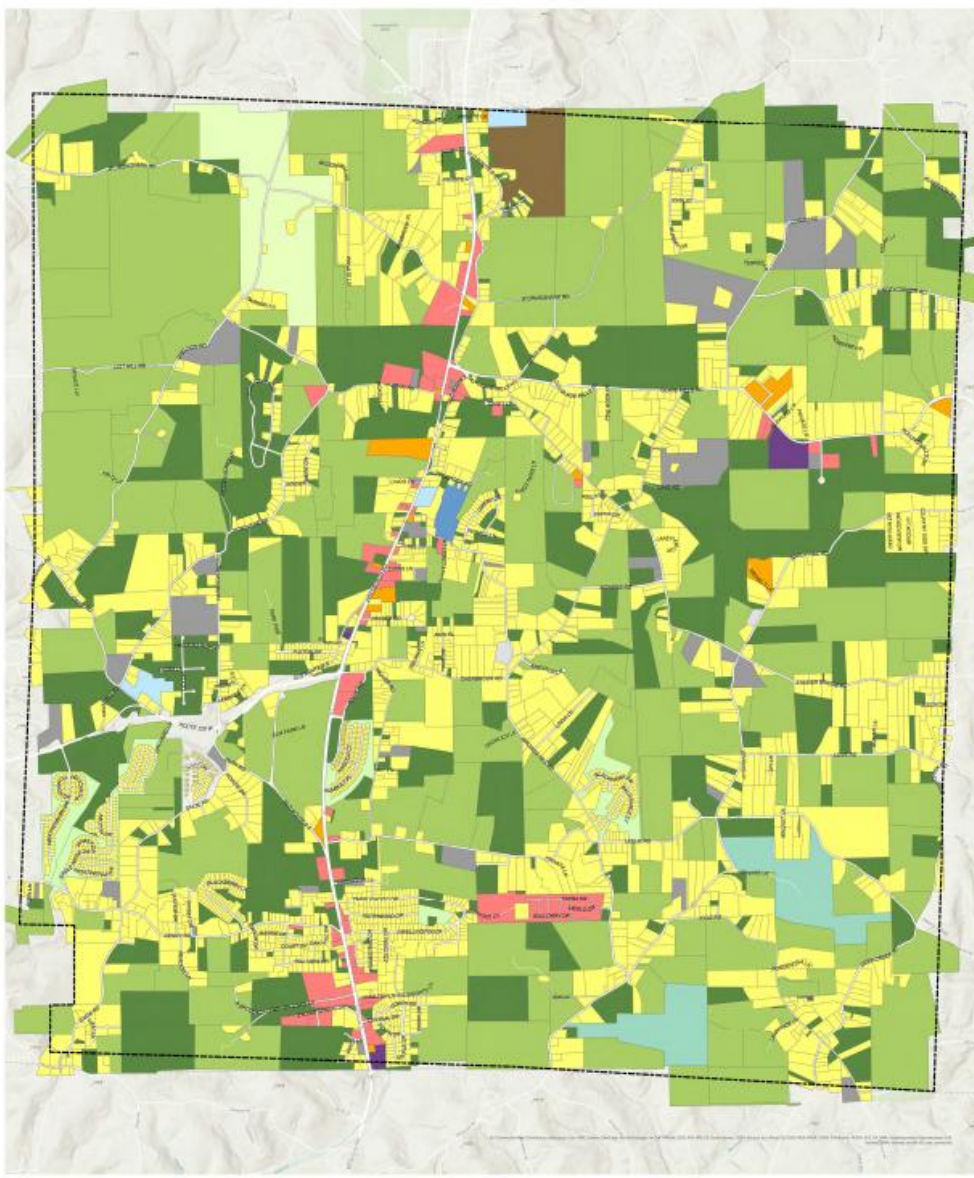
Middlesex Twp. is

- 55% forested
- 8,140 acres forested
- 97% of forested land is privately owned

Pennsylvania is

- 58% forested
- 16.7 million acres forested
- 69% of forested land is privately owned





## FOREST FACTS

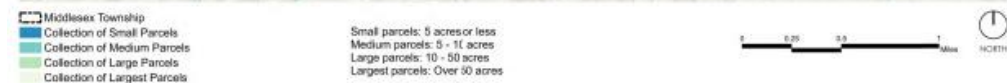
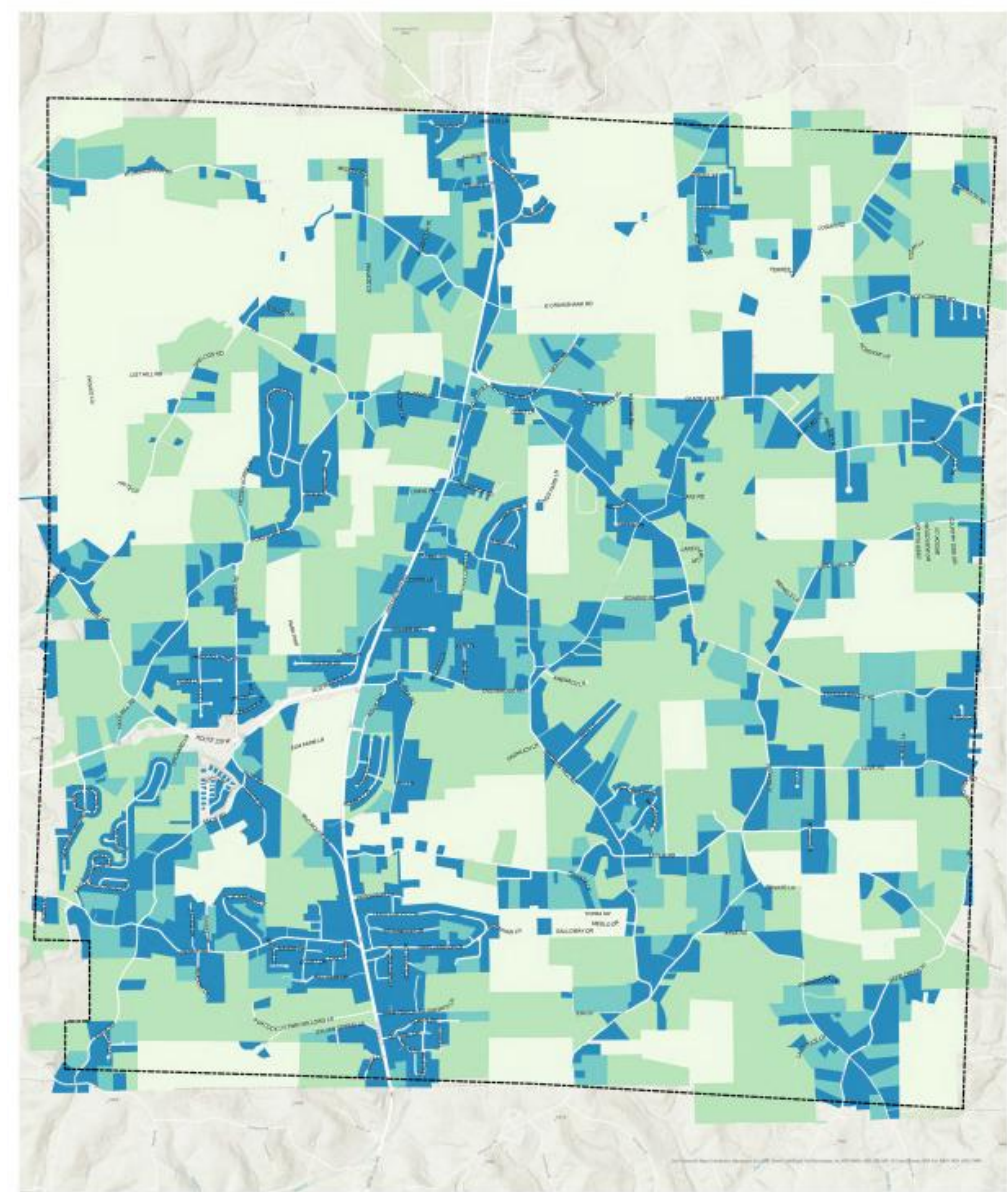
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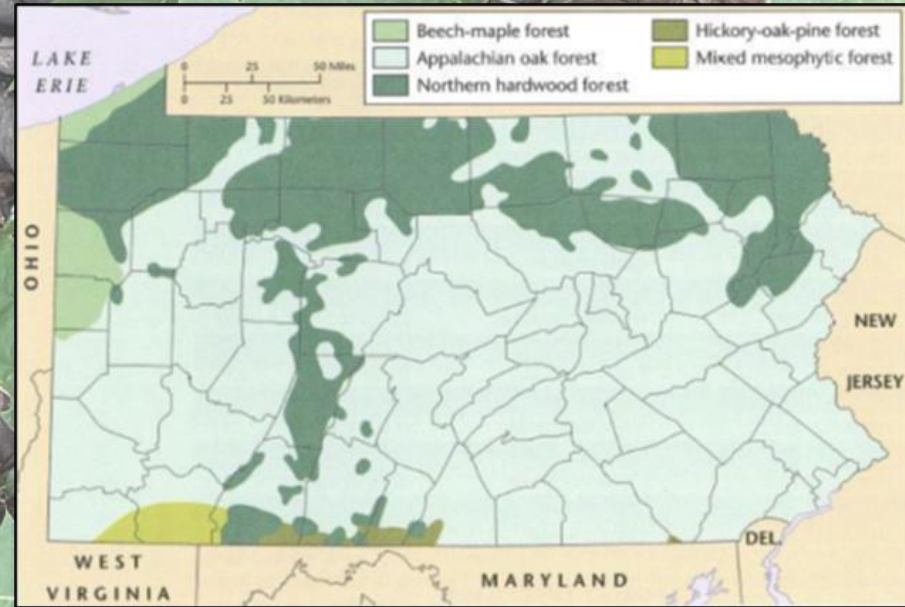
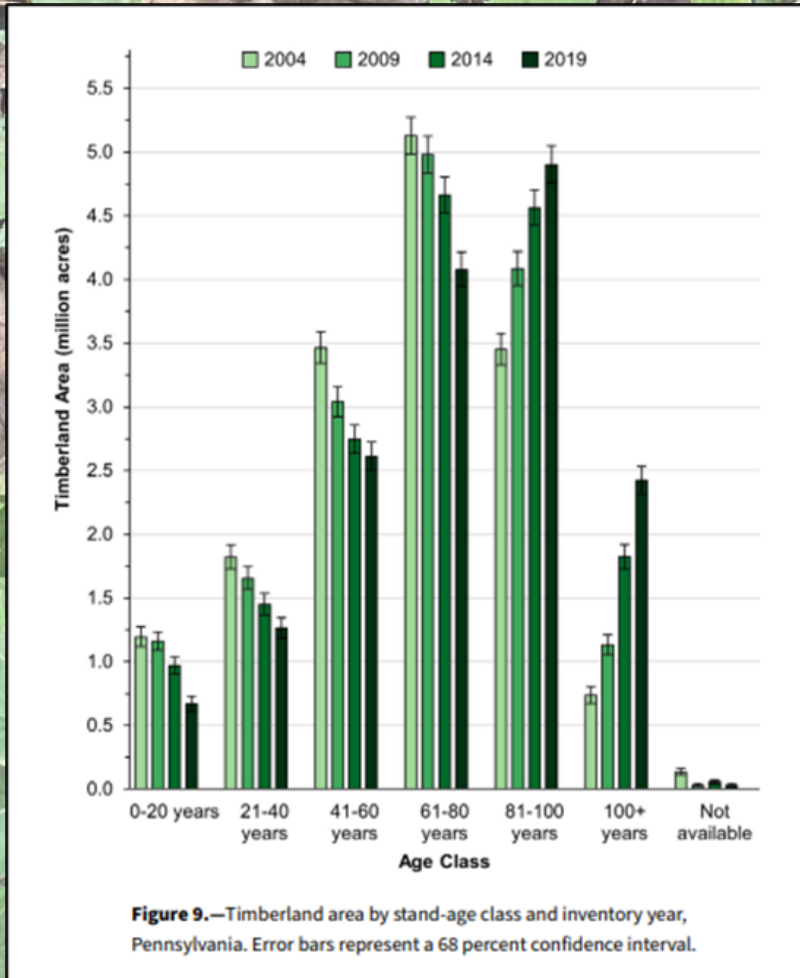
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Cooperstown 1938 to 2025

# Forests of Pennsylvania



Most of Middlesex Township's forests are mature oak hickory forests *or* old field forests dominated by red maple, black cherry, and declining ash

A photograph of a forest with a large, bright green leaf in the foreground. The leaf has some small holes, suggesting insect damage. The background is filled with many thin tree trunks and dense foliage, creating a sense of a healthy, mature forest.

**What makes a  
forest healthy?**

**Diverse**

**Sustainable**

# What makes a forest healthy?

**Resilient**

**Supports Native Ecosystems**

A photograph of a forest during autumn. The foreground is dominated by large, bright yellow leaves with serrated edges, likely from a maple tree. The background shows a dense forest of green pine trees and other foliage, with some trees showing early autumn colors. The overall scene is bright and natural.

**Why do healthy  
forests matter?**



Take a  
deep  
breath and  
thank a  
tree!





# Forest Health Challenges



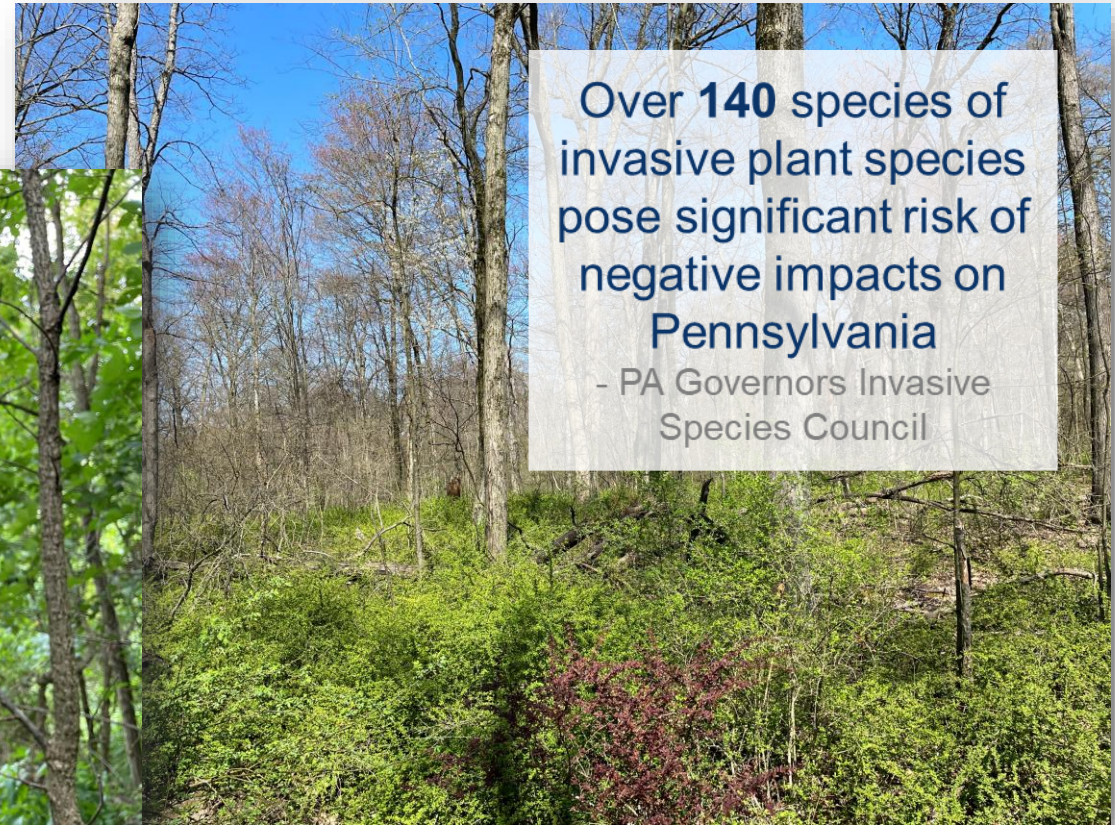
# Threats to Butler County Forests



## Elevated Whitetail Deer Populations



## Non-native, invasive plants



Over **140** species of invasive plant species pose significant risk of negative impacts on Pennsylvania  
- PA Governors Invasive Species Council

**forests that are struggling to regenerate**

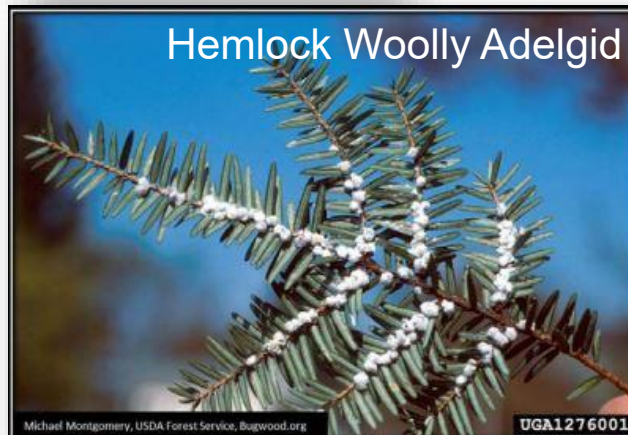
# Threats to Butler County Forests



## Fragmented Landscapes



## Insects and Disease

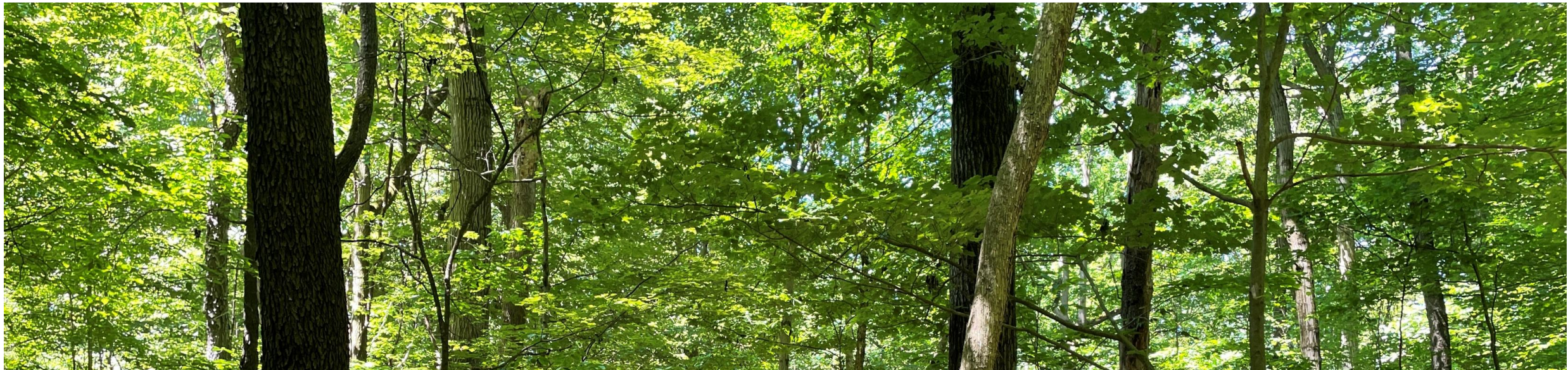


Other Challenges  
for Healthy Forests:

Poor Land Use  
Planning, Changing  
Climate, Damaging  
Timber Harvests,  
Extraction Impacts,  
etc.



# Professional Resources



# Helpful Resources



DCNR Service Foresters

Consulting Foresters

USDA Natural Resource  
Conservation Service (NRCS)

Wildlife Organizations, such as  
the Ruffed Grouse Society,  
Pheasants Forever, Wild Turkey  
Federation, Deer Management  
Association, etc.



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- Answer forestry questions and help people find the resources they need
- Property visits – walk with landowners to answer questions and provide site-specific forest management recommendations based on landowner goals and objectives, including advice on:
  - Sustainable forest management
  - Forest health
  - Tree planting
  - Invasive plant control
  - Forest habitat improvements
  - Available forestry programs

# Helpful Resources



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A service forester is assigned to every county in Pennsylvania. Contact your service forester using the form linked below.



### Have questions about your woods?

Use this form to get in touch with a Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Service Forester in your county. Our foresters provide professional advice to help you care for your forest land. Once you submit your information, your county's forester will reach out to you directly.

[Contact a DCNR Service Forester](#)

# Helpful Resources



## Penn State Extension and the James C. Finley Center for Private Forests

- Articles, Webinars, and Newsletter
- Pennsylvania Forest Stewards Program
- Statewide Forest Landowner Conference
- <https://extension.psu.edu/forests-and-wildlife>

## Pennsylvania Forestry Association

- <https://paforestry.org/>

### Stay connected with the Forestry and Wildlife Team!

Sign-up to receive news, upcoming event information, and the bi-monthly e-newsletter.

*Woods and Wildlife News* has the latest news and information on publications, videos, and online and in-person events. The six yearly editions of this newsletter covers topics like vegetation management, private forest landowner issues, wildland fire and ecosystem services, forest taxation, timber markets, wildlife, youth education, and more.

By entering your email, you consent to receive communications from Penn State Extension. [View our privacy policy.](#)



# Tools for Landowners



## **Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program**

County Natural Heritage Inventory, Plant Factsheets, and Conservation Explorer Map

<https://naturalheritage.dcnr.pa.gov/>

## **Penn Pilot**

Pennsylvania Historical Aerial Database (1930s-1960s)

[Penn Pilot](#)

## **Butler County Tax Map**

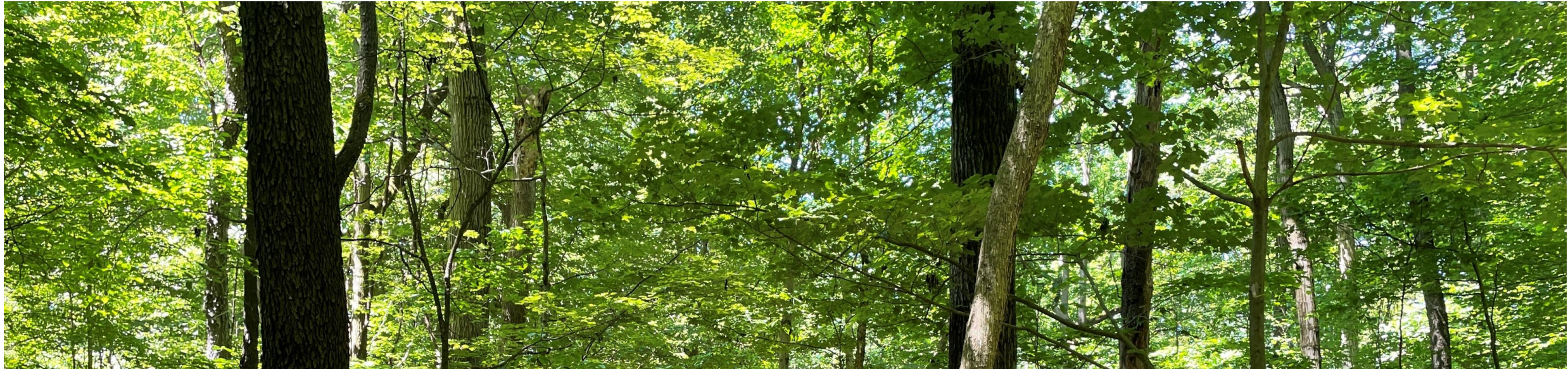
Can measure acreage, draw, and print map

[Butler County, PA: Parcel and Tax Map](#)

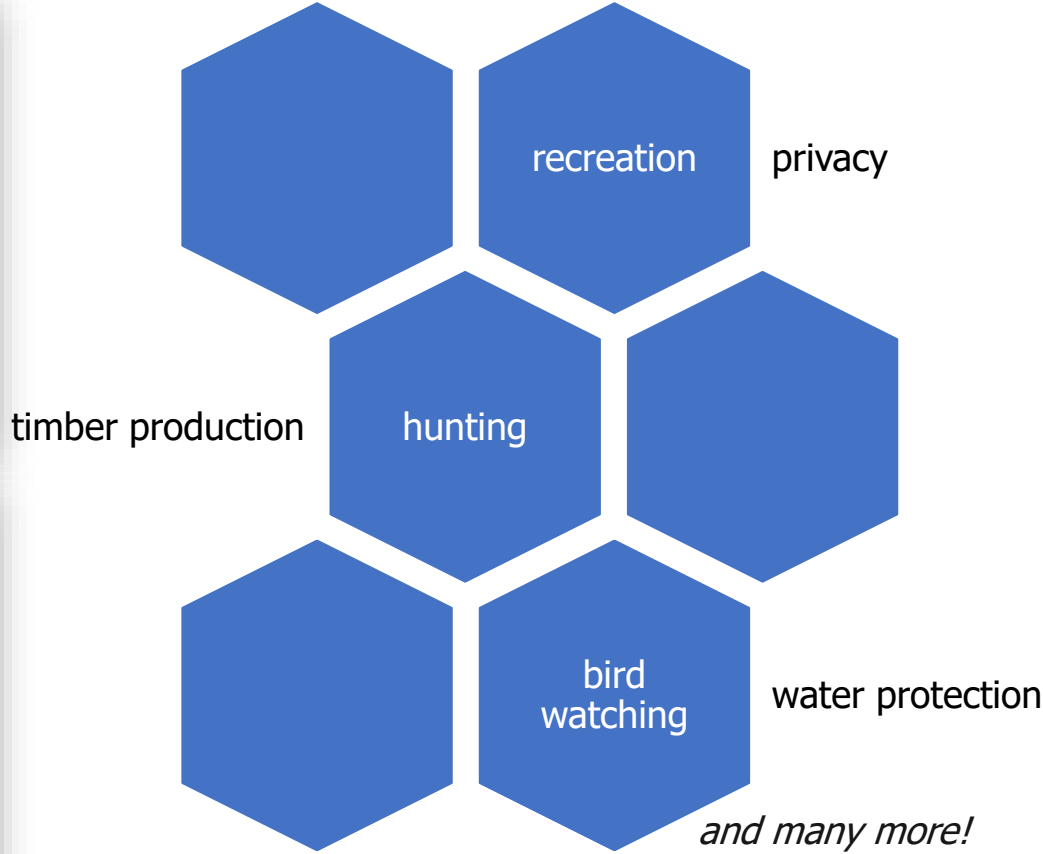




# Managing Forests with Intention



# Define Your Objectives



# Management Plans



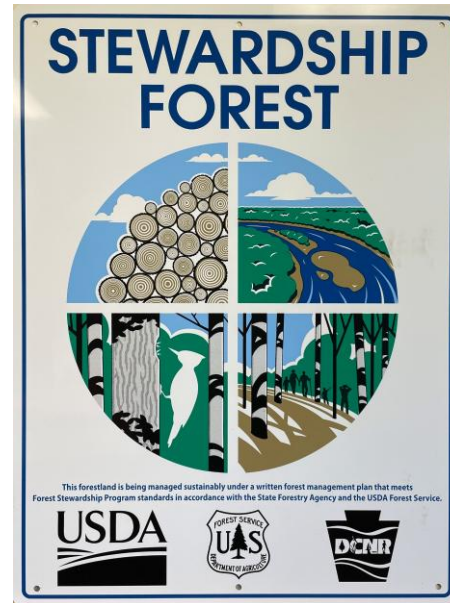
more ← typical level of detail ← less

Timber Plan

Forest Management Plan

Forest Stewardship Plan

NRCS Plan - CPA 106



**ANY PLAN THAT HELPS YOU BEST CARE FOR YOUR LAND IS A USEFUL PLAN!**

**Butler Service Center**  
625 Evans City Road, Suite 102  
Butler, PA 16001  
(724) 482-4800

**District Conservationist Contact**  
Sydney Feits  
[sydney.white2@usda.gov](mailto:sydney.white2@usda.gov)

**USDA** United States  
Department of  
Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service

# Management Plans



## Other Program Specific Plans:

Family Forest Carbon Program

[Family Forest Carbon Program | Earn Income from Your Woodlands](#)

Tree Farm Certified Family Forest Plan

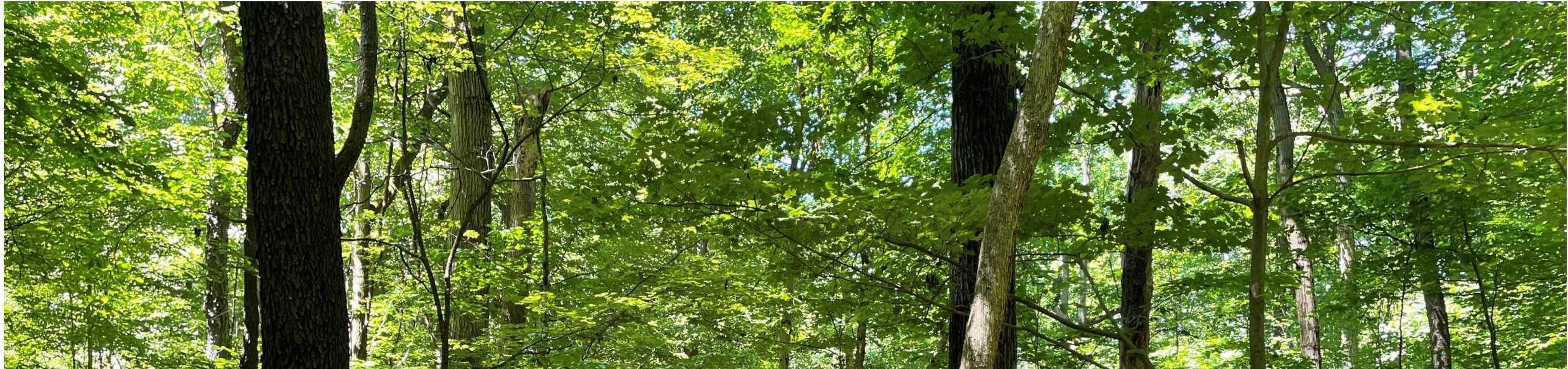
[PA Forestry Association | Tree Farm](#)



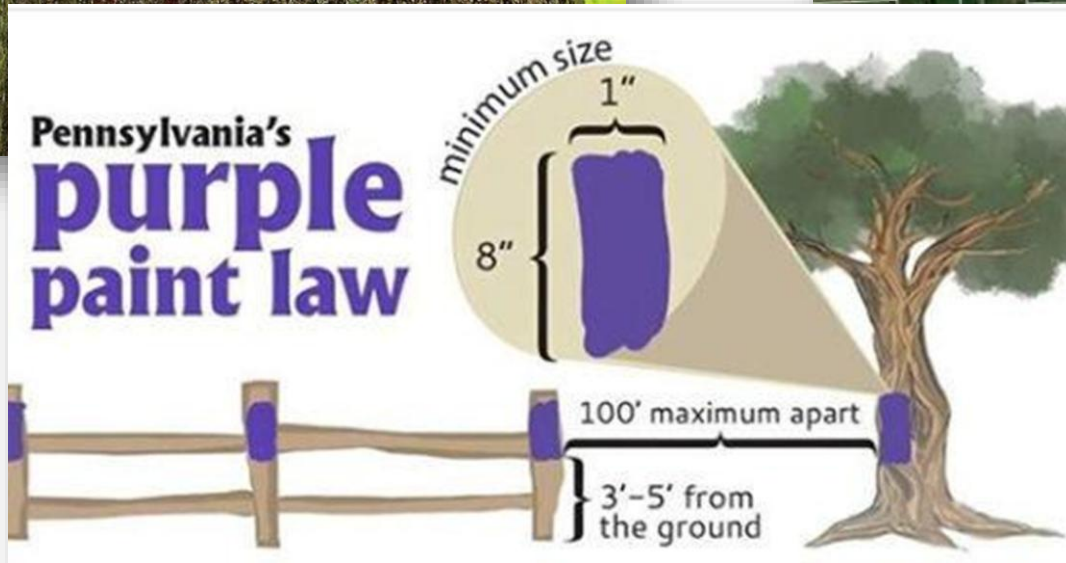
**ANY PLAN THAT  
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# Forest Management Activities



# Mark your Boundaries



# Managing Invasive Plants



## Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM)

### – Cultural

Making the environment unsuitable for the pest

### – Mechanical

Hand or machine removal

### – Biological

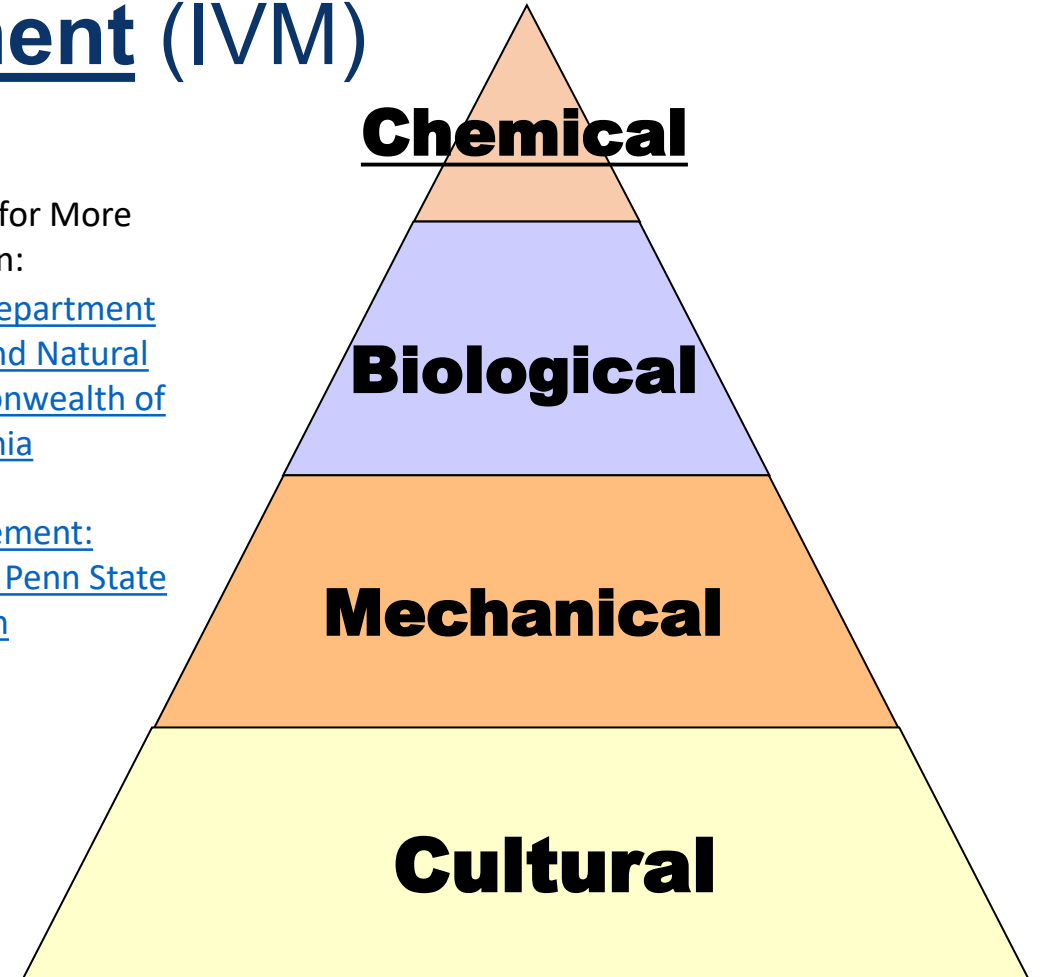
Natural pest controls

### – Chemical

Pesticides

Online Resources for More Information:  
[Invasive Plants | Department of Conservation and Natural Resources | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#)

[Forest Management: Competing Plants | Penn State Extension](#)



# Managing Invasive Plants



## Cultural Prevention Strategies

Watch fill material!

Don't spread infestations!

- Learn about invasives so you don't spread them
- Don't purchase invasive plants
- Clean equipment between treatment areas

Japanese barberry and Japanese stiltgrass



# Managing Invasive Plants



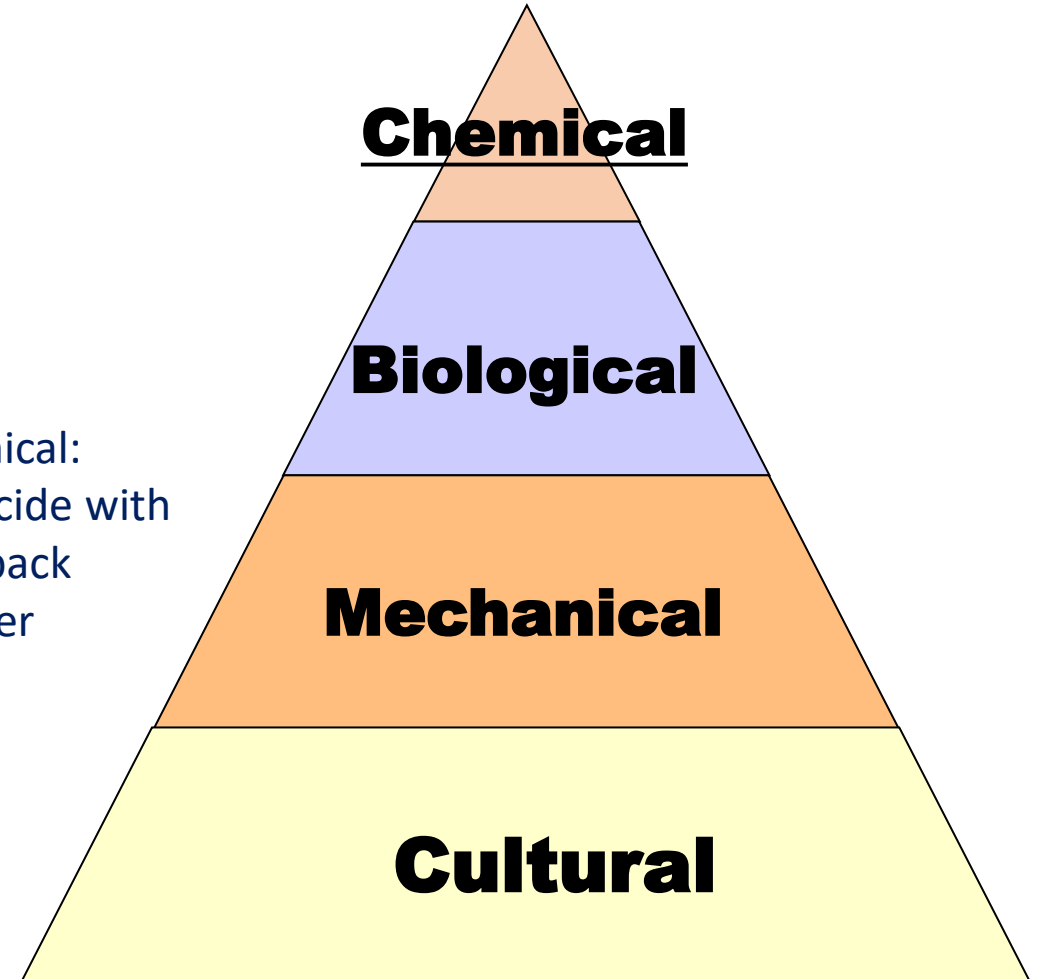
Mechanical:  
Weed  
Trimmer



Chemical:  
herbicide with  
backpack  
sprayer



Biological:  
Mile-a-Minute  
Weevils



# Harvesting Timber Sustainably



Timber harvesting is a management tool to

- diversify forest ages
- improve habitat for birds, deer, and other wildlife species
- can be used to weed unwanted trees
- provide income
- create forest trails

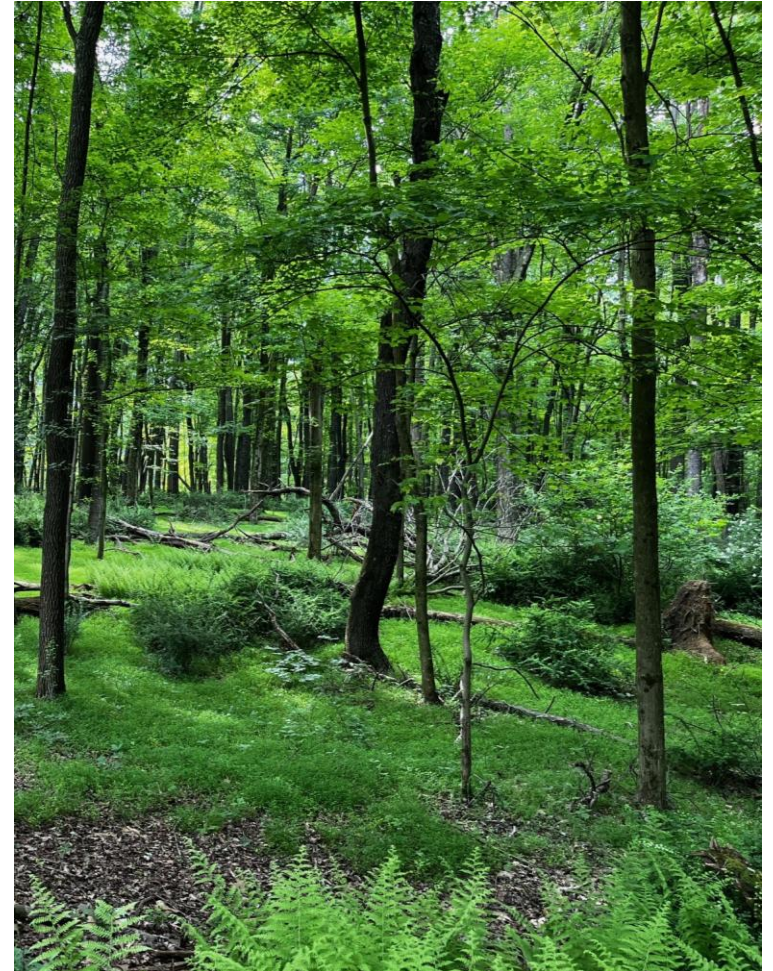


# Harvesting Timber Sustainably



## Common Poor Forest Management Decisions

- Diameter Limit Harvesting
- Failure to evaluate regeneration before harvest
- Ignoring interfering vegetation
- Poorly developed contract
- No inventory of trees to be harvested
- Not considering the deer factor



# Utilize Consultants



Pennsylvania  
Department of Conservation  
and Natural Resources  
Bureau of Forestry

## Pennsylvania Consulting and Industrial Forester List

This list is maintained by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Bureau of Forestry to help link landowners to resource professionals. Individuals or companies listed are not endorsed by DCNR.

Pennsylvania has no professional certification system by which a person may call themselves a "forester". However, the foresters on this list have post high school education in natural resource management. Certifications from non-government professional organizations and services provided are included for each individual on the forester list. Considerations for selecting a forester are below.



Choosing a professional forester to assist you in managing your woodlot is an important process in addressing the challenges you may face in sustaining multiple benefits and resources from your forest. A trusted professional forester can be utilized for the life of your ownership to carry out management planning on your property, implement forestry practices recommended by your plan, and assist you with other important aspects of your forest, such as tax and estate planning. When hiring a forester, contact several on the forester list and consider asking them about:

Find a list of consultants using the QR code or by contacting your service foresters





*A healthy, sustainable, and productive forest on private property  
in western Pennsylvania*