

IMPACT

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UI Extension empowers hundreds of families to manage forests in 2013-2014

AT A GLANCE

Family-owned forests are critical in northern Idaho counties. UI Extension provides education that helps these forest owners keep their forests healthy and productive.

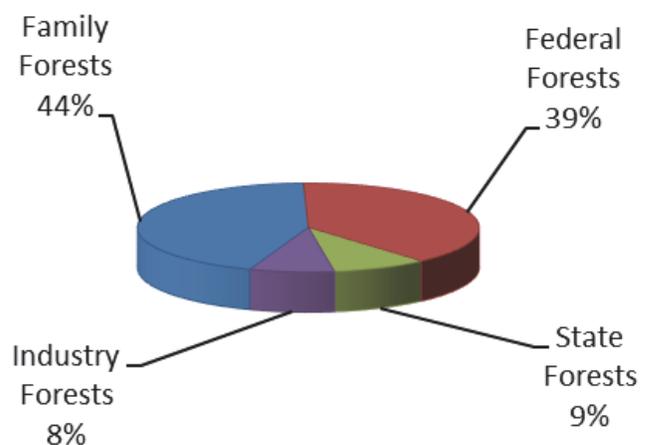
The Situation

Describe factors that make the program relevant. Roughly 44% of the forests in the Idaho Panhandle (Boundary, Bonner, Kootenai and Benewah counties) are held and managed by 46,993 family forest owners (23,663 owning 5 acres or more).

Family forests are critical to timber supply, water, wildlife, and many other shared values. For example, family forests tend to be more concentrated near key locations for ecosystem functions (e.g., along lakes, streams, and in increasingly rare low elevation wildlife habitats).

Since 1987, the average annual timber harvest from these forests in the Idaho Panhandle has been over 167 million board feet, valued at over \$100 million milled. Family forests have provided 28% of the timber harvest in the ten northern counties of Idaho since 1997. Without family forest owners, several lumber mills in North Idaho would likely have closed down.

Family forest owners usually have multiple goals for their property. With better management, family forests can provide much more than they have historically. With a better working knowledge of forest ecology, silviculture, and related forest management techniques, family forest owners can sustainably produce more wood and biomass and simultaneously improve forest health, water quality, wildlife habitat, and other forest values.



Idaho Panhandle Forest Ownership.

Our Response

As part of the Idaho Forest Stewardship program, a cooperative effort with the Idaho Dept. of Lands and many other partners, UI Extension provides an annual series of workshops, field days and other educational activities titled *Strengthening Forest Stewardship Skills*. The activities are designed to strengthen forest owners' ability to implement practices that improve forest health and growth, and are offered in a variety of locations and times.

Forest owners can choose from over 140 forestry extension publications available through local UI Extension offices. UI Extension videos on water quality, "selective" logging, and forest tax management, provide additional learning resources. Finally, the University of Idaho Extension Forestry web site offers short monthly articles on forestry in Idaho, a large archive of short forestry publications on a

variety of topics, and a calendar of upcoming forestry education opportunities.

Program Outcomes

In FY 13-14, 619 owners of over 89,822 family forest acres attended UI Extension workshops and other educational activities in the Idaho panhandle. Participants indicated knowledge increases ranging from 19% to 118%, with an un-weighted average of 62%. Based on evaluation results:

- 194 will monitor for forest insect, disease, or animal damage;
- 173 will favor tree species that resist insects & disease;
- 100 will reduce unwanted vegetation;
- 68 will monitor/ manage weedy non-native species;
- 60 will contact a forester for additional assistance;
- 44 will thin forest trees;
- 41 will better organize their succession planning;
- 40 will complete a forest management plan;
- 39 will prune forest trees;
- 38 will use internet data sources to help manage their forest;
- 37 will plant forest tree seedlings;
- 34 will improve log manufacturing;
- 31 will spend more time talking to mill representatives regarding their log specifications and prices;
- 24 will measure tree heights and diameters;
- 23 will try one or more computer mapping tools;
- 23 will use safety equipment when thinning or pruning;
- 21 will try one or more of android forestry applications;
- 19 will identify & culture superior seed trees; and
- 17 will arrange to collect seed from superior trees.

The Future

The improved management practices family forest owners implement as a result of knowledge and skills gained in UI Extension programs will ultimately increase wood and biomass to fuel Idaho's economy, maintain water quality, reduce catastrophic fire risk, improve forest growth and health, and enhance biological diversity.

Strengthening Forest Stewardship Skills will continue to be offered annually, along with new publications, internet content, and other efforts to help Idaho Panhandle family forest owners manage their forests more effectively.

Cooperators and Co-Sponsors

- Idaho Department of Lands

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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