



Photo: Amy Grotta

# Management Planning for Woodland Owners: Why and How

EC 1125 • May 2013

Amy Grotta

Management planning—the words conjure up visions of corporate boardrooms and gray suits. As a woodland owner, your management planning does not need to be an intimidating process. Simply put, a forest management plan describes your property, what you want to do with it, and how and when to carry out your plans for it. This publication describes both why and how to develop a forest management plan.

Good plans will change with time. Whether you are just starting out as a woodland owner or are a longtime, active forest manager, it is never too soon or too late to develop a plan. A management plan is beneficial to a wide range of owners, whether you are an active timber manager or you own woodland primarily for personal enjoyment. As you learn more about forestry and your own objectives, you can change your management plan to fit expanding knowledge and new situations.

## Why plan?

There are many reasons why it is helpful to have a management plan for your property. Primarily, a plan helps you:

1. Consider what you might do on your property to improve its condition.
2. Save time and money, and avoid costly mistakes that may not be correctable.

3. Organize your business records and keep track of activities on your property.
4. Communicate with others who use the property or who may be caring for it in the future.
5. Demonstrate to others your commitment and interest in continued woodlot management.

Let's look at each of these reasons in more detail.

## Consider what you might do on your property to improve its condition.

Planning requires careful thinking about why you own your property, what you would like to see happen to it, what it might produce, and how much time and money it will require. Thinking and learning about possible management options will go a long way toward helping you establish your objectives.

When you set goals, consider your constraints or limitations. Personal and economic constraints might include limited time, money, and equipment. Biological and physical constraints might include poor drainage, steep ground, rocky soils, or disease and insect problems. These limitations may narrow your options and require that you set goals and objectives that are more attainable.













