

Introduction

Why this toolkit?

Across the country, more women are taking the reins of forest management, as owners, as stewards, and as family members. These women are a historically underserved demographic who are making or influencing management decisions on millions of acres of working forests. At the same time, our culture is in transition from one of learning by receiving information to one of engagement and contribution. Observing these trends, a group of like-minded educators from around the United States came together to create simple and relevant tools to facilitate peer-learning education for women woodland owners.

This project is designed to engage women woodland owners with an empowering, peer-learning approach. Peer-learning alternatives supported by this project will be conducive to open, problem-based, learner-driven exploration. Through this method, the women's confidence, engagement in learning, development of mutually supportive personal relationships, and basic technical skills will all increase, leading to more informed land stewardship decisions.

Another of the project's goals is give forestry and natural resource educators a better understanding of the unique needs of women owners of working woodlands, so they can provide the kinds of learning options that this group perceives as relevant and valuable.

This toolkit focuses on the nuts and bolts of designing, forming, holding, and maintaining a peer-learning group, whether the group you want to reach is women woodland owners or any other group of people who have similar goals for learning. You'll find in this toolkit templates and worksheets for you to use, with samples to make clear how to use them.

If you are:

- an educator or association leader involved with forest and rangeland communities in the United States,
- a woman who owns forest or rangeland and who is not currently engaged in your respective forestry or range communities,
- a woman who owns forest or rangeland and who stands to serve as a mentor or facilitator of a peer network, or
- a woman who may not currently be managing but who stands to inherit or otherwise acquire forestland,

then this book is for you.



This young woman learns to haul logs using a logging arch.

Photo by Amanda Subjin, © Oregon State University

If you would like to learn more about women's ownership of woodlands, visit the Women Owning Woodlands website at:

<http://www.womenowningwoodlands.net>



Photo by Jeff Hino, © Oregon State University



"It's a very nurturing environment to learn. Being surrounded by women we feel comfortable to ask the 'stupid' questions!"

Elizabeth Gale, forest owner, Broadbent, Oregon