

Woods Workbook

You can fill out this workbook online at mndnr.gov/woodlands.

1. About your property

Begin by answering a few background questions. Visit mndnr.gov/woodlands for information about your watershed and ecology of your land.

How many acres do I have? _____

Is my property in multiple parcels? If so, how many? _____

What county or counties is my property located in?

What [Ecological Classification System](#) subsection is my land in?

What subsection is my land in?

What major watershed is my land in? _____

What minor watershed is my land in? _____

2. Evaluate your property

Take a leisurely walk through your woods. What do you notice? Consider these questions and take notes.

- What kinds of trees are there? Are they old or young?
- How dense is the tree cover in my woods? Has there recently been a harvest? Are there openings from trees that have died or blown over?
- Are there “islands” of woods surrounded by open land or is all of my woodland connected?
- What is the understory like? Is it thick with shrubs and brush or is it open?
- What wildlife is there?
- Are there any invasive species? Which species? Where are they located?

- What is the terrain like? Is it hilly or flat?

Consider repeating this exercise with each new season. You may notice different plants and animals in different seasons

3. Identify what interests you about your woodland

First, note topics, then set goals. Here is a list of topics that may interest you as a woodland owner. Check any that apply to you. This isn't an exhaustive list, so add any additional topics that are important to you.

Topics

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Game wildlife | <input type="checkbox"/> Wetlands |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nongame wildlife | <input type="checkbox"/> Shoreline management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rare plants and animals | <input type="checkbox"/> Water quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> Prescribed burning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Timber harvest | <input type="checkbox"/> Investment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tree planting | <input type="checkbox"/> Intergenerational land transfer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost-share | <input type="checkbox"/> Carbon capture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tax incentive programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Nontimber forest products (mushrooms, maple syrup, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Invasive species/forest health | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Protecting important habitats | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

4. Identify your top three topics

5. Write your goals

Write a short goal statement about each of your top three topics.
Example: If "game wildlife" is one of your top three topics, then your goal might be to "Make sure my property contains wildlife openings to support more wild turkeys."

Goal 1:

Goal 2:

Goal 3:

Other goals:

6. Describe a work project

First, choose a goal you want to tackle. Your goal may involve setting up a work project. If you don't know what kind of work needs to be done to reach your goal, ask a forester. It's also a good idea to get a project plan from a forester.

Example: If your goal is to "Ensure my property contains wildlife openings to support more wild turkeys," then your project may be to "Locate existing openings and enhance them by removing trees and planting native species of plants that turkeys eat."

Describe a work project that will help you achieve your woodland goal:

7. Identify action steps

If possible, break down your project into smaller action steps. Take as many steps as you need. Use extra sheets if necessary.

Example: Step 1—Locate existing openings by examining aerial photos. Step 2—Schedule walk with forester to visit openings I want to enhance. Step 3—Ask my forester to recommend times to mow or burn. Step 4—Conduct mowing or burning. Step 5—Plant shrubs and trees that are good for wildlife (ask my forester for recommendations).

Step 1:

Step 2:

Step 3:

Step 4:

Step 5:

8. Pull it together

For each work project, use this template to list individual action steps, set a time to do each step, estimate budget needs, and record notes and observations about how things are going along the way.

Work Project (describe)					Year	
Steps (describe)	Date/ Season ¹	Tools needed ²	Partners/ Contacts ³	Budget estimates		Notes
				My contribution	Financial assistance	
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						

¹ Date/season considerations.

For action steps within a project, consider the season, the order of action steps, and amount of time you need to complete each step.

Example: Most harvests occur in winter when the ground is frozen to minimize damage to the soil.

In what order will you tackle your work projects?

Example: Control invasive species at trail entrance—2015; Enhance wildlife openings—2016; Incorporate as an LLC—2017; etc.

² Tools needed might include aerial photos, chain saws, management plan, project plan, shovels, shrubs, etc. You may want to note where you might get these tools.

³ List names and phone numbers of people who could advise on or help with each step such as your local forester, a neighbor, etc.

Remember to take before and after photos!