



FORECON

Give Yourself a Year to Learn

A practical first-year guide for new woodland owners

Your First Property Walk

- ☐ Locate primary access points
- ☐ Look for boundary markings
- ☐ Photograph roads and stream crossings
- ☐ Note erosion, storm damage, and invasive plants
- ☐ Identify areas that require follow-up

What Matters Most to You?

- ☐ Maintain a healthy forest
- ☐ Produce periodic timber income
- ☐ Improve wildlife habitat
- ☐ Create better recreational access
- ☐ Protect streams, soils, and sensitive areas
- ☐ Keep the property in the family
- ☐ Prepare the land for an eventual sale

Most owners will choose several goals. Writing down the top three can make future decisions and family conversations easier.

Address Immediate Risks

Usually Can Wait

- ☐ Harvesting mature timber
- ☐ Major habitat projects
- ☐ New recreational trails
- ☐ Long-term stand improvements
- ☐ Large property improvements
- ☐ Most major investments

Investigate Promptly

- ☐ Serious erosion
- ☐ Failing roads or culverts
- ☐ Hazardous trees near structures
- ☐ Uncertain or disputed boundaries
- ☐ Unauthorized use
- ☐ Aggressive invasive species

First 30 days: Learn the property

- ☐ Gather deeds, surveys and tax records.
- ☐ Locate access points and boundaries.
- ☐ Walk the land and identify obvious concerns.
- ☐ Avoid major forestry decisions unless an urgent problem requires action.

First six months: Understand your options

- ☐ Tour the property with a forester.
- ☐ Learn about the timber and forest conditions.
- ☐ Review taxes and insurance.
- ☐ Discuss ownership goals with family members or co-owners.

First year: Create a plan

- ☐ Decide whether a timber inventory or written forest management plan is appropriate.
- ☐ Prioritize road, boundary, habitat, and forest-health work.
- ☐ Establish relationships with professionals you may need.

During an initial property visit, a forester can help answer several important questions:

- ☐ What tree species and forest types are present?
- ☐ What is the general condition of the woods?
- ☐ Is there merchantable timber?
- ☐ Are any areas ready for management?
- ☐ Are invasive species, insects or diseases creating problems?
- ☐ Do roads or stream crossings need attention?
- ☐ What can wait, and what should be addressed now?

Recently Inherited Woodland?

Not sure where to begin? We can help you understand your woodland, identify immediate priorities, and develop a plan that reflects your goals. [Contact us](#) for an initial property consultation or call (716) 664-5602.

We've been helping landowners make informed decisions since 1954.