GETTING STARTED—SETTING OBJECTIVES

Your land is a piece of the forested landscape that makes up more than 80% of New Hampshire. Your decisions as a woodlot owner shape the greater landscape, wildlife populations, and ecosystem services New Hampshire’s citizens use and rely on.

In addition to providing the public many benefits, your woodlot provides you and your family a refuge, a financial investment and a legacy. It is an asset—however you define it—and one step to protect your asset is developing clear objectives.

When setting your objectives think big and long term. List all your hopes and dreams for your land. Thinking long term helps you develop short-term objectives that ensure you reach your long-term goals. Talking with UNH Cooperative Extension county foresters, other foresters, loggers, family, neighbors, and friends can help, as does taking time to get to know your land.

Your objectives for the current and future use of your property should be specific. You will use your objectives to formulate recommendations that then become a course of action to accomplish these objectives. The more specific and measurable your objectives, the easier to track whether you are achieving them.

Recommended Practices
- Contact your UNH Cooperative Extension county forester for a woodlot visit.
- Determine your goals and objectives and write them down. Refer to Landowner Goals and Objectives worksheet by UNH Cooperative Extension
- Involve family members so they understand your goals and objectives, especially if you plan to leave your land to them.
- Develop a management plan.
- Contact your legal advisers and a local land trust to find out more about estate planning and land protection options.
- Discuss your objectives with your forester and revise them as you learn more about your land, or if your situation changes.
- When wildlife habitat is an objective, examine your land within its larger context to determine management that may be effective and reasonable to pursue.

Where can I learn more?
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DRAWING YOUR PROPERTY

Drawing a rough map of your property and identifying the approximate locations of important resources may help you clarify your objectives for forest management. If you wish, use crayons, markers and different colors on your map. Don’t worry about accuracy—this is a very rough map to help you think! Draw the approximate shape of your property on a large piece of paper.

- Show roads, trails, ponds, streams, wetlands, fields, forests, hills, and other natural features.
- Show human made features such as houses, other buildings, deer stands, tree houses, bridges, ….
- Show the places that are special to you and those who use the property – a view, special grove of trees, boulder, ….
- Show areas that you use regularly – maples you tap, the part of the pond used for swimming/fishing, where you snowshoe, your deer stand, ….
- Show areas where you’ve discovered wildlife or their sign – turkey tracks, fish, songbirds, salamanders, bear, porcupine, fox, turtles ….

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