

# State Partnerships Work:

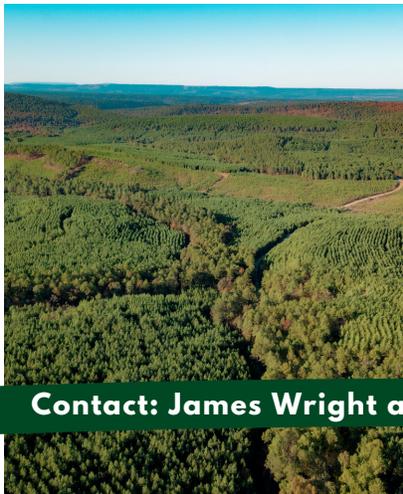
**Arkansas forestland owners need technical and financial assistance. Together, state foresters and state conservationists deliver.**

State forestry agencies are the primary deliverers of forestry technical assistance nationwide. When they team up with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)—the leading federal source of financial assistance for forestland owners—great things happen for America's forests.

**Forests in Arkansas cover nearly 19 million acres (that's 56% of state's land area). Of this acreage, families own and manage the vast majority—a total of 12.5 million forested acres.**

The Arkansas Department of Agriculture Forestry Division provides technical and financial assistance to more than 345,000 family forestland owners through multiple agreements with NRCS. From 2019 to 2021, this agency-to-agency partnership helped Arkansas NRCS distribute \$20.8 million to Arkansans for forestry practice implementation across more than 200,000 acres. During the same three-year period, the state NRCS also provided support for the installation of firebreaks across 900 miles.

Coupled with technical assistance from the state forestry division, NRCS financial assistance helps private forestland owners provide public benefits—like cleaner air and water, enhanced wildlife habitat, and sustainable wood products—all by actively managing their forests.



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To further enhance its successful partnership with NRCS, the state forestry division collaborates with the USDA Forest Service to administer the Forest Stewardship Program (FSP). FSP directly benefits Arkansas' non-industrial private forestland (NIPF) owners by supporting the technical assistance work of state forestry agencies.

Landowner assistance through FSP can take different forms, but generally starts with a field forester from a state forestry agency creating a forest stewardship plan for a participating woodland owner. Forest stewardship plans can be very detailed, mostly topical, or more general depending on the individual landowner's needs and management goals for their property. Between 2019 and 2021, the Arkansas Forestry Division wrote 525 forest stewardship plans for woodland owners, in total providing management prescriptions for over 92,500 acres of forest across the state.

In addition to delivering technical assistance directly to forestland owners, state FSPs often serve as entry points for landowners to access financial assistance programs. The NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program, for instance, is vitally important to keeping forests working and intact nationwide.

## Nationwide, the Forest Stewardship Program has big impacts...

- State forestry agencies routinely provide technical assistance to **upwards of 300,000 private forestland owners annually** through state Forest Stewardship programs.
- With FSP dollars, state forestry agencies can provide **management plans to private landowners** at a discounted rate or free of charge.
- NIPF owners that have forest management or stewardship plans are **2.7 times more likely to harvest timber**.
- On average, state forestry agencies match federal investments in Forest Stewardship programming at least 2:1, which means the impact of **federal dollars delivered through FSP have amplified on-the-ground results**.