

# Your Legacy, Your Land

Resources for landowners as they plan for the future of their land.



Planning for the legacy of your land, and your estate overall, can seem like a daunting process. Throughout 2016, the American Tree Farm System (ATFS) has worked to break down this process into easy steps that you can do. Partnering with [Oregon State University](#) and its [Ties to the Land](#) program, we have provided you with tools and resources for each of those steps, including videos with experts and worksheets you can do on your own. The Your Legacy, Your Land program is part of the celebration of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ATFS, honoring the successes of the last 75 years and looking forward to the future for family forest owners.

## Step One: Make a commitment to your legacy

Take a moment to sign the Legacy Pledge: [www.mylandplan.org/legacypledge](http://www.mylandplan.org/legacypledge). The pledge is your commitment to yourself and your loved ones, demonstrating the meaningful role your woods play in your legacy. You are pledging to take an action to help ensure that the hard work you have put into your land remains for future generations. No matter where you are in the legacy planning process, there is a pledge action for you and we will provide you resources and tools to help you meet your commitment.

## Step Two: Creating an overview of your estate

The next step in developing a plan for the long-term future of your land is to document your estate. Your estate includes all of your assets, not just your land. Why is this step important? What do you need to do to create your estate overview? Learn more, including how to develop your estate overview: [www.mylandplan.org/create-estate-overview](http://www.mylandplan.org/create-estate-overview)

- Worksheet 1: Forest Property and Estate Overview

## Step Three: Setting goals for your legacy and your land

Setting goals for your legacy can help you develop your plan, it give you the direction on where you are going, and what you'd like to see happen to your land. What do you need to consider when developing your goals? One thing to consider is whether you see your land as a family heirloom or a financial asset. Learn more about goal setting and the resources available to you: [www.mylandplan.org/setting-goals](http://www.mylandplan.org/setting-goals)

- Worksheet 2: The Heirloom Scale
- Worksheet 3a: Individual Values and Goals
- Worksheet 3b: Shared Long-Range Goals

## Step Four: Outline who does what on your land and plan for who will do it in the future

There are many different jobs or tasks associated with your land. You might have that list in your head of all these activities, who to talk to and what needs to be done when. Does your next generation of owners have this information? Take some time to record it and share it with your next generation:

[www.mylandplan.org/who-does-what](http://www.mylandplan.org/who-does-what)

- Worksheet 4: Who Does What On Your Land

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### Step Five: Gathering your documents

Your legacy plan might include several different types of documents, including a will, management plan for your land, deeds, beneficiary forms, and more. Record what documents you have and where they are located, then share this information with your next generation: [www.mylandplan.org/who-does-what](http://www.mylandplan.org/who-does-what)

- Worksheet 6: Documents You Need For Your Estate Plan

### Step Six: Identifying and communicating with your heirs

Have you thought about who will inherit your land? Most likely you have, but have you thought about how to engage them in the management of your land? Have you shared with them the vision you have for your land? What about dividing your estate between multiple heirs? Learn more about communicating with your heirs: [www.mylandplan.org/communicating-with-heirs](http://www.mylandplan.org/communicating-with-heirs)

- Worksheet 5: Selecting Your Heirs

What if you don't have heirs that you can give your land to? What else can you do to protect the legacy of your land? Learn more: [www.mylandplan.org/options-for-your-land](http://www.mylandplan.org/options-for-your-land)

- Worksheet 9: Is A Charitable Donation Right For You

### Step Six: Planning and hosting your family meeting

A family meeting can be a great place to start to share your vision and long-term goals for your land, as well as engage your heirs in the management of your land. We talked with Ginny and Allen Nipper, experts in legacy planning, who shared their own family's experience. Learn more including tips for running a family meeting and having a successful meeting: [www.mylandplan.org/your-family-meeting](http://www.mylandplan.org/your-family-meeting)

- Tips for A Successful Family Meeting from the Nippers
- Worksheet 8: Tips For Running Your Family Meeting

### Step Seven: Reviewing the different ownership and estate options available for landowners

There are many different legal tools that you could use in the development of your legacy plans, from simple ownership types to partnerships, LLCs and Trusts. We have resources outlining the different options including an online video with John Ross, a Tree Farmer and an estate and probate attorney in Tennessee. Learn more at: [www.mylandplan.org/ownership-options](http://www.mylandplan.org/ownership-options) and [www.mylandplan.org/ownership-options-2](http://www.mylandplan.org/ownership-options-2)

- Worksheet 10: Ownership Options
- Worksheet 11: Understanding Different Ownership Options

### Future Steps Will Include

- Finding the right professionals to work with
- Developing and implementing your legacy plan

Find out more at [www.mylandplan.org/your-legacy-your-land](http://www.mylandplan.org/your-legacy-your-land).

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