

Public Abstract

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Forestry

Using Attitudes and Motivations to Segment the Landowner Audience: A Typology of Family Forest Owners in the Missouri Ozarks and Description of Management and Information Behaviors

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With 74% of Missouri's forestland controlled by over 350 thousand family forest owners, understanding this ownership group is critically important to ensuring the sustainable management of the state's forests. Audience segmentation techniques can help us to understand the diversity of this growing population, and to design effective communication strategies. In this study, cluster analysis was used to construct an attitudinal typology of family forest owners in Missouri based upon responses to a mail questionnaire. This resulted in two distinct attitudinal types of family forest owners: the *legacy owners*, for whom the land is an important part of one's personal and family identity, and the *detached owners*, for whom it is not. Members of both groups were further examined through semi-structured interviews. Attitudinal type was significantly related to management behaviors, with the legacy-oriented owners being more active forest managers than owners with less interest in family legacy. Results show that legacy owners use significantly more sources of information to learn about their land, and are more influenced by other people when making decisions about their woodland. However, the two types did not differ with respect to many demographic and land ownership characteristics. The results of this study indicate that how forest owners relate to their land and to other people may be better indicators of their management and information behaviors than demographic or land ownership characteristics. Furthermore, the methods used herein may prove a useful means of segmenting forest owners in other geographic areas for the purposes of targeted communication efforts.