

Public Abstract

First Name:Jill

Middle Name:Renee

Last Name:Lucht

Adviser's First Name:James

Adviser's Last Name:Rikoon

Co-Adviser's First Name:Mary

Co-Adviser's Last Name:Grigsby

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Land in the United States is predominantly owned by private individuals and families, and has traditionally been used for economic profit through agricultural or timber production. However, U.S. landownership patterns are changing, and an increasing number of landowners are acquiring land for non-monetary, amenity-based reasons. These changes impact landscapes and effective delivery of agroforestry and natural resource-based education and technical assistance programs. This thesis examines the adoption of conservation practices, landowner typologies, environmental concern and attitudes, and changing motivations for landownership to explore the relationships between landowner types, land use orientation, perceptions of trees and knowledge and interest in agroforestry practices. Two models of landowner types are utilized, one based on the distance landowners live from their land, the second based on their current or former involvement in agriculture.

Results presented are based on a 2006 survey conducted in four counties located in two different ecoregions of Missouri (N=298), selected due to proximity to University of Missouri research farms with ongoing agroforestry research. One county in each region was chosen for its rural character; the other included an urban center. The population surveyed included all landowners with 10 or more acres of land. Methods utilized include descriptive statistics with Chi-Square Test of Independence, as well as bivariate and mediation/regression analyses.