

Who Owns NH's Forests?

New Hampshire has the second highest percentage of forest land of any state in the country, following Maine. Nearly 85% of our state's 5.7 million acres is forested; that's 4,819,000 acres in all.

The state and federal governments classify forest land in three categories: productive timber land, non-productive timber land, and forested areas reserved for wilderness and other special uses. They also estimate how much of the productive timber land, a total of 4,551,000 acres in New Hampshire, is owned by private individuals, businesses and corporations, and the public.

Forest ownership can be thought of in three general categories:

Private Individuals

Seventy-one percent of New Hampshire's productive timber land is owned by 84,000 or so landowners who have small parcels of one acre or more.

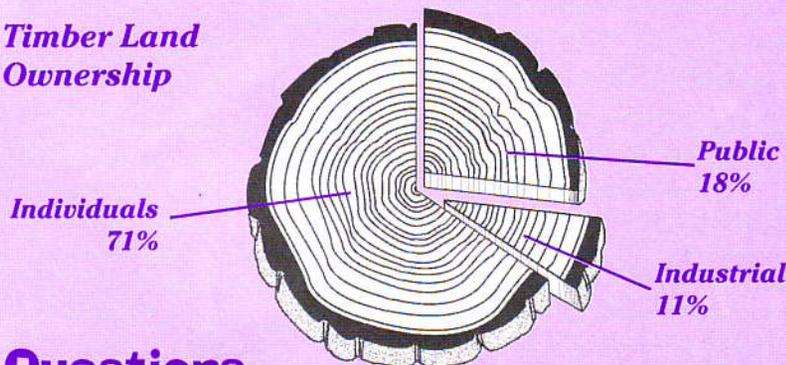
Industrial

Eleven percent is owned by about 200 private businesses or corporations.

Public

Local, county, state, and federal governments own 18% of the state's forest land. Most of that – 10% – is in the White Mountain National Forest. The remaining 8% is managed by other public agencies, such as town and county governments, or the state.

Timber Land Ownership



Questions

What is the average size parcel (in acres) of timberland held by individual forest owners? What is the average size parcel of timberland held by private businesses and corporations?

Answers: (38 acres for individuals; 2,500 for industrial)

To help interpret the information on this factsheet, turn to the *Project Learning Tree PreK-8 Activity Guide!*

PLT Activity #32: A Forest of Many Uses

Privately and publicly owned forests are often managed to some degree to provide several different resources. In this activity, students will learn how forests are managed to meet a variety of human and environmental needs.

Fun Facts

In 1710, the selectmen of Newington established America's first town forest. Today, the state's 234 towns and cities own 90,000 acres of forest.



Congress established the White Mountain National Forest in 1911 with the passage of the Weeks Act. The act originally preserved nearly 100,000 acres to protect streams, rivers, lakes, and ponds. The land also was protected as a timber resource. Today, the White Mountain National Forest covers more than 780,000 acres.

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