

Background

What is Sustainable Forestry?



Virginia Forest Landowner Education
Helping Virginians Keep Their Woodlands Healthy and Productive
Real Forestry for Real Estate

Definition

- Those forestry practices that meet present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

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A Guide for Virginia Forest Landowners

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Introduction

As a private woodland owner, you are a vital link in the sustainability of Virginia's forest resources. Your land provides many benefits to all Virginians, including wood products, wildlife habitat, clean air and water, and recreational opportunities. Because woodland owners like you own and manage two-thirds of the state's forestland, the decisions you make regarding your woods today will impact the quality of Virginia's forests for many years. The purpose of this publication is to provide you with a set of suggestions for starting or continuing to actively manage your land. In addition, this guide will help you understand the importance of timber harvest planning and how to work with professional foresters and natural resource management agencies.

The information contained in this publication regarding taxation and environmental regulations is accurate but should not be construed as official government interpretation. Regulations and laws are constantly evolving, so you are encouraged to obtain professional forestry assistance before making your final management decisions. Resources for learning more about any of the topics covered are available at www.virginiasfl.org, or contact the agencies listed at the end of this brochure for further assistance.

What Is Sustainable Forestry?

Virginia's forests make a vital contribution to our state and beyond by providing economic, consumer,



environmental, recreational and aesthetic benefits essential to our quality of life. While sustainability is a dynamic concept, some basic principles are clear: sustainable forestry consists of those management practices that meet present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Specifically, sustainable forestry integrates reforestation, and the managing, growing, nurturing and harvesting of trees for useful products and ecosystem benefits such as conserving soil, air and water quality, sequestering carbon, perpetuating biological diversity, conserving wildlife and aquatic habitats,

- improving recreational opportunities and protecting aesthetics.
- Examples of sustainable forestry practices include:
- Regenerating forests as soon as possible following a timber harvest
 - Minimizing the impact of forest management activities on water quality
 - Maintaining important habitat elements for wildlife and plant species
 - Managing for populations of imperiled and critically imperiled species
 - Protecting forests with exceptional conservation value
 - Managing biological diversity
 - Limiting the spread of exotic (non-native) plant species and pests



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Definition



- Specifically, integrates the regeneration, growing, nurturing, and harvesting of trees for useful products while conserving soil, air, water quality, wildlife, plants, aquatic habitat, and landscape aesthetic quality.

Certification

- 3rd party voluntary process to recognize sustainably-managed forests
- Tool to foster forest stewardship
- The Pinchot Institute for Conservation



Certification

- Sustainable Forestry Initiative
www.sfiprogram.org
- American Tree Farm System
www.treefarmssystem.org
- Forest Stewardship Council
www.fscus.org



Practice 1

- Forest Management Planning
 - Determine what you have
 - Set long-term goals and objectives
 - Schedule activities
 - Regularly review and revise management practices



Resources

- Forest Management Plan
 - Stewardship Plan
 - Virginia Department of Forestry
 - Consulting forester
 - Tree Farm Plan
 - Conservation Activity Plan
 - Consulting forester (cost share available)
 - Wildlife Management Plan
 - Department of Game & Inland Fisheries
 - Forest Industry Landowner Assistance Programs



Practice 2

- Forest Health & Productivity
 - Prompt reforestation
 - Species selection
 - Soil protection
 - Forest protection
 - Wildfire, exotics, diseases



Resources

- Virginia Department of Forestry
 - Area foresters
 - Seedling nursery
 - www.dof.virginia.gov
- Cost share programs
 - Reforestation of Timberlands program



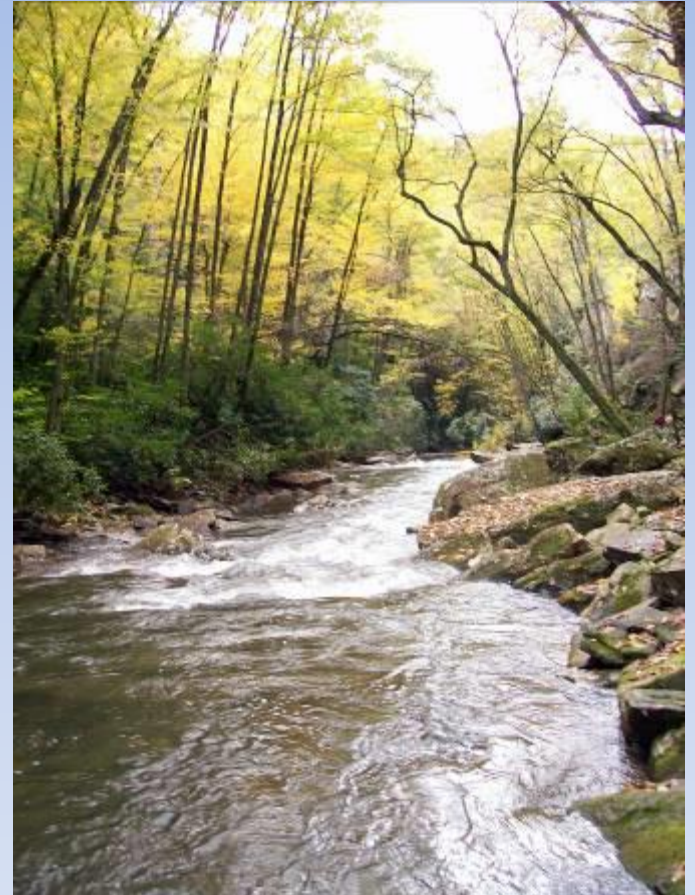
Resources

- A Field Guide for the Identification of Invasive Plants in Southern Forests
- Virginia Forest Landowner Update
- Virginia Natural Heritage Program
- Virginia Native Plant Society
- USDA Forest Service

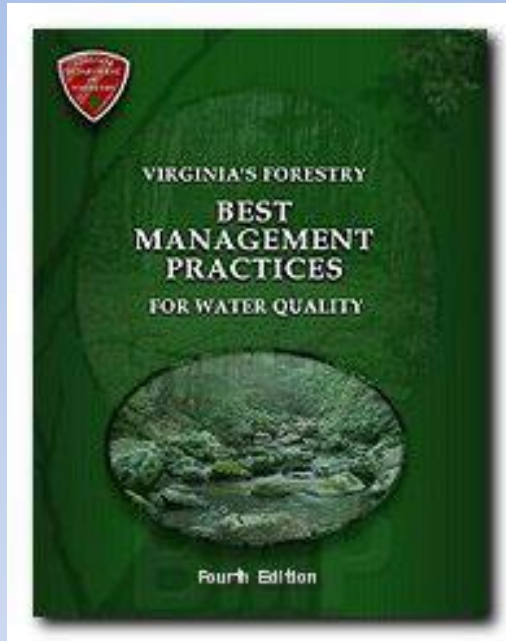


Practice 3

- Protect and maintain water resources
 - Best Management Practices
 - Riparian buffer zones



Resources



- Riparian Buffer Tax Credit
- Best Management Practices
- On-line Learning from Virginia's Link to Education About Forestry (VALEAF) Program
 - Laws Affecting Water Quality and Forestry Operations in Virginia
 - Protecting Water Quality with Best Management Practices in Virginia
 - Free!

Practice 4

- Conserve Biological Diversity
 - Promote native diversity
 - Sound wildlife habitat management
 - Protect T & E species
 - Protect Forests of Exceptional Conservation Value



Resources

- Guide to threatened and endangered species on private lands in Virginia
- Natural Heritage Program
- Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries
 - Regional biologist



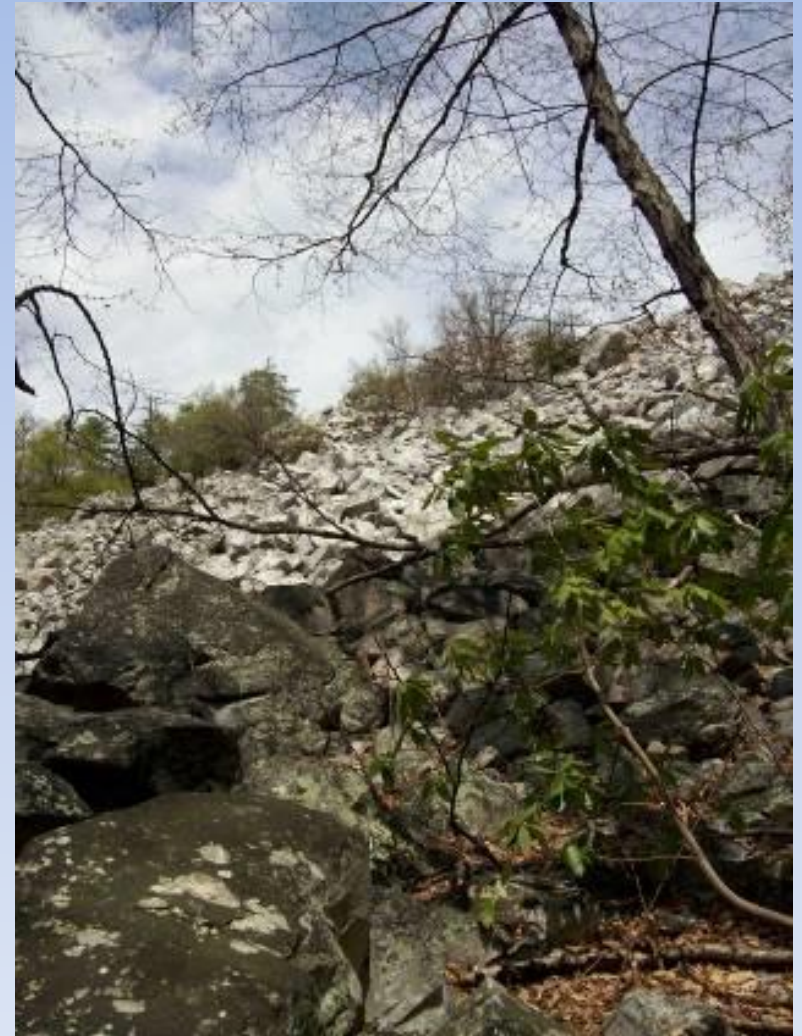
Practice 5

- Manage visual quality
 - Manage impact of harvesting on visual quality
 - Manage shape, size and placement of clearcuts
 - Green-up requirement



Practice 6

- Protect special sites
 - Identify and manage unique habitats
 - Cemeteries
 - Historic sites



Resources

- Natural Heritage Program
- Environmental Protection Agency
- The Nature Conservancy



Practice 7

- Efficient use of forest resources
 - Minimize waste
 - Efficient utilization of harvested materials



Resources

- VFELP
- Professional forester
 - Virginia Department of Forestry
 - Association of Consulting Foresters
 - Society of American Foresters
- Timber sale contract
- Reputable logger

