



The White Oak Initiative

Convening, Connecting, and Collaborating





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WhiteOakInitiative.org



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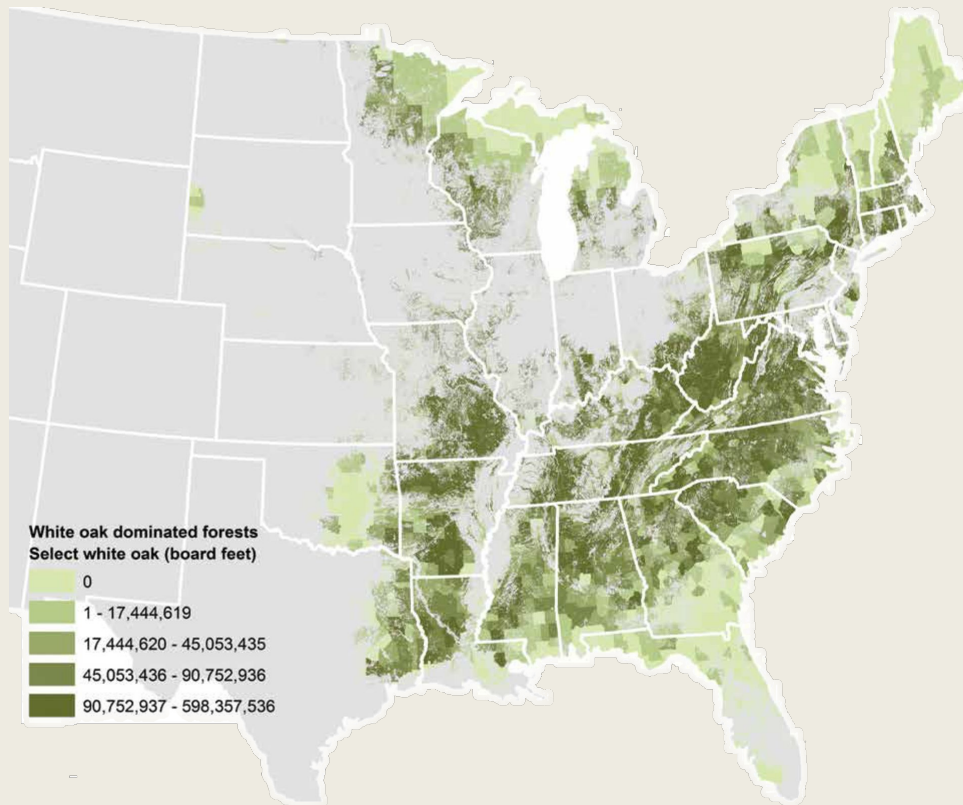
American White Oak (*Q. alba*)



Leaf & bark: Ruth Dorando Marry, MSU Extension; Acorn: Paul Wray, Iowa State University, Bugwood.org



American White Oak (*Q. alba*)





Why White Oak?



San Diego History Center



([State Archives of Florida](#)/Bulger)



Why White Oak?





Why White Oak?





Why White Oak?





Why White Oak?





“If you think of white oak as the center of a wheel, the spokes that come out of that center are numerous and varied. For example, if you look at the industries that white oak touches, the sheer number of jobs it creates is countless.”

– Elizabeth Wise (Sazerac)



What's the Problem?

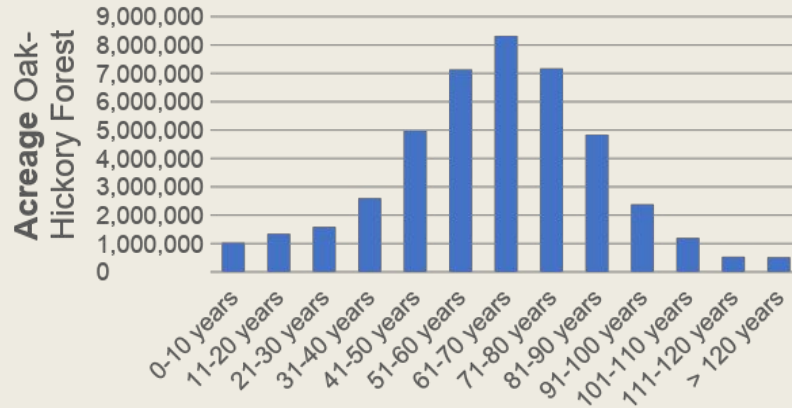


We need more babies!



What's the Problem?

Stand Age Distribution of Oak-Hickory Forest Type Group



Findings From Spatial Analysis Study

75% of all white oak trees
across the eastern United States
can be classified as “mature.”

Source: EVALIDator Version 1.7.2.00 – IL, IN, KY, MO, OH, TN Data run by Lhotka J. Stringer, Univ. of KY, Forestry and Natural Resources



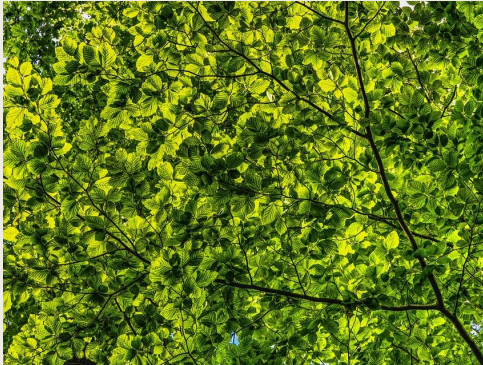
What's the Problem?



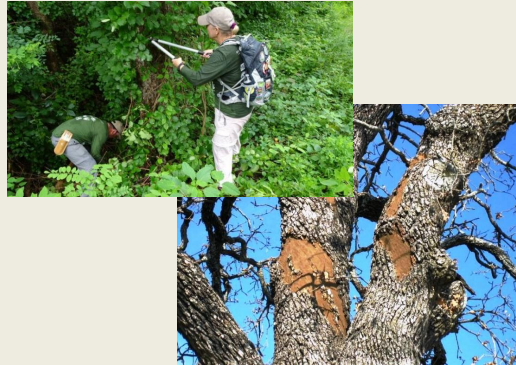


What's the Problem?

- **Lack of Disturbance**



- **Pests, Disease, Invasives**



- **Change of Land Use**





What's the Solution?





What's the Solution?

- **Prescribed Fire**



- **Sustainable Harvesting**



- **Herbicide Treatment**



- **Markets**





OMG!!



What's the Solution?

- **Prescribed Fire**



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What's WOI?

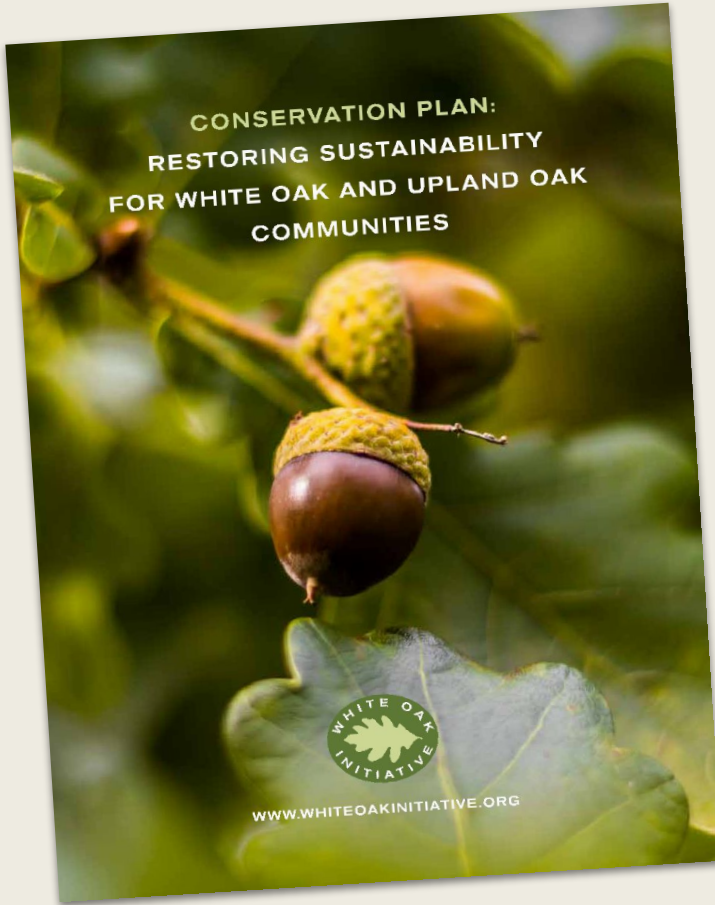
Mission

an advocate and catalyst for sustainable oak forest management with a focus on white oak.



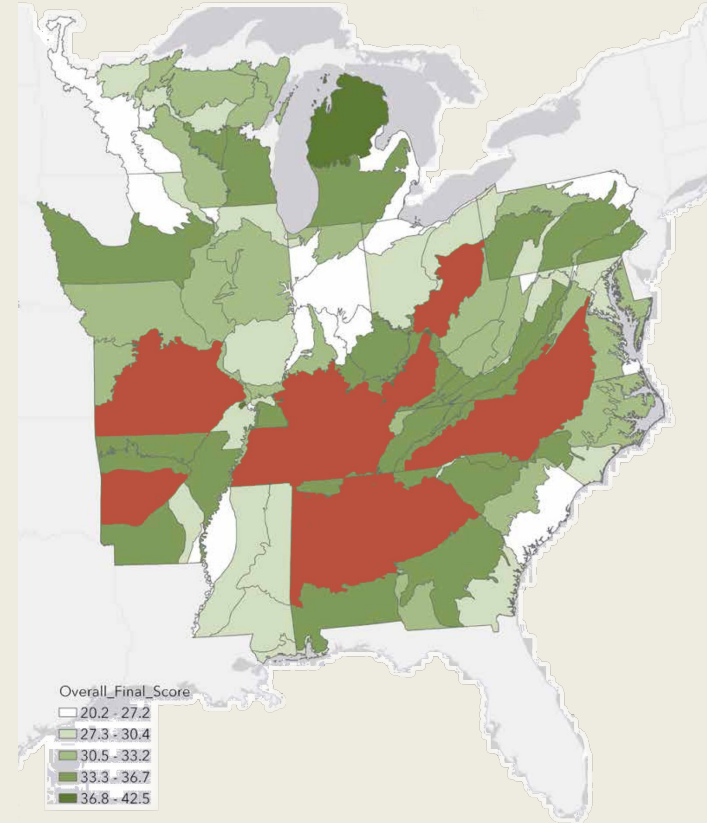


What's WOI?





What's WOI?

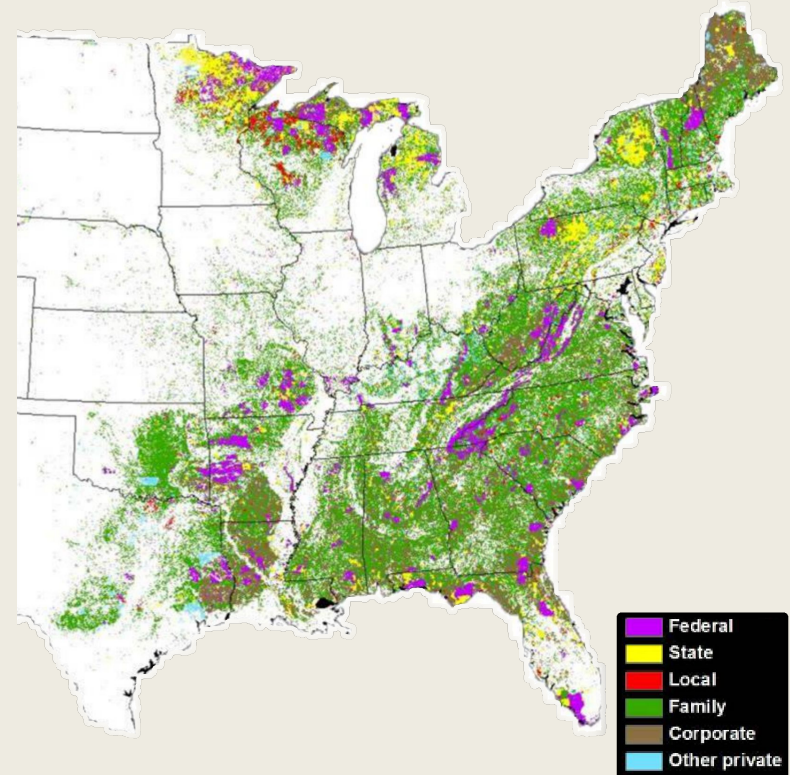




What's WOI?



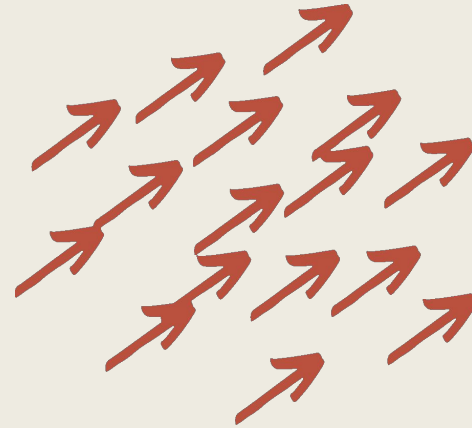
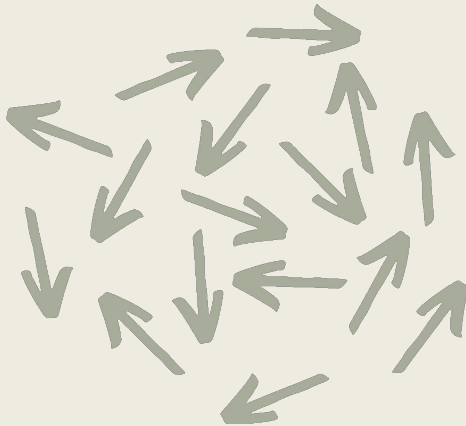
U. S. Forest Land Ownership





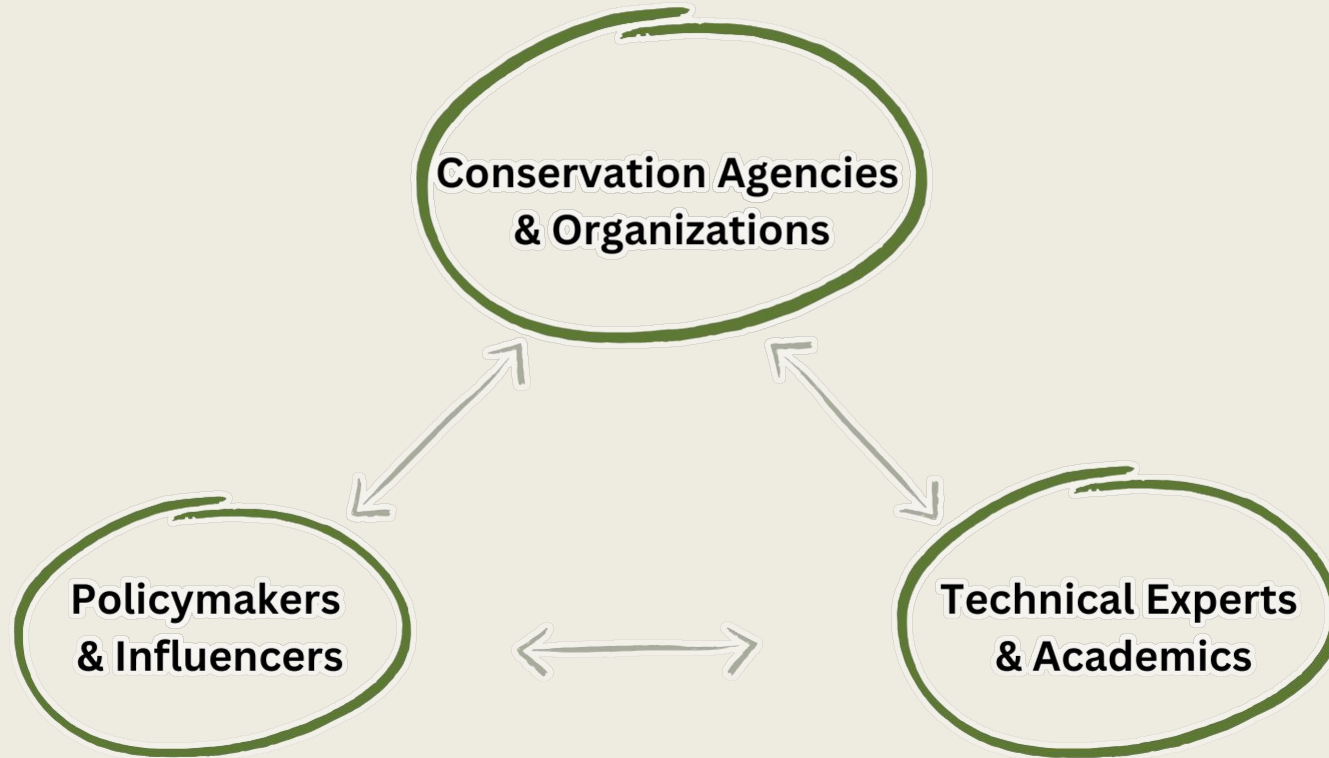
What's WOI?

“**Success**” is defined as the **identification** and **establishment** of **networks** across **targeted geographical areas** that are **committed to the implementation of practices** that align with WOI Guiding Principles and are **committed to collecting and sharing measurable on-the-ground achievements**.





WOI "AUDIENCES"





WOI “AUDIENCES”

Policymakers
& Influencers



H.R.471 - 119th Congress (2025-2026): Fix Our Forests Act | Congress.gov | Library of Congress

5/19/25, 3:52 PM

CONGRESS.GOV

H.R.471 - Fix Our Forests Act
119th Congress (2025-2026) | [Get alerts](#)

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Latest Action:

Roll Call Votes:
Tracker:

[Dan Meuserman: House \(ID:JD-1\) \(Introduced: 5/14/25\) \(95%\)](#)

Summary (1) Text

Listen

There is one summary

First Regular Session of the 124th General Assembly (2025)

PRINTING CODE. Amendments: Whenever an existing statute (or a section of the Indiana Constitution) is being amended, the text of the existing provision will appear in this style type; additions will appear in this style type, and deletions will appear in this style type.

Additions: Whenever a new statutory provision is being enacted (or a new constitutional provision adopted), the text of the new provision will appear in this style type. Also, the word NEW will appear in that style type in the introductory clause of each SECTION that adds a new provision to the Indiana Code or the Indiana Constitution.

Conflict reconciliation: Text in a statute in this style type or this style type reconciles conflicts between statutes enacted by the 2024 Regular Session of the General Assembly.

HOUSE ENROLLED ACT No. 1557

AN ACT to amend the Indiana Code concerning natural and cultural resources.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana:

SECTION 1. IC 14-23-6-6 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE AS A NEW CHAPTER TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2025]:

Chapter 6.6. Prescribed Burning

Sec. 1. As used in this chapter, a "certified prescribed burn manager" means a person who has successfully completed the division of forestry's prescribed burn manager training program.

Sec. 2. As used in this chapter, "landowner's agent" refers to a person who has permission from a landowner to use prescribed burning on the landowner's property.

Sec. 3. As used in this chapter, "prescribed burn" or "prescribed burning" means the planned application of fire to a naturally occurring vegetative fuel to accomplish one (1) or more land management objectives, including:

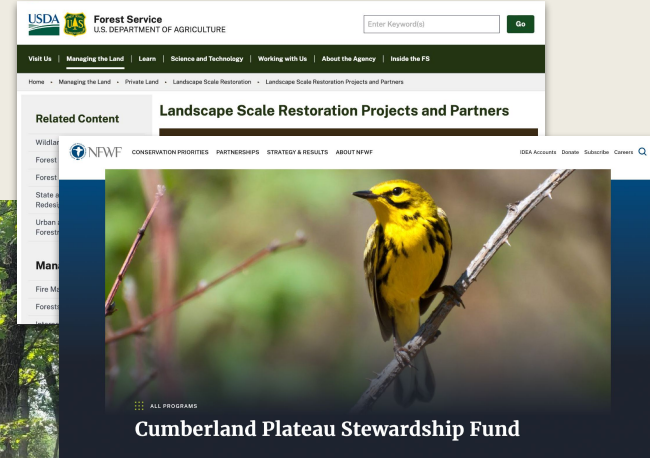
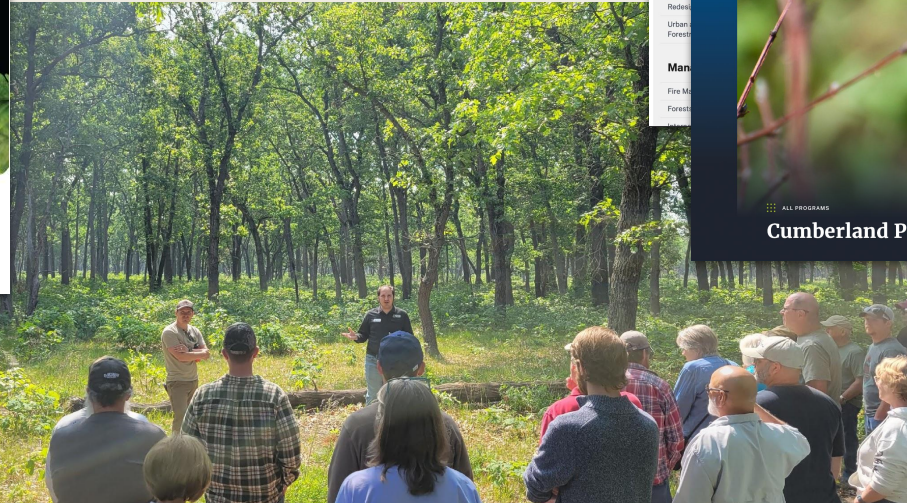
- (1) a forestry operation;
- (2) a vegetative fuel reduction;
- (3) a silvicultural treatment;
- (4) a wildlife habitat improvement; or
- (5) the management of:
 - (A) a grassland;
 - (B) a forest;

HEA 1557 — Concur



WOI "AUDIENCES"

Conservation Agencies & Organizations





WOI “AUDIENCES”

Conservation Agencies & Organizations

Technical Experts & Academics

April 16

Partners' Roundtable

Agenda

11:00 AM – Welcome and Opening Remarks

- Jason Meyer (WOI): Brief overview of roundtable objectives.
- Jamie Lewis Hedges (WOI): Recap of Frankfort

11:10 AM – Partner Spotlights:

- Sandhya Nepal (USFS Southern Research Station): Spatial Prioritization
FMI - [Click to check out Wildfire Risk Story Map](#)
- Joe Rossetti / Justin Barnes (Virginia DoF): Partner Spotlight

11:50 PM – Supporting You: Needs and Resources

- Group Discussion: *What resources or support would be most helpful?*

12:00 PM – Government Updates

- Dallin Brooks (National Hardwood Lumber Association): Tariffs
- Erica Tergeson (CrossWinds Solutions): Policy

12:25 PM – Next Steps and Feedback

- Open floor for final questions, comments, and suggestions.
- Preview of upcoming opportunities and Save the Dates.

12:30 PM – Adjourn

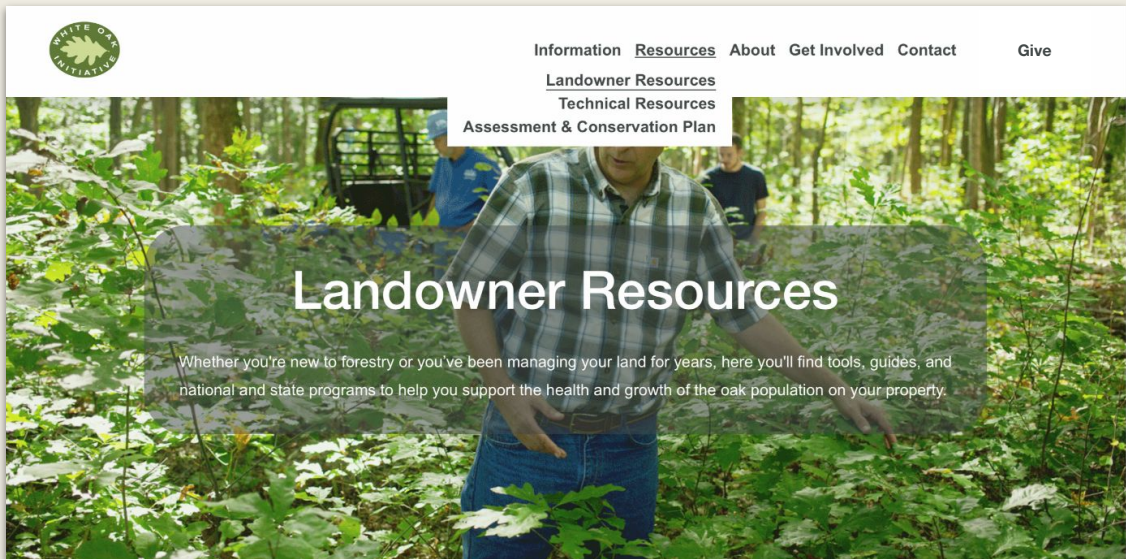
Optional: Participants can remain online for informal networking and discussion until 12:45 PM.

These roundtables provide an essential platform for connecting with each other, sharing challenges of ongoing projects, offering resources, and exploring innovative solutions for sustainable upland oak forest management.





Become a partner...



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[Landowner Resources](#)
Technical Resources
Assessment & Conservation Plan

Landowner Resources

Whether you're new to forestry or you've been managing your land for years, here you'll find tools, guides, and national and state programs to help you support the health and growth of the oak population on your property.

RESTORING SUSTAINABILITY FOR WHITE OAK AND UPLAND OAK COMMUNITIES: AN ASSESSMENT AND CONSERVATION PLAN QUICK FACTS

AMERICAN WHITE OAK IS A FOUNDATIONAL TREE SPECIES.

- American white oak trees occupy more than 100 million acres of public and private forested areas much of the eastern and central United States.
- White oak forests support extensive plant and animal biodiversity, and generate billions of dollars annually through industries such as furniture, flooring, cabinetry, and wine and spirits.

WITHOUT INTERVENTION TODAY, THE AMERICAN WHITE OAK POPULATION WILL BEGIN TO DECLINE SIGNIFICANTLY WITHIN THE NEXT 10 TO 15 YEARS, WITH MORE EXTREME DECLINES OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL DECADES.

- Due to shifts in land management and ecological changes, older white oak trees are not being replaced by younger white oak trees at a pace that will support long-term sustainability.
- About 75% of all surveyed white oak acres could be classified as at least "vulnerable," while about 20% of them are in white oak woodlands present, and about 5% had no white oak saplings present.
- Challenges such as climate change, invasive insects and diseases, and habitat change are also impacting white oak sustainability.

RESTORING THE LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF AMERICA'S WHITE OAK IS POSSIBLE.

- In order to restore the long-term sustainability of America's white oak forests, and maintain the economic, social and environmental benefits they provide, we need active cross-industry collaboration, participation and support from industry, resource professionals, policymakers, landowners and others who can apply knowledge and resources toward the report's 10 recommended forest management practices, before it's too late.

RESTORING SUSTAINABILITY FOR WHITE OAK AND UPLAND OAK COMMUNITIES: AN ASSESSMENT AND CONSERVATION PLAN



RESTORING SUSTAINABILITY FOR WHITE OAK AND UPLAND OAK COMMUNITIES: AN ASSESSMENT AND CONSERVATION PLAN KEY TAKEAWAYS

WHITE OAK FACTS



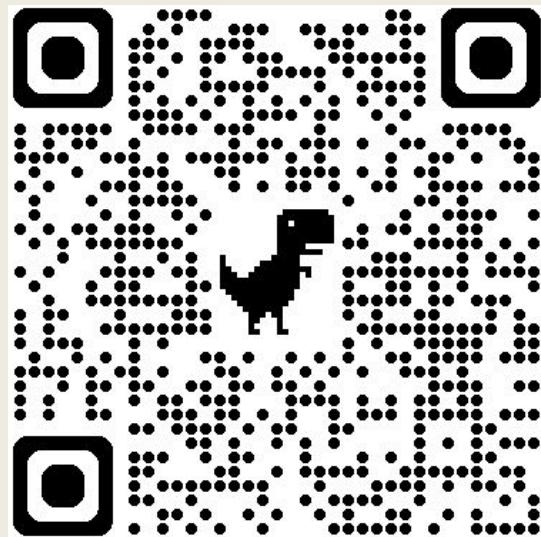
- American white oak is a foundational tree species, currently occupying more than 100 million acres of public and private forested areas much of the eastern and central United States—including a strong presence in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia and Wisconsin.
- White oak forests support biodiversity and are vital economically, providing a critical food source for a variety of wildlife species and serving as important sites in conserving our diverse forest ecosystems.
- Forest sector economic reports from central hardwood region states clearly indicate the importance of oak resources, which generate billions of dollars annually.
- White oaks are the most commercially important forest commodities for industries such as furniture, flooring, cabinetry, and wine and spirits.

CURRENT STATE OF AMERICA'S WHITE OAK

OVERALL REPORT FINDINGS


- Due to shifts in land management and ecological changes, an increasing amount of compelling tree species have been establishing themselves in the understories of America's white oak forests.
- Compelling species, most notably oaks and hickories, are shading out white oak trees and preventing them from "regenerating."
- Without intervention today, the American white oak population is likely to decline significantly within the next 10 to 15 years, with more extreme declines over the next several decades.

WhiteOakInitiative.org

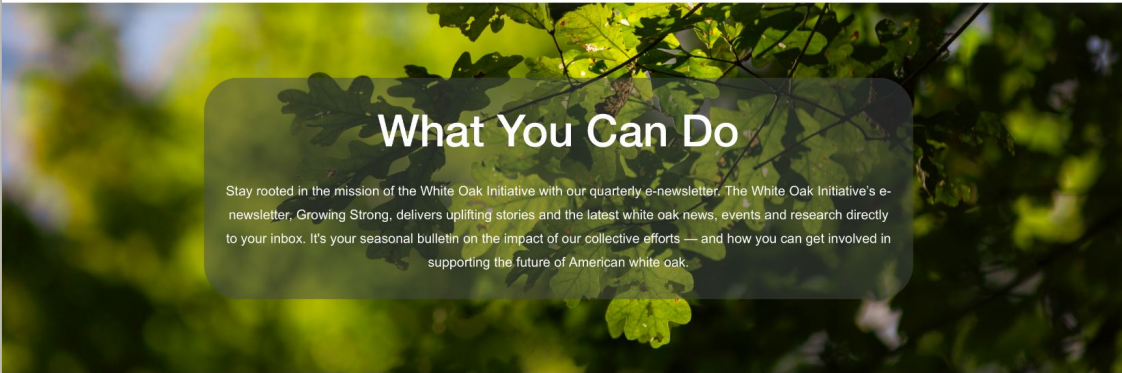




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What You Can Do

Stay rooted in the mission of the White Oak Initiative with our quarterly e-newsletter. The White Oak Initiative's e-newsletter, *Growing Strong*, delivers uplifting stories and the latest white oak news, events and research directly to your inbox. It's your seasonal bulletin on the impact of our collective efforts — and how you can get involved in supporting the future of American white oak.

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Get news from White Oak Initiative in your inbox.

Name

First Name

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MaY 29, 2025

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