



Montana Forest Owners Association
2814 Brooks Street, Suite 345
Missoula, MT 59801
www.montanaforestowners.org

Why Join the Montana Forest Owners Association?

MFOA is a unique non-profit trade organization (501c.6) that represents only one group: Non-industrial (family) private forest landowners. Any individual, family, company, organization, or natural resource professional that loves and respects the land, and the intrinsic rights of landowners to decide how to best manage their lands is encouraged to join and be heard. We are the only state voice that solely represents family forest owners interests in our legislative process.

Our Guiding Principles

- Freedom to manage our own forest land property
- Fair income, estate and property tax
- Private property rights
- Forestry education and fair forest regulation
- Fire policies and regulations that are private landowner conscious
- Improved forest products markets and services

Accomplishment highlights

- Negotiated fair fire preparedness fees for family forest lands
- Assist with Forest Best Management Practices development and audits
- Pushed for transparent and fair forest tax valuation and assessment
- Support and help plan forest landowner educational workshops
- Testified at numerous Montana legislative sessions regarding forest regulation and taxation bills
- Participating in wildfire suppression policy development
- Participating in wildfire suppression damage compensation policy development

MFOA identified top issues facing forest landowners

1. Concern for liability of wildfire/prescribed burning of my property from/to other lands.
2. Losing control over my property from new laws (federal, state, local regulatory actions).
3. Maintaining forest products infrastructure (markets, forestry and logging expertise).
4. Cross boundary management including collaboration among state/federal/private regarding forest health and fire (the needs expressed here I think are for private forest lands to have a voice and be considered equal partners in the decision making and implementation phases).
5. Timber land taxation/assessment policy and practice.

6. Consistency and increases in state and federal cost-share for forest related treatments on private lands.
7. Keep voluntary status of landowner BMP audits (clarification is that private forest landowners participation is essential for the audit process to work, however, this needs to remain voluntary for landowners thus more effort needs to be taken to inform and recruit landowners to be part of this process).
8. General landowner liability with respect to trespass, easements, etc. - need clarity of rules for this (note – this is considered a separate issue from wildfire/prescribed burning liability).
9. Extended prescribed burning season for private lands forest practices – perhaps over the entire winter - with respect to DEQ rules and local air quality rules and regulations (the ability to burn clean dry piles from forestry operations when snow is on the ground and good air dispersal exists needs to be present all winter long, rather than the current 3 month prohibition).
10. Impacts of potential climate change legislation on forest management on private lands.
11. MFOAs' active role in helping landowners deal with federal/state/local administrative overreach.
12. Increase timber management options within SMZ's

Legislative issues to watch for in the future:

1. EQC hearings on – management of chronic wasting disease (including management of animals on private property).
2. SJ30 – wildlife location database showing wildlife locations on private lands.
3. SJ20 – wilderness study area changes in designation.
4. Funding for state Natural Heritage Program (additional fees and tax assessments).
5. Local government as wildfire authority – additional fire suppression taxes on top of existing fire preparedness tax landowners already pay (but not municipal residents).
6. Water rights.

We can only be effective if we maintain forest landowner membership!

As a member you will enjoy the following benefits:

1. Subscription to Northwest Woodlands Magazine
2. Subscription to NIFP-ty Notes newsletter
3. Invitations to meetings, workshops, seminars, and conferences
4. An opportunity to sit on our Board of Directors
5. Networking opportunities with other private landowners and public officials
6. A direct voice to legislators, legislative committees, and agencies to express your concerns and solutions to help private forest landowners.
7. Website benefits at www.montanaforestowners.org

Please consider joining or renewing your MFOA membership today.

Annual \$25 dues can be paid in-person or online at

www.montanaforestowners.org.