

Buying Land? What you should know about Forest Management.

When you're making decisions about buying recreational property from a timber perspective, it's a great idea to talk to a forestry expert. In some cases, your broker may have this knowledge; in others, the broker may want to bring in an independent forestry consultant.



The [Association of Consulting Foresters \(ACF\)](#) is a national organization of professional forestry consultants. The expertise and experience of such professionals can give landowners valuable insight, says Pete Prutzman of [Kingwood Forestry](#) in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, a member of the Potlatch Preferred Network.

Before you buy recreational land where the timber component is significant, Prutzman, a Registered Forester, offers the following tips:

Prior to making a purchase, ask a Registered Forester or ACF Consultant to determine tree health and condition. Obtain a timber inventory.

After your purchase, a Registered Forester/ACF Consultant can help you maintain your land by:

- drafting a forest management plan;
- overseeing thinning of trees and brush control;
- maintaining boundary markers;
- inspecting trees for insects or disease;
- advising when it's time for a selective harvest;
- checking to ensure that access roads are in good repair;
- assessing timber market conditions.

The basic principles of good forestry are the same no matter where you purchase your property, but different geographic areas will have varying management needs. For example, trees in Minnesota and other northern states grow much slower than in warmer climates, says [Rod Osterloh](#), a Potlatch Preferred Broker in Brainerd, Minnesota, so it's important to keep that in mind when determining how your timber will grow over time.

Minnesota recreational property buyers see timber investment as an added bonus that could be quite substantial when the timber is fully mature and ready for harvest. "A basic understanding of forestry principles is important for any buyer to have," Osterloh says.

Guided by a belief in sustainable land stewardship practices, any member of the [Potlatch Preferred Broker Network](#) welcomes the opportunity to work with buyers by answering any questions and helping them make an informed buying decision.