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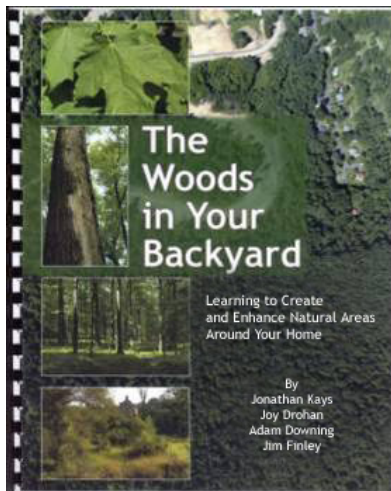
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## FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you would like to talk with a *Woods in Your Backyard* trainer in your area, or find out more about the manual and training, contact:



Online information about the Woods in Your Backyard can be found at:

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*The Woods in Your Backyard* was created through the cooperation of the University of Maryland Cooperative Extension, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Penn State Cooperative Extension, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Virginia Department of Forestry, and the Potomac Watershed Partnership.

# The Woods in Your Backyard

Learning to Create and  
Enhance Natural Areas  
Around Your Home



A Manual and Workbook for  
Owners of 10 Acres or Less in  
the Mid-Atlantic Region

Maryland Cooperative Extension  
Penn State Cooperative Extension  
Virginia Cooperative Extension

## WHAT IS THE WOODS IN YOUR BACKYARD?

Would you like to spend less time and money maintaining your lawn? Do you want to provide a sanctuary for wildlife? Would you like to enjoy the beauty of nature in your own backyard? *The Woods in Your Backyard* will show you how to make these things possible.

*The Woods in Your Backyard* is a manual and workbook written for owners of 1-10 acres of land. The purpose is to help landowners make informed decisions that impact water, wildlife populations, recreational opportunities, and forest health.

### IMPORTANCE OF SMALL FORESTS

Did you know that in the US, 42% forestland is owned by private families? In the mid-Atlantic region, at least two-thirds of forest landowners own 10 acres or less. As land is divided into smaller parcels, forests become fragmented and



corridors providing safe travel for wildlife are eliminated. Therefore, it is increasingly important that small forestland owners create and follow a land management plan that provides for wildlife without restricting other forms of land use.

*The Woods in Your Backyard* is a four-part manual and workbook that walks readers through the steps necessary to create a personalized management plan suited to the landowner's goals and resources in a way that protects and improves forest integrity.

### PART 1: INTRODUCTION

Have you outlined your goals for your property? Are you familiar with your property's boundaries and possible legal constraints? Part 1 of the manual guides you through the process of exploring the possibilities of what you may do with your land, mapping the property, and identifying legal and physical restrictions that may exist.



### PART 2: GET TO KNOW YOUR PROPERTY

Natural areas can look very different. Part 2 helps you to divide your land into management units. You will also learn about obtaining aerial photos of your property and how to identify common tree species of the mid-Atlantic region.

### PART 3: ECOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES

Are you familiar with forest succession, carrying capacity, and the value of dead trees? Part 3 of the manual describes the fundamental principles of forestry and ecology that you'll need to understand when creating and altering a natural area.



### PART 4: PUT YOUR KNOWLEDGE INTO PRACTICE

Whether your goals are recreation, aesthetics, environmental, or economic, Part 4 will help you meet your goals and instruct you in techniques for land management, trees planting, and trail design and maintenance.

### APPENDICES

Don't know which trees to plant or how to attract certain wildlife species? Tables in the appendices describe the characteristics of mid-Atlantic tree species and their benefit to wildlife. You can also read about the specific needs of common wildlife species and how to provide them on your property.