

Who owns the forests in the Northeastern U.S.?

Brett J. Butler

USDA Forest Service

Forest Inventory and Analysis

National Woodland Owner Survey

Presented at the Late Successional Old-Growth Dialogue
April 27-28, 2005 in Portland, Maine

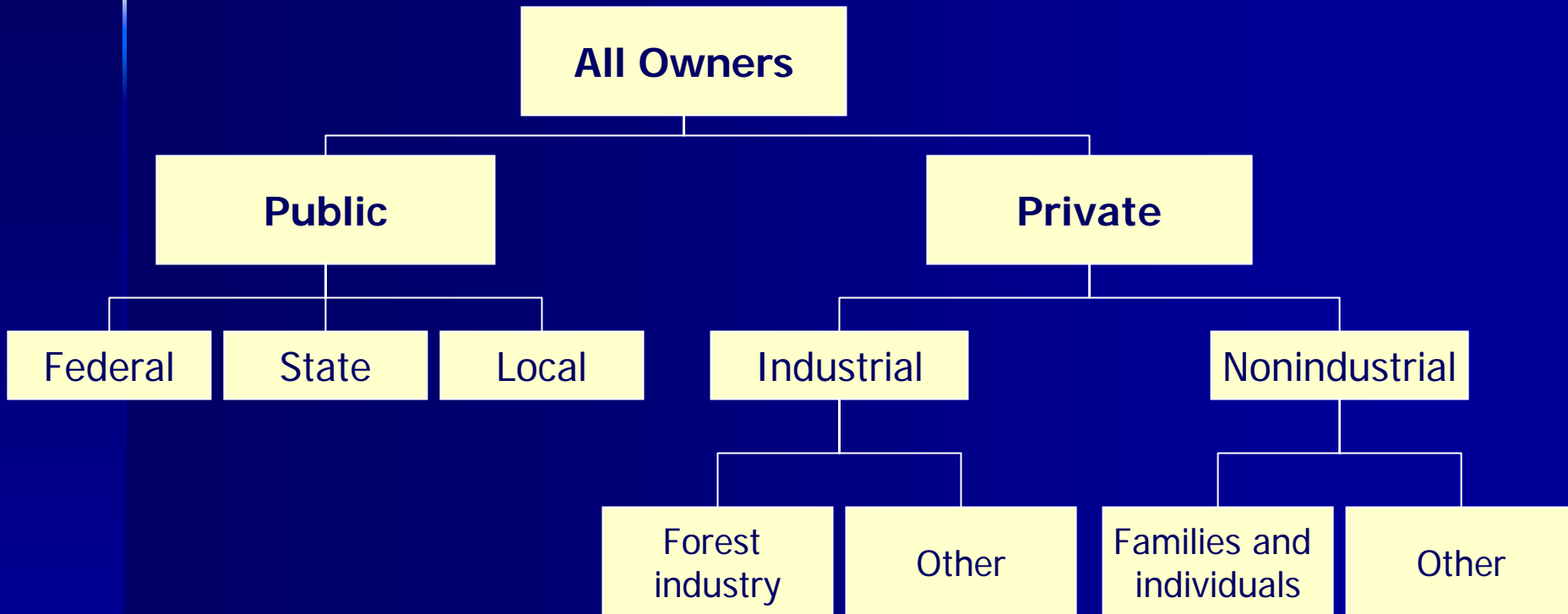


Why does ownership matter?

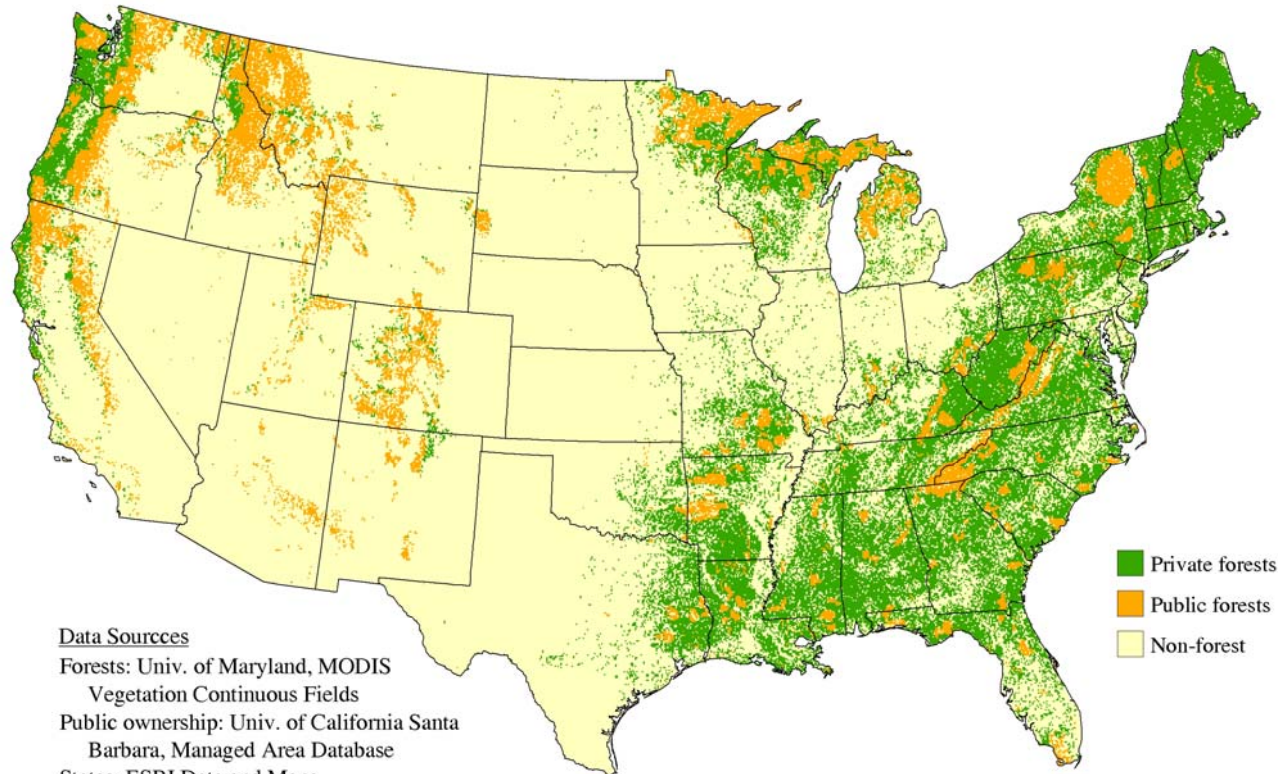


- People influence:
 - Land use
 - Land cover
 - Forest management
 - Forest composition
 - Forest structure

Ownership Categories



Forest Ownership



Data Sources

Forests: Univ. of Maryland, MODIS
Vegetation Continuous Fields
Public ownership: Univ. of California Santa
Barbara, Managed Area Database
States: ESRI Data and Maps

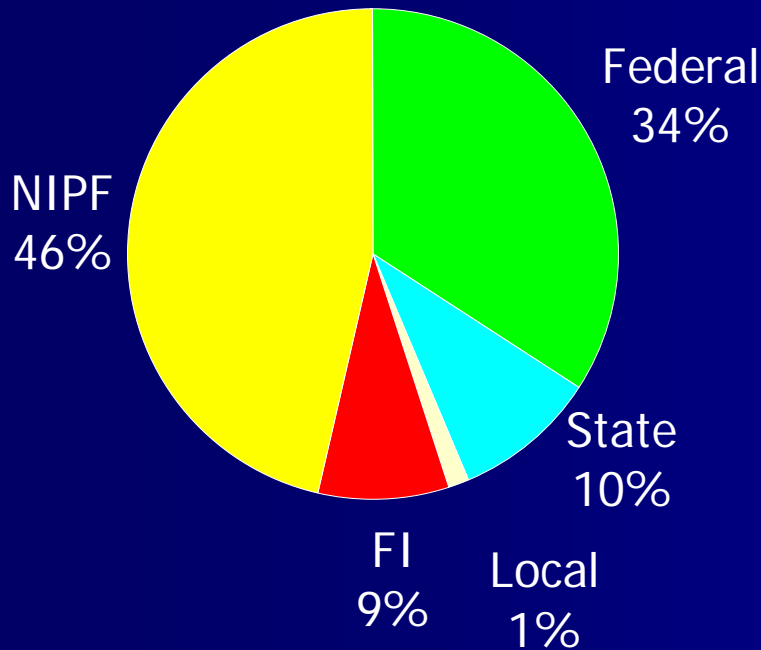
- Private forests
- Public forests
- Non-forest



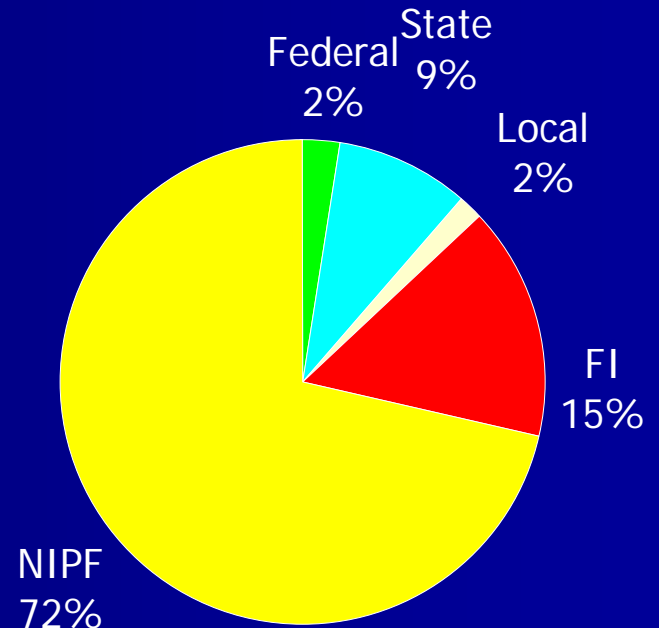
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Forest Ownership

United States



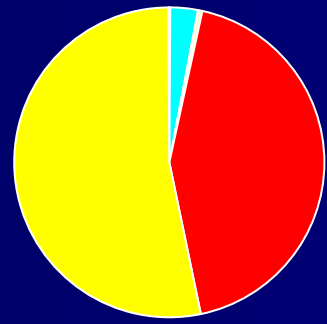
Northeast



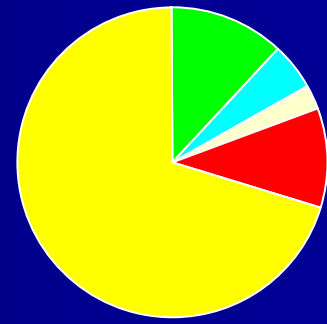
Source: Forest Resources of the United States, 2002

Forest Ownership by State

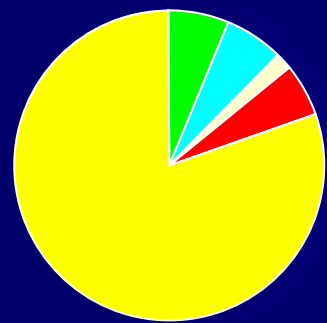
ME



NH



VT



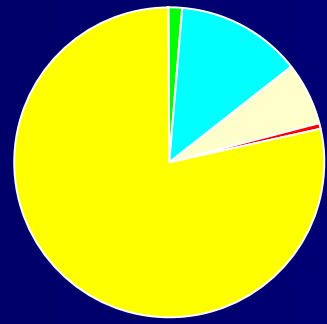
- Federal
- State
- Local
- Forest industry
- Nonindustrial private



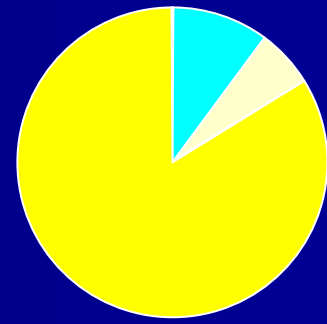
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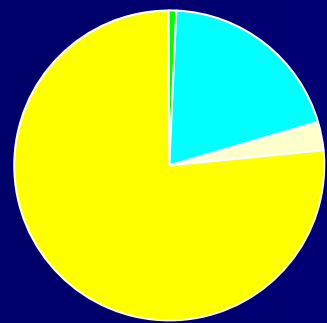
MA



CT



RI



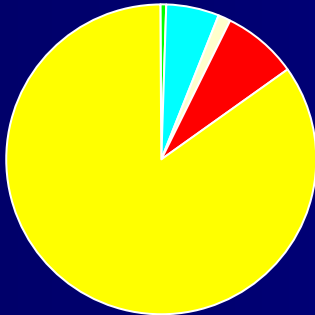
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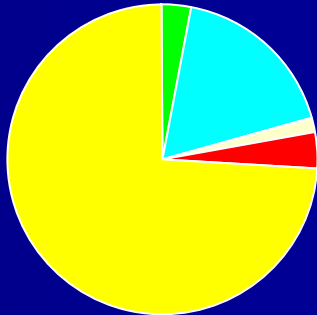
Source: Forest Resources of the United States, 2002

Forest Ownership by State

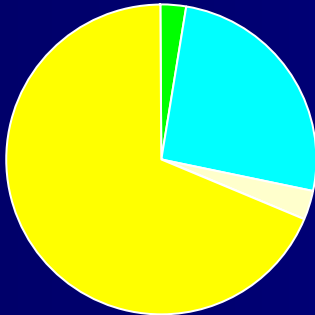
NY



PA



NJ



- Federal
- State
- Local
- Forest industry
- Nonindustrial private



Source: Forest Resources of the United States, 2002

Public Owners

- Federal
- State
- Local



Industrial Owners

- Forest industry
- Investment organizations



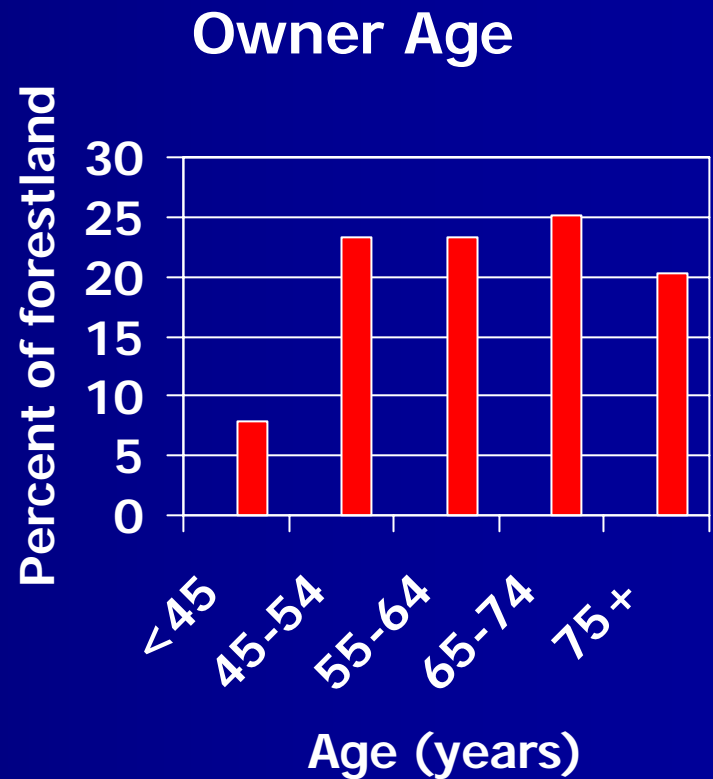
Nonindustrial Owners

- Families and individuals
- Conservation groups
- Other businesses

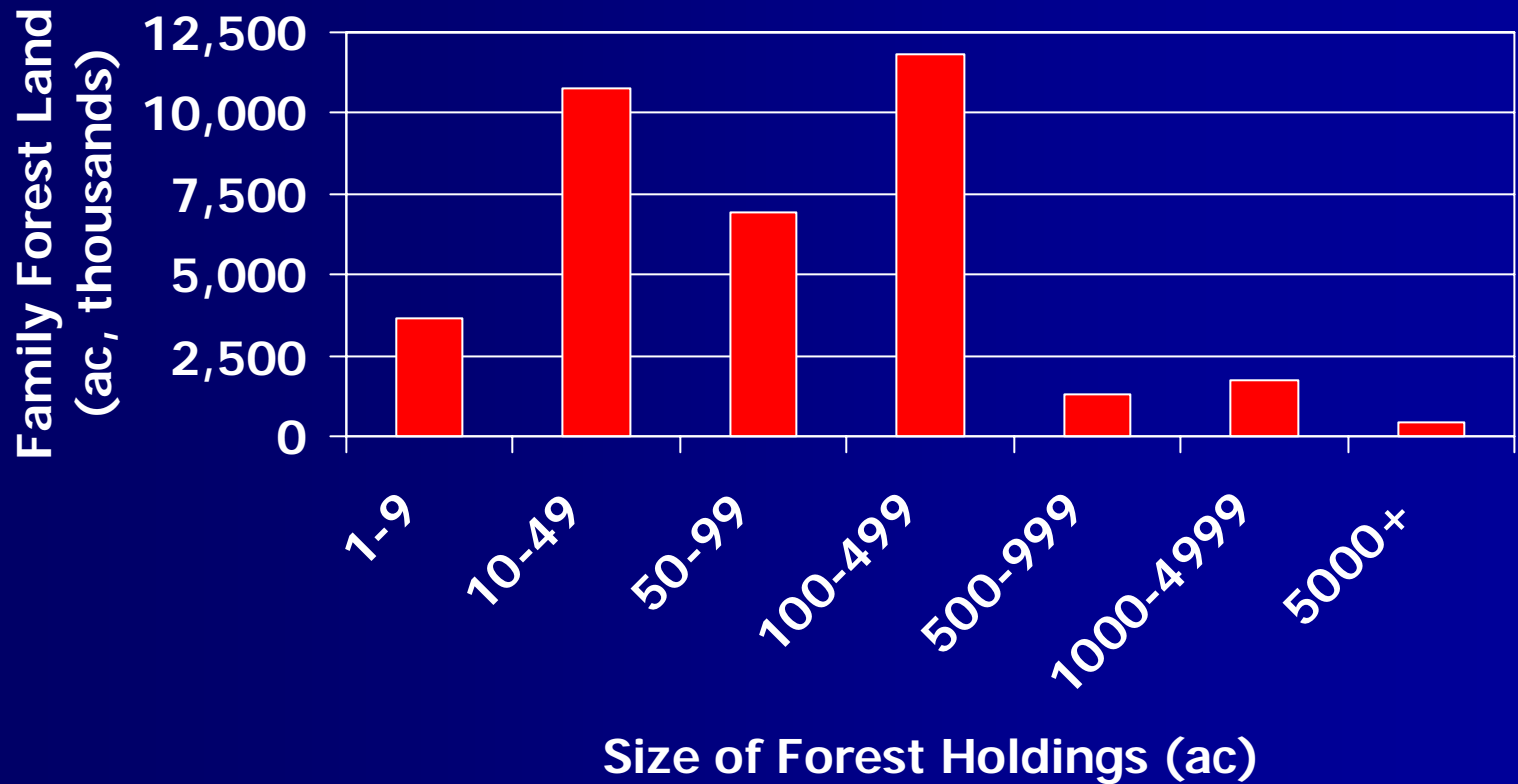


Who are the family forest owners?

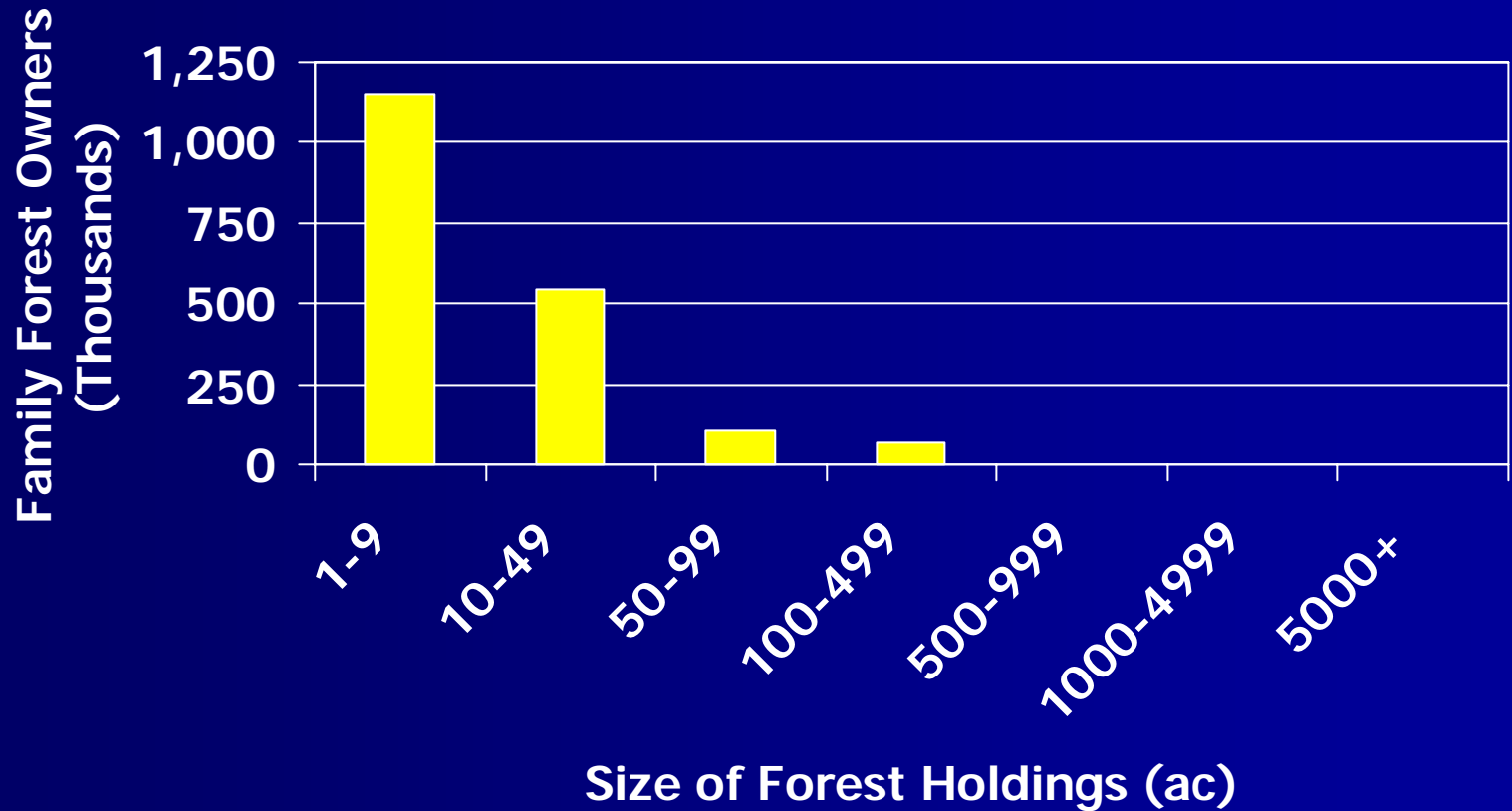
- Number of owners
1.9 million
- Forested acres owned
37 million
- Education
64% some college
- Occupation
51% retired
- Average age
63 years



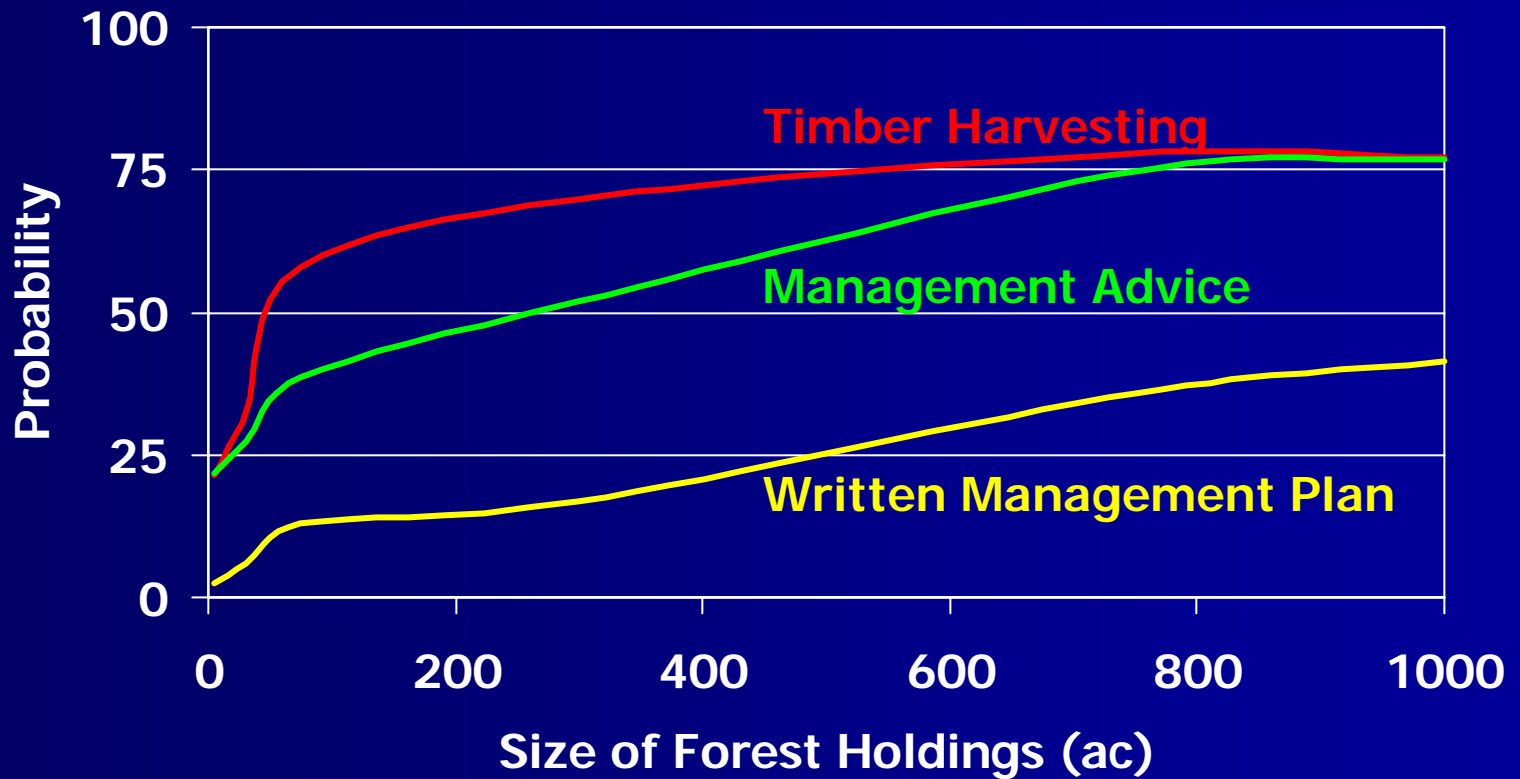
What size holdings do they have?



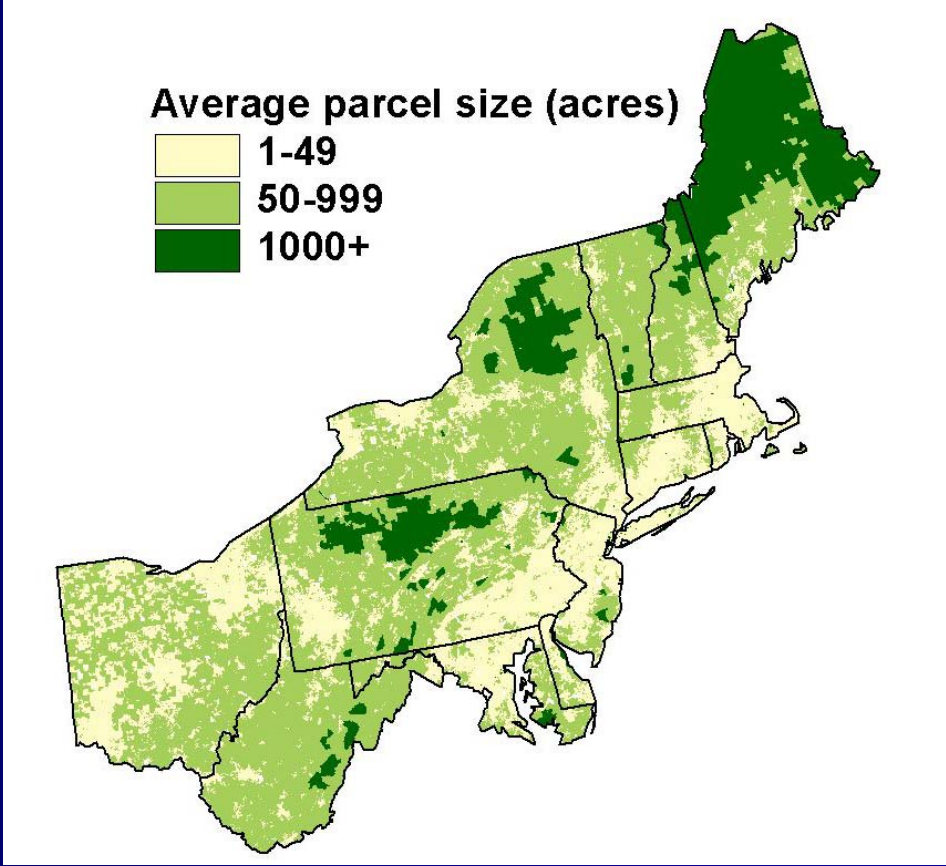
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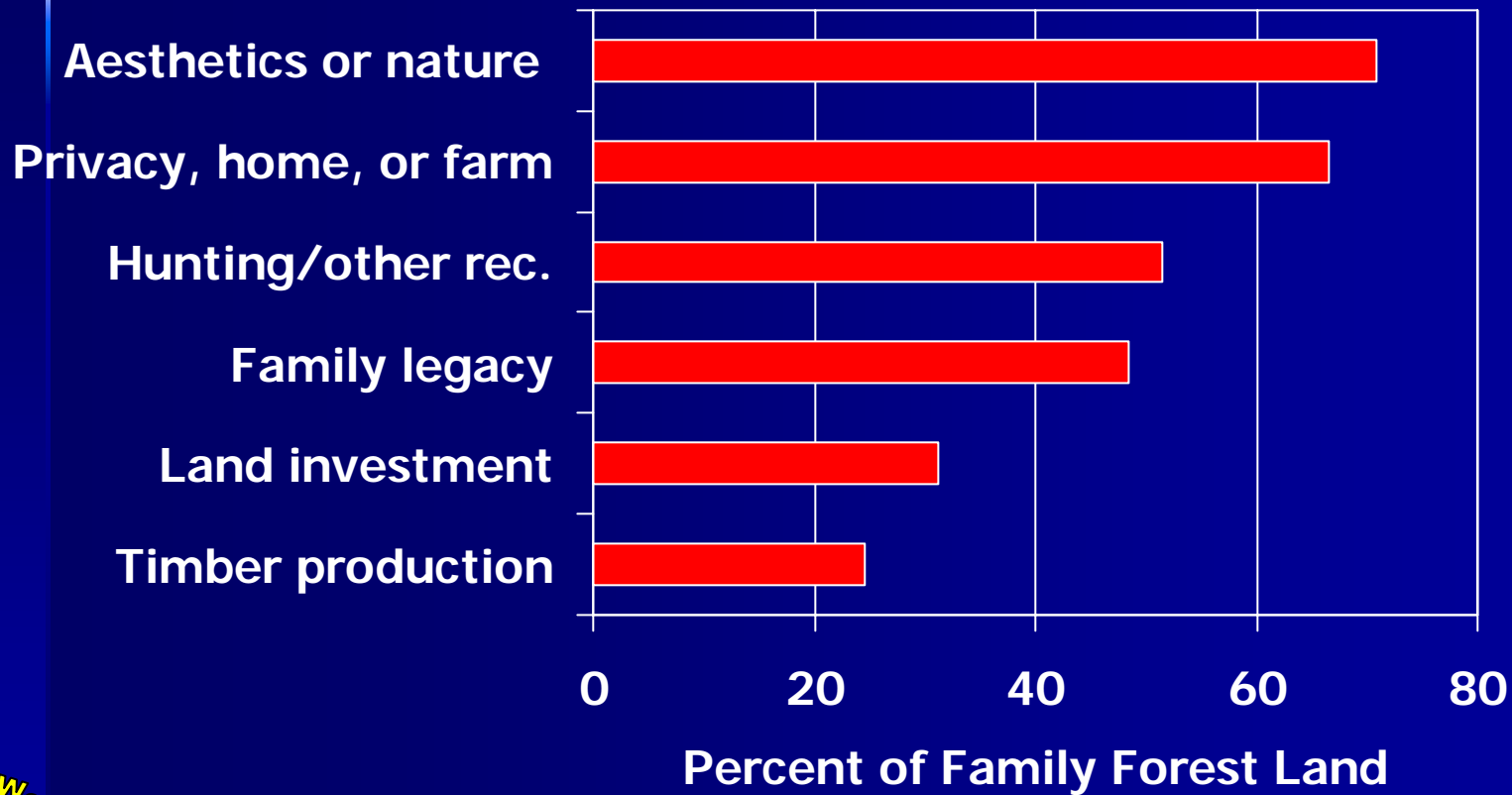
What is the relationship between forest management and size of forest holdings?



Forest Parcel Size



Why do they own forest land?

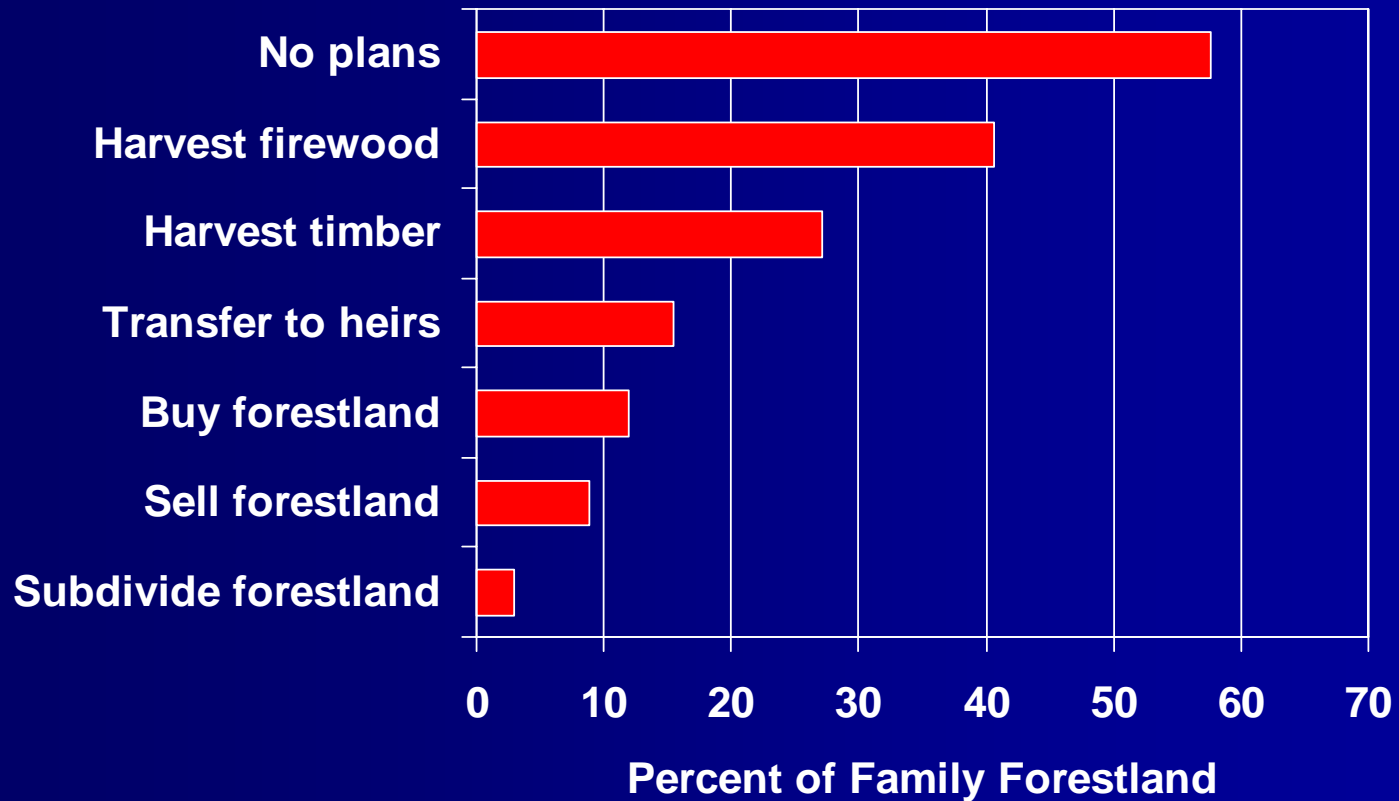


Forest Management

- Timber harvesting
 - 27% of family forest owners
 - 42% of family forests
- Forest management plans
 - 4% of family forest owners
 - 18% of family forestland
- Professional assistance
 - 11% of family forest owners
 - 33% of family forestland



What do they intend to do with it in the next 5 years?

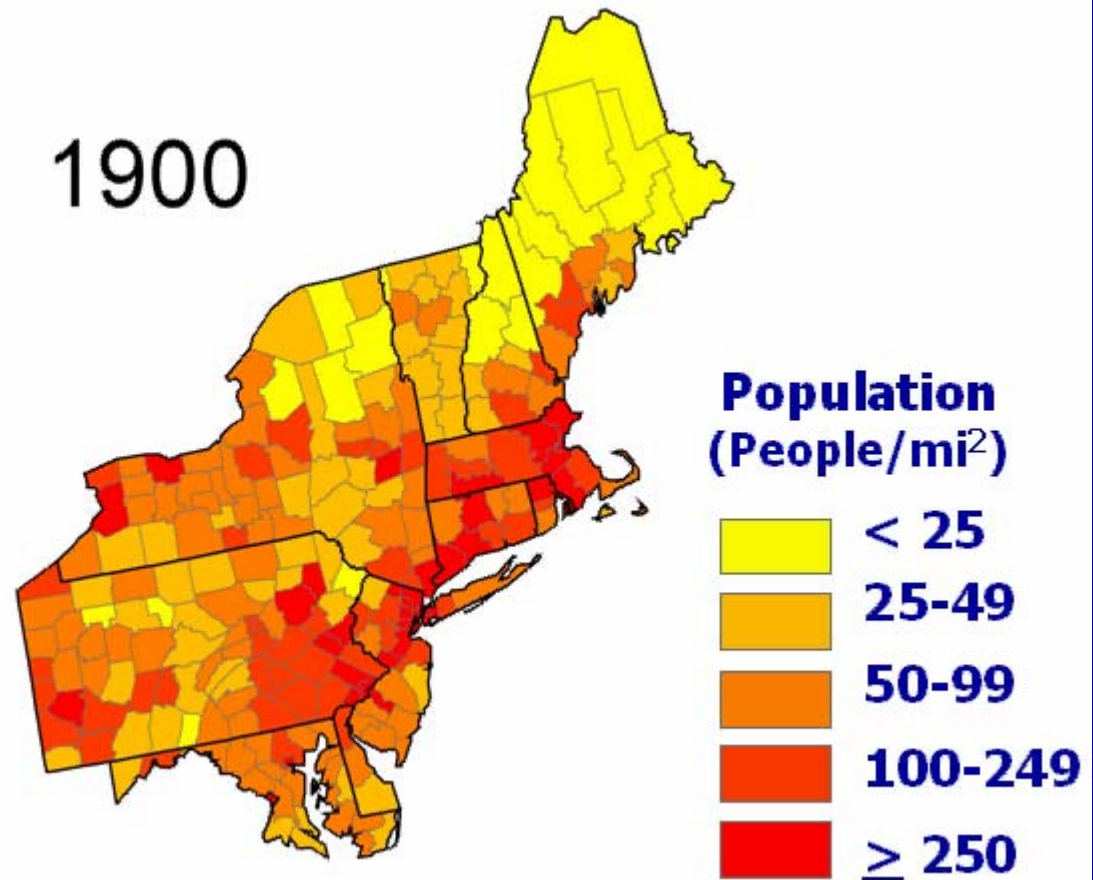


Trends in Forest Ownership

- Increased population pressures
- Evolving role of investment organizations and traditional forest industry companies
- Parcelization and consolidation
- Public lands increasing, but remaining relatively stable
- Lack of management funds
- High landowner turnover (families and individuals)
- Changing ownership objectives (families and individuals)

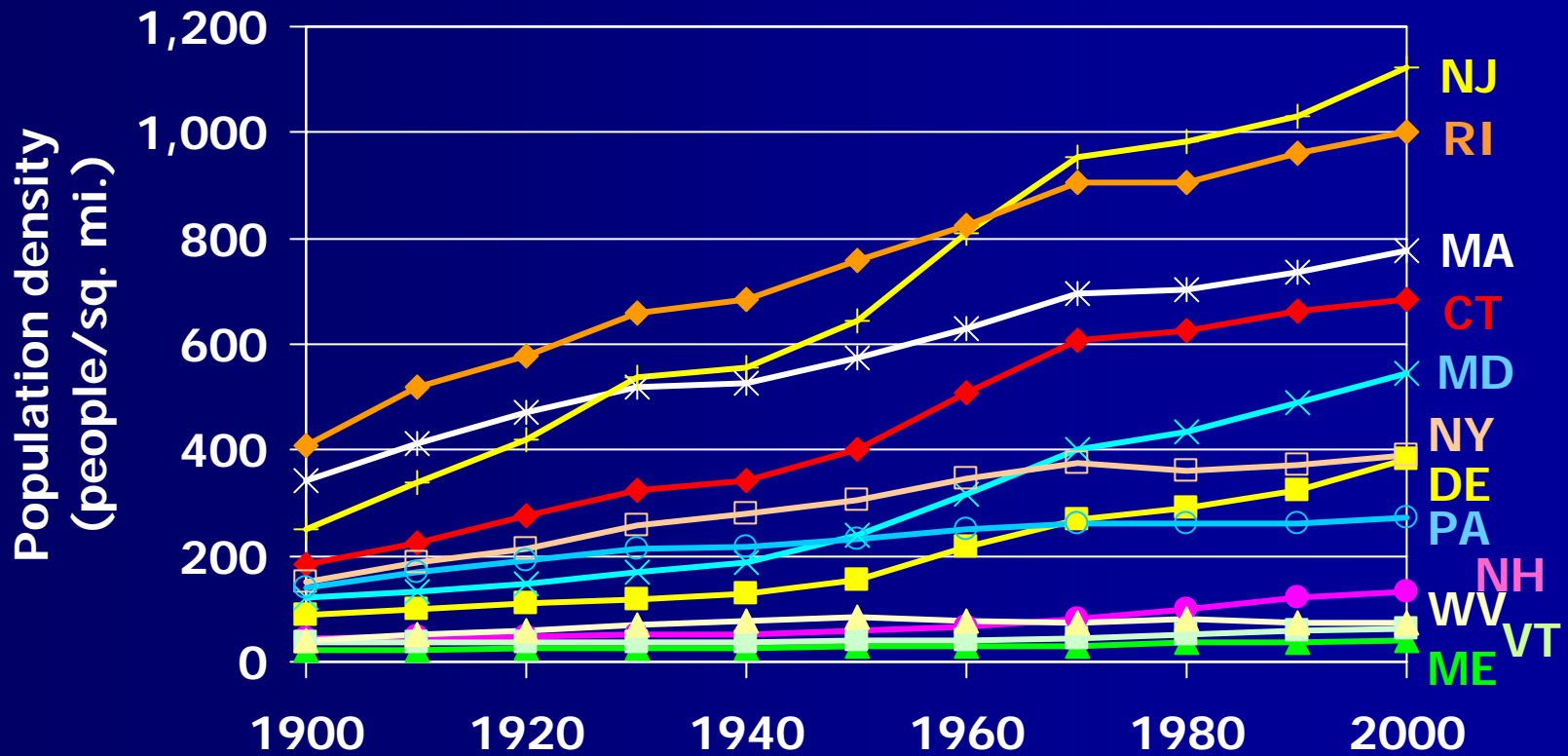


Population Change 1900-2000

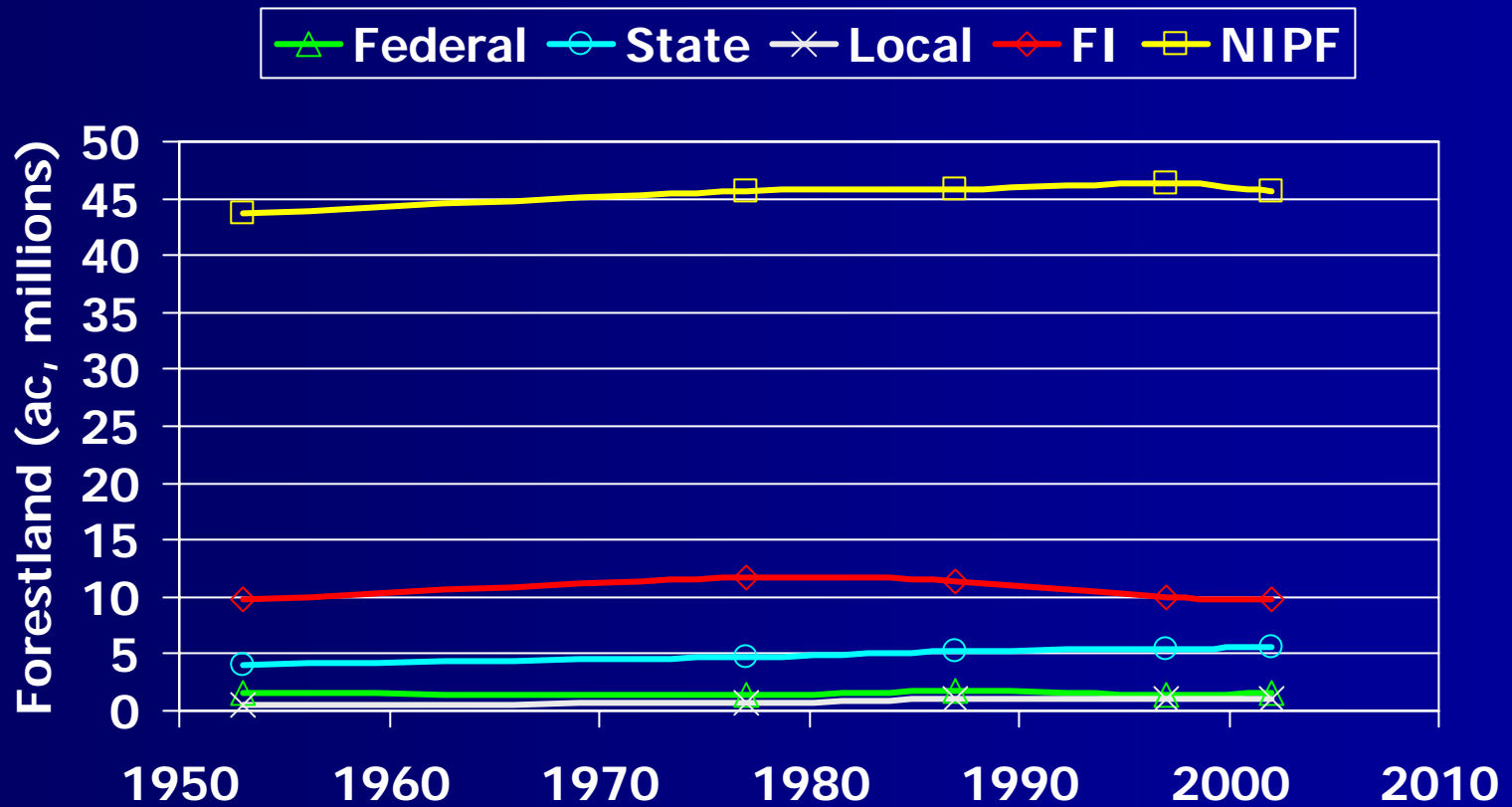


Data source:
U.S. Census Bureau

Population Change 1900-2000

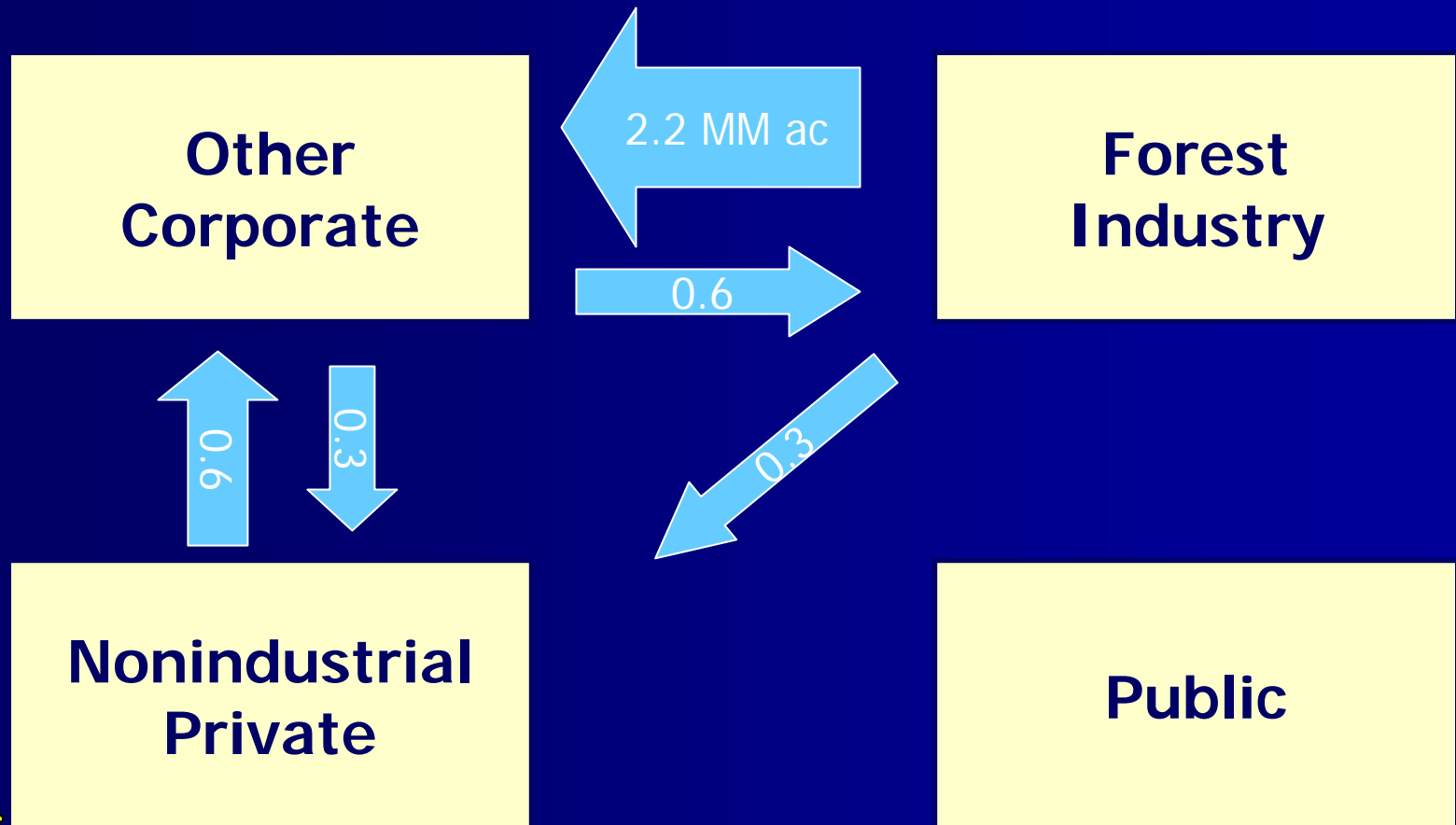


Forest Ownership in the Northeast, 1953 - 2002



Gross Changes*

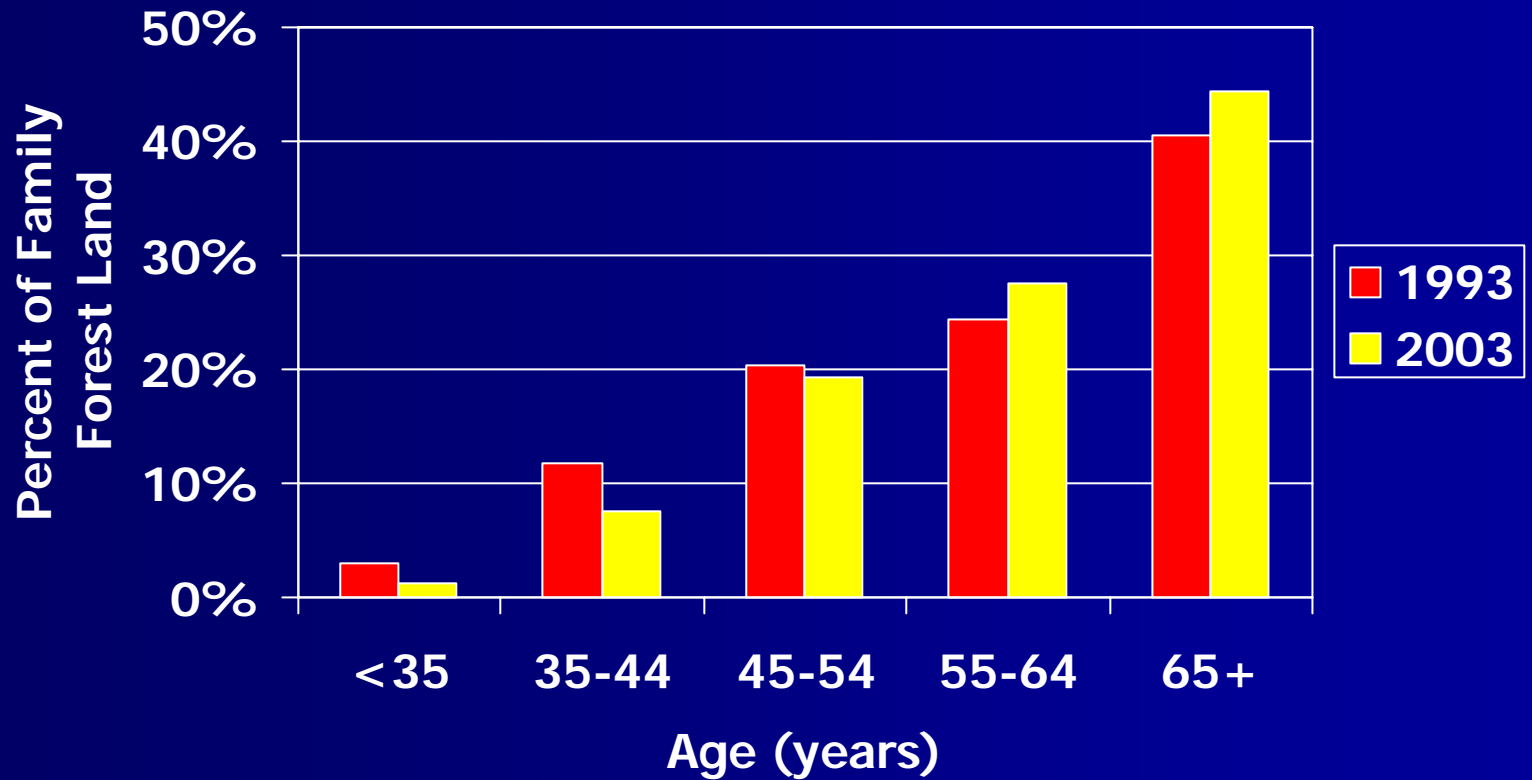
Maine: 1995 to 2003



* Only changes in excess of 100,000 ac are depicted

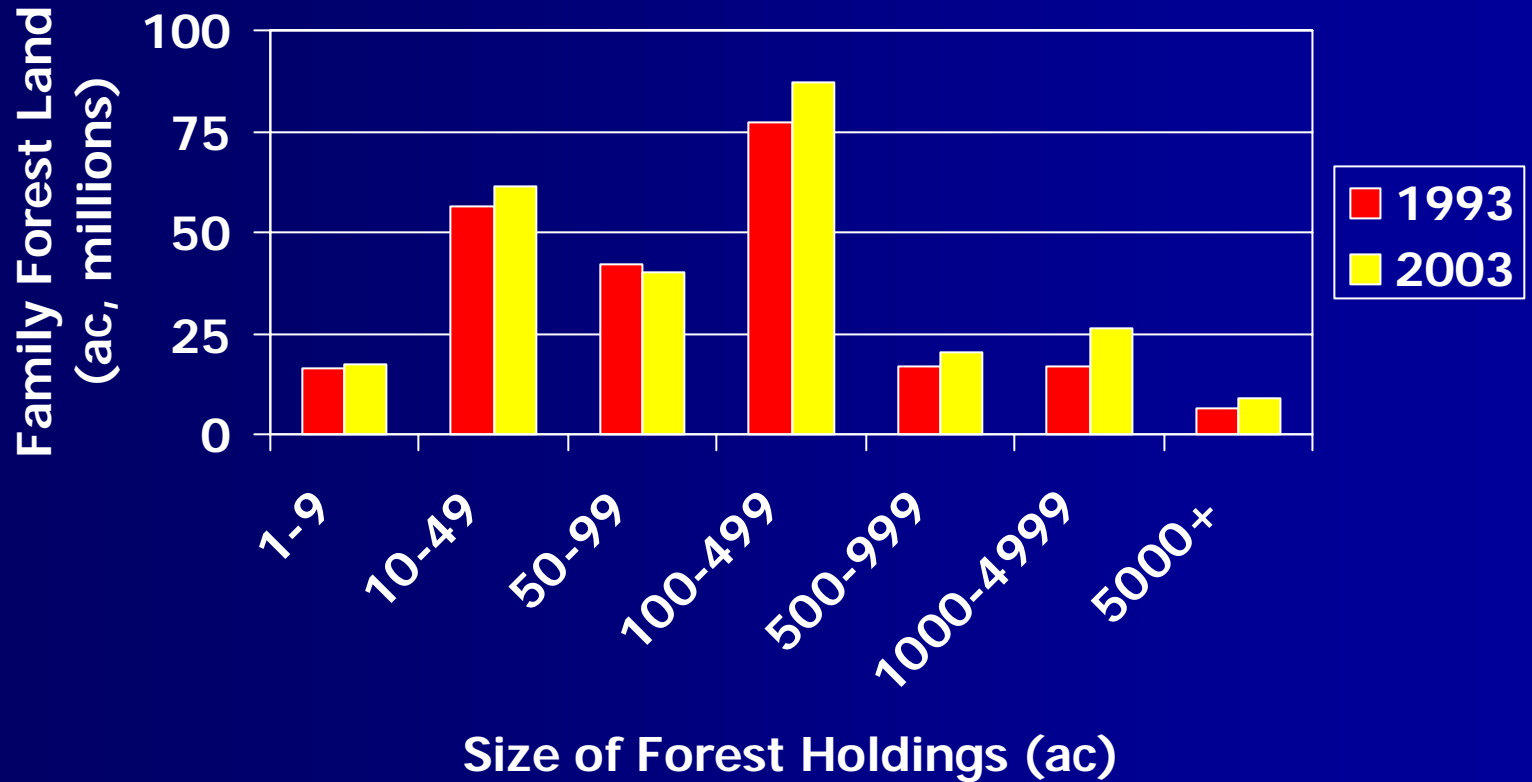
Ownership Dynamics

Owner Age



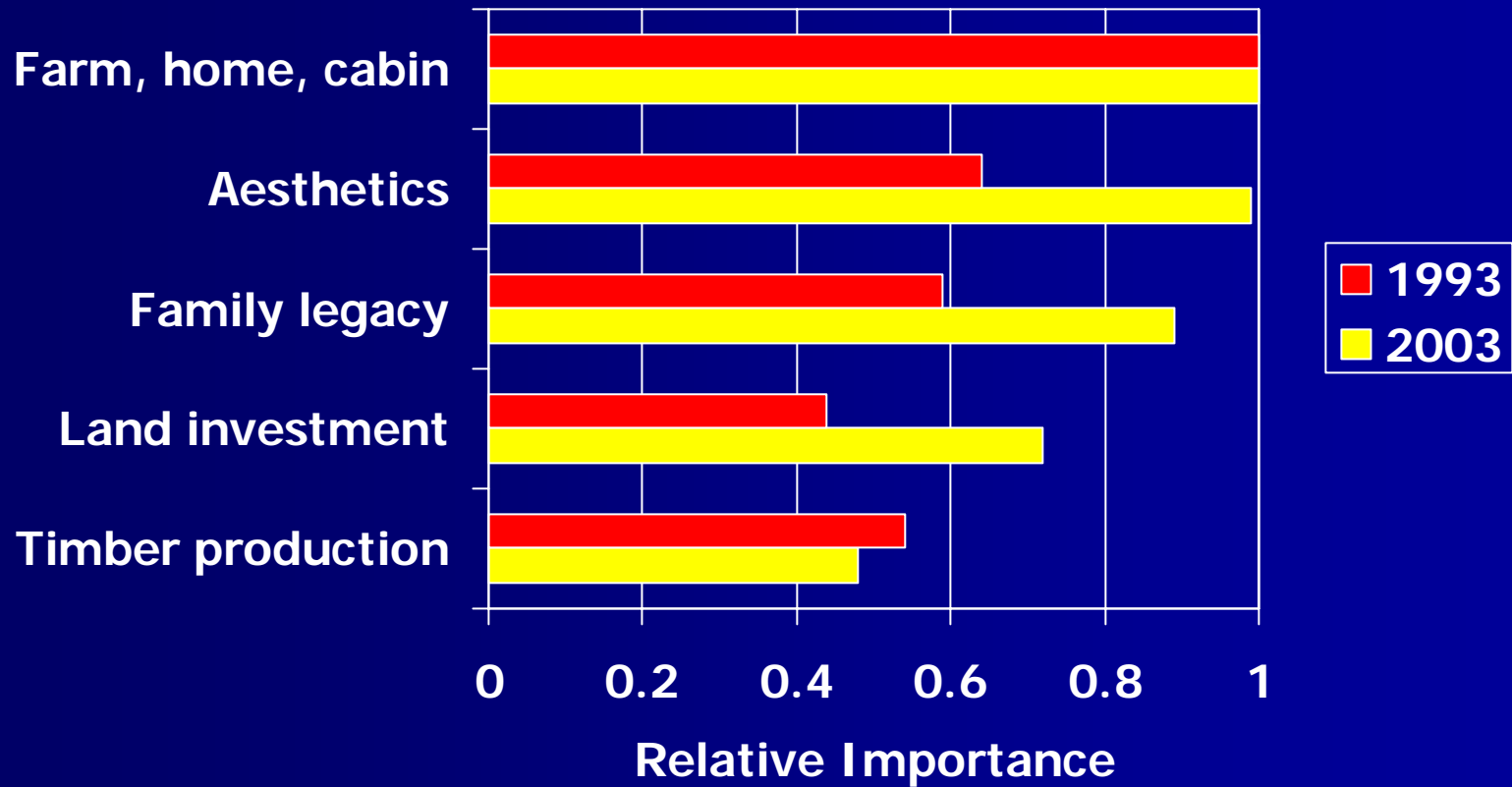
Ownership Dynamics

Size of Landholdings



Ownership Dynamics

Ownership Objectives



Questions?

