

Understanding and measuring woodland owner engagement

University of Wisconsin Extension has been conducting Learn About Your Land, beginner level classes for woodland owners, since 2008. The intent of these classes is to provide landowners basic skills to understand their woodlands and start to feel comfortable engaging with resource professionals. Sounds familiar, eh? But ALL our funders want to know: so what?

This session will cover three topics to answer that and engage in conversation around our theories and methods. Part one will introduce our models and understanding of landowner engagement over the past few years. Part two will cover our evaluation plan and methods. We have followed this plan regularly the last 13 years, but our questions have evolved to address our models. The last half of this presentation will engage attendees in conversation about concepts of landowner engagement, how we measure it moving forward, and what support Extension educators need to fully engage in impact evaluation of programs for woodland owners.



Kris Tiles

Kris Tiles joined Univ of Wisconsin-Madison Div. of Extension in April 2004 as a Regional Natural Resources Educator, and is currently the Program Manager. Kris' work covers the areas of forestry outreach to woodland owners and water quality improvement through soil health. She has been part of the team leading a program of broader outreach called Learn About Your Land, for new and beginning woodland owners. She has also worked with communities to facilitate dialogue around sense of place and the environment. After receiving her bachelor's degree in Forest Science from the UW-Madison, she joined the Peace Corps where she worked as an agroforestry volunteer for two years. Upon her return, she worked for Oregon State University as a researcher looking at spotted owl habitat. She returned to Madison, where she earned a master's degree in Human Dimensions of Forest Management.