



PID
FLOORS

Benefits of Working Forests

Forests where the sustainable production of wood is carefully balanced with protecting other important resources such as water quality and wildlife habitat are known as “working forests.” After trees are harvested from these forests, they are replanted and harvested again in a sustainable process that can span lifetimes.

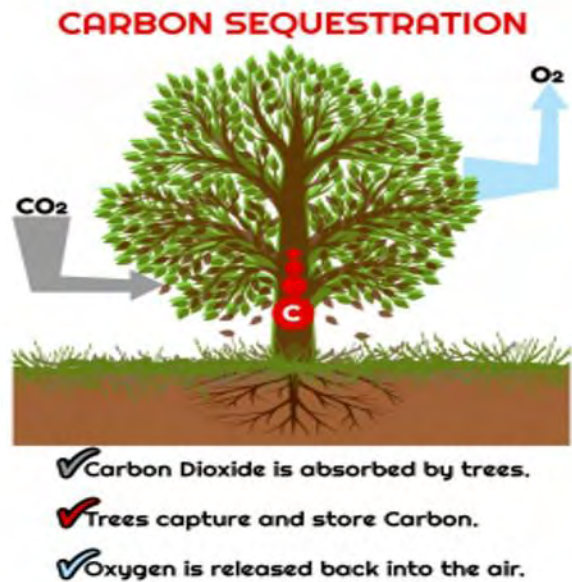
Working forests are a real solution to reduce the amount of carbon in the environment. Scientists commonly refer to the cycle of growth and harvest in working forests as carbon sequestration. Carbon sequestration is the process of capturing, securing, and storing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. The idea is to stabilize carbon in solid and dissolved forms so that it doesn't cause the atmosphere to warm.

Carbon sequestration is directly related to the growth rate of a tree. Newly planted and young trees grow quickly and absorb more carbon dioxide from the atmosphere than older ones. Older trees will have more carbon stored because they have spent more time absorbing it. However, if these older trees are not harvested, they are more susceptible to fire damage, pests, and diseases. Also, their carbon absorption plateaus. Therefore, in a working forest, it is important that older trees ready to become lumber are harvested and replaced with robust growing young trees. This process will maximize the CO₂ absorption of the forest.

The process continues with more carbon being stored during a tree's high-growth period (when they are younger) and less being stored in older phases of growth. One of the best parts of this process is that after harvest, the wood continues to store the carbon as lumber, wood, and paper products.

Overall, working forests increase CO₂ absorption and prevent catastrophic fire, disease and insects that kill trees and emit carbon dioxide. They provide drinking water, a healthy climate, wildlife habitat, and green jobs.

To manage a working forest, you do not have to live in Idaho or Washington. In fact, urban forests account for almost 20% of the sequestration of carbon in U.S forests. Working forests are popular, and a 10% increase in the number of entry level urban forestry jobs (most related to tree trimming and pruning) is expected from 2018 to 2028.



Although working forests and carbon sequestering are extremely efficient in reducing the human carbon footprint, humans can put in some work, too! Below are helpful ways of reducing your carbon footprint whether you live on a farm or in a metropolitan area:

- Use public transportation, walk, or bike. In NYC, this one is easy!
- Unplug your electronic devices after they are done charging. We are all guilty of falling asleep with our cell phones fully charged and still plugged in.
- Build with wood. As we know, trees absorb carbon from the atmosphere and store carbon in wood products!
- Shop resale instead of buying trendy; there will be a lot less waste in our landfills!

References:

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The Life of a Working Tree, <https://oregonforests.org/working-forests>

What Makes a Working Forest Work? <https://www.workingforests.org>

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