

For the past four years, Kim Ingram, Forest Stewardship Education coordinator, has been listening closely to the private forest landowners who participate in her Forest Stewardship Workshop series. In 2023, Ingram and the Forest Stewardship team published a story map project that aims to provide landowners with a virtual platform to share their experiences and ways that they have been empowered to manage their land.

The project also includes stories from forestry professionals, providing readers different perspectives on forestry project development and implementation. You can visit the Forest Stewardship Story Map here: <https://arcg.is/1qP88L0>

Read portions of some stories from California RPFs and forest landowners below!

Tori Norville (Napa County RPF)



Figure 1: Tori Norville, RPF and UCANR Fire Advisor. Credit: Grace Dean

“Working face to face with the community is important to me. When I establish trust with a landowner and they invite me out to their property, I can understand the work they are both excited as well as, may be hesitant to do. It’s also great to see people’s faces light up when they tell me about the work they’ve done already. This process (site visits) help me get a better idea of what the landowner is working with, and if certain projects would be feasible (based on their budget, scope and time-frame), which helps me give better advice.”

Diane Koenig (Santa Cruz County landowner)



Figure 2: Diane Koenig's forestland. Credit: Diane Koenig

“My husband, his land partner, and I have had multiple management and timber plans over the years, stretching back to 1984 with the first California Forest Improvement Program (CFIP) plan. Working with our forester to make these plans really helped us think about the projects that needed to be done. It helped me put plans together in my mind to get rid of fire ladders, and clear encroaching brushy areas. That’s why having a forester is great, they know their stuff. They can help you figure out what your land needs.”

Ryan Tompkins (Plumas County RPF)



Figure 3: Plumas County forestland. Credit: Kim Ingram.

“I provide technical assistance and can help landowners network to find funding assistance to manage their lands. A few resources more landowners should use are the California Fire Science Consortium, University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources websites, and just experiential learning. Learn by doing, go out there, try some stuff out, monitor it, watch it over time. Once you own forest land, you are automatically a forest steward- whether you like it or not. You assume the role of being a decision maker.

I like to tell a lot of my clientele who I work with that owning forest land is like owning an old Volkswagen. You don't do it because it always makes economic sense, but it's a labor of love.”

Brent McDermott (Nevada County Landowner)

(no photo)

“Education is so important, and you either must find it yourself or hire a professional forester. But don't do too much at once because it can become overwhelming very easily.

Know your own goals, and then you can get more specific from there. Get advice from different people too and see if what they say meshes with your goals and ethics. For me, forest management is all about getting the forest back to the way it used to be. That's my purpose, and the management practices I do all circle back to that.”