

Women Caring for the LandSM

Targeted Conservation Outreach to
Female Non-operator Farmland Owners



Women Landowners Matter

- Women landowners own or co-own nearly half of Iowa land
- Women landowners own 61% of the rented land in Iowa

Women Farmland Owners



A. Men Farmland Owners
B. Women Farmland Owners
C. Women Farmland Owners, 65+
D. Women Farmland Owners, 75+

Rented Land



A. Men own 39% of rented land
B. Women own 61% of rented land (details page 9)



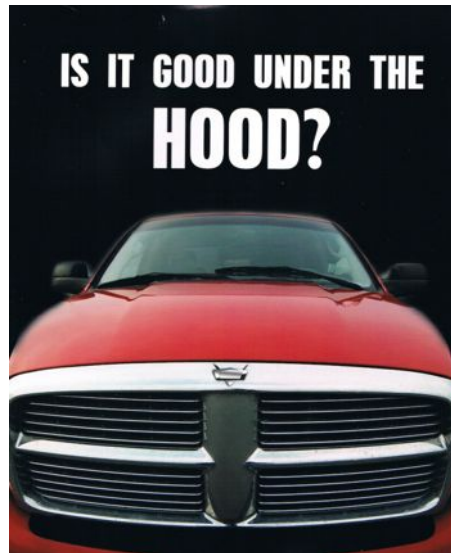
The Landowners

- Women 65+ owned 25% of Iowa farmland in 2007; % is rising
- Many have inherited land
- May retain land for sentimental reasons
- Most employ tenant farmers
- May lack knowledge and confidence about farm management
- Excellent conservation partners when properly informed and supported



The Challenges

1. Women landowners often feel overlooked and neglected
 - Most agency print materials are clearly geared toward men
2. Many women landowners lack confidence as decision-makers



“Learning Circles” Methodology

- Women prefer it
- Empowers participants
- Adaptable
- Peer-to-peer
- Women are experts
- Creates a comfortable atmosphere for learning



Room Choice and Setup

- Choose an easy-to-access meeting facility well known in the community: library, community center, county conservation building
- Avoid high-ceiled rooms
 - Echoes create a difficult environment for the hard-of-hearing
- Minimize background noise
- Use microphones if necessary
- Put tables in a circle or U-shape
 - Close together so that everyone can hear and see each other
- Disperse conservation professionals throughout the circle



When Speaking

- Do not interrupt women landowners when they speak; listen first and respond to their concerns. No lecturing!
- Speak slowly and clearly
- Avoid technical terms and acronyms
- Explain terms that they need to know or give handouts
- Highlight benefits and procedures for best practices
 - How does it work? How much does it cost?
 - What resources are available to help?



Introducing Yourself

- Keep your introduction short but personal
- It's most important that these women see you as a person with a personal investment in nature and the land
- Personal stories go much further in making the women comfortable than explaining your job responsibilities
- Make sure to talk about your specialty and points of interest



Demonstrations

- Ten activities are included in the guide for you to use or adapt.
- Practice your chosen activity beforehand
- Be prepared to explain if things go wrong or right
- Use less techno-babble and more analogies
- Tell group what you will do beforehand, throughout, and after the demonstration



Field Tour

- Professionals should be dispersed throughout the transport vehicle(s); this is where many of the women are able to talk one-on-one with professionals and each other
- Minimize background noise for the hard-of-hearing
- Use microphones, especially when in a large/long bus
- Limit walking and getting off and back on bus



Making Connections

- Women landowners will connect with the other women landowners
- Hand out your business cards with phone number and email addresses



Summary

- Women landowners are an important but underserved audience
- Intersperse professionals with the women landowners
- Speak clearly in a well-sized room with a low ceiling and use microphones when necessary
- Introduce yourself not just as a professional, but also as a woman with a personal investment in the land
- Use plain language
- Let women landowners speak without interruptions
- Practice demonstrations before presenting them
- Encourage connections



Thank you!

- Questions?



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Visit our *Women Caring for the Land*SM website at

www.womencaringfortheland.org

for more information, and these free downloadable resources for reaching out to women landowners:

- Curriculum guide
- Cover crops brochures and booklet
- *Patchwork* newsletter

