


One of Woodsy Owl's® famous sayings is "Lend a Hand, Care for the Land!" Woodsy® likes to lend a hand and care for the land by helping take care of **forests**.



Forests are areas mostly covered with trees and other plants.



Woodsy® wants to teach you about ways people take care of the forests. It is important to take care of forests. Forests give us many **benefits**.

Forests are home to animals and plants.



Bobcats live in the forest.



Canada geese can be found in forests.



A **benefit** is a good or helpful result.

Forests help keep our air and water clean. Forests give us places to play and work. There are many other benefits of forests too.



Forests help keep water clean. The roots of trees keep soil in place, so it doesn't wash away when it rains.



Some people like to hike in forests.

Many people help take care of our forests. Some people plant trees to help the forest.



A forest worker helps plant new trees.



People plant trees in areas that have been hurt. The areas may have been hurt by things like fire and flooding.



A fire burned some of this forest.

Some people work for the Forest Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which helps take care of forests. The Forest Service takes care of 154 forests!



Some people help take care of trails. People use trails to walk through a forest.



People also help take care of trails by removing plants and fallen trees and branches.



Some people help mark trails. Marking the trails helps hikers know where to go.



There are two bright orange trail markers on this tree. Two trail markers are used to show the trail will turn.

Some people help when there are fires in a forest.
Not all fires hurt forests. Some fires are good.



Some people use fire to help the forest. Using fire to help the forest is called a prescribed fire. During a prescribed fire, parts of the forest are carefully burned to take away **fuel**.



A **fuel** is something that will burn in a forest.

Some people help the forest by fighting wildfires.

Wildfires are unplanned, outdoor fires. Some wildfires hurt forests. Plants, trees, and buildings can be burned.



Some people study the forest. These people are called scientists.



This scientist is getting information about the weather.

Scientists try to solve problems in the forest. They may study animals and where the animals live. Scientists may study trees and plants to learn where they grow best.



This scientist is studying longleaf pine trees.

Some people take care of forests by building things like bridges and roads. Bridges and roads help people get to the forest.



Sometimes people take care of the forest by cutting down trees. There are different reasons to cut down trees.

Trees that are unhealthy or dead may be cut down.



Trees may be cut down to help **manage** wildfires. If there are too many trees close together, fire can move through them more quickly.



Manage means to take care of something.

Trees are also cut down for wood. Wood is used to make paper, furniture, houses, and many other things.



Some people help the forest by teaching others about the forest. They teach people about the benefits of forests. They also teach people about what happens in a forest.



People also help the forest by keeping the water and land clean.



This person tests the water to see if it is clean.



These people **volunteer** their time to help clean up the forest and trails.


When people **volunteer**, they give their time for free to help with a project. There are many volunteer groups that help forests.



People take care of forests by helping with **invasive** animals and plants.



Sometimes, people **remove** invasive animals and plants. They remove them so the invasive animals and plants do not take over the area.



These people help remove invasive plants from the forest. An **invasive** animal or plant is an animal or plant that spreads easily and in a place where it does not usually live. **Remove** means to take something away.



There are many people who help take care of our forests. People help take care of the land in many ways:

- Planting trees
- Taking care of trails
- Fighting wildfire
- Using prescribed fire to manage wildfire
- Studying the forests
- Building bridges and roads
- Teaching about the forest
- Keeping the water and land clean
- Removing invasive plants and animals





Can you think of some other ways you can help the forest?



Woodsy Owl® lends a hand to care for forests. You can be like Woodsy Owl® and help take care of forests, too!

- Stay on the trail when you are hiking. Staying on the trail keeps the homes of animals and plants safe.



- Take your trash with you when you leave the forest.
- Teach others what you learn about forests.
- Be careful with campfires. Make sure your campfire is completely out before you leave it.

