

**Evaluate Current Practices:**

Are we currently using/purchasing lumber, food, building materials, and paper products that are sustainably sourced and produced? Yes / No

Are we currently looking for ways to reduce the use of paper/plastic products, for example, by forgoing the use of disposable plates and cups for church events? Yes / No

Are we currently using synthetic pesticides, fertilizers or other biocides to maintain our lawn? Yes / No

*Forests, wetlands, peatlands, and grasslands are vital for absorbing the carbon dioxide causing climate change and are also essential for halting the destruction and fragmentation of habitat that is needed to maintain the biodiversity of the species on earth.*

Are we currently supporting any projects or organizations through our time, talents or financial gifts that curtail the destruction of or restore existing forests, wetlands, peatlands, and grasslands? Yes / No

**Evaluate the Vegetation on Your Property:**

*Lawns promote water runoff rather than absorption, are often a place where chemical fertilizers and pesticides are used that runoff into and pollute nearby water sources, need to be mowed and trimmed using fossil fuel powered machinery, and do absolutely nothing to support pollinators, insects, birds, other wildlife, or healthy soil, water, and air.*

What percentage of our land is covered by standard lawn?

Less than 25%, 25%-50%, 50%-75%, 75%-100%

What areas of our property could be replaced with native and diverse plant species?

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*Plants and wildlife have evolved over time to complement and depend upon each other, so plants that are native to a location are required to promote biodiversity of species and support pollinators and other wildlife. Additionally, only certain pollinators will fertilize certain species, so location-specific (native) pollinators are needed to continue certain plant species*

Using the **iNaturalist** phone application or other field guides, identify the trees, shrubs, followers, grasses, etc. present on your property.

Tree/Shrub Species Present:

Flower/Grass Species Present:

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Top 10 non-native invasive species in Arkansas:

1. Chinese Privet (*Ligustrum sinense*): Extremely common, forming dense thickets that eliminate native understory in forests.
2. Kudzu (*Pueraria montana*): Well-known vine that grows rapidly, smothering trees and structures.
3. Japanese Honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*): A widespread, semi-evergreen vine that chokes out native vegetation in forests and fields.
4. Cogongrass (*Imperata cylindrica*): A high-priority noxious weed that displaces native grasses and is highly flammable.
5. Tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*): Rapidly colonizes disturbed areas and releases chemicals that inhibit the growth of surrounding plants.
6. Japanese Stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*): Invades shaded, moist areas, quickly forming monocultures on forest floors.
7. Bradford Pear / Callery Pear (*Pyrus calleryana*): Escapes ornamental landscapes to form dense, thorny stands in natural areas.
8. Chinese Wisteria (*Wisteria sinensis*): Vigorous vine that girdles trees and kills native shrubs.
9. Sericea Lespedeza (*Lespedeza cuneata*): An aggressive, perennial legume that outcompetes native grasses in pastures and prairies.
10. Golden Bamboo (*Phyllostachys aurea*): Spreads rapidly from landscape plantings, creating dense monocultures that are difficult to eradicate.

Are there any non-native invasive species that need to be removed? Yes / No

List: \_\_\_\_\_

*Remove non-native invasive species because they will often out-compete the native species, causing a decrease in biodiversity for the area and using more water than native species.*

When/How will we remove these invasive species?

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Are we an urban/suburban church with the opportunity to create rooftop gardens or add green spaces to reduce heat and/or water run off by the presence of concrete and asphalt? Yes / No

**Adoption of new practices:**

*It has been determined that trees and other plants form below-ground connections that help promote the health of the group and strengthen each other against strong winds. Additionally, trees provide shade in hot weather, cool the air with their transpiration, slow down the rain hitting the ground during downpours, facilitate water absorption versus runoff and flooding, clean the air by absorbing carbon dioxide, and release oxygen that wildlife and humans require to live.*

Are there areas on our property where we can plant native trees in clusters of three? Yes / No

If so, which tree species will we plant?

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Are there spaces, however small or large, that we might plant edible plants to support the food security of our local neighbors? Yes / No

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What steps can we take to work towards replacing 50% of our standard lawn over time with trees and native plants?

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What steps can we take to turn our urban/suburban spaces into rooftop gardens or promote green spaces to reduce heat and/or water runoff?

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Are there areas where water runoff from hard surfaces flows into storm drains or nearby creeks and rivers? Yes / No

Are there opportunities to plant rain gardens to absorb some of the runoff, slow down the flow, and even clean the water before it hits the storm drain or closest stream?  
Yes / No

Are there opportunities for us to convert to renewable energy sources? Yes / No