

Research Proposal, New Leaf Climate Partners**Topic:** Landscape assessment of non-industrial private forest land in the US**Sector:** Impact Investing, Forestry, Conservation, Climate Justice**Role Type:** Part-time, consultant**Timing:** Fall 2022**Summary**

- Opportunity to work with impact investment firm focused on financing reforestation and land restoration efforts in the US
- Research geared toward better understanding the landscape of private non-industrial forest landowners including composition, needs and challenges in accessing technical and financial services for restoration projects
- Deliverables will include a broad assessment of available literature and datasets, coupled with a more detailed investigation of individual landowner needs of a specific region
- This work will inform a new investment strategy in development by NLC

Project Description

- In the United States, 80% of reforestation potential is on privately-owned property, as opposed to public (state and federal), private industrial timber or indigenous land
- Barriers to a step-change in investment and impact include identifying non-industrial private forest land owners (NIPFLOs), assessing and aggregating context-specific needs, and implementing services to create economies of scale
- There is opportunity to develop a systematic approach to identifying and prioritizing NIPFLOs, potentially starting with large acres adjacent to public lands, in order to maximize coordination or response efforts across large land areas
- The researcher will work closely with NLC partners to distill key insights from the broad landowner context in the US, to specific landowner interviews and archetypes
- The resulting new methodology for prioritizing and reaching NIPFLOs will then inform NLC's investment to support NIPFLOs restoration efforts

Methodology

- Review literature on composition of NIPFLOs through the USFS and other sources
- Identify and consolidate national, regional, local land use datasets including Column.US (includes ownership data by parcel)
- Identify restoration data sets including TNC Reforestation Hub, to overlay on ownership data (may include fire data)
- Create and refine framework for prioritization, needs assessment for NIPFLOs, which may include income and demographic data plus restoration need/climate benefit and parcel size and location data
- Identify specific region(s) to "test the framework" based on joint agreement with NLC

- Within specific region, identify specific partners working with NIPFLOs including forestry extension services and establish a “listening tour” to understand challenges and needs

Deliverables

- Country-wide assessment of NIPFLOs information and datasets, including distribution of ownership in acres, ownership details, and restoration needs
- Regional report that focus on NIPFLOs demographics, tree and financing needs in region TBD based on researcher/NLC interests
- Assessment of how NIPFLOs are currently engaging with USFS, reforestation professionals, other upfront and operating inputs
- These findings can be aggregated into summary report for each national, regional and individual analysis as well as compendium with relevant datasets and sources

Timeline

- 3-6 Months broken down by US assessment of datasets, regional report, and individual landowner assessment

About the Organization

- New Leaf Climate Partners is an investment and advisory firm that applies innovative finance to nature-based solutions to climate change.
 - New Leaf invests in market infrastructure to improve supply chains, platforms for transaction efficiency, and project financing for reforestation in North America.
 - Our goal is to holistically reimagine the reforestation value chain, and in so doing, help communities create thriving economies, build climate resilience, and recover from climate disaster stronger than before.
 - To learn more about New Leaf Climate, visit our [website](#).
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