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# The Stewardship Philosophies of Forest Landowners in the Maritime Provinces of Canada

**Purpose of Study:** The unique characteristics of the Acadian forest and the environmental ethics of landowners offer an opportunity to adopt forest management for climate change resilience, but it's not clear how to best support and engage landowners.

**Research Objective:** There are almost 90,000 private forest landowners in the Maritimes. The objective of this research is to build a rich understanding of their forest stewardship philosophies, practices, and concerns, in the context of a changing climate.

## Research Questions

1. How do conservation-minded private forest landowners perceive good forest stewardship, and how might this perception influence their management aspirations and decisions?
2. How do landowners make their forest management decisions and what barriers might landowners face in pursuing forest management activities that are aligned with their stewardship values?
3. How might climate change affect the place attachments and stewardship concerns of conservation-minded landowners in the Maritimes?

## Study Methods

**Data collection:** This is a qualitative study that will gather data through semi-structured interviews with 40 to 50 landowners. Semi-structured interviews are popular in qualitative research because they have some pre-determined structure but offer participants flexibility.

**Data analysis:** This research will employ grounded theory, an iterative process between data collection and analysis used to build theory — from the ground up. It uses a process called “coding” to organize and make sense of data.

**Timeline:** Interviews will begin in April 2021 and will likely be completed by September 2021. Study results are expected to be available in Spring 2022.

## Research Outcomes

The outcomes of this research will be a greater sensitivity to the factors that influence landowner decision-making and a better understanding of their interest in active forest stewardship for climate change mitigation and adaptation.



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