



Boosting female forest owners' self-efficacy by means of peer-learning

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- FACESMAP Final Conference,
7-8 September 2016
Vienna, Austria

Outline

Background and motivation

Case group of female forest owners

Methods and data explored

Findings and implications

Background and rationale

Notable share of female forest owners (in Finland 38%)

- Recognition of notion “gender matters” in private forestry
- Signals from interviews and networks that female owners would prefer female advisors and “female only” activities

Promise of peer learning to complement expert-led forest guidance

- More meaningful action-oriented learning via sharing concrete experiences with “similar others”

Hypotheses: female owners’ peer learning group would empower them as active forest owners

Our catalyzer: peer learning examples from the USA



WOMEN OWNING WOODLANDS

WISCONSIN COVERTS PROJECT



Promoting Woodland Wildlife Stewardship

NY Master Forest Owner Program



Growing Your Peer Learning Network

Tools and Tips from the Women Owning Woodlands Network



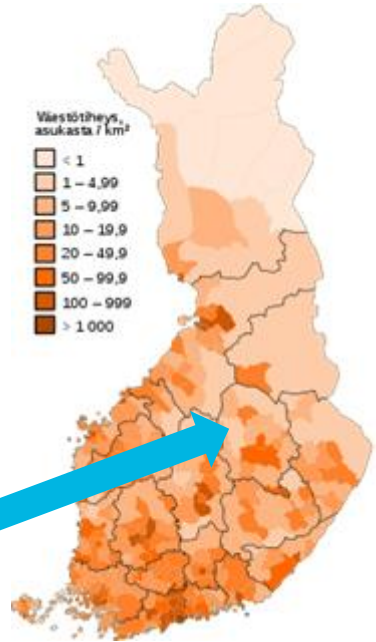
Oregon State UNIVERSITY

Extension Service
EM 9064 - August 2013

Allyson Muth, Penn State University; Amanda Subjin, Delaware Highlands Conservancy; Eli Sapor, University of Minnesota; Nicole Strong, Oregon State University; and Tamara Walkingstick, University of Arkansas

Group of female forest owners (n=13)

- Background and earlier activities: Rural Women's Advisory Organization
- Now: European Social Fund project "Forest owners' peer-to-peer advising diversifies professional advisors' work" (2015-2017)



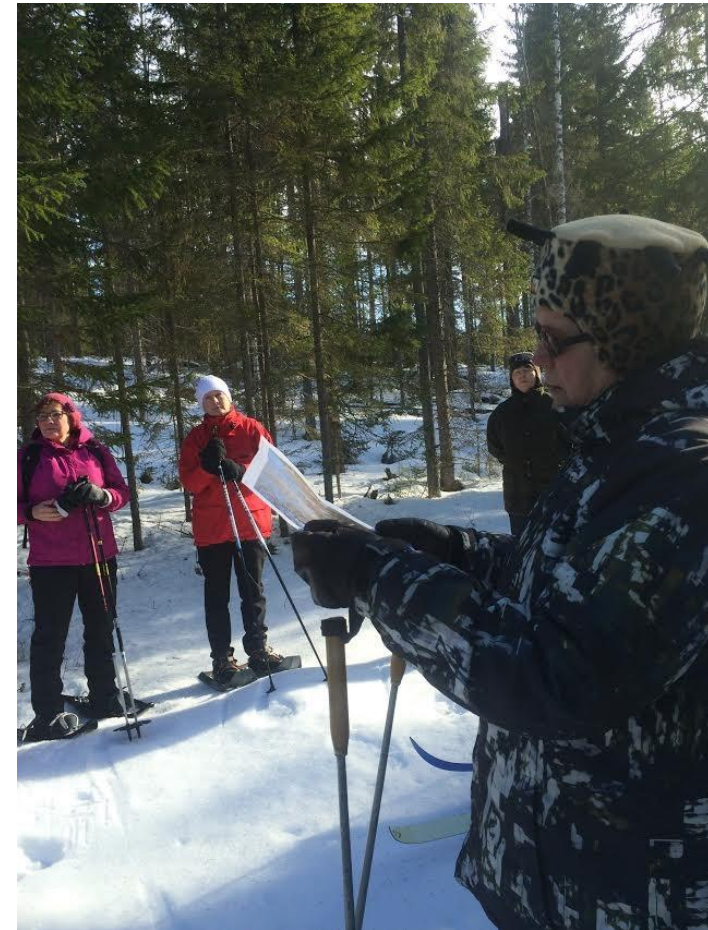
Owners and their forests



Group of rural female forest owners



Group of rural female forest owners



Meetings and study material

Example: forest walk

- Different forest stands, the owner presents the stand, others ask questions and share their own experiences
- Public forest advisor facilitates
- Invited forester answers owners' questions, too
- Researcher's observation notes



Feedback and reflection

- Next to camp fire: What was memorable, what did you learn?
- Feedback forms: experiences learned, experiences shared, expert knowledge gained



The participants' learning interests organized as a meeting series

Timing	Topic	Organization
June 2015	Eliciting wishes	Meeting in a house; brainstorming and cognitive mapping
September 2015	Nature and scenic spots	Path walk; a crag, pond shore, retention trees; coffee break at a lean-to
March 2016	Timing of silviculture	Forest walk; snow damage, removing standards, acquiring domestic firewood; coffee break at a gaff
June 2016	Regeneration	Discussion at a final felling site; interviewing an invited expert from Stora Enso
September 2016 to May 2017	Smartphones in forest; generational transfers, forestry equipment for females	One meeting in a house, others in forest, details to be specified later together

Observations from the first four meetings

Relaxed atmosphere

- Due to common history

Vivid discussions

- Small enough group

More questions than experiences

- Sharing is not that familiar practice yet

The owner lady was less active when the invited husband was presenting

- Reproducing a gendered practice and expert-led mode

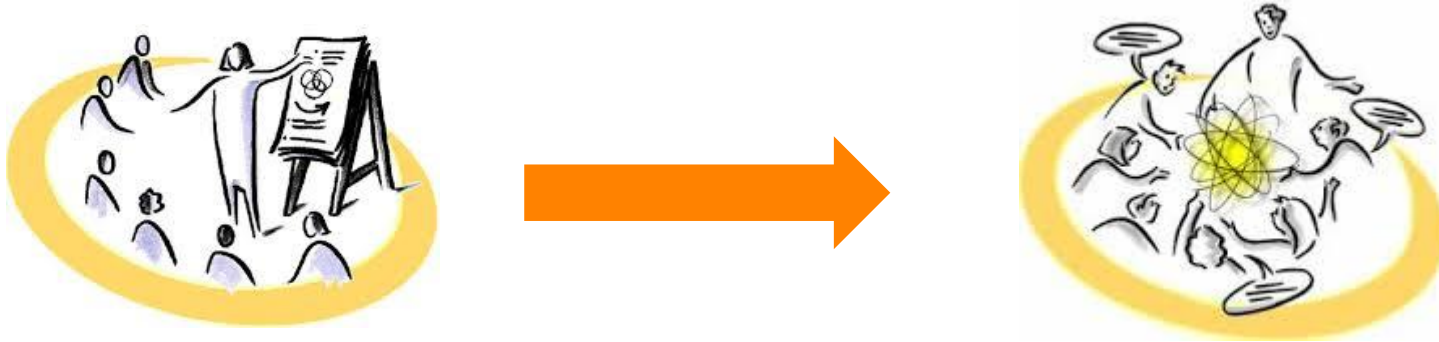
Participants' average perception of receiving and giving useful information on scale 1-7 (n=7-11) – the higher the ratings, the more information was received or given

Meeting number	Received from peer owners	Received from forest professionals	Shared to peer owners
2	5.3	5.5	3.4
3	5.4	5.9	4.1
4	5.1	5.4	3.7

Feedback

- Joy of being together with acquaintances
- Nice atmosphere and aesthetic places
- Beneficial to see practical examples and ask questions
- Some wished for more encouragement from the facilitator

Discussion: subtle adjustment of vertical versus horizontal knowledge exchange



A

Forestry advisor from content expert to learning facilitator: a demanding task

Our data only shows first steps away from expert-led practices

B

Forest advisors may need their own peer network to learn new facilitator's skills together

Gendered and expert-led practices mix with each other

C

Forest owners could be trained as facilitators and mentors

Gender awareness may be part of the training

Implications

A special well-functioning group

- A particular mode of “peerness”
- Shows continuity

Gender does make a difference

- Female group a special motivating factor
- Male participation changes group dynamics

Wide interests of forestry issues

- Topics are not feminine or masculine but a mix of both
- Good example of empowered female owners

Learning with peers only took first steps

- Experience sharing is a challenge for facilitators
- Need to go further with experiments and co-learning

Thank you!



European Union
European Social Fund

Leverage from
the EU
2014–2020



Hamunen, K., Virkkula, O., Hujala, T., Hiedanpää, J. & Kurttila, M. 2015. **Enhancing informal interaction and knowledge co-construction among forest owners.** *Silva Fennica* 49(1). 15 p. <http://dx.doi.org/10.14214/sf.1214>

Hamunen, K., Appelstrand, M., Hujala, T., Kurttila, M., Sriskandarajah, N., Vilkriste, L., Westberg, L. & Tikkanen, J. 2014. **Defining Peer-to-peer Learning - from an Old 'Art of Practice' to a New Mode of Forest Owner Extension?** *The Journal of Agricultural Education and Extension* 2014(939199): 1-15. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1389224X.2014.939199>