

WWOA Woodland Mentor Program FAQs

Q.) Do I have to be a WWOA member to participate?

A.) Yes. Both the Mentor and Aspen (inexperienced member) need to be members.

Q.) What if I live outside of Wisconsin?

A.) No problem! You will be able to communicate through email, phone, or virtual meetings (whichever is preferred between Aspen and Mentor). There is no need to leave your house!

Q.) Does it cost anything to participate in the program?

A.) No. This is just one of the many benefits to you as a WWOA member. WWOA will provide you with either digital or hard copies of the materials that will be covered.

Q.) Do I need to be an established WWOA member to participate in the Mentor Program or do I need to be a new WWOA member?

A.) Any WWOA member can participate! If you are passionate about WWOA and want to get more involved with your woodland, this is for you! We are looking for Mentors to share their years of experience in caring for their woods. Mentors are not foresters, they are woodland owners willing to share their experiences. Ideally, Volunteer Mentors will have a written management plan that they are following and have completed a few practices. If you don't know where to start or want to learn more about your woods, you can participate as an Aspen.

Q.) Who are the "Aspens"?

A.) In the Mentor Program, this is what we call the Inexperienced Members that will be mentored. Aspens are a fast growing, early successional tree species that is intolerant and needs lots of sun. The Mentor Program will be the abundance of sun that these Aspen saplings need to flourish in the mighty woods that is WWOA!

Q.) What are the goals of the Mentor Program for Aspens?

A.) For the Aspens, the goal is to feel comfortable in WWOA and become an active member at the chapter level. Aspens will also learn about the variety of resources available to assist them in caring for their woods, consider their long-term goals, and hopefully schedule an on-site meeting with a professional forester or other natural resource professional to obtain a written practice or management plan for their land.

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Q.) What are the goals of the Mentor Program for Mentors?

A.) For the Mentors, the goal is for them to share their years of woodland experiences, their knowledge of various natural resource programs, and their network of WWOA friends. Mentors will meet a new WWOA friend. It is a way for our experienced members to give back while helping inexperienced members become better woodland stewards. Mentors may even learn some new information about the topics presented along the way.

Q.) Does a Mentor replace a Professional Forester or other Natural Resource Professional?

A.) No! A Volunteer Mentor for the program shares their tips, resources, experience, and knowledge and will communicate the educational topics provided by WWOA for the program. They do not serve as or replace a professional forester or other natural resource professional. Mentors do not make decisions for Aspens; they work to educate the Aspen about their options. The Aspen is encouraged to work with a forester or other natural resource professional of their choosing.

Q.) What if my knowledge of woodland management is low? Can I still become a Mentor, or should I be an Aspen?

A.) You are encouraged to become an Aspen to learn more about caring for your woods. Mentors will share their experiences while the education and training materials are provided by WWOA covering various topics.

Q.) How much time do I need to dedicate as a Volunteer Mentor or Aspen?

A.) A 6-8 month commitment is required to participate in the program. This will allow time to cover about two modules per month. The time requirement per month is about 2-4 hours, depending on the discussions between Mentors and Aspens. All modules will be required, but more topics can be discussed, if desired. Mentors will also attend a few hours of training prior to starting the program. Mentors have the choice of continuing to be a Mentor for another Aspen at the end of the program, but it is not required.