

How to Start a Women's Learning Circle in Your Area



Recent surveys estimate women now own or co-own close to 50% of the farmland in the US. Women's Learning Circles are designed to serve women farmland landowners who are interested in learning more about conservation. Our work with women farmers and landowners shows many share strong conservation values, and want their land farmed sustainably into the future. "Learning circles" are peer-to-peer meetings in which every women's knowledge and expertise is of value. A wide range of experts are brought in to provide information that will help the landowners make informed decisions about soil and water conservation, hunting and habitat management, pollinator habitat, forest management, and many other topics. Some of our partners include the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Soil and Water Districts, Purdue Cooperative Extension, Indiana State Department of Agriculture, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, USDA Farm Services Agency, and Indiana Department of Environmental Management.

Discuss the value of the opportunity with your SWCD Board, supervisors, etc. Obtain their support.

Identify potential partners or funding sources. There are costs associated with hosting a circle, including venues, meals, and transportation to the field site. Partners can help share the expense, and share the benefit of spreading their conservation message.

Select a potential topic relevant to the women operators/landowners in your area. Past topics have included, soil health, pollinator habitat, invasive species management, forest management, whole farm planning, etc. Identify a time of year to host, or even select several specific date options.

Contact the Women4theLand State Coordinator with your interest, topic, partners and support, and tentative dates. Six weeks advance notice is preferred.

Use the Women4theLand Resources to prepare. A facilitator and co-facilitator will be assigned to your Women's Learning Circle. If you are a trained facilitator, a co-facilitator will be assigned to you to assist.

Start Planning. An initial phone call with the facilitators and host partners will be scheduled, to discuss the topic, field day, and logistics! Guidance will be provided on the necessary process for a successful Circle.

Successfully host your Women's Learning Circle!

Women4theLand is here to assist you along any of the steps of the process. Feel free to contact us at any time.

Web: www.Women4theLand.org

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