

ACRES KEPT · Landowner Readiness

Every Property Has a Story

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Landowner Reading Room

Publication LR-102 Every Property Has a Story Before We Talk About the Land, Let's Talk About the Story When people first think about property, they often think about acreage. They think about boundaries. Taxes. Timber. Fields. Buildings. Market value. Those things matter. But long before land becomes an asset, it becomes part of a family's story. It becomes the place where memories were made. Where children learned to work. Where grandparents shared wisdom. Where celebrations were held. Where hardships were endured. Where dreams were planted. 1

The value of land cannot be measured only by what it is worth today. Its greatest value is often found in what it has meant across generations. That is why every ACRES KEPT journey begins with story. Because before you decide your property's future, it deserves to be remembered. Your Story Matters No two properties share the same story. Some have been in a family for generations. Some were purchased through sacrifice and determination. Some were inherited unexpectedly. Some carry memories of farming, hunting, worship, family gatherings, or simply being a place where people knew they belonged. Your story does not have to be extraordinary. It simply needs to be remembered. Stories preserve meaning. Meaning shapes decisions. Why Story Comes Before Strategy It can be tempting to begin with questions like: "Should we sell?" "What is it worth?" "Who should inherit it?" Those are important questions. But they are not the first questions. 2

The first question is: What has this land meant to our family? When families begin there, something remarkable often happens. Conversations become less about transactions and more about purpose. Differences become easier to discuss. Future possibilities become easier to imagine. Story gives direction to strategy. Stories Reveal Value That Cannot Be Appraised An appraisal can estimate market value. It cannot measure:

- The perseverance that purchased the property.
- The generations who cared for it.
- The lessons learned there.
- The traditions created there.
- The hopes attached to its future.

These forms of value are no less real simply because they cannot be assigned a dollar amount. They deserve to be recognized before any decision is made. Your Family's Story Is Still Being Written Many families believe they are deciding the ending of their story. More often, they are writing its next chapter. Whether your family chooses to keep the land, strengthen it, conserve it, or one day entrust it to another faithful steward, your story continues. The question is not whether your story ends. The question is: 3

How do you hope the next chapter will be written? Reflection Before moving forward, pause for a few moments. Ask yourself:

- What is the earliest memory I have of this property?
- Who first cared for this land?

- What sacrifices made this property possible?
- What values does this land represent to our family?
- What do I hope future generations will remember about it?

There are no right or wrong answers. Simply begin remembering. Continue Your Journey Every meaningful stewardship journey begins with understanding. The next step is discovering the opportunities your property may hold today and for future generations. Next Recommended Reading LR-103 — Understanding the Value Beyond Price

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