GEORGIA FORESTWATCH
PRESERVE PROTECT RESTORE GAFW.ORG

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Give a Gift Membership or GAFW Merchandise as a Holiday Gift

Our members know the pride and ease of mind that comes with a membership to Georgia ForestWatch. Now you can share your love and support of our state's national forest land with family, friends, and other loved ones with a gift membership or one of our popular logo items.

Gift memberships are offered at any of our membership levels starting as low as $20 for students. We will mail the membership packet on the date of your choosing. Look for the check box entitled "Giving a Gift Membership?" at the top of our Gift Membership page and consider making this a recurring gift membership by clicking the "Make this donation yearly" box.

Additionally, whether combined or separate, you can purchase several merchandise items, including books, t-shirts, tote bags, hats, and maps for yourself or as gifts. GAFW would be happy to enclose any of our merchandise items into any gift membership packet just by letting us know at info@gafw.org.

Gift Membership

Choosing a Sustainable Holiday Tree

The most ecologically friendly and sustainable tree option is the one you already own. Instead of purchasing a new tree this year, use the one already in your attic or basement.

Some national forests allow you to cut your own tree for a small fee. The Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest **is not one of them** (nor are national forests in NC, SC, TN, & AL), and cutting down a living tree is a federal crime. If you see someone harvesting a live tree in our forest at any time of the year, call 911 and report them.

Artificial Trees

- While convenient, they often have more harmful effects than a live tree. Approximately 85% of fake trees in the U.S. are made in China, with subsequent high manufacturing and transportation emissions. If you opt for a fake tree this holiday season, try to buy one made in the U.S.
- How a fake tree is disposed of is one of its worst impacts. Many fake trees are made from oil-derived, non-recyclable, and environmentally harmful plastic and will live in landfills for centuries.
- Most Americans only keep a fake tree for six to nine years but keeping it closer to 20 years can significantly reduce its environmental impact. Using the same artificial tree year after year can have comparable effects on the environment to buying a new, non-organic, commercially grown tree every year.

Live Trees

- Live trees are a better option if you are not planning any further than this year's holidays. If you choose a live tree, there are several factors to consider.
- Live trees in lots also come with transportation emissions. Look for trees grown as close to home as possible. Consider visiting a local organic tree farm to cut your tree as a family outing.
- Conventional tree farms also come with a host of concerns. Conventionally farmed trees require prolific use of herbicides and pesticides linked to cancer, hormonal disruptions, neurological damage, reproductive defects, asthma, and organ damage. Conventional tree farms rely on monoculture and can spread over hundreds of acres which may look pretty but are ecological deserts that offer little to no environmental benefits. At harvest, petroleum-driven equipment is used, and they are shipped vast distances to reach your neighborhood.
- If possible, forgo the plastic netting your tree is wrapped in after you purchase it.
- Consider a tree that comes in a planter with its root ball intact.

But know the difference between a “potted tree” that has been dug up and potted, meaning the roots are likely too damaged to live after replanting. Look for instead “pot grown” trees grown from seed, sold in the same pot, and much more likely to live when planted.

- After the season is over, your tree is 100% compostable. Recycling or composting your tree into mulch, wood chips, or firewood after use can reduce its overall impact. Many municipalities offer curbside pickup options or free drop-off locations to recycle your tree and have it turned into mulch.

If this email was forwarded to you, please register here to receive GAFW updates.

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Thank You

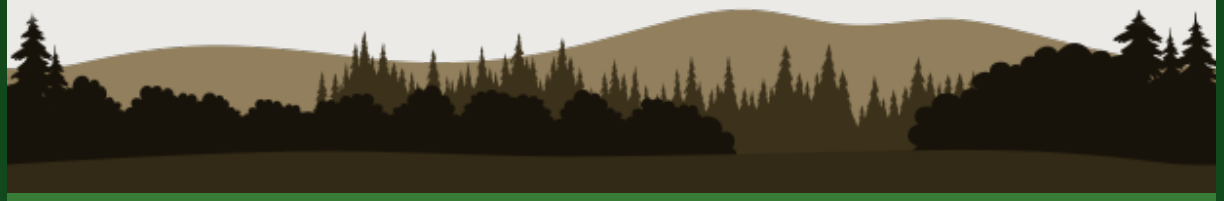
Georgia ForestWatch is the only nonprofit organization with a mission solely dedicated to ensuring the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests remain healthy and available for future generations, and we can only pursue our mission with the support of the community.

Please support our mission by ensuring your membership is up to date and providing additional support as you are able.

On behalf of our entire national forests in our beautiful state, we thank you for your support.

Our Mission

Our mission is to enhance the health of over 867,000 acres of Georgia's national forest by protecting our forests and streams, advocating for natural processes, and identifying opportunities to improve forest management. Visit Georgia ForestWatch (GAFW) to learn more.



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