

## Peers and Pros 360°

Teaching and Learning Together by Using What Forest Landowners Have to Say



Sanford Smith & David Jackson  
Forestry and Wildlife Extension



Photo Credit: Barb Sellers



[extension.psu.edu](http://extension.psu.edu)



## Woods Tours, Woodlot Visits, and Woods Walks!

Photo Credits: David Jackson, Sanford Smith,



**“What we need is a new approach  
with our educational tours!”**



Photo Credit: Barb Sellers



Photo Credit: Sanford Smith

**Peers &  
Pros 360°**





**HS Student Tours Using the Peers & Pros 360° Method**

Photo Credit: Sanford Smith



**Teachers Tours Using the Peers & Pros 360° Method**

Photo Credit: Sanford Smith





**Woodland Owner and Public Tours Using the Peers & Pros 360° Method**

Photo Credit: Barb Sellers




### **In The Beginning of a Peers & Pros 360° Program**



1. Discuss objectives: To make the program more fun, interactive, appropriate, and educational for participants and presenters. Also allows for peer to peer learning.
2. Randomly hand out printed cards with numbered statements - ones commonly made by the public, teens, teachers, etc. (peers) about forest resources.





**Peers & Pros 360° Cards for Forestland Owners**

Photo Credit: Sanford Smith

PennState Extension

### During a Peers & Pros 360° Program



3. Have individual peers stand in a circle and read their statements aloud, by theme groups. Ask the peer group members to respond as if another peer said this. Let everyone discuss and share for ~ 5 min.
4. The statements are not questions. There are no 'right' answers. Make every effort not to discourage or embarrass anyone about what they don't know about forest resources.
5. Then, the pro(s) give generalized insights (using the talking points if needed), make connections, gentle suggestions about misconceptions, and wrap up before moving on to the next theme.

## Tour Stop No. 1



**Statement #1**

"We bought our land so we could have a place to get away and relax. We love the woods and watching wildlife."



**Statement #2**

"We don't have a written plan for our forestland, but we do have some ideas about what we hope to do with the property."



**Statement #3**

"I've heard there's someone from the state who will come look over your woods."

Photo Credits: Sanford Smith, Allyson Muth, WPSU



## Tour Stop No. 2



**Statement #4**

"We don't plan on cutting down any trees on our property, only dead ones for firewood."



**Statement #5**

"We know someone who has a logging business; we plan to contact him soon. Why should I hire a consulting forester and pay him a fee to sell my timber?"



**Statement #6**

"It's best to only cut the big trees, that way you can come back and harvest again every 10-20 years."

Photo Credits: Barb Sellers, WPSU, Sanford Smith



## Tour Stop No. 3



**Statement #7**

"Invasive plants are just 'wiping out' all of our native plants."



**Statement #8**

"Most of the trees in Pennsylvania are being killed by bugs and diseases from other countries."



**Statement #9**

"I just love to see all the ferns in my woods; it reminds me of where I hunted up north as a kid."

Photo Credits: Sanford Smith, Laura Sellers, Laura Sellers



## Tour Stop No. 4



**Statement #10**

"I'm interested in helping wildlife on our property but I don't really know what to do."



**Statement #11**

"We enjoy feeding the deer, turkeys, and bears that come to our property."



**Statement #12**

"Cutting trees destroys wildlife homes and places where they get food."

Photo Credits: Barb Sellers, Sanford Smith, Dave Jackson



## Tour Stop No. 5



**Statement #13**

"I've heard that you need to sign your name on all your NO TRESPASSING signs, but I'm not really sure about this."



**Statement #14**

"The biggest headache we have on our property is ATVs from the nearby camps."



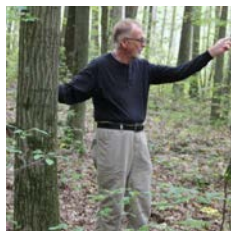
**Statement #15**

"I don't want to enroll in any Government programs because I would have to open my land to the public."

Photo Credits: Sanford Smith



## Tour Stop No. 6



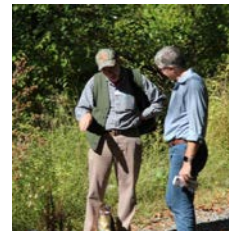
**Statement # 16**

"We plan to pass the property on to our three kids in equal portions."



**Statement # 17**

"None of my kids are really interested in the woods. I'm not sure what will become of my land when I die."



**Statement # 18**

"I'm going to deed the woods over to my boys before I go. They love to hunt."

Photo Credits: Barb Sellers, Delaware Highlands, Barb Sellers

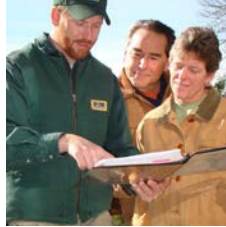


## Tour Stop No. 7



**Statement # 19**

"I'm concerned about people breaking into our camp and destroying the property."



**Statement # 20**

"We don't live near our property, so we can't really get many things done up there."



**Statement # 21**

"I've been thinking about letting some hunters post my land for me. You know, in return for them watching over things when I'm not here."

Photo Credits: Sanford Smith, Nancy G.W. Baker, Barb Sellers



## Lessons Learned

- The method, while seemingly simple, is effective. Participants are willing to stay engaged longer in these sessions because they find them so useful.
- Most participants start learning from their level of knowledge and build upon that through the insights and experiences of their peers and the professionals.
- Master forest landowners ("PAFS" in PA) and professionals alike indicate that they appreciate having a method and curricula that allows them to conduct effective educational programs themselves. They report that leading these types of sessions are more interesting than just "doing all the talking."



### **Lessons Learned**

- This method works well with other peer groups and topics. It can be adapted to any topic by developing new statements appropriate to the location and the peer group.
- Some participants can sidetrack a session by talking more than they listen. If so, the session leader needs to encourage others to engage more by asking them what they think.
- When using this method during a tour, professionals must avoid falling back into their old method of doing a presentation about site specifics and other details. There isn't enough time to do both.

### **Lessons Learned**

- This method can be used indoors or outdoors.
- When developing your own statements, be sure to get lots of input from colleagues and other professionals.
- Be sure you are using statements that are appropriate to the peer group you are working with.
- Statements that are appropriate for the general public are usually suitable for elementary and middle school teachers.



Please give us feedback about the effectiveness of this webinar and the teaching technique we presented today.

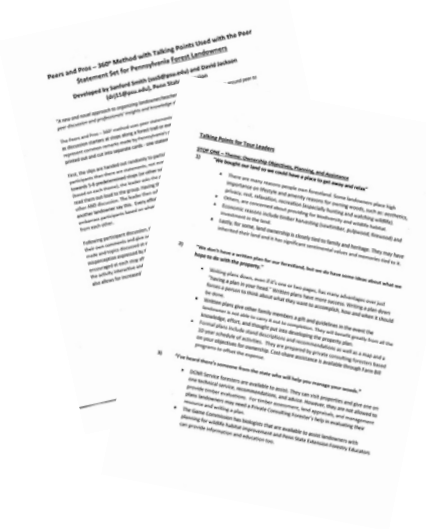
Photo Credit: Sanford Smith



Do you have any other typical statements you've 'heard in the woods' that you think we should use in the future?

Photo Credit: Barb Sellers





Would you like to field-test the Peers and Pros 360° method? Request a copy of our write-up with talking points and cards for session leaders.

**Please send requests to:**  
[sss5@psu.edu](mailto:sss5@psu.edu).

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