

Carbon School

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE (UT) SCIENTISTS and students rely on the research properties of the school's Forest Resources AgResearch and Education Center to study trees, soil, land management and more. Now those 11,400 acres have another job: serving as TNC's first registered carbon-offset project on academic lands in the United States.

In late 2019, the university's Institute of Agriculture agreed to manage the predominantly hardwood forests under The Nature Conservancy's Working Woodlands program. The program helps landowners generate

revenue by selling carbon credits based on how much carbon a standing forest absorbs from the atmosphere.

University research will continue on the lands, says Kevin Hoyt, director of the UT Forest Resources AgResearch and Education Center, and TNC will help fund new sustainability and climate change research on the properties. But first, the project kicked off with a detailed inventory to measure carbon, timber and forest health. "That inventory is a game changer for us," Hoyt says. "If you can't measure it, you can't manage it." —K.W.

WOODLAND: More than half of Tennessee's land area is covered in forests, including this Appalachian woodland on the Kentucky border.



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