Forest carbon offset programs for Michigan landowners, January 2026

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There are several companies helping family forest landowners (30 to 5,000 acres) and urban forests to sell "forest carbon offsets" on voluntary carbon markets. Landowners should work with their consulting forester, accountant and attorney to compare programs to see if one is a good fit for their woods and family land ethic.

The Department of Natural Resources does not endorse forest carbon developers, and this list is not exhaustive. However, landowners and society should recognize that **private forests produce public goods** like clean air, clean water, wildlife habitat, recreation, biodiversity, and beautiful nature. Both traditional forest products and new "ecosystem service" markets may help families earn income and achieve their forest management and land protection goals.

- Forest Carbon Works has sold carbon on the California regulatory market since 2016 and the voluntary market on the Verra registry since 2022. Landowners with 40+ acres of forest agree to a 25-year crediting period. Harvesting up to 10% of initial carbon stocks is allowed when done according to a forest management plan and forest certification provided by the program (Forest Stewardship Council). Carbon benefits are monitored for a 35-year period after the payments end. Two payment options are available – either a per acre option with current prices around $10 per acre annually or a 25% revenue-sharing option after sale of credits to determine carbon prices. Email Jordan@ForestCarbonWorks.com for information.
- Family Forest Carbon Program (FFCP) pays landowners with 30+ acres of northern hardwoods or oak-hickory a fixed price of $10 per acre annually for 20 years. "FFCP does not pay landowners for carbon" but rather for implementing practices that reduce harvest intensity where landowners can harvest up to 25% of their basal area. The program sells carbon credits on the Verra registry to pay for program administration and to enroll more landowners. Email BVanderwall@ForestFoundation.org for more info.
- LandYield has a harvest deferral program that pays landowners for carbon credits generated by their forests for 20 or 40 years. Landowners with 40 to 5,000 acres might earn between $20 to $40 per acre annually. LandYield's forest carbon program follows the American Carbon Registry's methodology for Small Non-Industrial Private Forestland which prohibits commercial timber sales for either 20 or 40 years. Email Max Grodnick at info@LandYield.com for more information.
- City Forest Credits is a registry that offers tree planting and forest preservation credits for urban forests in or near cities and within larger suburban regional planning areas. The urban tree planting methodology offers front-loaded payments over 25 years. The forest preservation methodology requires a recorded easement, covenant, or deed to protect an urban forest at risk of development or degradation for at least 40 or 100 years. Payments for forest preservation are paid in the first five years of the project and have paid $3,000 to $5,000 per acre. City Forest's preservation credits are endorsed by International Carbon Reduction and Offsetting Accreditation. Email Mark@CityForestCredits.org for more information.
- Climate Action Reserve is a registry with two unique options in its Climate Forward program. The Mature Forest Management Forecast Methodology issues up-front credits a single time for landowners to sell after they commit to grow large, old trees. Landowners must develop a permanent conservation easement with a land conservancy and enroll in the carbon program within one year. Reforestation Forecast Methodology issues ex-ante (up-front) credits a single time one year after planting trees on land that has not been forest for 10 years or had a natural disturbance of more than 75% in a forest more recently. Contact JRemucal@ClimateActionReserve.org for info and Heart of the Lakes to find a Michigan land conservancy.